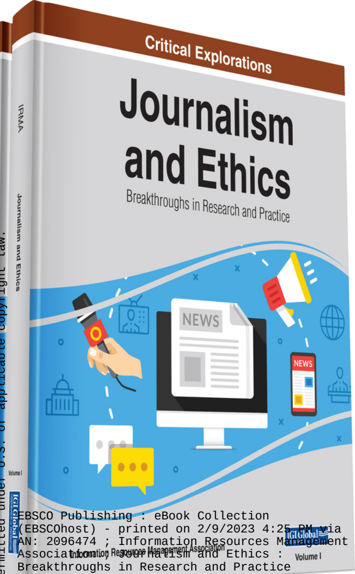
Critical Explorations
Journalism and Ethics
Breakthroughs in Research and Practice
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Journalism and Ethics:

Breakthroughs in Research and Practice

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Preface

The everchanging landscape surrounding the current social, economic, and political climate can make it very challenging to stay at the forefront of prevalent issues and trends, especially when looking at how diversely they can be portrayed across different forms of media. That is why IGI Global is pleased to offer this two-volume comprehensive reference that will empower journalists, media professionals, students, researchers, practitioners, and academicians with a stronger understanding of ethical issues and best practice in journalism and mass communications.

This compilation is designed to act as a single reference source on conceptual, methodological, and technical aspects, and will provide insight into emerging topics including but not limited to conflict reporting, objectivity, media ethics, new media technology, immersive journalism, and transmedia journalism. The chapters within this publication are sure to provide readers the tools necessary for further research and discovery in their respective industries and/or fields.

Journalism and Ethics: Breakthroughs in Research and Practice is organized into seven sections that provide comprehensive coverage of important topics. The sections are:

1. Development Journalism and Conflict Reporting;
2. Factual Reporting, Objectivity, and Verification;
3. Media Ethics and Regulation;
4. Media Literacy;
5. New Media Technology;
6. Social Media and Social Networking; and
7. Transmedia Journalism.

The following paragraphs provide a summary of what to expect from this invaluable reference source:

Section 1, "Development Journalism and Conflict Reporting," opens this extensive reference source by highlighting the latest trends in free media and conflict-sensitive journalism. The first chapter in this section, "Free Media and Democracy in the Age of Globalization," presents the evolution of print media around the world through changes in freedom of speech, democracy, and justice within different countries. The next chapter, "Imperative of Peace and Conflict-Sensitive Journalism in Development," explores peace journalism as a model for journalists to write on situational backgrounds, the context of conflicts, hidden agendas, and peace ideas in their coverage. Another chapter, "Role of Citizen Journalism Through Internet in Reporting War and Conflicts: An Introspection," explores the use of smart devices as tools for modern individuals to utilize for citizen journalism. One of the closing chapters within this section, “Understanding Media during Times of Terrorism,” investigates media outlets as proprietors of propaganda and the negative exploits of journalism while also highlighting the development of alternative and community media to promote peace messages. The final chapter in this section, “Role of Traditional and New Media in Ethnic Conflict in Nigeria’s Middle Belt Region: A Primer on Peace Building and Community Development,” discusses new media’s role in conflict exacerbation, resolution, and mediation while also examining how traditional and new media respond to ethnic conflicts.

Section 2, “Factual Reporting, Objectivity, and Verification,” includes chapters on remaining objective and verifying source information when presenting news stories. The first chapter in this section, “Analyzing Verbal Narratives in TV News and Commercials,” presents a lexical analysis of TV news coverage on economics, presidential approval polls, and general presidential news, while also investigating campaign ad differences in winning and losing campaigns. Following this chapter is “The Biased Truth: An Objective Perspective on Nonobjective News Reporting,” which addresses local, national, and satire news sources that attempt to remain objective in their reporting, but ultimately lose their objectivity in the presented narrative. Another noteworthy chapter in this section, “Ethical Pitfalls in the Digital Age: When the Desire to ‘Serve Hot’ Gets in the Way of Verification,” examines the internet’s impact on journalists’ ethical practices in publishing stories without proper verification in order to avoid the story being published by a competitor first. One of the closing chapters in this section, “Media-Invented Stories and Outright Lies a Threat to Journalism Ethics and Media Credibility,” presents cases of media lies and credibility concerns when one news story is reproduced without citing the original story. The next chapter, “Real-Life and Virtual News Sources Can Be Flat-Out Wrong: Teaching the Importance of Libel Law and Media Literacy in a Single Class Session,” emphasizes the rampant cases of eyewitness misidentification and memory distortion published in news reports and the need for journalists to check sources before disseminating information to the public. This section concludes with “Media Literacy and Fake News: How Media Literacy Can Curb the Fake News Trend,” which covers the responsibility consumers and media have in fact checking news to avoid inaccurate information from continually being spread and to improving the media landscape.

Section 3, “Media Ethics and Regulation,” presents coverage on the importance of reporting truthful, unbiased information that was uncovered ethically. The first chapter in this section, “To Lie or Not to Lie: Interrogating Codes of Conduct on Photo Ethics in the Era of Digital Technologies,” explores the ethical implications of photo manipulation in photo journalism. The second chapter in this section, “New Communication Technologies: Women’s Rights Violations, Limits on Freedom of Expression, and Alternative ways to Promote Human Rights,” explores the restrictions that freedom of expression can have on human rights and Internet regulation. Another chapter in this section, “Media Ethics and Elections Coverage in Nigeria: Understanding the Context and Imperatives From a Gender Perspective,” investigates ethical reporting’s impact on elections that can promote gender equality while encouraging a platform for engagement among candidates and constituents of all genders. One of the closing chapters, “Media Regulation and Freedom of Expression in Black Africa: A Comparative Study of Nigeria and Cameroon,” argues that press freedom and liberal democracy are still ideals in some African countries until it is supported by political parties, while highlighting the ways in which Nigerian media differs from other African media outlets. The following chapter, “Citizen Journalism on Facebook and the Challenges of Media Regulation in Zimbabwe: Baba Jukwa,” discusses the continual rise of citizen journalism and the impact of this practice on media regulatory laws, journalistic ethics, authentic news stories, and engagement between media professionals and consumers. The final chapter of this section, "Deferring Citizens' 'Right to Know' in an Information Age: The Information Deficit in Namibia," seeks to examine Namibia's reluctance to adopt access to information legislation and the affects information black-outs have on society.

Section 4, "Media Literacy," discusses coverage and research perspectives on digital literacy and critical thinking. The first chapter in this section, "Digital Competence: A Net of Literacies," presents a conceptual framework of digital literacy's importance in social, civil, and technological aspects of society. The following chapter, "Critical Media Literacy as Transformative Pedagogy," provides a theoretical framework of critical media literacy (CML) pedagogy and examples of practical implementation in K-12 and teacher education. The concluding chapter of this section, "The Freedom of Critical Thinking: Examining Efforts to Teach American News Literacy Principles in Hong Kong, Vietnam, and Malaysia," situates news literacy within parameters of its parent field, media literacy, and current trends in digitization, globalization, and information freedom connecting American pedagogy within Asian contexts.

Section 5, "New Media Technology," includes chapters on emerging media technology and its role in current news outlets and journalism. The opening chapter of this section, "When Journalism Met the Internet: Old Media and New Media Greet the Online Public," explores the lack of planning stymying internet-based journalism while analyzing two examples of "old media" news outlets and two "new media" news outlets. Another chapter in this section, "Training for Mobile Journalism," examines the changes that have led to the mobile era, the new jobs now available, and how industry and academia are adapting to emerging on-the-go journalism. A noteworthy chapter in this section, "The Politicization of Selfie Journalism: An Empirical Study to Parliamentary Elections," identifies the specific characteristics of selfie journalism in political reporting examining the extensive use of the practice by political candidates during campaigns and the impact on media engagement. The following chapter, "Journalistic Professionalism and User Motivations for Snapchat Video," investigates the motivations behind posting Snapchat videos as journalistic norms to show whether or not the medium can be used to relay news stories effectively. The final chapter in this section, "Games and Quizzes in Online Journalism," provides an overview of the state of gamification in journalism, challenges and opportunities for the growth of games in online news, and also discusses evidence for the impact of increasingly gamified news content on how users process and perceive news information.

Section 6, "Social Media and Social Networking," explores the impact of social media on news gathering and social engagement in media. This section opens with the chapter, "Spreading the News: Spreadable Media, Social Networking, and the Future of News Production," which explores news sharing through social media outlets for journalists to create engaging content. The next chapter, "Abuse of the Social Media Brain: Implications for Media Producers and Educators," examines the social media behavior of undergraduate students aiming to determine if there is any correlation between the amount of time spent online and the use of cognitive functions. Another noteworthy chapter within this section, "Potential Mediations of Hashtags Within Transmedia Journalism," aims to investigate how media activism movements appropriate hashtags to expand the narrative through social engagement. One of the closing chapters, "Citizen Engagement and News Selection for Facebook Pages," focuses on news flows in social media environments, such as Facebook, and the connection it creates among different categories of people. The concluding chapter in this section, "Stakeholder Interaction for Sustainability: The Impact of Social Media on Nigeria's Oil and Gas Industry," investigates the ways new media technology can be used and is used to manage corporate-stakeholder relations, engagement, and communication.

Section 7, "Transmedia Journalism," seeks to explain transmedia projects and introducing transmedia learning into classroom settings. The first chapter in this section, "Journalism in the Twenty-First

Century: To Be or Not to Be Transmedia?" proposes a framework that can support journalists in the production of transmedia contents that conveniently explore the characteristics of the involved media, using formats and languages that better fit the story, and enabling the user to engage in the interpretation, change, and distribution of these contents. This chapter is followed by "A Question of Trust: Functions and Effects of Transmedia Journalism," which investigates journalistic storytelling on digital platforms and the expectation of journalists to create narratives to invigorate the authenticity and comprehension of their coverage. Another chapter, "Designing Transmedia Journalism Projects," explores the design and execution of transmedia journalism projects to inform professional production and academic experimentation. The final chapter, "Pedagogical Guidelines to Introduce Transmedia Learning Into the Classroom," presents some pedagogical guidelines for introducing transmedia learning into classrooms allowing for open, dynamic, and engaging teaching and learning.

Although the primary organization of the contents in this work is based on its seven sections, offering a progression of coverage of the important concepts, methodologies, technologies, applications, social issues, and emerging trends, the reader can also identify specific contents by utilizing the extensive indexing system listed at the end.

Section 1
Development Journalism and Conflict Reporting

Chapter 1
Free Media and Democracy in the Age of Globalization:
An Analysis of Turkish Leading Newspaper

Moazzam Naseer
International Islamic University, Pakistan

Celalettin Aktaş
Istanbul Commerce University, Turkey

Hassan Shehzad
International Islamic University, Pakistan

ABSTRACT

The present chapter investigates the evolution of print media in general around the world and with particular emphasis in Turkey with respect to major transformation of freedom of speech, democracy and justice. The other equally important and major focus of this chapter is what causes the print media to evolve when it was long debated that the time for print media is over. In the age of globalization when there are plenty of media round the corner and the terms free media and democracy are contested and debated in different countries. An analysis is presented how a newspaper could work to bring the justice and democracy in a given society as a fourth pillar of the state in a contested environment of new media. Interviews with a print media journalist one who is not working in Turkey and with another one is influential reporter working in Turkey are conducted. The comments of the journalists are ethnographically evaluated and interpreted with storytelling and ethnographic techniques and discourse is presented.

I. HISTORICAL RELATION OF PRESS AND THE STATE

That democracy envisages protection of rights of the masses cannot be stressed enough (Meiggs 1972). The essence of democracy lies in the fact that power is not concentrated at one point; rather, it is distributed among the masses through institutions that are interlined but at the same time do not trespass into exclusive domains of each other (Laski 1980). Three institutions – Parliament, Judiciary and Executive

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– were deemed pillars of society because they ensure that every citizen has an equal opportunity to hold any authority accountable while the functions of state run smoothly (Khalid 2013).

The nineteenth century witnessed that press is added as the fourth pillar of the state because it ought to contribute in the process of accountability (Schultz 1998). Explicitly, Wilbur Schramm (1949) elaborated that a message travels through the society on media in a systematic – mathematical – manner. Lazarsfeld and Merton (1948) enhanced the spectrum recognizing that media function in diffusion of innovation can be supplemented through social actors.

Media is seen rooted in the concept of accountability since the start but it seems that the media owners wished media to be seen so. Emperor Babur, who ravaged India to set up his dynasty, started the first journal of history, according to some, titled The Journal of Babur or Babur Nama, at the start of which he stated that he meant to put in place a system of accountability and he would never resort to telling lies writing this journal (Beveridge 2002). Having read the Journal, one fails to find anything about accountability other than accounts of how the emperor always prevailed on all odds and eliminated his opponents.

The pioneer of journalism in sub-continent of India, Hicky, Shabir, G., & Khakan, B. (2005) a drunkard and defaulter, started Hicky Gazette raising the slogan that his newspaper will hold the rulers accountable but the newspaper carried vivid accounts of private life of wives of the rulers and activities of bishops. Similarly, the concept accountability seems to be a misfit with practices of media owners.

Mega mergers of media outlets and brazen commercialization have generated serious doubts about any relation between media and democracy (Thussu 2006). and gave birth to Frankfurt School, one of the most influential schools of thought in media studies (Horkheimer, 1982). Academics and researchers see strengthening of media in countries like China and India where rights of large portions of population remain suppressed (Lee, 2001; Zhoa, 2008). In gulf, growth of media and dynasties go hand in hand, and media safeguards concentration of power (McPhail 2010). Even in the US, having the most vibrant media (market and moguls), (McChesney 2000) elaborates that the media get rich and democracy poor, a total shift in discourse about media facilitating democracy and ensuring accountability.

At a time when media was found creating ‘false wants’ (Mosco & McKercher 2009) and ‘false gratifications’ (Katz, Peters, Liebes & Orloff, 2010), Internet and Computer Technology was projected as a breather of fresh air (Bulkeley 1998). But then there is strong criticism surrounding the policymaking of ICTs that will be discussed in detail in the research thesis. Carnoy, M. and Castells, M. (2001) believe in formation of an ‘information society’ and Schiller (2007) explains how networks are formed in society.

History of the press media remained for almost the same for nearly 400 years since its inception (Hunt 1850, pp-37). The printing press remain under the sheer control of kings and the church, the first explicit censorship he notes that was in the year 1501 when Pope Alexander the Sixth (Borgia) placed the press under his direct command he further notes that fourteen years later it was formally decreed by the Council of the Lateran, “That No publication whatever should be issued in any place where the church of Rome had jurisdiction” from that year onward it was the first press rules and regulations promulgated in Rome adopted in England and wherever the Church of Rome had jurisdiction.

Professional journalism was never smooth and sturdy from the beginning like any other professionals like law and medicine, but the beginning of 19th Century has seen drastic changes in the contemporary surfaces of the journalism (Banning 1998). Not only have the rudimentary trained journalists proved how badly a reporting could term upside down and how much professionalism is needed in the professions. Banning found quoting Sociologies Wilbert Moore that the process of professionalization is a process in which we scale to describe the different level of professional attainments.

French newspapers had been published in Ottoman Empire as early as 1796 and in Izmir since 1824 but these newspapers were only available to the elite class and foreigners notes Shaw, S. J., and Shaw, E. K. (p-35) and Mehmut wanted to enlighten his subjects more specifically about the solutions of the complaints he used to receive, and about what is happening in and out of the Empire so that the subjects of the ottoman empire participate with the European civilizations, Muhammad Ali's Vekayi-i-Misriyye (Events of Egypt) had begun publications in 1829 two years later in 1831 Mahmut published first Ottoman language newspaper the Takvim-i-Vekayi (Calendar of Events) for more or less to be published on weekly basis.

The year 1990 has seen a major shift towards the process of globalization and the media has emerged to most privatize broadcasting corporations but still the media in Turkey overall remained bi polar (Kaya & Cakmur 2010) states and the situation is not less than that now a days. Due to the emergence of news media and growth of press the media did not freed itself from such parallelism rather such media owners have themselves tried to expert pressure on the political system for the emergence of such laws which monopolies the media and help them to accumulate the capital. Shaw, S. J., & Shaw, E. K. (1977, p-253) note that in the time period the taste of the people have changed from time to time and people in the history have become more sophisticated and the demands and expectations of the people have been shifted towards other narratives taste and style then despise, Boke, O., Aker, S., Aker, A. A., Sarisoy, G., and Sahin, A. R. (2007) also note that with the passage of time the taste and the standard of the people for reading newspaper is changing and the newspapers are raising awareness.

In Turkey generally there are two type of division among who is the focus of the news media, firstly the commercial media mainly focuses on firstly poor and ordinary people along with their problems and misfortunes and secondly they focus on the rich and wealthy people their lifestyle and fashion (Bek 2004). On the contrary the public own media mostly focuses on the parliamentary actors most importantly the people who are running the government. More or less the same type of hierarchy is followed in most of the developing countries around the world and this has become a set norm.

In May 1987 about 3000 women marched in the streets of the Istanbul Sirman, N. (1989) notes that this was the first time when the voices of the women were broadly articulated in the political system of the turkey, which she may refer to as feminist, and she notes that in the later years the arena has seen a flux of such variations not only in the political system but this has changed the way people ideologically think about the women in Turkey in particular and in the third world country as a whole.

Karabacak, E. (2009) argues that the Turkish Language Society (TDK) for the time and again is working for the promotion of the Turkish language and they have devised the terminology as a set pattern for the journalist to use them in their everyday routine, although the practice is not very much common among the journalist. It is worth noting there are several steps and several organizations and bodies which think that they reserve the right over the press and what is being said and told through media and there is always a check and balance not only from the press point of view but also from the societal perspective as well. To exist in the market a reporter a journalist has to go through and keep in mind all the primary and tertiary reservations. Which makes not only his work more standards and somewhat restricted but this also indicates where as a whole the press industry may be leading to due to such small alterations on day to day basis besides legal and ethical requirements.

II. TURKISH NEWSPAPER *ZAMAN* AND ITS CONTRIBUTION FOR GLOBALIZATION

Zaman is the name of Turkish language newspaper operated by ideologies of the religious Gülen movement; however Fethullah Gülen himself is not the owner. Feza Publications Inc. (Feza Gazetecilik A.Ş) owns the newspaper which is a very influential conglomerate and they also own Today's *Zaman* English daily besides *Cihan* News Agency, a Turkish magazine *Aksiyon*, and a book publisher *Zaman* Kitap. On 3rd November 1986 almost 30 years ago the Turkish language Newspaper *Zaman*, the traditional print newspaper stepped forward in the country to attract a versatile type of readers with the only principles of "democracy and justice", and this slogan has attracted many readers and with this passion and enthusiasm *Zaman* started developing each passing day.

The newspaper was different in thematic way and it has attracted a lot of population and that has also made it difficult for the newspaper to exist in a country like Turkey which has been criticized internationally for its censorship laws and a difficult place for the working journalist and freedom of press. *Zaman* has enjoyed a lot more time upholding the same spirit of democracy and justice in the country despite all censorship and strict media laws.

In the passing years there had been many major shifts in not only administration but also in the working of the *Zaman* in Turkey, but the conscious of the newspaper remained the same, each passing administration kept its motive alive, they kept the repute, promoted the democracy, freedom of speech, freedom of press, pluralism and it has accepted all colors from all walks of life in the society. The dialogue was open to the world and for the future of this newspaper reader and they have also paved the ways for the same determination during the broadcast Cemal Kalyoncu (*Zaman*, 2015) notes.

The newspaper which started from *Rüzgarlı* street of Ankara has reached roughly 650 thousand readers now a days. This was the first ever critical paper in the time, the critic on the government and the critic on the process of democracy to put the democracy in the right path and keep the government doings in the right track, this is how they believed. There had been sever response from the fundamentalist against this newspaper and the passage was not easy. *Zaman* has always stood up for justice no matter against whom and that has made this newspaper a controversial in the corridors for the people in the realm of affairs.

Until 1990 *Zaman* had only 60 thousand readers and in the year 1995 the readership arose to the extent of 335 thousands, there was a crisis in the year of 2000, but again in the 2001 they were celebrating 15 years of their foundation. *Zaman* has renewed the promises they have made with the readers for up-keeping the justice, and keep raising the voice against the people who try to suppress the voice of freedom and injustice among the society and community level. *Zaman* incorporated the new opinions and diversified their newspaper by incorporating the ideas and diversity of the staff and by counting every opinion of the wider range of readership to not only to fit in the environment but also provide the diversification.

When *Zaman* was entering its 25th anniversary of the foundation of the newspaper the number of the readers reaching roughly 1 million and now-a-days the audiences have reached the count of 300 hundred million due to invention of new media technologies and due to the online editions but these figures varies in different statistical information of the country, however without any doubt *Zaman* is the most circulated newspaper of Turkey with official figures of circulations reaching roughly 1 million as on December 2014 as reported by the Turkish Newspapers Circulation table of Mediatava.com. According to BPA an American company which provides independent and third party audit of audiences reported that "ending January 2007 *Zaman* as having 583,043 subscriptions out of a total weekday circulation"

III. INTERNATIONALIZATION IN THE NEWSPAPER INDUSTRY

Globalization has seen its effects all around and the Print Media is not an exception, ranging from developed countries to the developing economies. Not only the visualization was improved for the local community but many business enterprises went from local to global so does the print newspaper. The first step they took was to start publishing it in different languages and present not only the local news but also keep pushing the international agenda.

Zaman is the newspaper which is published in 9 languages and which is considered the best selling newspaper of the Turkey so far and it is considered the elite newspaper and the readership of the newspaper is considered the best educated and the best satisfied with its reporting (Kalyoncu, 2015). They have their Twitter, Facebook and other social media accounts besides the Today's *Zaman* is also reporting its news through English language and a separate Twitter and Facebook account.

As reported by Sardar, S. and Ozen, E. (*Zaman*, 2015) there were design changes in the same time period of 2005 when there were advancements in the technology and there was a new era emerging out of the broadcasting. The developments in the face of the design and visual appearance brought into the industry by broadcasting, traditional print newspaper have also evolved from black and white to a color newspaper.

The visual changes in the newspaper have increased its circulation and due to this transformation it has started reaching a wider audience, has entered into the better design and was meeting the expectation of the audiences of the wider range. The process of publishing of *Zaman* started in 1986 when a newspaper was black and white, with the technological revolution of rising expectations was colored with the visual force. The main focus and vision of the *Zaman* was to keep the clear objectives and agenda and they had adopted a policy of "Serious newspaper would be clear" without undermining the seriousness of the color with the road leading to the development. Previously, only the color used to highlight elements of the photo and logo. With the passage of time the pictures started coming in color in the newspaper and later with the development in the print industry the news also started coming indifferent colors.

With the changes in certain times the logo without disconnecting the connections with the past the administration of the *Zaman* have tried their best to keep up the pace with past and present.

They have adapted two colors the blue and orange initially in their logo design as their theme color and according to Fevzi Yazici (*Zaman* 2015) the blue color represents the "Trust" and orange connection with the warm and dynamic, the administration also believe that the blue color has some connections with the youth and identity. For some time period *Zaman* has used the hourglass in their logo in early 90s which mentioned the modernization and the connection with the past.

IV. ZAMAN NEWSPAPER FOR FREEDOM OF PRESS, DEMOCRACY, AND JUSTICE

The freedom and democracy is considered *Zaman*'s first and foremost motto and passion and with this passion they have earned many awards in Turkey in the past several years. Such as The Journalists Association of Turkey in Journalism award, Sports Writers Association, the Writers Union of Turkey, and Association of Photojournalists have been awarded prizes for their exceptional work and for fulfilling their duty for the sake of journalism and to protect the democracy and freedom of speech in the country, and they have also won the award for best outlook and design in the year 2012, In 2004 *Radikal* was awarded the Turk Democracy Associations "Democracy Media Award" (jointly with *Zaman*) (Today's Zaman, 2014).

Roughly ten years ago there was a new terrorism act passed to suppress the voices of the journalists and to control the media as well as at the same time Director General of *Zaman* Abdülhamit Bilici said that "Herkes için demokrasi, herkes için adalet" (democracy for everyone, justice for all). "Reporters without Borders" an international Non-Governmental Organization has reported the censorship in the following words about the censorship in Turkey.

Intense debate has raged around several plans to control the Internet, ranging from an outrageous list of banned keywords to a mandatory centralized filtering system that ended up being optional. Despite relentless pressure, netizens have been mobilizing against the implementation of backdoor censorship on the Web. (RSF, 2012)

In the past 30 years all *Zaman* could see is strengthening the foundation pillar of the democracy stronger each passing day with objectivity in journalism and professionalism upholding the justice for citizens and keeping up with the freedom of speech. That was the time of the competition, competition for upholding their spirit and upholding the readership and then there was a competition with in different media groups for the readership and in between they have to keep up their flag of the democratic country and for the fairness of the environment around them. The time was tough but *Zaman* had kept the motives, motto and mission alive with objective journalism such as free media society, justice and democracy in the country.

V. HIGH STANDARDS OF PROFESSIONALISM IN PRINT MEDIA

Both in terms of the quality and the professional ethics *Zaman* has set a high standard, and *Zaman* believe they have achieved such standards by providing the professional ethics and high standardization of the quality to its readers, not only be including their opinions but also by meeting them with time and again in different parts of the countries in different cities.

Zaman has started the process of publishing the newspaper and their aim from the very beginning was to develop the democracy and freedom of speech back in 1980 which they are still keeping up and trying to hold on to these things as a guardian to the best standards of democracy and freedom of speech. This has been taken very seriously as the high standard of professionalism in a print media industry as a whole in Turkey notes Hassan Sutay (*Zaman*, 2015 p. 21). Post-modern coup of February 28 in the process exposed the reactionary campaign against *Zaman*; because of its advocacy of democracy has been exposed to the accreditation of the General Staff until 2012 in April 27 e-memorandum against brave journalists was passed and even in such hard times the journalists said their stance that 'no turning back from democracy, justice and freedom of speech at all costs'.

VI. INCORPORATION OF NEW MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGIES IN PRINT MEDIA

In 2005 the offices of the *Zaman* Newspaper moved from Ankara to Istanbul, that was the year of reformation administratively and thematically and *Zaman* have adapted the technological advancements. More and less during the same time period 2005-2010 Turkey has adopted the Fatih Project (Altan & Tüzün 2011) which has the motive of "Movement of Enhancing Opportunities and Improving Technology" for the Children and these were the same years when technology took revolution around the world (Internet boom, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter and alike started gaining momentum). These were the same years when for the first time the Turkish first ever newspaper go online by the name of Todays' *Zaman* an English daily with full length international standardization they have added more pages to their traditional print newspaper. The print quality was upgraded due to advancements of the technological developments around the world. Just after such advancements the *Zaman* which has recently become Today's *Zaman* won two international recognitions Society for News Design (SND) and Syracuse University, New York jointly held a design competition and hence declared the *Zaman* newspaper as full standardized international newspaper (*Zaman*, 2012).

VII. NEW WAYS TO ATTRACT THE READERSHIP: MANY-TO-MANY PARADIGM

To keep up with the readership once the *Zaman* has started a public meeting in different cities of the Turkey between readers and the authors, and in such meetings they get the questions answers not only to satisfy their readers but also the purpose of such meetings was to take the feedback of the readers to keep them engaging in to the traditional print newspaper. This trend has taken its number of readers to a whole new and unique level, Turkey's most popular newspapers of the time, holds the title of being the most selling newspapers over the years, they call such meetings as "common mind meetings".

The strongest bond of belonging they establish with their readers is by adding their opinion into the consideration of the newspaper. And the readers of the *Zaman* are versatile from every walk of life equal importance was given to the females as well. This is a very different and proactive experience not only the readers have experienced but also the writes have experienced, and this interaction and experience the *Zaman* term it as their dream to meet with readers. This has actually changed the atmosphere of the traditional newspaper. Once print media was perceived to be one way of communication or as it said (Morris, 1996) from one to many a typical means of mass communication which was of course seen as the effect of globalization in which many to many form of communication was tried to produce (Cover 1991).

This practice brought them faithful readers and this is what the administration and the writers of *Zaman* has to relate to a new story a new dimension on the surface of the traditional print media which they term it as the making difference and having faithful readers. This is the story they can relate to while changing the traditional patterns of mass communication to a whole new level of incorporating its readers. The administration of the *Zaman* believes that rich in quality and content has improved its readership and innovation & dynamics have made them realize the dreams to make it the most successful newspaper in Turkey.

1. Examples of Opinions From Different Writers of the Newspaper

With the motivation of press freedom, human rights and justice for all in Turkey, *Zaman* has kept pace with electronic media and professional staffs as well they keep continue publishing in the Turkey. There are some excerpts of the opinion which are translated from different people initially published in the newspaper on its 29th anniversary, and interviewed by Milike Sönmez (*Zaman*, 2015, p.17)

- **Hilmi Yavuz:** He is writing for *Zaman* since 1997, he is of the view that he is very well aware of the fact that he is under the impression of a free writer who has to write without any hesitation and without any fear to write and this is a great feelings and he could write without any problems.
- **Herkül Millas:** He is writing since 2002 for this newspaper for almost thirteen years and he is of the view that he had been doing this nonstop, and he believes that they at *Zaman* keep up the pace with the value of the social peace and harmony in the society. He adores the very concept of democracy which is the key feature and dimension of the harmonious society. He adds that for knowledge there must be a criticism on both of the side for knowledge and for growth, he stresses hard that people who believe that they know everything are actually closing down the new doors of the opportunity for learning and development and knowledge.
- **Selim Ileri:** He admits that while working for few years with *Zaman*, he has learnt how to befriend with people and during this process of writing it had helped him to freely express his ideas through his writings.
- **Ahmet Kurucan:** Working with *Zaman* since 1992 and is of the view that freedom of speech and freedom of thoughts are the key words which comes into his mind since working with *Zaman*, he is working as a columnist, and he is of the view that ever since working with *Zaman* he had never felt any hindrance or obstacle while performing his call of duty.
- **Nuriye Akman:** Is of the view that She feels She is lucky by working with such a prestigious newspaper because while working here she never felt that his opinions are rejected and she had not been heard or given space even though she wrote some times contrary to the editorial policy but still no one intervene her freedom of expression.
- **Sahin Alpay:** Is working with *Zaman* for 13 years, is of the view that in Turkey it's a blessing to be able to freely express yourself, *Zaman* provides you protection and support, and these characteristics has been improved and strengthen by the passage of time. He emphasizes that the more you support the freedom of speech the more you will get the democracy out of it.
- **Omar Faruk:** The editor of the culture and arts service told that it's a great history of 20 years since he has been working with *Zaman*, though he had been working for different pages of the newspaper ranging from Arts, Culture to Policy pages, but the time was more challenging when he was moved to policy pages. That was the time when he has to be more careful and attentive and accepting the challenges of correcting the government when there are many names from the people in power keep coming in and keep going but he kept the mission as a watch dog to put the democracy on the way and to keep the government on its track.

It was of course not an easy job the time has seen many good and bad days, and it was sometimes very difficult to differentiate the friends and foe. Writing for newspaper was not a child's play, one has to face the challenges may be police, prison and alike but a good professionalism requires to be focused and write for upholding the truth, justice and democracy no matter what it may takes. This is why he notes that today he is surrounded by the trustworthy people around; the colleagues are more than friends and family as a *Zaman*. Writers for any newspaper are like an eye to reader and he adds we must not tell the lies to our readers while performing our duties; we are like soldiers in the line of duty. This is why the relationship between the readers and the writers for this newspaper is unique.

2. Interview With the Journalists

At the end of the year 2015 the authors have conducted two interviews with a very professional newspaper media journalist who had been working with print media for several years. To know the stances of what ideology actually counts the most for the determining the news stories its angle and the agenda setting. One journalist Mr. Hassan Shehzad who is working with *The News* of Pakistan and is a journalist for roughly 15 years, another journalist who had worked with *Zaman* for over 5 years. Presently he is also working as a journalist with another media organization but with an economic magazine of Turkey. Due to personal and professional reasons he had requested not to mention his name in the chapter of the book. Therefore, analysis only refer to the Interviewee to refer to the same journalist who had contributed a lot in the refining of this work and made this chapter of the book happen in a quite good period of time.

During the interview it was of a great surprise for authors as well that for the time no doubt *Zaman* reserve the right to be the first and the best newspaper of Turkey for upholding the professionalism in the country. The quite important information the interviewee had shared with the authors (authors have taken a help from a common friend Mr. Ziya Oktay not only for interpretation of some Turkish language but also to stay focused and in line with the objective and theme of the research work), that for some time in *Zaman* they have introduced a new trend in the market. *Zaman* had not only published the news but also they have been for some time publishing the opinion and comments on the news separately on the same page at the same place, this practice was well perceived and was appreciated among the masses and have enhanced the taste and recommendation of the general public.

This is of course a rare example if explored globally in the world around; no doubt *Zaman* had contributed a lot more trends and well deserves the award of the creativity and well perceived imagination. Authors have no doubt in saying that *Zaman* was the trend setter in the print media sector of the Turkey weather it's the design, going online or other factors alike in a newspaper like this. Upon asking a question, what *Zaman* had contributed to its journalist, there was a ray of hope and confidence when the interviewee was answering this question could definitely be seen from his expressions and enthusiasm. He adds that reporters have learned confidence, how to talk and when to talk, this had not only lead him to be quite a seasoned professional but despite his international tours in Europe, he had quite well learned from a professional environment and from well-honed professionals of the *Zaman* newspaper.

He further adds that there is a distinctive feature of the *Zaman* that they had always supported their journalists in time of need and crises, be it's the personal matters or the professionals. He quotes the example that in Turkey if there is something bad or wrong published by an amateur journalist in some newspaper the owner or the public relations office of the company against whom the news is published used to call the owner of the newspaper and they used to negotiate with them for not giving further ads and alike and request them to fire the particular reporter/journalist in question. This practice is very common in Turkey and despite this practice *Zaman* had never listened to such tactics of others against his own employees.

As the practice suggests that the reporter in questions has to lose his job irrespective of performing his duties well in line with the objectivity and professionalism in the field of journalism. The interviewee is very confident in admitting that irrespective of such instances, the higher management of the *Zaman* had always supported the point of view of the reporter and they have protected their employees first. This certainly speaks high quality of the professionalism on the part of the *Zaman* newspaper.

The interview prolonged for two hours with the journalist of *Zaman* and there was very quiet a good amount of data and information which needs to be translated and scripted, just because of the scarcity of the time and space authors have to sum up with a conclusion below that the *Zaman* had set a trend in the Turkey for a highly qualified professionalism, although the time is not right and the wind is not very friendly for the time being for the *Zaman* but if the circumstances remain favorable it will help strengthening the freedom of speech, Justice for all and for the upholding more democratic country.

VIII. CONTENT ANALYSIS OF PKK ATTACK IN DAĞLICA AND ITS NEWS REPORTING

Dağlıca is a village in Yüksekova District of Hakkâri Province in the south east corner of Turkey which is near the border of the Iraq. On 7–8 October, the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) killed 15 Turkish soldiers in an ambush on Turkish Armed Forces.

Zaman has quoted that they have taken the news from the Reuters while the American newspaper The Guardian quotes the news source as Anatolia News Agency on the 7 of September, which also leaves one to think the sources of the news quoted. *Zaman* reports approximately on the same time at the time of the reporting of the other media, but *Zaman* quotes that the exact number of causalities are not confirmed while in other news media the exact number of people killed are reported from 15 to 17 people at the same time which may differ from the sources to sources. The *Zaman* keeps on quoting the news sources as Cihan News Agency which is owned and operated by the *Zaman* but they had hardly mentioned or quoted the national news agency which is Anatolia News Agency while reporting their news of the incident, this could be due to various administrative, policy reasons.

On the next day the main focus of the news and the picture used by the *Zaman* was about the 'Genel Kurmy' Chief of the Army and how they have tackled the terrorist as this is the seventh attack in Turkey by this separatist organization. Much of emphasize of the news was given on the duties and responsibilities taken or not well taken care of by the Army.

On the 9th of September the *Zaman* has taken another turn and started reporting the stories from the mouth of the families whose relatives were killed, the picture they have used was an old lady the mother of a victim and she is crying and the image is appealing and to incite the sympathies of not only the families of the victims but also to make importance of their stance and their news in the Turkish society they have used Figure ; the story lines reads like this "Analar ağlıyor... Genelkurmay: Dağlıca'da 16 şehit".

On the 9-10 September the story still followed by *Zaman* and they have claimed that the administration for their weak stance in the newspaper and they have stated that if the government should well take care of the matter the peace could be retained in the region. Further to that the story from the families and the pictures of the victims were published in the newspaper. *Zaman* has also reported whenever the death toll of the causalities rises and as soon as the updates were coming they were also giving different frames to the news, the same time period the *Zaman* has also provided the news on the protest taken places in some parts of the Turkey rather other newspapers seem silent on these issues or have not given much of the importance to the protest by the citizens of Turkey against the government (Figure 2).

Figure 1. Mothers are crying ... Army Staff: Dağlıca'da 16 Martyred
Source: Zaman.com.tr.

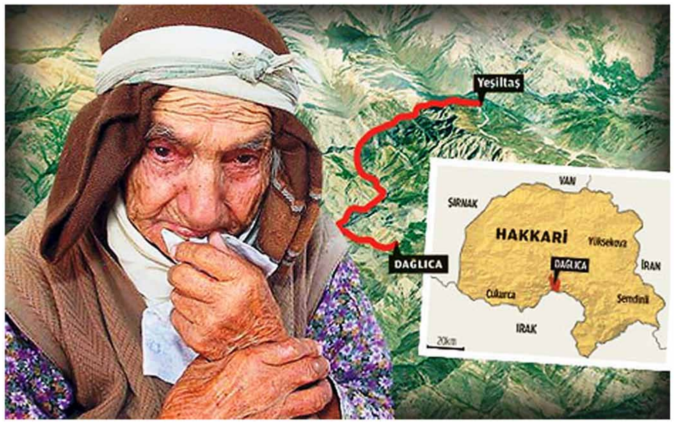

Figure 2. Anti (HDP) protest picture published in Zaman
Source: Zaman.com.tr.

1. Coverage in Other Turkish Newspapers and International Media

In the context of the same events it is very important to note that how the incident has been reported not only in Turkey in other Turkish newspaper but also which stances have been taken places in the world around for the same incident. There has always been a different opinion on the same issues by different news media; this is why there are framing and priming techniques which leads the masses to make their opinion.

In the early morning of 7 September there was a heinous attack by the PKK on the two military vehicles in the south east region of turkey by the name Hakkari. During the first day of the attack the newspaper Hurriyet has portrayed no picture of the event while they seem quite neutral but they have also mentioned and agenda setting that the cause of the attack is not very obvious. While other claimed that the cause of the incident was a response to the bill passed in Turkish Grand National Assembly to grant Turkish military right to carry out an incursion into northern Iraq.

While the international news like The Guardian has portrayed the same event on 7 of September with a clear picture of the incident and they have covered not only the background of the story but also they have produced what has caused the people or the outlawed organization to think or act like that. On the other hand the Hurriyat newspaper a Turkish language newspaper of Turkey has produced a view point of the attackers as well and they have focused more on the supportive stance of the government. They have also shown the concern of the ruling party and the conferences and meetings they held even, they have mentioned that the President of Turkey and the leader of Justice and Development Party (AKP) Ahmed Davutoglu have postponed his engagements with the Football game and he had called a meeting to discuss the matter with different security and army people in Ankra and newspaper have emphasized on the engagements of the prime minster and how he had spent 2 hours, while the international newspaper is more like a silent on the issues like the engagement or the steps taken by the government to tackle with the security issues rather the media stay more focused with the reporting.

There is also another angel that The Guardian has taken the news from the Anatolia news agency while they heavily rely on the news from the state owned news agency and while the state only speaks of their own stances, while the Habertuk have their own news reporters or other sources of the news as well to produce a versatile news story.

Aljazeera has not shown the picture of the incident rather they have used the map of the Turkey with the highlighted area of the attack. Aljazeera has not mentioned the engagements of the Prime Minister that what he was doing at the time, while the *Zaman* has reported that the prime minster was watching a football match in Konya, furthermore the Aljazeera was of the view that it has toppled down the peace pact between the AKK which is considered a terrorist organization in Turkey and in United States, however *Zaman* reported that this is a problem of terrorism.

As reported in the BBC version of Turkish page they have reported the case study of the Chief of Army staff and the stance of the president on the incident, they have mainly relied on the information from the Firat News Agency, although the news is reported in Turkish Language but still they have not presented the case of the Army or any news issued from the army on the stance.

IX. LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS IN THE RESEARCH WORK

Mixed tools of qualitative research as defined by Annette N. Markham (2009, 2013) and Tillmann, L. M. (2009), Godall H. L. (2006) are new dimensions for research in media and communication. However authors have preferred to use the discourse analysis and content analysis of the text for this research. These methods are adopted because this is how one can define the quality of research. Moreover, the method does not remove researchers as a distant objective and politically removed relationships to those whom we study and write about it in qualitative research (Kendall 2003). This had made this study more personal, interactive and self-reflexive. Qualitative provided us with a greater freedom to build creative and compelling arguments that enters large conversations both inside and outside the academy.

However there are some certain limitations to this methodology, firstly they will not be able to provide the in-depth of the actual situations as long as the first hand interviews must not be taken. Secondly all the content analysis and discourse analysis is based on self-reporting and the information and knowledge of the people address the authenticity and reliability of which could be doubtful. To remove these limitations there is always necessary to interview the higher administration and the editorial board of the newspaper. Looking in to different social media accounts and their individual status updates are also crucial to note down and present the content analysis.

On the other hand this is also not a reliable source to only include one side of the story, to be more precise and to balance the research not only a comparative of the different newspapers but also the voices of the people in the government be included to satisfy the nature of the research. However to strengthen and support the main idea, I have included a long detailed interview with a reporter who had been working for quite a long time with *Zaman* and his ideas are included in this research.

Due to personal reasons the interviewee has not given his consent his name to be included in this research or part of the book. So his name is intentionally omitted and there are not instances to use the pseudonym. The questions asked to the reporter are given in annex, which are approximately 36 questions, although authors understand some questions are repeated but for the sake of originality and to make it sure about certain facts some questions has been purposefully asked twice in a different way to derive the meanings. Finally the meaning has been driven using the ethnography techniques, storytelling and discourse analysis is presented at the end of the chapter in the form of a conclusion and also during re-writing of this whole chapter.

X. CONCLUSION

Revolving around the entire theme and the ideology in our opinion there are hardly a few theme around which the press revolves around and that clearly and explicitly states its purpose and will help authors to understand its existence and co-existence, these factors are; the economic, political and religious influences which matters the most. However the influences of globalizations are never negligible, in an answer to one question, Mr. Hassan Shehzad quotes “the internet has empowered the journalist”. No doubt the power is shifted from the media houses towards the individuals who produced the content.

Besides all the agenda setting and priming or framing techniques above all the ideology of the newspaper which at the end of the day matters the most in a country like Turkey. As the political parties are getting stronger and stronger and the mandate of the audiences is neglected day by day by jamming the cellular services and by blocking the website of the social media and new media technologies. However such trends and such voices are hard to neglect when published at such a broader scale and especially when such newspapers are the mouth piece of a country when it is published in many countries and in many languages.

The Web 2.0 has provided much space for not only *Zaman* but also its competitor newspapers in the environment; however the choices are in the hands of the audiences, viewers and readers who pick up certain news over others. With social media becoming the major part of the news distribution the newspapers in this trend of globalizations are not only the news producers they have also managed how to organize and redistribute the news. This does not keep them away from upholding their fundamental ideology, “democracy for all, and justice for everyone”.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Freedom of Speech: Any form of expression to voice one's opinion publicly and without any fear or censorship, it is considered the fundamental human right.

Press: Mostly the term refers to the print media mainly the newspapers and periodicals.

Print Media: Newspapers and magazines.

State: A community under a single political order to form a government.

***Zaman*:** Literal meaning 'Time', it is a leading newspaper of Turkey.

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APPENDIX: QUESTIONS ASKED FROM THE REPORTERS

Basic questions, age education, background, and formal chit chat over a cup of coffee and some snacks was conducted with a reporter who has not given his consent to include his name in this chapter of the book. However the other journalist who is from Pakistan Mr. Hassan Shahzad has allowed the authors to include his name.

1. Why and how do you made your choices in the past to become a journalist, what choices has helped you to determine your future as a working professional with media specifically the print media?
2. What preferences you had ever thought you would give in life before joining a professional life?
3. What changes do you think in particular you have brought in your reporting which makes it different you from others or stand out and what in particular are the changes you can pin point you think are your inventions the sector of print media in Turkey?
4. What are the advantages or disadvantages of working for the print media over working with other media channels or broadcast media?
5. What transformations do you see in the newspaper you are working ever you joined them, though they have changed dramatically with the passage of time, can you highlight some thematic changes and their reasons for doing so?
6. What are the transformations you think there are in the print media in general in the sectors with respect to Turkey or around the globe you ever have noticed while working as a journalist?
7. What particular changes you think you ever wanted in the media but you could never do that because either the sector is too rigid or the editorial board policies do not allow doing so?
8. If given circumstances you could become the member of the editorial board or owner of a big newspaper what changes would you do in the first phase of transition?
9. Have you have ever thought of being influential to make certain changes in the news formation, collection or presentation in the print media?
10. What newspaper in particular you wanted to work in Turkey and why? And which newspaper do you think is best for innovation, research and development? Would you work for broadcast media?
11. If given the same circumstances and a better wage would you still work for this newspaper? If you are the head of design and format what would you do?
12. Have you ever thought of working as freelance? Have you written for international newspapers?
13. Have you attended any collaborative or journalist exchange programs abroad? Do you think such initiatives are good for exchange of ideas and developments?
14. What is the future of print media with respect to Turkey and with respect to rest of world?
15. What recommendations can you give for the professionals? Any recommendations for changes in the field of journalism about Turkey and general?
16. What are your future goals in next 20 years?
17. What changes in the media made a big hit in the history for any newspaper? And what are the flaws you can see in other competitions? Can you relate any story for innovation?
18. How bravely or open heartily your organisation accepts innovation?
19. Page making and designing
20. Morality and ethics of journalism and its related questions
21. Legal and society strengthening questions

22. Member of professional organisations in Turkey or around the world
23. Participation for administrative and organizational related matters
24. How important it the finances and the choices of the audiences
25. How much importance is given to the audiences choices
26. How important is the *Zaman* group policies
27. Have you have written against the policies but it was the highest standard of the journalism
28. What do you support the most, readers the (*Zaman*) group policies the editorial board or the profession?
29. How often and on what grounds your stories have ever been rejected
30. Effects of education, family and personal life on professionalism
31. Effects of political pressure, time frame and background education on professionalism
32. What is the most driving factor for the reports working in the industry and what made them to stick around with the profession
33. The environment for the journalists is relatively tough in Turkey how do you think it can work for the rest of the reporters and the future of the journalism and how it can affect the future of journalism, have you ever been a part of the voices against such tight professional environment?
34. If you were not a journalist what would you prefer to be?
35. Would you still prefer anyone from your family close family to follow your food steps to be a journalist?
36. The difference and preferences for the editorial board is much inclined towards or a Business and the ideology?

Chapter 2
Imperative of Peace and Conflict-Sensitive Journalism in Development

Jide Jimoh
Lagos State University, Nigeria

Jimi Kayode
Lagos State University, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

Even though the role of the media in development has long been recognized, more attention has been given to their role as purveyors and disseminators of news and little on how such news are framed. Against this background, this chapter looks at the nexus of peace and development and the role of journalism in the mix. The concept of development journalism as a kind of deliberative effort, may have received some impetus and the practice established, as governments, policy makers, scholars and practitioners assign developmental roles to the mass media beyond the ideas from the West. Similarly, the notion of peace journalism emerged as a dimension of development journalism. Originally conceived by the eminent peace scholar, Johan Galtung, the Peace Journalism model is a source of practical options for journalists which shows backgrounds and contexts of conflicts, explores hidden agendas, highlights peace ideas and initiatives in news coverage of conflicts and therefore is recommended for consideration by journalists especially in developing nations.

INTRODUCTION

The Millennium Development Goals, developed by world leaders under the auspices of the United Nations (UN) at the beginning of the millennium, was perhaps the most important development framework for fifteen years up to 2014. The eight goals included eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, achievement of universal primary education, promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women and reduction of child mortality. Others include improving maternal health, combating HIV/AIDS, malarial and other diseases, ensuring environmental sustainability and developing a global partnership for devel-

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opment. These were lofty developmental goals but as noted by the Secretary-General of the UN, Ban Ki-moon (2015:3), "Yet for all the remarkable gains, I am keenly aware that inequalities persist and that progress has been uneven. The world's poor remain overwhelmingly concentrated in some parts of the world. In 2011, nearly 60 per cent of the world's extremely poor people lived in just five countries." The admission of minimal success is also an indication of the huge responsibilities ahead for all development agencies, governments, civil society and the media. The immensity of the development tasks ahead has also led the UN to develop another set of goals designated as Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to be pursued between 2015 –2030 in the continuous search for solution to the challenges of development in the world. The SDGs document declared that:

On behalf of the peoples we serve, we have adopted a historic decision on a comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centered set of universal and transformative goals and targets. We commit ourselves to working tirelessly for the full implementation of this Agenda by 2030. We recognize that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. We are committed to achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions – economic, social and environmental – in a balanced and integrated manner. We will also build upon the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals and seek to address their unfinished business (United Nations General Assembly: 2015).

The search for solution to this unfinished business must therefore be widespread and include all institutions whose works impinge on development. The media are part of such institutions.

Even though the role of the media in development has long been recognized, it would seem more attention has been given to their role as purveyors and disseminators of development news and little on how such news are framed. As noted by Moemeka (2000:275), a common mistake in development planning is the practice of treating communication not as a full-fledged component of the resources for development, "but as a 'matter- of- fact' adjunct that does not need any serious and separate consideration in the context of development projects", hence the failure of most development interventions including peace building efforts. Facts from studies indicate the need to nudge planners to mainstream media and communications into the central context of their development interventions. It is only then that the full benefits of development journalism can be reaped.

The Nexus of Peace and Development

Are development and peace intertwined? Most people would say yes. Yet there is considerable disagreement as to the nature of the relationship between these two economic and political phenomena. Some argue that development encourages peace. People in better economic condition are less likely to initiate violent conflict both because they are more contented and because they have more to lose from the physical danger and economic disruption that war brings. Others say that development discourages peace, either because the continued development of some depends on their forceful suppression or control of others. Still others argue that development and peace have no significant connection to each other.

The idea that political development has a direct, organic connection to peace is a main tenet of political liberalism, going back to the eighteenth century writings of Immanuel Kant (e.g. *Perpetual Peace)*. It holds that republics in which individuals have fundamental civil rights are less likely to go to war than are autocratic forms of government. A more modern variant is the so-called "democratic peace" argument, as espoused by Bruce Russett. "Democratic peace" argues that --- because of shared norms of peaceful dispute resolution and the unquestionable political legitimacy of governments freely chosen by their own people --- liberal democracies do not go to war *with each other*. Empirically, this does seem to be true. Liberal democracies rarely do fight each other. Even if that does not mean that they have entirely backed away from war, it is still an important indication that political development has a meaningful effect in building international, as well as internal peace. Economic development can also help to build peace within and among nations. The poverty and frustration of so many of the world's people is a fertile breeding ground for violent conflict. There have been well more than 120 wars since the end of World War II, taking more than twenty million human lives. Nearly all of them have been fought in developing countries. There is a vicious circle between development and peace, and that is encouraging. But it is tentative, even fragile, and must be carefully nurtured. For better or for worse, people seem to be more ready to support that which makes them personally more economically prosperous and physically secure than they are to support that which only extends the benefits of a decent material and political life to others in distant lands. (Dumas, 2006)

DEVELOPMENT JOURNALISM

It was within UNESCO, one of the subsidiary institutions established under the United Nations in the years following World War II, that the idea of a new world information order surfaced and escalated to a level of ferment and tensions filled with overtones and undertones of racism, colonialism, ideology and power geo-politics. So bitter and caustic were the confrontations between the first, second and the third worlds that the UNESCO itself was almost obliterated. Following more than two decades of debates the UNESCO had provided a platform for the ferment over free flow and freedom of the press, as well as freedom of expression. However, the third world nation-states have come to see these concepts as a vehicle to use against former colonial masters more so because these developing countries defined these concepts quite differently from the perspectives of the West.

The USA and the West see these concepts as espousing the unrestricted pursuit of objectivity in the production and dissemination of information whereas the third world holds a counter point of view. (Altschull, 1995).

Thus, the concepts of free flow, though a communication concept, has had its roots in the disparity of the world economies which evidently favored the West and a call for the new world information and communication order (NWICO) had actually been precipitated by inequalities and inequities of the world's economic order.

The concepts of balance and imbalance were germane to the debates even though no definitions were found that could be acceptable to all parties concerned. Attempts by the third world to correct the global imbalance in information flow were in themselves inseparable from the struggle for economic emancipation. Economic imperialism had become more or less synonymous with media imperialism.

The most important document to come out of the years of debate on new information and communication order was the report of the sixteen-member McBride Commission which was regarded as a landmark of diplomacy rather than substance as it contained little that was new or better articulated than done before in other UNESCO documents. Perhaps most remarkable and encouraging was that this disparate group of sixteen individuals coming from different backgrounds, social, economic, and ideological was able to agree on a single document aimed at ‘a new more just and more efficient world information and communication order’. (Altschull, 1995; Nordenstreng, 1995)

Thus the concept of NWICO (New World Information and Communication Order) emerged in the 1970s out of a heated debate regarding information flow, media freedom, media regulations and national media systems in a global context and was more or less abandoned in the post-Cold War period of the 1990s, when it gradually disappeared from intergovernmental platforms in the UN.

Overall, the significance of the NWICO debate lies in the lessons learnt globally by the nation states of the world rather than in the actual phenomena of communication and related global structures. The debates had enhanced conceptual thinking and awareness about the role of the media and their relation to globalization. In fact, certain real changes had been achieved concerning the objectives of the NWICO debates. For example, most nations, especially, in the developing regions conceptualized and established communication policies within the context of global values and concerns. Also, alternative news agencies had emerged and survived and regional and sub-regional structures are diversifying the global patterns of information flows along multi-lateral dimensions.

Most importantly is the emergence of global ethical and professional values of media practice and the concept of global civil society, as well as the coming of age of southern media such as the Al Jazeera, television programming (‘tele-novellas’) from Mexico and Brazil amongst others, in what has been referred to as global pluralism. (Nordenstreng, 1995; Sreberny, 2008)

Developing countries all attempted to establish news agencies either at the national, sub-regional, or regional levels and there was even the non-aligned pool news agency which was at the global bi-polar level.

Nation-states began to play key roles in cultural protection by developing national policy frameworks, setting up regulatory and legal environments to protect indigenous media industries and to hinder the unwarranted activities of foreign media production and distribution systems.

For example, many countries, including China, Malaysia, Singapore, Saudi Arabia, and Iran had at times attempted to control their cultural and media environments by regulating the purchase and use of satellite dishes or by controlling the circulation of foreign video CDs and by censoring the inward flow of foreign news. (Sreberny, 2008)

Up until this time most third world countries lacked formal communication policies, and in other countries in this region communication infrastructures and policies where they existed were by products of colonialism. This situation has since changed and many countries of the third world had come to recognize communication’s place in national development and the strengthening of national sovereignty. (Winseck, 1995)

Against this background, the concept of development journalism may have received some impetus and the practice established, as governments, policy makers, scholars and practitioners assign developmental roles to the mass media beyond the ideas from the West.

The term development journalism was first coined in the 1960s at the Press Foundation of Asia. Filipino journalists Alan Chalkley and Juan Mercado were concerned that news organizations were covering socio-economic developments in a superficial way, with journalists reporting government press releases and quotes but leaving little space for analysis or evaluation of development projects. Today development journalism looks at conditions in developing states and how to improve them. It exposes poverty worldwide and helps to research the causes, consequences and how to address poverty in developing nations.

Development journalists bring attention to issues that are overlooked or under-represented by other media and by the international political community. As investigative reporters, they uncover the stories within the stories, revealing the multi-faceted nature of poverty.

A feature story on development journalism may cover the following issues: economic development, agriculture and food security, health, sanitation and medicine, employment, education and literacy, informational technologies development, housing conditions, environmental sustainability, urban and rural development, gender equality, etc. Its main actors are ordinary people rather than official figures; its emphasis is on stability, partnership, harmony, and consensus.

Conceptual Framework of Development Journalism

The term development journalism is used to refer to two different types of journalism. The first type of development journalism attempts to document the conditions within a country so that the larger world can understand them. Journalists are encouraged to travel to remote areas, interact with the citizens of the country, and report back. This type of development journalism also looks at proposed government projects to improve conditions in the country, and analyzes whether or not they will be effective. Ultimately, the media may come up with proposed solutions and actions in the piece, suggesting ways in which they might be implemented. Often, this type of development journalism encourages a cooperative effort between citizens of the nation and the outside world.

The second type of development journalism can walk a thin line. On the one hand, government participation in media can help get important information spread throughout the nation. Governments can help to educate their citizens and enlist cooperation on major development projects. However, a government can also use the idea of "development" to restrict press freedom. Journalists are told not to report on certain issues because it will impact the "development" of the nation in question, and therefore citizens are not actually being given access to the whole picture.

As a tool for social justice, development journalism can be very valuable. By speaking for those who cannot, a development journalist can inform the rest of the world about important issues within developing nations.

Looking at the strengths and weaknesses of a country may also help identify ways in which the nation can be helped. This style of development journalism is a tool for empowerment.

When development journalism is used as a tool of political or sociological propaganda, however, it can become very dangerous. Many citizens are taught that the news is a reliable and useful source of information. For example, within a developing nation which has a corrupt government, journalistic exposes of the government are extremely important for reform. If journalists are not allowed to write about what is actually going on, the citizens are not well served. (www.wisegeek.com)

The concept of development journalism in Africa is caught up in the historical evolution of the theory of development communication. This theory can be postulated in three historical moments, each with its own basic assumptions. The first of such moment was the 'modernization' paradigm. It dominated the period from about 1945 to 1965. It stressed the transfer of the technology and socio-political culture of modernity from the developed North to the Third World. It found its coherent articulation in Everett M Rogers' 'diffusion of innovations' perspective. The 'modernization' approach to development, described as the 'dominant paradigm' by Rogers, is represented by such scholars as Walt W Rostow, Everett M Rogers and Daniel Lerner, who posit development communication as an engine of change from the 'traditional' to the 'modern' society. The model is characterized by three mechanisms for 'modernizing' the 'traditional society': psycho-sociological, institutional and technological. The 'psycho-sociological' mechanism entails 'empathy', or the capacity to see oneself in the other fellow's situation, which is an indispensable skill for people moving out of traditional settings. (Banda, 2007).

According to Lerner, there is a correlation between the expansion of economic activity being equated with 'development' and a set of 'modernizing' variables, chief among which are urbanization, literacy, mass media use, and democratic participation. Recognizable within this view is the belief that the interaction between literacy and mass media can make people in Third World countries break out of the bonds of traditionalism and adopt modernizing values and practices. Thus, the role of the mass media would be to create awareness of, and interest in, the innovations espoused by change agents. It is clear that this mechanism was influenced to a large extent by the two-step flow model of media influence, with the notion of 'opinion leaders' playing a key role in bringing about modernizing practices among their fellow citizens.

Secondly, the diffusion approach looks to the mass media as an 'institutional' nexus of modernizing practices and institutions in society, functioning as 'watchdogs', 'policymakers' and 'teachers for change and modernization'. This approach further holds that traditional societies would have to go through a five-stage model of transition from a traditional economy to a modern industrial complex: the traditional society, preconditions for take-off, take-off, drive to maturity, and the age of high mass consumption (Rostow, 1960).

Thirdly, 'technological' advances would, according to this model, assist the shift towards the modern society. Technology, in and of itself, is thus treated as another driving force for development. Technology was seen as pivotal to the growth of productive agricultural and industrial sectors and therefore the transfer of technical know-how from the developed North was seen as extremely crucial for development in the Third World nations (Melkote, 1991).

The second historical moment is the dependency-dissociation paradigm. This approach to development communication (and therefore development journalism) is associated with the elevation of the aspirations of the newly independent nations of the Third World for political, economic and cultural self-determination and an ideological distancing from Western forms of modernization (Servaes, 2004, 1991).

This orientation was a reflection of a broader political agenda of 'nonalignment' espoused by the new states in Africa and Asia. These nations shared the idea of independence from the superpowers and formed the Non-Aligned Nations. This movement, whose philosophy was to keep out of the Cold War between the West and the then Soviet Union, played an important role in the debate on a new world information and communication order (NWICO) (Servaes, 2004).

In the tradition of dependency-dissociation, Nkrumah of Ghana, Nyerere of Tanzania and Kaunda of Zambia espoused the 'revolutionary theory' of the press. This 'theory' entailed greater state control of the media, a departure from the private ownership of media evident in the colonial period. Some nationalist leaders went so far as to articulate 'philosophies' to justify state ownership of media.

For example, the then Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda propounded the philosophy of 'humanism' which subjected all major societal institutions, including the media, to the custody of the state. Within the context of the 'revolutionary press' ideology, journalists and politicians alike saw the media as forging national and continental unity, encouraging economic development, and serving formal and social education, including adult literacy as well as engaging in constructive criticism.

Thus the idea of development journalism was in the early 1960s associated with independent journalism that provided constructive criticism of government and its agencies, informed readers how the development process was affecting them, and highlighted local self-help projects.

Subsequently, the third historical moment of development communication emerged, described as 'emancipatory journalism.' This third moment is variously referred to as the 'multiplicity' or 'another development' paradigm. This development journalism model sets forth the importance of the cultural identity of local communities and stresses the value of democratization and participation at all levels. It points to a development strategy which is not merely inclusive of, but largely emanating from, the receivers or audience themselves. The main strength of this kind of developmental journalism is that it may be seen as an extension of Paulo Freire's dialogical pedagogy, which emphasizes participatory communication and 'conscientisation' of the people.

Emancipatory development journalism has the following tasks: (i) to motivate the audience to actively cooperate in development; and (ii) to defend the interests of those concerned.

The evolution of development journalism could be summarized thus: from modernization paradigm to dependency-dissociation paradigm and most recently, the emancipatory or participatory paradigm.

The foregoing notion of development journalism actually resonates with other forms of journalism invoked in academic literature. For example, one can readily detect the notion of a subjective journalistic engagement in the emergence of the so-called 'public' or 'civic' journalism movement in the early 1990s and participatory paradigm evident in 'citizen' journalism.

Theoretical Framework for Development Journalism

The main theoretical framework for developmental journalism is situated in the normative theory which is concerned with examining or prescribing how media ought to operate if certain social values are to be observed or attained. McQuail (2010) identifies four models of the normative theories – a liberal-pluralist or market model, a social responsibility or public interest model, a professional model and an alternative media model. In principle, there are as many normative theories of journalism as there are political systems, from Marxism-Leninism to diverse conceptions of democracy. (Benson, 2008) Scholars attempting to classify normative theories (Siebert, Peterson, & Schramm 1956; McQuail 1983 and 2005; Ferree et al. 2002; Baker 2002); as well as less systematic reflections about media and democracy, have identified non-democratic theories, including authoritarian, totalitarian, Marxist-Leninist, and developmental, as well as democratic theories, including libertarian, social responsibility, democratic elite, democratic participatory, public sphere, and postmodern.

Authoritarian theory holds that journalism should always be subordinate to the interests of the state in maintaining social order or achieving political goals (Siebert, Peterson, & Schramm 1956). Under more extreme authoritarianism, or totalitarianism, a closely censored press pro-actively promotes and extends a totalizing state control over society. In the context of the Cold War, the Soviet-communist theory stood out (Siebert, Peterson, & Schramm 1956 as cited by McQuail, 2010), an approach perhaps best understood today as a variant of totalitarianism that includes Islamic and other forms of religious fundamentalism. Since the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991, versions of Marxist-Leninist, or *Soviet,* theory have survived in North Korea, Cuba, and Vietnam, and to a certain extent in China, as the most coherent, self-consciously elaborated examples. The Soviet normative theory of journalism posits that media should not be privately owned, should serve the interests of the working classes, and most importantly, should provide a complete, objective view of the world following Marxist-Leninist principles, as defined by the communist-party controlled state.

Another non-democratic normative theory is partly a product of western communication scholarship and foreign development projects. Development theory is authoritarianism *for a good cause*, supporting the economic development and nation-building efforts of impoverished societies (Schramm, 1964; McQuail, 1983).

In the context of western dominance in international news gathering, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) framed development theory in cultural pluralist terms as the right to communicate (McBride, 1980) and, most recently, as the defense of global cultural diversity.

The western press and communication research generally portray these non-democratic theories negatively, as anti-democratic, whatever their potential merits. Outside of the West, however, purely anti-democratic justifications of journalism have grown rarer. The Chinese government, for instance, defends a 'market socialist' approach to the media, which combines limited market freedoms with continuing state control. Certain ideals in non-western societies are not necessarily anti-democratic, such as the poetic or literary ideal of the Arabic press (Mellor 2005). Democratic normative theories have been motivating forces behind emerging non-western media outlets such as the Qatar-based Arabic language cable news channel Al-Jazeera modeled after the BBC and CNN. Even in the most repressive authoritarian states, the language of democracy has become commonplace. (Benson, 2008)

Where authoritarianism stresses the importance of maintaining social order, libertarianism aims to maximize individual human freedom. John Locke and other liberal philosophers of the eighteenth century conceived of the libertarian theory (Siebert, Peterson, & Schramm 1956 as cited by McQuail, 2010), which relates closely with laissez-faire capitalism. In the oft-used metaphor, the press should offer a *marketplace of ideas,* pursuing profits in a natural process believed to support democracy.

Libertarian theory sees the government as the primary if not only threat to press freedom.

Observers and activists who perceive that a pure market orientation does not necessarily support democracy have argued that the press must instead assume social responsibility.

Social responsibility theory lacks any systematic critique of capitalist media ownership and funding (Baker, 2002; McQuail, 2005). Most journalistic professional exhortations about *ethics* are social responsibility theories in this sense, including not only traditional defenses of investigative journalism but also the recent movement for civic journalism.

Other democratic normative theories also concern social responsibilities, but emphasize some more than others. Representative Liberal theory (Ferree et al., 2002) or Democratic Elite theory (Baker, 2002) proposes that democracy works best with highly educated elites and specialized technicians in charge. The primary duties for the press are to chronicle accurately the range of competing elite perspectives, to examine the character and behavior of elected officials, and to monitor closely their activities for corruption or incompetence (the *watchdog* function). In other words, the press should adopt a critical, serious tone in covering public affairs, defined as the activities primarily of government but also, in principle, of business or other powerful social institutions. Democratic elite theories tend to be skeptical, however, of whether the press can adequately report and analyze complex issues (e.g. Lippmann, 1922).

Pierre Bourdieu's (1998) critique of journalism argues for a democratic elite theory from a sociology of knowledge perspective. He would generally prefer that journalism loosen its *monopoly* over public communication so that non-journalist experts could directly transmit their knowledge as they see fit. However, Bourdieu's ideal of complete autonomy could lead journalists (as well as non-journalist experts) to pursue only their own narrow interests and ignore legitimate concerns of wider publics (Schudson, 2005).

In democratic participatory theory, journalism is called upon to promote actively the political involvement of citizens. The theory emphasizes principles such as popular inclusion, empowerment, and full expression through a range of communicative styles (Ferree et al. 2002; McQuail, 1983). Its theorists emphasize diverse viewpoints and active citizen involvement more than the quality of the discourse (whether reasoned, critical, serious, or the like). They disagree on the best means to achieve these goals. Tabloid forms of journalism, for example, might provide a bridge leading formerly apathetic citizens to an interest in politics (McNair, 2000), or the mainstream press might provide news from more perspectives (Gans 2003). In participatory theory, however, small-scale, *segmented* media, commercial as well as non-profit, are best for promoting grassroots citizen involvement such as Citizen Journalism.

With his ideal of the public sphere the German sociologist and philosopher Jürgen Habermas (1989) combines concerns for the quality (reasoned, critical debate) with the quantity (broad representation and participation) of discourse that journalists mediate (Calhoun, 1992).

However, *public sphere theory,* also referred to as the *discursive* (Ferree et al., 2002) or *republican* (Baker 2002) ideal, places the greatest emphasis on quality, narrowly conceived: the press should create a domination-free environment where the better argument can prevail in a quest for social consensus. The public sphere should be free from the state as well as the market.

Emerging in part as a critique of Habermas, *postmodern* or *constructionist* (Ferree et al. 2002) *theory*, like democratic participatory theories, is more tolerant of diverse styles and forms of discourse that journalists mediate. Feminist scholars such as Nancy Fraser say that the ideal of reasoned-critical debate may embody masculine domination and that the ideal of social consensus may suppress ineradicable identity differences (Calhoun, 1992; Benson, 2008)

Mapping the Boundary of Development Journalism

The primary thesis of the "Four Theories" model propounded by Siebert et al is that the press always takes the form and coloration of the social and political structures within which it operates. While the news values of the West are contextualized upon timeliness, proximity, personality, unusual events, human interest, and conflict, that of the third world are embedded in development journalism ideals which emphasizes development, social responsibility, national integration, education, and transformation. These news values in themselves are positive and inspirational especially in societies that are underdeveloped or developing.

Generally, critics of developmental journalism are really criticizing what can be a perversion of it or its utilization by authoritarian governments. (Hester & To, 1987)

Development journalism where it is practised the right way can help to create a climate for social transformation and development. If it is acceptable that the ideals of development journalism includes social transformation, political 'conscientization', and participatory news gathering and dissemination, then, the scope of this genre of journalism could be extended to cover citizen journalism, public journalism, peace journalism and civic journalism and so on. All of these presumably new trends in journalism could actually be subsumed in development journalism. These new trends may be just old wine in new wineskins as they epitomize the underpinnings of what developmental journalism stands for.

Development Journalism in Practice

As of late, scholars have reconsidered development journalism as a promising model for African media practice (Banda, 2007; Musa & Domatob, 2007). Development journalism, it would seem, is gaining renewed interest within African media circles and governments. Some of the several cases across Africa and other developing countries that epitomize the resurgence of development journalism are: Ethiopia, alongside growing politicization of the Ethiopian state media, the authorities have introduced development journalism in official media policy. (Skjerdal, 2011)

In Nigeria, a content analysis was carried out to examine media coverage of development issues in the country. Findings indicate that the media accept and somewhat practise development journalism but not adequately enough, besides, investigative stories and advocacy were more or less neglected; and so is participatory journalism. (Adeniran, 2010)

In Thailand, according to Daorueng Prangtip, development journalism was applied in the recent coverage of the tsunami disasters; journalists diverted their focus from disaster to humanitarian issues. (Kauri, n.d.)

It is safe to conclude from the selected cases cited above that development journalism may have come in different shades and hues of journalistic enterprise and this may have been accepted in principle across the developing world by journalists, news organizations and governments yet much needs to be done. Development journalism has arrived but it is yet a long way from getting home.

According to Ahmad Murad Merican in an article titled, *Development journalism: what's new,* development journalism in a nutshell is about going beyond the 'who, what, when, where' of basic inverted pyramid journalism; it is usually more concerned with the 'how, why' and 'what now?' questions addressed by journalists. The ideal of development journalism has a parallel with investigative journalism, but it focuses on the condition of developing nations and ways of improving this. With this approach, journalists are encouraged to travel to remote areas, interact with the citizens of the country and report back. Proposed government projects are put under the spotlight and they are analyzed to see whether they really would help communities.

People are usually at the centre of these stories. Also, often, the journalist comes up with proposed solutions and actions. The main essence of investigative reporting is 'why'. Development journalism attempts to highlight the 'what, why and how' of the process of events. The basic philosophy of investigative journalism is to unveil the secrecy, to expose. But development journalism has to be alive to the realities of the situation and has to tail, study and report the process of socio-economic, cultural, political, educational changes in the country. Another form of development journalism, the one denigrated by Western journalists, involves government participation in the media. On the positive side, this means that important information can be distributed throughout the nation. Governments can educate their citizens and seek support for major development projects. However, the down side means that state authorities can also capture the idea of 'development' to stifle free speech and restrict social justice.

Aggarawala (1980) described development journalism as a kind of investigative reporting in which the journalist critically examines, evaluates and reports the relevance of a development project to national needs. He further explained that a development journalist looks at a development process, stops the clock, and takes a look backward and forward to convey to the reader the continuing and long term nature of the process of economic and social change. In this approach, development news is significantly different from so-called spot or action news. (Agarawala, 1979, 1980)

David Robie (2013) conceptualized development journalism as a kind of deliberative journalism which uses news reporting for 'mobilizing change from passive communities to those seeking change'. He explains that instead of the news values that have often led conventional news reporting to exclude a range of perspectives, such a notion would promote deliberation by journalists to enable the participation of all community stakeholders. This, Robie (2013) also referred to as critical deliberative journalism which he further explains is issue-based and includes diverse and even unpopular views about the community good and encourage an expression of plurality. In this context, development journalism may be deemed similar to citizen or public journalism both of which have received better mention in the West than the third world led concept of development journalism.

PEACE JOURNALISM

Peace journalism can be described as journalism that offers a more balanced perspective of war and conflict than that provided by the dominant mainstream media. For instance, peace journalism aims to construct realities from all sides, and to reveal less visible causes and effects of war and violence, such as their cost in terms of the dead and disabled, and of the destruction of social order and institutions, while refraining from dehumanizing the enemy. Rather than emphasizing what divides opposed parties, as is common in mainstream media war coverage, peace journalism seeks to uncover any possible areas of agreement between them. It offers analysis of what caused the conflict and tries to suggest how it may be resolved or transformed in cases where resolution is impossible or too difficult. As such, it may include peace advocacy journalism, which shares many of its characteristics but with an explicitly articulated point of view that aims above all to persuade. While scholars have long studied how media report war, attention given to peace journalism in the academy is relatively recent, dating from the 1970s and flourishing in the 1990s and beyond.

McGoldrick (2000) as cited by (Hanitzsch, 2005) described peace journalism as a “new form of journalism” which looks “at how journalists could be part of the solution rather than part of the problem”. Other scholars have conceptualized journalists in peace journalism as “participant-observers” because the people involved in stories adjust their behaviors according to calculations about how the coverage will affect the course of events (Lynch, 1998)

Peace journalism is defined “when editors and reporters make choices - of what to report, and how to report it - that create opportunities for society at large to consider and value non-violent responses to conflict” (Lynch & McGoldrick, 2005)

Originally conceived by the eminent peace scholar, Johan Galtung, the Peace Journalism model is a source of practical options for journalists; a lead in to media monitoring for peace activists and offers a firm basis for drawing distinctions in content analysis by academic researchers.

Peace journalism: shows backgrounds and contexts of conflicts; hears from all sides; explores hidden agendas; highlights peace ideas and initiatives from anywhere at any time.

Peace Journalism has been embraced, under that name, by journalists in mainstream (corporate) media in Indonesia, and some in the Philippines, following grassroots campaigns and journalist training interventions by Jake Lynch and Annabel McGoldrick.

But much more Peace journalism is being practised by many journalists, in many different places around the world, all the time. (http://www.peacejournalism.org/Peace_Journalism)

Peace Journalism:

- Explores the backgrounds and contexts of conflict formation, presenting causes and options on every side (not just ‘both sides’);
- Gives voice to the views of all rival parties, from all levels;
- Offers creative ideas for conflict resolution, development, peacemaking and peacekeeping;
- Exposes lies, cover-up attempts and culprits on all sides, and reveals excesses committed by, and suffering inflicted on, peoples of all parties;
- Pays attention to peace stories and post-war developments.

In terms of reality and representation of conflict reportage, Peace journalism is described as more realistic, in the sense of fidelity to a reality that already exists, independently of people’s knowledge or representation of it. The advocates of this genre believe that to report violence without background or context is to misrepresent it, since any conflict is, at root, a relationship, of parties setting and pursuing incompatible goals. Also, to omit any discussion of them is a distortion.

Hanitzsch (2005) analyzes several aspects of what he terms peace journalism's "myths and fallacies and oversimplifications." These include its rejection of journalists' usual stance as neutral observers of the events they cover and its overestimation of the impact of journalism on society (while neglecting to consider the role of interpersonal communication).

First he mentions the fact that many proponents of peace journalism share a naïve epistemological perspective that the practice of traditional war reporting represents reality in a distorted way.

He argues that these complaints about a "media-distorted reality" actually miss the point. Besides, the media by nature cannot provide an "objective" representation of reality that is objective in the sense of being identical with the reality. In a world full of contingent descriptions of reality, war correspondents can only provide one version of reality that is just as "true" as numerous other versions. (Hanitzsch, 2005)

Secondly he argues that another oversimplification of peace journalism is that it adheres, to the philosophical assumption of powerful, causal and linear media effects, thus overestimating the power of journalism and understating the impact of interpersonal communication. This myth or oversimplification, he further alludes, connects readily with an anachronistic conceptualization of the audience as a mass, whose characteristics are of only modest significance for the understanding of mass communication. He surmises that if such conceptualization of the audience as a mass coincides with the demand for a socially responsible journalism, fatal misjudgments are likely consequences.

Hanitzsch (2005) further points out that the argument for a responsible journalism requires journalists to keep an eye on the "public interest" or the "greater good" of society, whatever that may be. This, however, overlooks the fact that journalists and their employers in reality do not necessarily orient themselves to an anonymous mass audience and an overall public interest, rather they most often adjust their "responsibilities" to the interests of their specific audiences and interests.

Thirdly, Hanitzsch (2005) further points that journalism is often treated with poor contextualization by the advocates of peace journalism, holding it responsible for virtually everything that goes wrong with culture and society. For instance Peace Journalism advocates constantly blame journalists for the criteria of news selection such as negativism, personalization as well as proximity to elite persons and elite countries.

Even scholars of Peace Journalism are quick to attribute these criteria to journalism as if they came out from nowhere. But the criteria of news selection (news factors) are structures of selection in public communication, and they are subject to continuous negotiation between journalism and its audiences.

Also, granted that audience studies show that what people want most are stories of natural or human-made disasters, unusual weather fluctuations, wars and terrorism and perhaps "a dose of titillation and trivia" and this is sad, indeed, but the other question still remains, that is, why should journalism ignore its audiences? What is the big deal if the media disregard their audiences' interests and, thus, put at risk their economic existence? The media, in spite of its social responsibility cannot take the liberty not to be a business.

The news coverage of wars and conflicts needs to be discussed with reference to culture and society. Instead of transforming journalism into an active agent and promoter of peace which has the function to better the world, one should take into account that the chain of causality may actually be the reverse.

Therefore, Hanitzsch (2005) argues that a peaceful culture is in reality a precondition of peace journalism. In a culture in which the life of others has virtually no meaning and violence seems an appropriate measure of conflict resolution, peace journalism has only a little chance to evolve. He claims that every society gets the journalism it deserves and there is nothing exceptional about journalists as they are human. The best of men are men at the very best. Even though the traditional notions of objective and impartial journalism cannot be called into question, it may be reasonable to also ask what kind of society is it that creates a sort of journalism that has no sense of peace.

Another criticism of peace journalism says that the advocates of peace journalism often fail to take notice of the nuances and structural constraints of journalism. There are many genres of journalism: serious vs. popular journalism, quality vs. tabloid journalism, public service vs. commercial journalism, and many others. All these areas of journalism are oftentimes lumped together. As a matter of fact, there are many structural constraints which shape the work of journalists: limited personnel, time and material resources, editorial procedures and hierarchies, textual constraints (news formats), availability of sources, access to the scene and information in general – just to name a few of them. Most importantly, since the practice of good journalism often requires journalists to be close to those involved in conflicts, they may become targets of assaults or military operations themselves. (Hanitzsch, 2005)

He also concludes that pro peace journalism scholars confuse the “genuine reality with the media reality” in defining the obstacles to peaceful conflict settlement and sometimes hold journalists and their media coverage responsible for riots and political disturbances. He argues that if that is true, what would be the alternative? Should journalists hold back certain facts from public attention when they think that this information could cause subsequent acts of violence after the news has been published? Who will define what facts are eligible to be reported and what information may disrupt social order? Is it not probable that peace journalism could become an excuse to the legitimization of government controls imposed on the press in the name of social stability, as experienced by many third world nations?

Hanitzsch (2005) also concludes that the world does not actually need peace journalism as this cannot be the primary task of journalism since it is the task of other social systems such as politics, law or the military. To adhere on the peace journalism philosophy means to divert political responsibilities from politicians and policy makers to journalists.

CONFLICT-SENSITIVE JOURNALISM

The concept of conflict sensitive journalism arose as a response to criticisms of peace journalism. Journalists, particularly, recoil at the prospect of being seen as practicing peace journalism which they perceive as running against their trainings in ‘objectivity’ and in refraining from propaganda- a tool for their public relations and advertising colleagues. Criticism of peace journalism also includes its overly pacifist nature which may require the journalist to ignore certain critical ‘facts’ while covering a conflict. Despite attempts by peace journalism theorists to deconstruct, “this myth of independence and objectivity with analysis of the news production system and processes, the myth is so well-entrenched in people’s consciousness that even after repeated discussions and trainings on the same subject, it crops up again and again.” (Patindol, 2010:199) explains that peace journalism is “only reporting about peace, peace movements and peace initiatives (with no critical reporting on peace efforts); in effect, reporting for peace and thus best seen as peace propaganda; and peaceful reporting- thus concentrating on positive news, avoiding ‘bad’ stories such as those involving violence.”

Patindol, a trainer with Peace and Conflict Journalism Network (PECOJON) which has membership in 15 countries worldwide noted that the misconception of peace journalism had necessitated the change in the nomenclature of their trainings from peace journalism, first, to peace and conflict journalism and, currently, to the term conflict-sensitive journalism (CSJ). She averred further that this term has significantly clarified the concept among participants and further focuses on the fact that:

1. It is more accurate and appropriate to the real work of an ethical, responsible journalist;
2. The concept applies to the reporting of conflict, not to avoiding it; and
3. The emphasis is on the challenge for journalists in reporting conflict. (Patindol 2010:200).

As explained by Howard (2003:15), CSJ presents balanced reports and only what is known. It uses words carefully and refrains from emotional terms, seeks explanation and comment from all sides, and looks for solution.

CSJ, as conceived by Howard and his followers also encourages the journalist to learn and use the skills of conflict analysis while reporting conflicts. Indeed, Agberemi et al (2006:48) proffer the following reasons, among others, for the imperativeness of CSJ:

1. The impact of the media on conflict is hardly ever neutral because media are powerful and can make the search for peace easier or more difficult;
2. The duty to inform (and especially how it is fulfilled) should be balanced by placing great value on life;
3. Absolute accuracy and balance/objectivity are elusive yet sound journalism is possible. Why should conflict-sensitivity as an added principle to accuracy and balance now make sound journalism impossible?

CSJ actually prioritizes both peace and justice (because great effort is made to give the audience, the full background of conflict and structural issues of inequality and injustice that are involved).

The concept of CSJ would seem to be a workable idea in the search for a more socially responsible and responsive media especially in a developing country like Nigeria.

The merits of CSJ have been recognized by the United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). UNESCO has published, *Conflict-Sensitive Reporting: A Handbook for Reporters.* In his preface to the book, Assistant Director-General for Communication and Information of UNESCO, Abdul Waheed Khan (in Howard, 2009:1) said “it is with the object to strengthen the capacity of media professionals to report in a well-researched, factual and non-biased way and without contributing to conflict that UNESCO has asked Ross Howard to develop this curriculum for conflict-sensitive reporting. It is intended to strengthen media capacity to contribute to dialogue, mutual understanding and eventually reconciliation and peace.”

It would seem that conflict sensitive journalism is a journalistic equivalent of the ‘Do – No – Harm’ principle in conflict and development intervention.

CSJ is based on the standards of journalism – accuracy in truth-seeking and telling, objectivity, balance and fairness, and ethical conduct. Since violent conflicts attract intense news media coverage that requires greater analytical depth and skills, to report on it without contributing to further violence nor overlooking peace building opportunities involves recognizing that, “the role and responsibility of reporting on conflict represents an expansion of journalism practice but not a radical change.” (Howard, 2009:14).

Indeed, Lynch and McGoldrick (2005:28) have developed a 17-point “suggestions for journalists to “re-balance the reporting of conflicts”, thus:

1. Avoid portraying a conflict as consisting of only two parties contesting the same goal(s);
2. Avoid accepting stark distinctions between ‘self’ and ‘other’ ;
3. Avoid treating a conflict as if it is only going on in the place and at the time that violence is occurring;
4. Avoid assessing the merits of a violent action or policy of violence in terms of its visible effects only;
5. Avoid letting parties define themselves by simply quoting their leader’s restatement of familiar demands or positions;
6. Avoid concentrating always on what divides the parties, on the differences between what each say they want;
7. Avoid only reporting the violent acts and describing ‘the horror’;
8. Avoid blaming someone for ‘starting it’ ;
9. Avoid focusing exclusively on the suffering, fears and grievances of only one party;
10. Avoid ‘victimizing’ language like ‘devastated’, ‘defenceless’, ‘pathetic’, ‘tragedy’, which only tells us what has been done to and could be done for a group of people by others;
11. Avoid the imprecise use of emotive words to describe what has happened to people such as ‘tragedy’, ‘assassination’, ‘massacre’, ‘systematic’;
12. Avoid demonizing adjectives like ‘vicious’, ‘cruel’, ‘brutal’, barbaric’;
13. Avoid demonizing labels like ‘terrorist’, ‘extremist’, ‘fanatic’, ‘fundamentalist’ ;
14. Avoid focusing exclusively on the human rights abuses, misdemeanours and wrongdoings of only one side. Instead try to name all wrongdoers;
15. Avoid making an opinion or claim seem like an established fact;
16. Avoid greeting the signing of documents by leaders which bring about military victory or a ceasefire as necessarily creating peace; and
17. Avoid waiting for leaders on ‘our’ side to suggest or offer solutions. (Lynch & McGoldrick 2005:28)

The points above meet the requirements for a conflict-sensitive journalism practice and hence inform the basis for judging media reports.

The threat of conflicts to human development has been underscored by the UN Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, Wu Hungbo (2015:14) when he described conflicts as the biggest threat to human development.

He noted further:

By the end of 2014, conflicts had forced almost 60 million People to abandon their homes- the highest level recorded Since the Second World War. If these people were a nation, they would make up the twenty-fourth largest country in the World. Every day, 42,000 people on the average are forcibly displaced and compelled to seek protection due to conflicts, almost four times the 2010 number of 11,000. Children accounted for half of the global refugee population under the responsibility of the United Nations Commissioner for Refugees in 2014. In countries affected by conflict, the proportion of out-of-school children increased from 30 per cent in 1999 to 36 per cent in 2012. Fragile and conflict-affected countries typically have highest poverty rates.

With the large scale disruptions and general spread of misery caused by conflicts, all avenues must be explored in the fight to end such disruptions and miseries. One critical area is the need to sharpen the skills of journalists as they report on conflicts by imbibing the concept of conflict-sensitive journalism which is an outgrowth from the ‘do no harm’ principle in medical and development operations.

In Western literature, conflict- sensitivity has been etymologically linked with medical practice as alluded to in the Hippocratic Oath taken by newly inducted medical personnel. Although, the original Greek phrase, *Primum Non Nocere* (above all, do no harm) was not stated in the Hippocratic Oath, it contains similar words and the promise “to abstain from doing harm” in medical intervention (Smith 2005). Furthermore, the Hippocratic Writings, *Epidemics* states that, “the physician must be able to tell the antecedents, know the present and foretell the future- must mediate these things and have two special objects in view with regard to disease, namely, to do good or to do no harm.” From its medical origin, the do no harm principle has been adopted in other fields like development studies, conflict and peace building, journalism and many other contexts.

While tracing the trajectory of conflict-sensitive development planning, Paffenholz, quoted by McCandless and Karbo (2011:420) said the conflict-sensitive approach to development represents the third phase of like-minded approaches that have developed around a concern for evaluating and improving the effectiveness of peace and conflict efforts. According to her, the first phase could be traced to 1998/1999 with Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment (PCIA) as hall-marked by Mary Anderson’s ‘do no harm’ approach. The second phase was marked by deepening engagement of broader range of actors and a proliferation of tools from 1999 to 2003/4.

The third phase saw the broader acceptance of PCIA and its expansion beyond assessing the impact of aid intervention to conflict-sensitive programming and policy making. It is this expanding knowledge and use of conflict-sensitivity that came into journalism through the efforts of scholars like Ross Howard when he published, *Conflict-Sensitive Journalism: A Handbook for Reporters* in 2003. This was followed by trainings in different parts of the world and the publication of the UNESCO-sponsored, *Conflict-Sensitive Reporting: State of the Art* by Ross in 2009. As summarized by Howard (2009:12):

Conflict- sensitive reporting reflects a modernization of the original values of the news media. It is rooted in the belief that the news media in many societies can be a powerful force to reduce the causes of conflict and to enable a conflict stressed society to better pursue conflict resolution. The media can do this by training its journalists to better understand conflict and media’s role in it. The journalist can strengthen their reporting to avoid stereotypes and narrow perspectives on the causes and process of conflict. The media can contribute to a wider dialogue among disparate parts of the community in conflict, through improved reporting. It can explore and provide information about opportunities for resolution. And at the same time, the media must maintain its essential standards of accuracy, fairness and balance, and responsible conduct.

The plank upon which conflict-sensitive journalism approach is built recognizes the fact that journalism can affect the course of a conflict either towards or away from conflict transformation. When well handled, it may help in finding common grounds for parties to reach consensus but on the other hand, media intervention can prevent consensus building and escalate the conflict. In a confused and crisis ridden society, development cannot take place and indeed may reverse the gains of development. Thus, the media as institutions and journalists as watchdog of society can influence development through their reporting of events in society.

Conflict-Sensitivity in the African Context

The presentation of the 'do no harm' principle and the related concept of conflict sensitivity may seem, on superficial reading, to be a Western concept that is being copied by African scholars. However, a little knowledge of the history and traditions of Africa show that the concept is contained in the folklores, idioms, oral history and traditions of Africa. 'Oral texts' like the *ifa* corpus of the Yoruba people also contain similar principles.

The conceptual gap is traceable to the non-codification of African heritage in books and other permanent forms that could be passed from one generation to the other – an advantage the West exploits to distort African history and heritage, thereby extending Western neo-colonialism and hegemony in all spheres of life. Furthermore, compounding this tragedy is the seeming collaboration and ignorance of some African scholars to interrogate Western claims and concepts or to, at least, domesticate them to reflect the African environment. Thus, the pioneering efforts of great Africans like Kwame Nkrumah, Julius Nyerere, E.W Blyden, Kenneth Kaunda, Obafemi Awolowo, Nnamdi Azikiwe, Leopold Sedar Senghor, Fela Anikulapo Kuti, among others, should be acknowledged

Nyerere, for instance, issued the first of his 'Post-Arusha' *Policy Directive on Education* in which he demanded an education revolution, in line with Tanzania's needs and social objectives, as against the system foisted on Tanzania by the Western Colonialists. Nyerere noted that the fact that pre-colonial Africa did not have 'schools' – except for short periods of initiation in some tribes – did not mean that children were not educated. He noted that "they learned by living and doing. In the homes and on the farms, they were taught the skills of the society. They learned the kind of grasses which were suitable for which purposes, the work which had to be done on the crops … They learned the tribal history, and the tribe's relationship with other tribes and with the spirits, by listening to the stories of the elders." (Nyerere 1987:524)

Thus, even though Western education was formalized early enough the purpose is the same: to transmit the culture, knowledge and ways of life of the society to succeeding generations and reinforce such in them. Other spheres of the African system were similarly affected by the colonial social formation and the consequent hegemony of its institutions. Olaoba (2002:88) captured the imposition of colonial legal culture on the Yoruba legal heritage when he said, "lulled into believing that many things were wrong with the indigenous legal culture, the Yoruba people, who, of course, saw nothing wrong in their legal heritage, thought that the received colonial law was better off. The colonial legal structure was equally riddled with problems of integration".

In his study of the protest music of the Afro-beat legend, Fela Anikulapo-Kuti, Olorunyomi criticized African and Western experts for missing the definitive nuances of the legend's music obviously because these experts are influenced by western precepts. He averred:

Africa, then in the logic of this stereotype, comes over merely as a repository of the call and response and improvisation, while the West, ostensibly, supplies the premeditated notations. It is the sort of generalization that presents even a formally trained musician such as Fela as incapable of processuality, just as the Euro-American is consigned only to the cold calligraphy of sheet-scored music without the capacity for 'life' and spontaneity. (Olorunyomi, 2005:3).

Similarly, Western scholars present the 'do-no-harm' principle as the brain child of Hippocrates because the Hippocratic Oath includes the promise "to abstain from doing harm" in any medical intervention. But African lore, mores and axioms passed from the ancient times contain such admonitions and prescriptions. Some Yoruba axioms and proverbs espouse similar ideas which arguably predate Western codification of same in books and other permanent records. For example, it is a popular saying among the Yoruba that, '*Ori bibe ko ni oogun ori fifo'*. This can be roughly translated, as: "you do not cut off a man's head in order to cure his headache".

The essence of this proverb is the same, "above all, do no harm" in your interventions in conflict situations. There is no evidence that African philosophers and ancestors read Hippocrates. Thus conflict – sensitivity is an African way of life; extending this concept to the practice of modern journalism is not so much of a foreign imposition or mere sanctimonious pontification.

The Yoruba also say, "*Agbo ejo apa kan da, agba Osika ni*" when literally translated this means, you do not give judgment (or reach a conclusion) on the basis of listening to one side of a case. This injunction aptly summarizes the journalistic requirements of balance and fairness which again is codified in western literature especially in codes of ethics for journalists as enjoined by the Social Responsibility Theory of the press. Codes of ethics became popular after the Hutchins Commission Report (1947) which encouraged self-regulation within the media. In a way, it is in the enlightened self-interest of the media to do so, rather than allowing regulation and, probably, censorship from government establishments.

In the preamble to their code, the Society of Professional Journalists in the U.S. wrote: "members of the society of professional journalists believe that public enlightenment is the fore runner of justice and the foundation of democracy. The duty of the journalist is to further those ends by seeking truth and providing a fair and comprehensive account of events and issues … Members of the society share a dedication to ethical behaviour (Black, Steele and Barney 1999:6).

Interestingly, the code is divided into four parts one of which urges journalists to "minimize harm". The other parts urge practitioners to seek truth and report it, act independently and be accountable. Of particular interest to this chapter is the section on minimizing harm which admonishes journalists to among other things, treat sources, subjects and colleagues as human beings deserving of respect. Specifically, it states that:

- Show compassion for those who may be affected adversely by news coverage and use special sensitivity when dealing with children and inexperienced sources or subjects;
- Be sensitive when seeking or using interviews or photographs of those affected by a tragedy;
- Recognize that gathering and reporting may cause harm or a discomfort;
- Recognize that private people have a greater right to control information about themselves than do public officials and others who seek power, influence and attention and that only an overriding public need can justify intrusion into anyone's privacy;
- Show good taste and avoid pandering to lurid curiosity;
- Be cautious about identifying juvenile suspects or victims of sex crimes;
- Be judicious about naming criminal suspects before the formal filing of charges: and
- Balance a criminal suspect's fair trial rights with the public's right to be informed. (Black, Steele & Barney, 1999: 7).

The above guidelines fulfil the requirements of conflict sensitivity in reporting and would seem to obviate the charges of recklessness and insensitivity on the part of journalists. However, there is a wide gap between theory and practice and only continuous harping on these principles can produce a large army of conflict sensitive journalists whose reports will encourage positive developments in society.

At a gathering in Ilorin, Kwara State in 1998, Nigerian journalists also gave to themselves, the latest version of the code of ethics. The code has undergone several reviews since Nigeria's independence in 1960, culminating in the code popularly called "The Ilorin declaration" of 1998. The preamble to this code reads: "Journalism entails a high degree of public trust. To earn and maintain this trust, it is morally imperative for every journalist and every news medium to observe the highest professional and ethical standards. In the exercise of these duties, a journalist should always have a healthy regard for public interest." (Code of Ethics for Nigerian Journalists, 1998:2).

Like other codes worldwide, the Nigerian code urges the reporters to be factual, accurate, balanced and fair, protect public health and morality, present or report acts of violence, armed robberies, terrorist activities or vulgar display of wealth in a manner that does not glorify such acts.

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Chapter 3
Role of Citizen Journalism through Internet in Reporting War and Conflicts:
An Introspection

Sree Krishna Bharadwaj H.
National Law School of India University, India

ABSTRACT

It is no doubt that internet has brought a revolution in the world. Every individual is nowadays active in terms of information of not just his country but happenings throughout the world. Therefore, with devices having connectivity in everyone's hand with the whole world, it is impossible to suppress or any occurrence. Every individual is becoming a journalist. This paper explores the issues in citizen reporting especially in wars and conflicts both legal and sociological.

INTRODUCTION

There is no doubt that technology such as computers, mobile, internet etc. has changed the lives of many and the way journalism used to work as well. With the introduction of social media, every individual can bring out any incident happening in one corner of the world to another who is another corner of the world and without any censor or restraint. The citizen journalism especially in case of wars and conflicts become critical and important because of the fact that journalist can't be everywhere and can't understand the ground level realities happening in the conflict zone. Therefore citizen journalism has gained importance in the present conditions of the world with the happenings in Syria, Egypt and other countries.

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BACKGROUND

L. Jannett Dates (2006), in his article titled "Does Journalism Education Make a difference?" has set up the essentialness of reporting calling and its conceivable part in reinforcing the majority rule government. It has additionally broken down the variables adding to delivering productive and moral writers.

K.E. Eapen (1995) in the book Communications: A Discipline in Distress has given an unmistakable photo of the stark reality of the status of scholarly correspondence programs in India. It has concentrated on issues such as the requirement for Journalism teachers to be prepared current patterns in Journalism programs in India and the relationship between the journalistic morals and expert preparing, and so forth., He has additionally dissected what turned out badly for the correspondence instruction in India. The study has archived the heartbroken situation of news-casting instruction in India, for example, absence of base, books and hardware and different obstacles in bestowing quality reporting training like qualification criteria for news coverage instructors in the state-supported colleges and schools. He has additionally called attention to that morals, as a point is not treated at any length in any of the college instructive endeavors notwithstanding all its different weaknesses of the Indian preparing. Notwithstanding, he has restored that the length of daily papers remains the spooning ground for the other media work force, for example, those of television, and the ability pool for reputation/advertising at the state, national and commercial enterprises level, the requirement for appropriate enrollment and preparing turns out to be doubly vital.

Vasuki Belavadi (2002) in her article titled, "What troubles media instruction in India – A Teacher's point of view", has examined the elements, which are thought to be pulling down reporting training in India. The study has assessed that before the end of 2010, India alone would require around 15,00,000 media experts. India has more than 200 media foundations contrasted with a little more than 25 in the mid-1980s. She has likewise called attention to the issue of instructive organizations offering media-related courses with accent on expanding benefits. She has bemoaned on the way that media establishments need center in the outlining of educational programs and in their nervousness to light up their understudies however much as could reasonably be expected, numerous foundations keep on offering a smidgen of print news coverage, a sprinkling of radio and TV. This notwithstanding different subjects like correspondence exploration, corporate interchanges, promoting, and so forth., all taught in only one/two/three years. She too has expressed that media training in the nation is to a great extent subject to course books from the west whose expenses are frequently restrictive and to a great extent unessential in the Indian setting.

L. Theodore Glasser (2005), in his study on Journalism Studies and the instruction of columnists, has contended that news coverage studies will just have any kind of effect on the off chance that they improve news coverage and offer us some assistance with understanding what news coverage implies. He has advanced different focuses for the requirement for news coverage instruction and what news-casting training can do to the understudies. He feels that news coverage instruction starts with the real routine of reporting and it starts in a perfect world at the graduate level with understudies who have had enough involvement in news-casting to comprehend at any rate instinctively, what it intends to do news coverage. News-casting understudies need to arrive not to leave, with the fundamental newsroom abilities, composing, reporting and altering. He has opined that instruction in reporting gives a chance to refine aptitudes not secure them.

CITIZEN JOURNALISM AND REPORTING WARS AND CONFLICTS

Defining the Citizen Journalism

Oxford Dictionary defines citizen journalism as the collection, dissemination, and analysis of news and information by the general public, especially by means of the Internet. (Dictionary O., 2015) The Macmillan dictionary defines it as the gathering and reporting of news by ordinary people rather than professional reporters. (Dictionary M., 2015) According to the Collins dictionary, citizen journalism means the involvement of non-professionals in reporting news, especially in blogs and other websites. (Dictionary C., 2015)

Techopedia defines citizen journalism as the reporting of news events by members of the public using the Internet to spread the information. (Techopedia, 2015) Citizen journalism is referred to by many other names, including: Collaborative citizen journalism (CCJ), Personal publishing, Grassroots media, Networked journalism, Open source journalism, Citizen media, Participatory journalism, Hyperlocal journalism, Distributed journalism, Stand-alone journalism, Bottom-up journalism, Non-media journalism, Indymedia, Guerrilla journalism etc.

Importance of Citizen Journalism

The citizen journalism means collecting any happenings, events or occurrences by any member of general public and irrespective of analysis or not, disseminate the collected material to the whole world through any means and the popular being the internet. Citizen journalism allows everyone to be a journalist and provide his version of truth to the whole world. Citizen journalism has gained importance in the present era. It is also notable that the citizen journalism has become of part of democracy observed by any country. A degree of democracy can be weighed based on the restrictions on the media imposed by the Government. Hence citizen journalism has become a symbol of democracy in the modern era. However, citizen journalism in case of war has been a part of major debate on emerging aspects of journalism. Ever since the rise of internet and social media as part of a person's life, the citizen journalism has gained maximum thrust and activism from the citizen. The reporting of war has taken many lives of journalists especially the foreign journalists and documentary makers who break stories of importance to the general public. This toll of death has its share on the citizen journalism also. Some countries also have termed citizen journalism as a treason. Putting aside the question of an individual reporting credibility on the social media/internet, the correspondence in war is dangerous and is highly important as well.

Pros and Cons of Citizen Journalism

Like every subject matter, even citizen journalism has its own share of advantages and disadvantages. Some of the pros and cons are as under:

Pros

1. The newspapers that survive are those that build the foremost of the advantages of the net world. Citizen journalism will in several cases offer free content and therefore the web provides the flexibility to succeed in a far larger audience. The recent media that mix their resources with the

benefits of recent media can thrive. The recent media that attempt to take hold their recent ways of doing things can die.

2. Most likely some events get reported by subject journalists that may not be reported while not them. Reporters cannot be everyplace and can't understand all events going down in their communities. In this sense, subject journalism might facilitate to broaden the sort of events that are reported.
3. With smaller staffs chasing fewer stories, subject journalists may facilitate native papers keep a broader mixture of stories and community reportage before of readers. Subject journalism will be a strong tool for reportage hyperlocal news (news that's specific to one community) as a result of individual's care concerning their community and have a hunger for locating out what's occurring. (Storch, 2015)
4. Speed in reportage news stories.
5. Higher credibleness of subject journalism reporters than the standard TV journalism.
6. A lot of honesty within the news reportage than ancient media.
7. Covering of events that don't seem to be permissible to be coated by the standard media coverage. Covering events of web sites linking ancient media reporters. (Khaja, 2015)

Cons

1. Citizen journalists sometimes tend to be bias. Skilled journalists are a unit trained professionals that explore either side of a story and may write from a non-objective purpose of read. Subject journalist doesn't have the sort of training; so, their stories aren't as credible as professionals.
2. Citizen journalists aren't trained on the libel law. Skilled journalists do have this information and coaching. They recognize what they will and can't say in an exceedingly newspaper article. Associate example of this is often once subject journalists de jure defendant potential suspects and alleged co-conspirators throughout and once the capital of Massachusetts marathon bombings. The subject journalists caused the police to require longer on the investigation. It additionally caused vast issues for those who were de jure defendant.
3. Last however not least, subject journalists don't notice the copyright problems. Once a subject submits a story, video, or image to the press or news website, that news sources has the correct to use the fabric but they value more highly to use it. (Nelson, 2015)
4. News of subject journalism is superficial and lacks depth.
5. News of subject Journalism has to be verified.
6. Citizen Journalism might look for to unfold rumors.
7. Citizen Journalism might lose honesty as a result of it serves special interests.
8. Citizen Journalism doesn't take the general public style under consideration. It's going to contain scenes of violence or X-rated scenes that offend public decency.

Case Studies of Citizen Journalism Through Internet and Impact on War

Case 1: Elliot Higgins

Belling Cat Project

Eliot Higgins has no formal journalistic training and no background in media whatsoever. But starting from his flat in Leicester, England in 2011 — where he blogged under the nom de plume Brown Moses — he became an expert in Syrian weaponry and terrorist activity by studying YouTube videos and networking with other self-taught experts. His research was cited by New York Times writer C.J. Chivers, and helped confirm that the Syrian government was using banned weapons.

Gathering evidence: In a similar way, the open database of vehicle sightings in Ukraine that Eliot and his team at the Belling cat site have been putting together — using photos and videos and eyewitness reports of vehicles, blast craters and burn marks that have been posted by residents — has produced some fairly strong evidence that Russia has been firing missiles and other weaponry into Ukraine from inside Russian territory, despite repeated government denials. (Ingram, Two great examples of how journalism has changed for the better, 2015)

Case 2

MacMaster, a Middle East peace activist who is working on his master's degree at the University of Edinburgh in Scotland, wrote that he fictionalized the account of a gay woman in Syria to illuminate the situation for a Western audience.

The hoax raises difficult questions about the reliance on blogs, tweets, Facebook postings and other Internet communications as they increasingly become a standard way to report on global events. Information from online sources has become particularly important in coverage of the Middle East uprisings, especially in countries that severely restrict foreign media — or that use social media against protesters.

MacMaster had used Amina as an identity online for at least five years. He started the blog in February, shortly after Amina told people she moved back to Syria from the United States. Amina's story might have remained believable, but when he wrote of her arrest, her fans — in a desire to help the woman they had grown to care about — found a trail of evidence that led back to MacMaster.

The persona Tom MacMaster built and cultivated for years — a lesbian who was half Syrian and half American — was a tantalizing Internet-era fiction, one that he used to bring attention to the human rights record of a country where media restrictions make traditional reporting almost impossible. (Flock, 2015)

Case 3

Abdul Rahman, who was born Osama Suleiman in the city of Baniyas on the Syrian coast and came to the U.K. in 2000, has four main contacts in Syria. They help to collate information from more than 230 activists. By contrast, Higgins has no prior knowledge of Syria and no contacts on the ground. He started the Brown Moses blog in March 2012. His first posts were about the British phone hacking scandal, but in May 2012, he started analyzing events in Syria. He was laid off from his job as an office administrator in October 2012, and worked on a temporary contract for four months. In February

2013, he launched an Indiegogo fundraising campaign that raised more than £6,000 and allowed him to continue his analysis full-time. Since then, he has become one of the pioneers of what he calls "citizen open source investigation."

Case 4

Death sentence passed on the citizen journalist Mohammed Abdelmawla al-Hariri for "high treason and contacts with foreign parties". He was arrested on 16 April just after giving an interview to the television station Al-Jazeera about the situation in his hometown of Deraa. Hariri was subjected to horrific torture after his arrest, to the point of being partially paralyzed. After the verdict was pronounced, he was transferred to Saidnaya military prison north of Damascus. (Borders, 2015)

Findings

1. **Negative Impact of Internet Journalism:** There are downsides to the present approach, obviously: In some cases, journalists say things within the heat of the instant that draw negative attention from readers and viewers — or managers and house owners of the media retailers they work for — and there are repercussions. News surroundings has become far more chaotic, currently that everybody with a smartphone will transfer photos and report on what's happening around them — together with the terrorist teams and armies that are concerned within the conflict that's being reported on, and also the final victims of their behavior. Hoaxes and information fly even as quickly because the news will, and in some cases are tougher to find, and people mistakes will have real repercussions. (Ingram, Social media has changed the way that war reporting works — and that's a good thing, 2015)
2. **Positive Impact of Internet Journalism:** We get journalism that's a lot of personal and more visceral, additional emotional approach to news. War correspondents inbound associate degree exceedingly in a very hot zone currently give an on-the-scene ethical and physical inventory that appears totally different from times past. The other major advantage of having such a large amount of sources of reports is that the method of news has become rather more democratized, which has allowed an entire new system of journalism to evolve. We not have to be compelled to have confidence one or two of thought retailers for our news and analysis is ultimately an honest issue.

SOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is always better to create a policy at a global level on the situation of the people dying because of journalism. The national initiatives in this regard has always been poor. So, there is always a need to create awareness among people, the advantage and disadvantages of such reporting. Moreover, people need to be more careful as to the dangers which can take their life.

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

It is pertinent to further dwell into the role of neighboring countries of the war hit countries to develop a safety plan for the citizen journalists who create awareness of the activities of their government and have risked their lives.

CONCLUSION

Citizen Journalism has its own share of advantages and disadvantages but it is to be noted that it gives every individual a chance to provide his side of the story to the whole world and let the world decide on it. The extent of citizen journalism shows the degree of democracy prevailing in a country. Citizen Journalism has gained much importance and the credit has to be given to the internet. Citizen journalism may have saved many lives, provide a platform for expressing one's view over a matter but it comes along with the responsibility. Every individual has a sense of responsibility to provide truth to the world and not mislead and misinterpret the situations. When an individual observes his sense of duty towards humanity, the world can definitely be made a better place with citizen journalism.

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Chapter 4
Understanding Media During Times of Terrorism

Robert Hackett
Simon Fraser University, Canada

ABSTRACT

Political violence, including terrorism, can be regarded as a form of (distorted) communication, in which media spectacles play an integral role. Conversely, mass-mediated communication can be regarded as a form of violence, and even terror, in several respects. Media are often propagandistic facilitators to state terror. More broadly, they may help to cultivate a political climate of fear and authoritarianism, contributing to conflict-escalating feedback loops. Even more broadly, beyond media representations, dominant media institutions are arguably embedded in relations of global economic, social, and cultural inequality—constituting a form of structural violence. Notwithstanding its democratic potential, the Internet does not comprise a clear alternative in practice, and neither censorship of terrorist spectacles nor the intensified pursuit of dominant forms of journalistic "objectivity" offer viable ways to reduce the media's imbrication with violence. Three potentially more productive strategies explored in this chapter include reforming the media field from within through the paradigm of Peace Journalism, supporting the development of alternative and community media, and building movements for media reform and democratization.

INTRODUCTION

The deformed human mind is the ultimate doomsday weapon (Thompson, 1980, p. 52).

I was reminded of that stark warning by the late British historian E.P. Thompson while listening to Canadian Broadcasting Corporation radio host Rex Murphy in November 2011. On his program *Cross-Country Checkup*, Murphy was interviewing Terry Glavin, a journalist and writer, about Glavin's (2011) latest book (titled *Come from the Shadows*), on Canada's so-called "mission" in Afghanistan. That is, following 9/11, Canadian troops participated in the subsequent invasion of Afghanistan, on the basis of a shifting rationale that arguably had never been adequately debated. Was it about preventing further

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attacks, overthrowing the Taliban regime, protecting women's rights, rebuilding a failed nation, or other unstated geopolitical objectives?

Murphy's telephone caller was a military man from Winnipeg. Asked whether he thought the "mission" was "worth it," the caller indicated it was good for the Canadian armed forces, because it gave them a chance to put their training and tools to "practical" use. On the face of it, that is an extraordinary statement from the perspective of human morality. It appears to justify invasion, bombing and war, and the massive organized spending of blood and treasure, on the grounds that they give the military a chance to try out its weapons. Would anybody argue for burning villages as a means of testing new fire engines? Interestingly, Rex Murphy did not challenge the caller's answer, but instead simply thanked him for his service to Canada.

That brief radio exchange, I suggest, is part of a broader pattern. Since the 9/11 terrorist attacks, and particularly the advent of the Conservative government of Stephen Harper, there has been a well-funded effort to militarize Canada's culture (Richler, 2012). That campaign helps to explain why recent official Canada Day celebrations are festooned with tanks and military equipment on which youngsters are invited to play; why the Harper government is rescuing from its erstwhile historical obscurity the War of 1812 against the U.S. as a symbol of Canadian identity, to take its place alongside the battle of Vimy Ridge during the inter-imperialist slaughter of World War I; and why professional hockey teams have special games honoring the military (Shipley, 2013). Canada's hegemonic media have often followed suit, providing prominent, respectful, and often emotive treatment of the 158 Canadian men and women who have died in the Afghan "mission" since 2002, while paying far less attention, for example, to the approximately *10,000* Canadian workers who have died on the job in the same time period.

Emerging debates around such shifts towards militarization are linked to Canada's involvement in war and armed conflict. However, as the internationally respected Norwegian peace scholar Johan Galtung (1990) has tirelessly argued, the trajectory of war begins long before the first shot is fired. War is typically preceded by euphemisms, lies, the glorification of combat and military, desensitization to violence, and a process of "othering" vis-à-vis a designated enemy. Cultural violence helps to lay the groundwork for the physical violence of war. The form of public storytelling known as journalism, along with other genres of mediated communication, are central to contemporary cultural processes.

Therefore, it is not absurd to ask whether media and terror are two entirely separate categories. Or might they be two sides of the same hideous coin—mediated terror, terrorizing media, or simply, media terror?

VIOLENCE AS COMMUNICATION

Violence can sometimes be acknowledged as a form of communication. Distorted, limited, destructive, immoral, counterproductive perhaps, certainly monologic rather than dialogic, but a kind of communication nevertheless. Long before 9/11, two European peace researchers argued that a defining characteristic of insurgent terrorism was the use of politically motivated violence against victims who were not the primary targets of the action (Schmid & de Graaf, 1982). Rather, the targets are other groups—typically, enemy governments or publics or rival groups and potential supporters. Schmid and de Graaf (1982) saw it as no coincidence that the mass media and modern insurgent terrorism (the Russian social-revolutionaries' use of "propaganda of the deed") emerged at the same historical moment—towards the end of the 19th century.

The televised spectacle is integral to contemporary insurgent terrorism. The fanatics who planned 9/11 clearly calculated that the first aircraft crashing into the twin towers would generate a nation-wide, real-time audience for the second plane's stunning and traumatizing arrival. Political communication scholar Eric Louw (2005) identified a variety of goals that al-Qaeda achieved through its choreographed violence. Specifically, it created fear, anger, and thirst for revenge throughout the United States; it demonstrated American vulnerability; it boosted recruitment and morale for al-Qaeda and other Islamicist groups; it propagandized al-Qaeda's cause; and it generated political polarization throughout the world—dangerous for humanity, but politically useful to elements on both (discursively constructed) "sides" in the subsequent "war on terror."

However, modern terrorism was originally an instrument *of* rather than *against* state power—that is, Robespierre's Reign of Terror during the French Revolution (Schmid & de Graaf, 1982). "State violence, particularly state terrorism that operates in violation of accepted human rights or international law, often prefers to hide in the shadows—but not always" (Hackett, 2007b, p. 3). Counter-insurgency campaigns often include both direct violence and efforts to "win hearts and minds" through public relations and media manipulation (Louw, 2005, p. 248). States may also use violence itself as a form of one-sided communication. The show trials of authoritarian states, intended to intimidate potential dissidents, are one example. During the Vietnam War, the U.S. government spoke of the bombing of Hanoi as a way to "send a message" to the North Vietnamese government. In this context, one might contemplate the brand-name of the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq: "Shock and Awe" (Hackett, 2007b). Was it demonstrative violence intended in part to dramatize the potential consequences of defying the imperial world order?

MEDIA AS VIOLENCE

If terrorism is a distorted form of communication, can mass-mediated communication also be a form of terror?

One common view sees news media as at least unwitting accomplices of insurgent terrorists, by not only spreading their messages and psychological impact, but also by enhancing their legitimacy and recruitment efforts. Liebes and Kampf (2004) argue that in the changed media ecology (including the emergence of al-Jazeera) since 9/11, global journalism has turned terrorists into regular sources, and even cultural "superstars."

That is a contestable view, at least in the North American context, where mainstream media are far more likely to focus on the destructive actions and future threat of insurgent terrorism, rather than on its grievances or even the social conditions that breed it. A more plausible case can be made that media are more typically handmaidens of state terror. With honorable exceptions, the American media largely uncritically amplified the Bush government's now discredited claims about Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction and links to 9/11, or at the very least, failed to question the accuracy, logic, and evidentiary basis for the Bush narrative. That media role is now widely regarded as a key to unleashing the enormously costly invasion and occupation that followed (Schechter, 2003).

Beyond such overtly political/propagandistic functions, hegemonic media have in some respects helped to nurture a culture of terror. Why did so many New Yorkers express a sense of "surrealism" at the 9/11 destruction of the twin towers? Perhaps because the attack was the materialization of a catastrophe already embedded cinematically in the public imagination, one that has been primed by a profit-driven, commercially oriented film and television industry to expect a dystopic future—or none at all. Social theorist Klaus Theweleit has provocatively suggested that the "producers of catastrophe films are of course terrorists, simply in a milder form" (Theweleit, cited in Herz, 2006, p. 53).

Add to the mix a local commercial television journalism that emphasizes mayhem—fires, crime, collisions, and murder—and the American mediascape has the makings of what the late communication scholar George Gerbner considered a degrading, inhumane, and even toxic cultural environment. In his lifelong research on how media "cultivate" particular perceptions of and orientations to the world, Gerbner showed that heavy TV viewers were disproportionately likely to distrust other people, to see the world as a threatening place, and to support authoritarian approaches to social problems—a phenomenon he labeled the Mean World Syndrome (Gerber et al., 1986; Morgan, 2002).

With the presence of a stronger public service broadcaster, Canadian television (still the primary source of news for most Canadians) has not gone so far down the "mayhem" path, compared to commercial American television. Yet impressionistically, and as implied at the start of this chapter, Canadian media have not been immune to the tendency to emphasize insurgent terrorism and to celebrate military power.

If hegemonic media help to cultivate a culture and a politics of fear, such a cultural environment creates incentives for politicians and governments to appeal to "security," resulting in military strength and crime crackdowns as a fast track to popularity. Conversely, it presents opportunities for politicians to avoid climate crisis, poverty, inequality, corporate corruption, and other pressing issues that might disrupt business as usual—the kinds of issues raised globally by the 2011 Occupy Wall Street protest movement. It is a political culture that fuels the military-industrial complex, the private security industry, the small arms trade, a gated community/Fortress America mentality, and a foreign policy that arguably practices state terrorism, economic exploitation, and cultural domination. Could one concoct a better recipe to foster fear amongst dominant groups, hatred amongst subordinate populations, and a cycle of terror and counter-terror?

What is at the root of media-as-terror? Some see a link forged by technology (Hackett, 2007a), one that arguably continues to strengthen along with dramatic changes in communication and media technologies (Karmasin et al., 2013). Terrorism and communication interact with one another, as "from an anthropological viewpoint, violence can be seen as a specific form of communication" (Ibid, p. xi). A generation ago, Jerry Mander (1978) analyzed a host of what he considered to be inherent technological biases in television, a medium that, two decades into the Internet era, is still the primary source of news for most Canadians and Americans. He asserts that television favors death, commodities, artificially highlighted events, compressed time, charismatic leaders, fast-paced and fixation-inducing techniques, and war rather than peace:

War is better television than peace. It is filled with highlighted moments, contains action and resolution, and delivers a powerful emotion: fear. Peace is amorphous and broad. The emotions connected with it are subtle, personal and internal. These are far more difficult to televise (Mander, 1978, p. 323).

That is a plausible argument, so long as we do not essentialize television as a medium. Any comprehensive international survey would show that TV is quite capable of offering diverse and thoughtful programming. It is not inherently a violence-promoting medium. What is important is the governing logic—the political economy—within which the medium is institutionalized. Gerbner argued that the prevalence of violent programming in American commercial TV and films was shaped not mainly by audience preferences, but by profit-making strategies, such as the relative ease with which "action films" could be translated and exported to overseas markets (Morgan, 2002). After all, the onscreen dialogue of actors such as Sylvester Stallone and Bruce Lee is not replete with culturally specific nuances.

During the 1990s, one of America's leading environmentalist writers taped one day's worth of programming available on the 100 cable channels in one Virginia community. Asking himself, "What would the world look like if this was your source of information"?, Bill McKibben (1999) spent a mind-numbing year viewing the tapes and found the essential message to be one of narcissistic consumerism: "You, the person watching the television, you are the most important thing on Earth. Everything revolves around you." He concluded that:

The thing to fear from [commercial] television is less the sight of [people] mowing each other down with machine guns than the sight of people having to have every desire that enters their mind gratified immediately . . . that kind of culture is going to be a violent one, no matter what images one shows. Television hasn't done this by itself, of course, but it's the anchor and central idol of this system of values that dominates us (McKibben, 1999, pp. 45-46).

More broadly, Majid Tehranian (2002) argues that the world's media are dominated by state and commercial/corporate organizations, tied respectively to the logics of identity and commodity fetishism. Such media generate political or commercial propaganda that too often constructs hostile and demonizing images of the Other—fertile cultural soil for the weeds of terrorism. Global media also generate a "fishbowl effect," in which the exaggerated opulence portrayed in American television programs (the "lifestyles of the rich and famous") is on display to the rest of the world, an excellent mechanism for breeding resentment. Thus, he says, the "envy and hatred generated by global communication seems to have outpaced mutual understanding, respect and tolerance" (Tehranian, 2002, p. 59).

Lynch and McGoldrick (2005) hypothesize one way that media representations may contribute, even if unwittingly, to the escalation of conflict. They posit a "feedback loop" between journalism and political realities, as governments and other powerful sources create "facts" (e.g., policy statements, statistics, initiatives, etc.), intending to have them "reported in such a way as to pass on a preferred or dominant reading" (Lynch & McGoldrick, 2005, p. 218). In that process, sources rely on their own previous observations of media to anticipate the nature of news coverage, which will favor some courses of action over alternative options. For instance, if incidents of political violence are reported without context, a "crackdown" may be incentivized.

Further, media terror is not only about media representations of violence or media's presumably unwitting role in its escalation. Media themselves are a *form* of structural violence, which Lynch and McGoldrick define as a structure, often understood as a system of political, social, or economic relations, that creates "barriers that people cannot remove . . . an *invisible form* of violence, *built into* ways of doing and ways of thinking," a form that "includes economic exploitation, political repression and cultural alienation" (2005, pp. 59-60, *emphasis in original*). Through the dominant global media, perhaps the world is wired in such a way as to reproduce the social and economic inequalities and cultural hierarchies that fuel the resentment, ignorance, and desperation underlying political extremism and insurgent terrorism. Writing in the wake of the 1980s New World Information and Communication Order movement, which called *inter alia* for more equal information flows between the global North and South, Jorg Becker (1982) attacked the liberal notion that the extension of transnational information flows necessarily promotes peace. Deriding the typical research focus on the effects of media (representations of) violence on their audiences, Becker reframed the issue: media are embedded in, and help to reproduce, relations of inequality within and between nations. In his words:

If mass-media reception as well as production are at once expression and motor of structural violence; if communications technology can be understood, historically, only as an integral part of the emerging military industrial complex; if the access to and the power over the mass media are unequal and unbalanced . . . then the mass media can fulfill their original hoped for function as "peace-bringers" [only] under rare and exceptional circumstances. The representation of violence in the mass media, then, is part and parcel of the universal violence of the media themselves (Becker, 1982, p. 227).

Since the 1980s, media globalization (i.e., the emergence of global media and advertising markets, the rise of transnational media conglomerates, etc.) has arguably (sometimes) moderated state authoritarianism or promoted notions of human rights. However, its relationship to democratization is at best contradictory (Zhao & Hackett, 2005). Its dark side reveals an equally repressive role. First, global media frequently facilitate and legitimize relations of inequality, hostility, and hierarchy, whether through the nationalist biases and blind spots of news organizations with a basis in a particular state, or through promoting the consumerist lifestyles available only to a minority of the world's people and at huge environmental costs. Second, the very structure of hegemonic media excludes the global majority from participation in public discourse, whether through overt censorship or through market mechanisms that embody a logic of one dollar-one vote, rather than one person-one vote.

Thus, what about the Internet? Debates about the Internet's impact on public communication, particularly journalism, are well rehearsed. Technophiles emphasize its perceived contributions to democracy, including its potential for interactivity and many-to-many communication, its capacity to evade or bypass censorship, to hold journalists and propagandists accountable to a more diverse marketplace of ideas, to facilitate transnational mobilization by democratization movements, and to vastly broaden the range of voices and information in the public domain.

However, do digital networks promote the kind of dialogic and inclusive communication that can drain the swamps of hatred? Do they reduce the cultural and structural violence (such as severe economic inequality) that can breed physical violence, including the resort to insurgent terrorism? Simply to state the question that bluntly is to invite a realistic skepticism. Most obviously, the Internet provides new tools and conduits for propaganda and recruitment by organized hate and terror groups—from the Websites of white supremacist organizations, to the video recorded beheadings notoriously posted by al-Qaeda. More subtly, the "digital divide" in access and effective use of the Internet parallels and reinforces rather than challenges the distribution of cultural, political, and economic power globally—the kind of mediated structural violence that Becker (1982) warned about three decades ago. Responding to the question of whether the Internet promotes global understanding, British media scholar James Curran (2012) summarizes the research this way:

[T]he idea that cyberspace is a free, open space where people from different backgrounds and nations can commune with each other and build a more deliberative, tolerant world overlooks a number of things. The world is unequal and mutually uncomprehending (in a literal sense); it is torn asunder by conflicting values and interests; it is subdivided by deeply embedded national and local cultures (and other nodes of identity such as religion and ethnicity); and some countries are ruled by authoritarian regimes. These different aspects of the real world penetrate cyberspace, producing a ruined tower of Babel with

multiple languages, hate Websites, nationalist discourses, censored speech and over-representation of the advantaged (Curran, 2012, p. 11).

Thus, the extent to which the Internet exacerbates or ameliorates the preconditions of terrorism, or even constitutes an extension of a culture of terror, is not predetermined by its technological potentialities. Rather, it is shaped by the way that it is inserted in political, economic, and social relations.

BEYOND MEDIA TERROR?

In advancing the concept of media terror, I would never suggest that the everyday work of reporters—professionals trying their best to deliver honest accounts of the day's events—is the moral equivalent of suicide bombing. Their respective intentions and immediate impact differ, it goes without saying, and that matters. Additionally, the category "media" is far too general, conflating organizations of different size, orientation, governing logic, and quality.

Still, in a world where politics and conflict are increasingly mediatized, one need not accept all the arguments in this chapter to acknowledge that dominant national and global media, generically speaking, are too often implicated in relations and acts of violence, and the politics of fear. Is there a way to dismantle the media/terror nexus?

The censorship of terrorist spectacles, in a misguided effort to deprive insurgent terrorists of the publicity they need, is hardly an option. Censorship would undermine a core putative function of media—to assist audiences in surveying the social and political environment, obviously including violent assaults on social order. Moreover, a censored press would deepen the shadows around the problem of state terrorism and sharpen the hierarchies of access that comprise a form of structural violence. In any event, outside of very closed regimes, censorship of terrorist spectacles is not likely to be effective in the era of the Internet and eyewitness accounts from online citizen journalists (Allan, 2004).

Nor does the pursuit of "objectivity," as it is normally understood and practiced within western journalism, offer a way out. To the contrary, as numerous authors have shown, the "regime of objectivity" in hegemonic North American media too often ties journalism to narrow official optics and to war propaganda (Hackett & Zhao, 1998). What specific mechanisms may have that effect? They include the heavy dependence on "authoritative" sources, such as government and corporate spokespeople; the conventions of "balance" that lead to the representation of conflict as two-sided zero-sum affairs in which one side's gain is the other's loss; and the focus on timely events (e.g., today's suicide bombing) rather than context, structures, and processes, such as poverty, political dysfunction, foreign meddling, or military occupation—or more positively, grassroots peace-building (Lynch & McGoldrick, 2005). Such contexts may help audiences understand the complexities of conflicts and alternative options for conflict resolution, but news media often avoid them, partly because they are more difficult to narrate than a single event, and partly for fear of opening the door to accusations of "bias."

Rather than doing more of what does not work, the challenge is to find ways that media can contribute to a more humane culture, to genuinely representative and transnational public spheres, and to the prevention or transformation of conflicts into non-violent conflict management and/or resolution. Briefly, three strategies can be suggested.

One approach is to reform the journalism field from within. It is unreasonable to expect journalists or media organizations to reduce levels of violence and terror on their own. However, there are signs that practicing journalists and journalism educators are aware that they may be unwitting contributors to conflict escalation, and they are thinking through alternative ways to report conflict. Since the 1990s, a reform movement known as Peace Journalism (PJ) has emerged. It has found particularly fruitful soil in societies—such as Indonesia and the Philippines—that have been riven by internal conflict in which media were perceived to play a role, and where media institutions have opportunities and incentives to seek new roles and professional norms at a time of political transition from brutal dictatorships (Hackett, 2006). Simply put, its public philosophy is "when journalists make choices—of what stories to report and about how to report them—that create opportunities for society at large to consider and value non-violent responses to conflict" (Lynch & McGoldrick, 2005, p. 5).

Originally proposed by Galtung (1990), PJ draws upon the insights of the emergent discipline of conflict analysis. It comprises a mode of analysis and evaluation, a toolkit of alternative practices for reporting particular conflicts, and a campaign for change by journalists and activists. Looking beyond the overt violence that is the stuff of conventional journalism, which is regarded as tantamount to War Journalism (WJ), PJ calls attention to the context of attitudes, behavior, and contradictions, and the need to identify a range of stakeholders broader than the "two sides" engaged in violent confrontation. If WJ presents conflict as a zero-sum tug-of-war, PJ invites journalists to reframe conflict as a cat's cradle of relationships between various stakeholders. It calls on journalists to identify the needs and objectives that underlie conflicts, and to include a broader range of sources, particularly victims and peace-builders, working for creative and non-violent solutions. It keeps eyes open for ways of transforming and transcending the hardened lines of conflict, and pays heed to aggression and casualties on all sides, avoiding the conflict-escalating trap of emphasizing "our" victims and "their" atrocities. By contrast with much conventional reporting of war and terrorism, PJ looks beyond direct physical violence, to explore the structural and cultural violence (e.g., racism, militarism, etc.) that may underlie conflict situations (Hackett, 2010).

While its prescription for media change may be appealing to many, PJ in many ways runs against the grain of governing logics in dominant news media. These include the attractiveness of war as a televisual spectacle; the difficulties of constructing "peace" as a saleable narrative; the symbiosis between economic, political, and media elites at national and global levels; the organizationally convenient dependence on official and military sources; the relatively high cost of contextual and localized reporting at a time when major media conglomerates (at least in North America) are slashing investment in journalism; and the national basis of much of the world's news media and their audiences (notwithstanding the recently hypothesized emergence of the global newsroom).

Thus, a second approach to media change suggests itself: support alternative and community journalism as a field of practices, projects, networks, and practitioners rooted in civil society, parallel to, but also challenging and influencing hegemonic journalism, and with far greater independence from corporate, state, and military power.

While there are debates in the burgeoning literature about how to define alternative journalism, an ideal type might include these characteristics: participatory models of production; challenges to established media power (including the professionalization and highly capitalized economy of commercial journalism and the division between media producers and audiences); more bottom-up ways of scanning and reporting the world, challenging conventional elite-oriented and ideologically conservative news values; and a positive orientation to social movements, social change, and/or marginalized communities (Atton, 2009; Atton & Hamilton, 2008; Hackett & Zhao, 1998; Hackett, 2010).

To be sure, some alternative media may be linked to movements that advocate violence or that lack a commitment to universal human rights and/or other-oriented ethics. Within the broad spectrum of ethnic diaspora media, for instance, some amplify the most militant or uncompromising views. However, at their best, alternative media share with PJ a commitment to social justice, to the critical analysis of social structure beyond the everyday spectacles of conventional news, and to the exposure and removal of the cultural and structural violence that can breed terrorism. Speculatively, the media most likely to meet these criteria are those linked to communities seeking to protect themselves from direct violence, or linked to oppositional social movements seeking democratization in the face of structural violence.

Even at its best, however, as the very term "alternative" journalism implies, it typically speaks to and for politically or culturally marginalized communities, and lacks the resources to transform public communication in the culture as a whole. Thus, a third avenue for enhancing the media's potential to reduce cultural and structural violence is suggested—media reform. It entails intervening in institutional fields adjacent to the media—notably politics and social movements—to change the environment of journalism, the gravitational pulls to which it is subject. One key aspect of journalism's institutional environment is state policy regarding culture and communication. Here, there are very encouraging signs. Citizen movements have emerged in a number of countries, demanding democratic reform of state communication policies to help bring forth more accountable, diverse, humane, and representative media (Hackett & Carroll, 2006; McChesney, 2004). In recent years, similar efforts by civil society organizations have been directed towards democratizing global media governance, such as the Campaign for Communication Rights in the Information Society (O Siochru, 2005). More broadly, social justice movements struggling to project their voice in the public arena could help shift the environment of journalism, particularly by lending a portion of their resources to support media reform organizations like the Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom in the U.K., freepress.net in the U.S., openmedia.ca in Canada, or their counterparts in South Korea, Taiwan, and elsewhere. Mobilized audiences, demanding "real news" as a condition of their own empowerment, could also make a difference.

It would be extremely naïve, of course, to believe either that media transformation can occur in the absence of determined movements for broader social change, or that media change alone can prevent insurgent terrorism, state terrorism, or cultural and structural violence. However, media are clearly part of the nexus of forces at play. We should take comfort in the fact that people can still be outraged by overt acts of terror. While Dobkin (cited in Lee, 2007) cautions that we are en route to normalizing state counter-terror and repression, we have not yet reached the point portrayed in Terry Gilliam's satirical film *Brazil*, when a terrorist bomb exploding in a restaurant attracts no attention from those diners not immediately eviscerated. Can those of us in the globe's gated communities extend our sense of outrage to forms of structural violence that do not immediately threaten us? Ultimately, a terror-free world requires an "enabling environment" for entrenching popular communication rights, empathizing with those we have been taught to see as the Other, and transcending a politics of fear and hate.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Communication Technologies: Interactive digital tools used to share information.

Media Reform: Proposed attempts to reform mass media towards an agenda that is in alignment with public needs and away from corporate interests.

Military Conflict: A clash, battle, or struggle between armed forces.

Peace Journalism (PJ): A public philosophy in which journalists make choices about what and how to report, to create opportunities for considering and valuing non-violent responses to conflict.

Political Identity: An individual's or a community's political affiliation.

Propaganda: Information, ideas, or rumors deliberately disseminated to help or harm a person, group, nation, movement, institution, etc.

War Journalism (WJ): A type of journalistic conduct that instigates the audience and society to support war and conflict.

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Chapter 5
Role of Traditional and New Media in Ethnic Conflict in Nigeria's Middle Belt Region:
A Primer on Peace Building and Community Development

Bala A. Musa
Azusa Pacific University, USA

ABSTRACT

A chief obstacle to community development and progress in sub-Saharan Africa is persistent, widespread, low-scale, yet catastrophic, ethnic and communal conflicts. Nigeria is no exception! Nigeria's Middle-Belt region has experienced long-standing ethno-religious and political conflict/crises. Frequent and intermittent ethnic conflicts have persisted among the various ethnic groups. This research looks at the seemingly contrasting, yet complimentary, roles of traditional and new media in ethnic conflict transformation in the area. Using a peace journalism media-ecological model that incorporates spiral of silence, priming, agenda-setting, and framing theoretical frameworks, the research analyzes the (dis)functional roles legacy and new media play in conflict exacerbation, resolution, and mediation. It employs a qualitative interpretive critical approach to examine how traditional and new media respond to ethnic conflicts in the region. It proposes a new ethic for ethnic conflict reporting, suitable for professional and citizen journalists.

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria's Middle-Belt region has been a contested zone of ethnic, religious, and cultural identities. Almost every community and locale faces competing claims of ownership and entitlement among different co-existing groups. Ethnic and religious skirmishes have become incessant among the various groups. These conflicts range from sporadic attacks resulting in few casualties to protracted conflicts that have resulted in the destruction of entire communities and the displacements of massive numbers of people.

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Using the UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Analysis model, this paper classifies conflicts into minor and major conflicts. Minor conflicts are considered as those conflicts that result in more than 25, but less than 1,0000 deaths in a year. Major conflicts are those that result in more than 1,000 deaths in a year (Hegre, Karlsen, Nygârd, Strand, & Urdahl, 2013).

Some have observed that since the end of the Cold War, there has been a decrease in some kinds of conflicts and an increase in other types (Tehranian, 1993; Musa, 2009a). Tehranian (1993) observed that:

The end of the Cold War . . . has unleashed the centrifugal, ethnic, and tribal forces within nation-states. . . . It has led to the breakup of the former Soviet Union, the world's largest multinational empire, the breakdown of multi-ethnic patchworks such as Yugoslavia and Iraq, has threatened the breakup of other nation-states such as Canada and India, and unleashed racial and ethnic violence in the United States, Israel, South Africa, and other multiracial and multiethnic societies. (p. 13)

In the time since the end of the Cold War, there have been reductions in the frequency of international and regional large-scale conflicts; the kind of conflict UCDP describes as state conflicts. Instead, internal conflicts between groups in various countries, or non-state actors, have been escalating. From conflicts in Syria to crises in Ukraine, many lives have been affected by wars, resulting in significant losses, catastrophes, and fatalities. Africa has had a significant share of these human and natural disasters. Somalia has been a Failed State since the early 1990s. Sudan's civil war which lasted many decades and claimed millions of lives, eventually leading to the eventual breakup of the country, with the creation of South Sudan. It was hoped that this was going to lead to peace among the groups. Instead, the conflict in Sudan has continued. Worse still, the new nation of Southern Sudan quickly deteriorated into another horrific ethnic conflict that continues till date. Likewise, there have been major conflicts in the Congo, Central Democratic Republic, Eritrea, and other countries in the continent.

For the scope of this research, attention will be given specifically to the central region of Nigeria. It is a region that comprises of many states; almost each state consists of tens of ethnic groups. The dynamics that drive the conflicts in Nigeria are reflective of the conflicts in other parts of Africa. The factors that account for the ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria's Middle-Belt both account for and predict conflicts in other African countries. Understanding the role of communication in these conflicts have implications for development or lack thereof, not only for Africa's most populous country but also for the continent and the world.

Reporting on the recent ethnic conflict in Wukari Local Government Area of Taraba State, which led to the loss of 30 lives, although others report much higher casualty figures, Reuters News Agency asserted that:

Taraba State is part of a volatile region where Nigeria's largely Christian south and mostly Muslim north meet. The region is often the scene of violence between seminomadic, cattle-keeping groups like the Fulani and settled farming peoples like the Jukun, usually over land disputes.

The fact that Fulani settlers tend to be Muslim and other ethnic groups, including the Jukun, are mostly Christian, sometimes gives the conflict a religious dimension. (Reuters, 2013)

This forms the backdrop for many of the conflicts that have been endemic, but not exclusive, to the central region of Nigeria. As will be examined shortly, the conflict fault-lines in this region run through ethnic divides. They are also coterminous with religious, geographic, political, cultural, and socio-economic lines. That means these are not just ethnic conflicts. Often the ethic groups are not just at loggerheads because of their identity differences, but the underlying issues include resource, political, and territorial competitions as wells. That means how the conflicts are framed in the media is essential to the process of preventing, transforming, and managing them. Thus the importance of understanding the role of traditional and new media in reporting and transforming these conflicts.

BACKGROUND

Until as recently as 2009 when the activities of the *Boko Haram* terrorist group have dominated news about conflict and violence in Nigeria, the international community was relatively unaware of the conflicts in Nigeria's Middle-Belt. Conflicts that received attention, in the past two decades, were conflicts in the Niger Delta area (Mogekwu, 2011; Ifedi & Anwu, 2011). That is because, since the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the New York Twin Towers, international terrorism has garnered more attention from the news media and the world community. The Niger Delta crisis also received significant media attention because major oil facilities were being attacked by the militants. In some cases, foreigners were being kidnapped, and oil production activities were being stopped. Another factor that brought media attention to violence such as the *Boko Haram* attacks was that these were major conflicts, based on the criteria identified earlier.

Apart from the attention that these crises received, Nigeria has been perceived as a relatively peaceful country since after its Civil War in 1967-1970. Those closely familiar with events in the country know that this is not exactly the case. They will tell you that beyond the façade of a stable country, based on the presence of a central government, in many ways the country bears the marks of a Failed State. In 2009, Nigeria was ranked 15 out of 177 nations in the Failed States Index according to the Fund for Peace think-tank and *Foreign Policy* magazine. Since Nigeria does not have a power vacuum at the center, it is hard to conceive of the country as a Failed State. Except, at closer observation, one could see that armed robbers and kidnappers reigned, terrorized, and killed people at will. Many communities in Benue, Plateau, Nassarawa, Kaduna and Akwa Ibom States have been attacked by Fulani herdsmen resulting in significant losses of lives. Interethnic violent conflicts have been recurrent between the Tiv and the Jukun, the Jukun and the Kuteb, the Ijaw and the Itsekiri, the Ife and the Modakeke, Berom and the Hausa-Fulani, the Aguleri and Umeleri conflicts, to name but a few (Ikpe, 2009).

The sum effect of these ethnic conflicts scattered across all regions of Nigeria has been the proliferation of failed communities – a phenomenon not well-understood or discussed by the press. The Middle Belt of Nigeria, in particular, has many destroyed communities and displaced people who are not able to go about their daily activities – farming, trading, schooling, etc. Since the rise of the *Boko Haram* fundamentalism, many communities have been razed. Thousands of internally displaced people have moved to refugee camps and are not able to continue with their regular economic activities. Although, the *Boko Haram* crisis is not an ethnic crisis, it is worth mentioning the homegrown terrorism is having across the country. The communities affected by ethnic conflicts have experienced similar fate in that they have had to abandon their homes and seek security at police and army barracks, relocate to other cities, or lose their livelihood because of the conflicts.

James (n.d.), in his book, *The Settler Phenomenon in the Middle Belt and the Problem of National Integration,* listed over thirty major communal conflicts between host communities and settlers from

1980-1998. One would say that the frequency and intensity of those conflicts have only increased in the last two decades. The main courses of the conflicts have ranged from land disputes to chieftaincy, religious, and resource wars.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This study takes a critical-cultural perspective on ethnic relations, ethnic conflicts and media's role in culture change. It is grounded in the premise that power structures in the society and the struggle to control resources and the distribution of those resources are foundational to intergroup relations. The social fissions in many of these societies are exploited by desire for dominance, fear of being dominated, and suspicion toward other groups.

An ethnic group is a "collectivity within a larger society having real or putative common ancestry, memories of a shared historical past, and a cultural focus on one or more symbolic elements defined as the epitome of their peoplehood" (Schermerhorn, 1970, p. 12). Those symbolic elements include "kinship, localism, religious affiliation, language and tribal affiliation" (Laird, 200, p. 698). Marger (1997) also observes that these and other factors that define ethnic groups include particular cultural traits, sense of shared history and "peoplehood" (community), ethnocentrism, involuntary membership, and territoriality.

Shared culture, language, religion, and other forms of identity make community possible. Community provides a sense of belonging and safety for its members. In community, people are socialized into the basic norms of civil society. Both Buber (1970) and Christians (1988) have opined that being in relationship is intrinsic to being human. This sense of community that makes groups care for their members also creates a pernicious attitude of "They" toward outsiders. In other words, kinship between members of groups creates natural in-group and out-group identities. This need to protect "Us" from "Them" is at the root of many of the conflicts that will be discussed here. Using Buber's analysis, this sense-making of who "We" are and who "They" are can lead to I-Thou or I-It intergroup relationships.

Christian's (1988) dialogic communication theory helps illuminate the difference between interpersonal and intergroup relations that either lead to honoring the Other, or lead to dehumanizing and exploiting the Other. The fact that we are talking about conflicts and wars in the Middle-Belt region of the Nigeria suggests that, in many cases, ethnic relations in this region are characterizes more by I-It relationships.

I-It relationships, when allowed to progress unchecked, result in conflicts, wars, and destructions. It is by objectifying the other that groups inflict harm on one another in their attempt to achieve their ends. Conflict is integral to interpersonal and intergroup relationships. The presence of conflict in itself is not necessarily the problem. It is how the conflict is handled that distinguishes healthy relationships from unhealthy ones. The many ethno-religious conflicts in Kaduna, Plateau, Taraba, Bauchi, Benue, Nassarawa, and Adamawa States of Nigeria speak volumes about how the groups have responded to differences in goals, expectations, and means of realizing them.

In addition to the nature of the relationships between the groups, media have played roles in the conflicts that are best understood through the lens of agenda setting theory, framing, theory, and spiral of silence theory. These roles have differed based on the nature and ethos of the conflicts.

ISSUES, CONTROVERSIES, AND PROBLEMS

Hegre, Karlsen, Nygård, Strand, & Urdahl (2013) have observed that factors that influence ethnic conflict are cyclical – they both predict and explain these conflicts. In looking at the nature of the conflicts that are witnessed in Nigeria's central region, one can notice that these factors are very much at play. One of these is what they term, *Conflict History.* This refers to how these conflicts date back in time. Among the groups that have been mentioned, it is evident that the conflicts are not just recent and isolated developments. The immediate causes of the recent events could be recent, but the strained relations, distrust, hostility, and occasional violence date back to a long time. The history of these communities consists of the numerous times that they have gone to war with one another. For instance, war songs exist in the Jukun language about particular encounters with, say, the Tiv. These songs have been passed down through the generations. Another marker of the historical nature of these conflicts is in the derogatory names and negative stereotypes that these groups tend to have of their neighbors. Names such as *Munchi, Zumpere, Apyi, Kyatun,* symbolize the mutual negative perception and underlying animosity between the groups.

Temporal Dummies account for violence that break out as decoy and by-products of the lingering hostility that already exists between the groups. The idea of viewing the other as an enemy means at any given time violence can erupt between them. There are usually intervals of uneasy calm or even real peace that prevails between the groups. However, violence tends to return, in some cases, at regular periods or intervals such as the farming season, the cattle migratory season, the fishing season, the hunting season, or election season. Any number of events can pile up the scab of the emotional wound, giving rise to another round of bloodletting. Disputes between individuals, which are normal within the in-group, when they involve a member of the out-group, they easily get interpreted as a spite or threat to one's group as a whole, leading to large-scale conflict.

Hegre, Karlsen, Nygård, Strand, & Urdahl (2013) find *Neighborhoods and Regions* as contributory factors to conflict. Certain parts of the city or community tend to be hot spots where conflict seems to occur more frequently. The nature of the relationships in some areas predispose them to higher tendencies for conflicts to occur. According to the researchers, these may include poverty, population density, and existence of conflict fault-lines in these areas.

Population, they argue, is correlated with potential for conflict. The more the population has grown, the greater the risk that conflict would arise. This is probably related to the resource competition that is heightened by population growth. The Tiv-Jukun conflicts in Benue and Taraba States, the Tiv-Fulani conflicts in Benue State, the Fulani-Berom conflicts in Plateau State, and the Nassarawa-Tiv conflicts in Nassarawa State have escalated as each group has felt "encroached" upon by the other group. Often these feeling of encroachment and entitlement stems from one group's need for more farming, grazing, residential, or investment land. As population grows, the groups need more space. Proximity to one another causes them to push against each other as they expand, often resulting in skirmishes. These expansions and, in some cases, migrations in search of better economic opportunities, result in the *settler-indigene* mentality that tends to increase the conflict between the groups.

Education is said to also be a predictor of the likelihood of ethnic conflict breaking out between groups (see also, Thyne, 2006; Collier & Hoeffler, 2004). These and other studies found that higher levels of education, greater the number of students enrolled in various levels of education, and more community investments in education are positively correlated to lower conflict in that community. It could be that level of education correlates positively or negatively with other factors to reduce the potential for conflict. By this, we mean such factors as poverty, xenophobia, and cosmopolitanism. As mentioned earlier, poverty and competition for scarce resources increases the likelihood of conflict. In any society, higher education has been found to increase the earning capacity of individuals thereby reducing poverty. Education also expands a person's mental horizon and, potentially, reduces stereotyping and xenophobia toward out-group members. In many parts of Nigeria, individuals attend school with people outside their own community and form friendships and bonds that lead to greater mutual understanding.

The younger the age of the populace, or what Hegre, Karlsen, Nygârd, Strand, & Urdahl (2013) refer to as *Youth Bulges*, the greater the propensity for conflict to result in violence. In some societies, when young boys undergo circumcision and other passage rites into youth, they are said to be have been initiated into the warrior age. For instance, young Massai males are often referred to as Massai Warriors. This is not different from any society where it is the young and middle-age adults, between ages 18 and 55, that serve in the military. The youth are the defense force of any society. They are also less conflict averse. This is also true of the conflicts in the central part of Nigeria. One of the most recent crises in Wukari, Taraba State that resulted in the loss of hundreds of lives and destruction of lots of houses and properties was sparked by a disagreement among young people at a soccer field.

Another factor that is seen to shape ethnic conflict is *Ethnic Dominance*. Power imbalance between groups in the same community often results in feelings of animosity. If one group dominates in sphere, be it political, economic, cultural, or otherwise, it tends to breed resentment in the less powerful group. When the dominant group uses its dominance to its advantage and to the disadvantage of the disadvantage of the other group, the less powerful group feels a sense of injustice. Depending on whether or not the disadvantaged group feels it has a fair means of competing will determine how it seeks to equal the playing field. Too often the group seeking to change the status-quo resorts to violence. In recent memory, the genocides in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Rwanda, Cambodia, and wars in Syria and Ukraine are extreme examples (Musa, 2007).

As earlier stated, the settler-indigene phenomenon in many parts of Nigeria's Middle Belt region creates various forms of imbalance and ethnic dominance. In many cases, the natives or original inhabitants outnumber the new arrivals. The numerical majority of the natives gives them advantage in electoral democracy and, thus, control of political institutions. In these and other societies, where politics is a game of winner-takes-all, the minority population fights hard to gain access to or seize control of political power. When they are unable to gain power through democratic means, because of their minority status, the often pursue dominance through economics, education, government bureaucracy, or military hierarchy. When they succeed in these pursuits, they ethnic dominance shift from the native majority population to the minority population in the form of economic, political, military, or bureaucratic power. This, in turn, creates resentment in the majority or native population. These instances abound in various parts of Central Nigeria, accounting for many of the ethnic conflicts.

As a whole, residents of the Middle Belt region of Nigeria are minority populations. That is because each of Nigeria's three major geo-political regions are dominated by one ethnic group, the Hausa-Fulani in the north, the Yoruba in the South-West, and the Ibo in the South-East. Many of the states in the Middle Belt are part of the northern geo-political region. The various native groups that, together, constitute the majority of the inhabitants of this region consists of numerous ethnic groups. This to a great extent accounts for vast diversity of ethnic identities, the predominance ethnic politics, and the frequent ethnic conflicts. The regions inhabited by the three larger ethnic groups do not experience as much ethnic conflict because of their ethnic homogeneity. Although the same struggle for political power and competition for scarce resources often results in communal conflicts, they are not ethnic conflicts per se.

ROLE OF TRADITIONAL AND NEW MEDIA

The picture painted above gives fair background for why ethnic and ethno-religious conflicts are rampant in Nigeria's Middle Belt. For a very long time, these conflicts received very limited attention in both the national international media. That ethnic conflicts are frequent is also supported by Laird (2000), who states that, "In Nigeria, the most populous sub-Saharan nation and home to some 350 distinct tribal groupings, ethnic conflict continues to be endemic" (p. 695). The most widespread and endemic are minor and low-scale long-standing and frequent conflicts. Although per incident each armed conflict can be regarded as minor or low-scale the frequency and widespread nature of these conflicts affects a significant popular. Also because of Nigeria's overall high population, the number of people killed, displaced, orphaned, or otherwise affected adds up to a significant number. While each conflict can be seen by the index stated earlier as a minor conflict, the result of the conflicts in Nigeria's middle-belt region on an annual basis adds up to a major conflict because they result in thousands of lives being loss in total.

Also, of late, with the proliferation of dangerous and high-powered weapons, the scale of destruction witnessed in these inter-ethnic conflicts have reached devastating proportions. This also increases the casualty figures in these conflicts. Unfortunately the individual minor conflicts rampant in the middle belt do not receive the kind of coverage given to civil wars that engulf whole nations, like the kinds fought in Nigeria in the 1960s or in Liberia and Sierra Leone in the 1990s, or the genocides in Rwanda and Dafur. Laird (2004) makes a similar observation that, |"While such massive conflagrations as those of Rwanda and Nigeria get international media coverage and attention, for most sub-Saharan countries localized violent incidents between rival ethnic groups are *ongoing* (p. 696).

In an article titled, "African Stories in Need of Reporters," the *Nieman Reports,* notes that on the eve of the 2004 World Press Day, the United Nations Department of Information launched "10 Stories the World Should Hear More About." Half of those stories were on Africa. These range from conflicts in the Central African Republic to Child Soldiers in Uganda, and Women and Peace-Building in Rwanda. That is to say yes, the media do give some coverage to crises in sub-Saharan Africa. Nevertheless, history has shown that certain factors constrain media coverage of conflicts in sub-Saharan Africa, including ethnic conflicts in Nigeria's Middle-Belt, that hinder them from given adequate coverage or doing justice to the stories.

The media influence conflict through agenda-setting, issue-framing, and issue priming. Traditional media, by their nature, prioritize conflict in deciding what events are newsworthy. Their approaches to conflict reporting range from a sensational approach to dispassionate approach. In addition to the fact that traditional media focus on event-oriented and episodic news frame, they also value scale, prominence, impact, and other factors that tend to dramatize and sensationalize conflict.

The impact on the reporting of conflict in Nigeria's middle-belt region has been more of a spiral of silence effect. Although the impact of the conflicts on the locals have been drastic and devastating, they not seem to rise to the scale where they attract the attention of national and international media. Without the attention of the national and international community, very little effort is mad to resolve the conflicts. The conflicts in Nigeria's middle belt have not seen any international intervention initiatives.

The profit motif, competition, political constraints, etc., limit the ability of traditional media to report with depth and continuously on local conflicts. In the effort to save cost, many national international media have significantly cut their staff. That means they have fewer people to send to the field to report on conflicts. And when they do send staff, those staff have limited time to spend any particular theatre.

Often those interested in those conflicts become aware of them through word of mouth and interpersonal communication rather than through the mass media. The rest of the world doesn't get to know that such conflict has gone on (Musa, 2009b).

Historically, traditional media has been relied upon to set the news agenda and bring awareness to events. Conflict always makes news. And it is expected that media will report on conflicts around the world. However, due to constraints of resources and the need to reach a larger market media tend to focus on large scale event. That means that conflicts have engulf whole nations or have high scale casualty figures will receive priority over the kinds of "minor" or low-scale conflicts in the middle-belt region of Nigeria, despite the fact these conflicts are numerous, perennial and do have significant impact overall.

The limitation of time and resources also mean media practitioners have limited knowledge of the issues and factors driving any particular conflict. The fact that the reporters hop from one conflict theatre to another, have limited knowledge and background information about the warring factions and actors greatly handicap their ability to provide indepth and thorough information. They, therefore, tend to frame these conflicts in shallow terms that fail to provide adequate perspective and understanding. Even in their report on major conflicts like the Rwandan genocide, Musa (2007) found that the media relied on episodic Cold War frames and emphasized such themes as barbarism and tribalism, without delving into the historical, political, and economic causes of the conflicts. This situation is compounded when it comes to reporting on conflicts involving smaller ethnic groups whom very little is know about by the international community prior to the outbreak of conflicts.

Media ownership and control impacts the coverage given to or not given to ethnic conflicts in Nigeria and other developing countries. Until the late 1990s, government had exclusive ownership and control of the electronic media and significant share of the major newspapers. Federal and state governments' interests in the reporting of conflicts have been to manage their reputation and appear to be running the control well, and also ensure that whatever information gets out does not exacerbate the conflict. That means truth-telling is a secondary factor when it comes to reporting on conflicts. Often the information is suppressed or doctored to present a desired image rather than the reality of what has happened. While governments have a responsibility to manage conflict and maintain peace, it is also important they accurately inform the public in order to promote trust. It only by the public being properly educated on issues that there can be real dialogue and attempts at finding solutions. The media's credibility is also at stake. If they, particularly government media, as viewed as tools of government propaganda, they will not be to perform their basic functions of informing the public.

Uncorroborated reports say, in trying to avoid negative publicity, some governors pay journalists to not report or to under-report conflicts and casualty figures. This is may be rare and isolated. Nevertheless, it does not mean that governments don't use various means to control or filter the information about conflicts. State media is a key source of information on conflicts. Likewise are government information officers. Journalists themselves rely on official sources for information. These sources have an interest in managing conflicts, sometimes by suppressing, downplaying, or delaying information about conflicts.

The nature and ethos of traditional media has made it more susceptible to control and manipulation from political authorities and interest groups. Its corporate nature makes it an interest group in the political-economic arena. The result is that political, financial and social pressure is often brought to bear on media organizations and individual journalists. The proliferation of traditional media outlets in Nigeria has been both a blessing and a curse, when it comes to conflict reporting and transformation. It is a blessing in that the public is able to get a diversity of viewpoints. No one group is able to monopolize the media or control information dissemination. The caveat is that despite the multiplicity of media, majority of them are located in urban centers, with the lion's share in Lagos, Abuja, Ibadan, Enugu, and Kaduna.

However, Nigeria's Middle Belt cannot not boast of any mega cities. Likewise the many resource related ethnic conflicts occur most frequently in small rural communities and involve farmland, chieftaincy, local political disputes. These communities receive limited coverage because they do not have local or beat reporters directly assigned to covering their communities. They only receive coverage when the conflicts result in high casualty figures.

Writing on the response of the media to the incessant conflict between the Fulani herdsmen and the Tiv people Benue and Nassarawa States, Hagher (2013) notes that, "*After months of tip-toeing around the subject,* the Nigerian media reported that from the 8-10th, February 2011, armed Fulani herdsmen numbering between 200-500 sacked three districts in Gwer Local government, unleashing an orgy of violence and killing for two days that left scores dead and rendered 20,000 people homeless" (Italics added).

The emphasis on the point Hagher makes in the fact that for long, the media "tip-toed" around these frequent gruesome killings and crises. This has been characteristic of Nigerian traditional media's disposition toward these conflicts that are rampant and frequent in the region. Hagher, noted that communities in Benue State that have experience conflicts with the Fulani include Nyiev, Tse Anda, Dooga, Yandev, Kpata, Lokobi, Mbagwen, Tse Zaki, Tse Kper, Chile, Tse Kpoku, Tse Kpar, Sengev, Gbuku, Tser Yaji. And in Nassarawa State, there have been clashes between Fulani herdsmen and the people of Andori,Rukubi, Akpanaja, Agyema, Idaku, Gidan Rai, Ankome, Agimaka, Ekije development area, Migili, Eggon, Agatu and Doma.

In Taraba State also there have been conflicts between Fulani herdsmen and many communities in Wukari, Ibi, Takum, Bali, Ussa, and other local governments. In other regions The Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) notes that in Plateau State, there have been recent inter-ethnic conflicts involving Fulani, Hausa, Anaguta, Afisare, Birom, Azara, Tarok, and other communities (http://www.ucdp.uu.se/gpdatabase/gpcountry.php?id=119&regionSelect=2-Southern_Africa#).

The list goes on, as far as ethnic and ethno-religious conflicts that have devastated communities in Kaduna, Bauchi, Adamawa, Gombe, Kogi, Niger, and other states of Ngeria's Middle Belt.

Today, there is more diversified ownership of bot print and electronic media. Nevertheless, experience has shown that traditional media journalists tend to rely more on official sources of news. The implication is that conflicts tend to be downplayed or casualty figures are significantly under-reported. This has been typical of media practice across the globe, not just in Nigeria or the developing world.

Diversity of media has been a blessing in that it enables various groups in conflict to express themselves and for different perspectives to be heard. The converse of this is that media have too often been coopted and harnessed as a tool for prosecuting conflicts. History has shown that, in times of conflict, media easily become tools of propaganda. This becomes a source of worry as many people and groups rush to establish their own newspapers, magazines, and broadcast stations. Recent history reminds us of how the broadcast media, particularly radio, was used as a propaganda tool in the Nigerian civil war (Doron, 2014). Also, during the many religious uprisings in Nigeria, such as the Zangon Kataf, Tafawa Balewa, Nassarawa, Yelwa, and Jos crises, among others, media became instruments of inciting violence as well as for calling for calm. This development is, in part, one of the reasons the Nigerian government and those of other development countries, delayed the privatization of broadcast media. While individuals and private corporations have been licensed to own broadcast stations, religious broadcasting has not been licensed for the same concern.

The dawn of social and new media has presented the same opportunities and challenges with regards to ethnic and religious conflict. Examples abound in Nigeria and outside where, instead of traditional media breaking the news of conflicts, it is on social and personal media that people become aware of ethnic and religious conflicts. 2014 and 2015 witnessed repeated clashes along ethnic and religious lines, particularly among the youth in Wukari, Ibi, Gindin Dorawa, and surrounding areas. Time and again, news of these crises were being circulated via personal phones, on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and other social media. Traditional media were late in reporting these events, if at all. Cell phones, the Web, and other new media technology enable local eye witnesses and citizen journalists to disseminate information on the conflict.

This has become the 21st Century approach to conflict reporting in Nigeria and other parts of the world. The power of social media in reporting conflicts was evident in the recent Arab Spring Uprising (Robertson, 2013). Citizen journalists are making it possible for conflicts that would have gone unnoticed to gain global attention on the World Wide Web. That is because of the many characteristics of social media that lend themselves to respond to local and low-scale and large-scale conflicts better that traditional media can. This includes the fact that, social and new media, tend to be more agile and nimble. Individual witnesses to events can, at times, be your only source. An army of citizen journalists serve as the true and first source of news in rule conflicts. With the proliferation of social media, individuals are able to post stories and images of conflicts instantly online, thereby bringing the world's attention to a given incident (Musa, 2014). The youth in Nigeria, whether in the city or rural areas have become very savvy with new media technology. They are able to record, narrate and post in real time communal clashes while they are occurring. It has the potential to draw attention to the conflicts and generate intervention that would otherwise not be possible.

The danger in this scenario is that individuals can exploit the situation by posting false stories that are not vetted or verified. Citizen journalists are able to visit conflict sites at a short notice. They can devote as much time as possible to a story. They are not constrained by the need to abandon a story and go the next hot spot. They are eye-witnesses and stakeholders in the conflicts.

As members of the community, they have better understanding of the issues and the players involved in a conflict. They are able to provide more detailed and accurate background and context. Community leaders are encouraging their members to play the role of the reporter and the investigator by documenting crimes, attacks, and clashes in order to pressure the government and the international community to intervene in some of these forgotten or ignored conflicts. Not only do they have the tools to document and report on the conflicts, they also have the motivation to use the tools at their disposal to resolve the conflicts.

The Anglican Archbishop of Jos, one of the regions most affected by ethnic and religious crises, recently spoke about how he has advised parishioners and pastors in his diocese to accurately document attacks against them in order to brain awareness about the conflicts. This is in the belief that truth and evidence are strong weapons in conflict mediation and peace building (Kwashi, 2015).

However, their proximity and involvements in the conflicts mean that they may not be objective and trustworthy sources of conflict news. That is where traditional media have an edge over new media. Also, the fact that new media report events instantly make it difficult to contextualize or analyze properly. Tweets are too brief to allow for any amount of contextualizing and indepth analysis. Yet they can bring attention and possible action to crimes against humanity which, sadly, are too common in these conflicts.

SOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PEACE-BUILDING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

It's been stated earlier that the frequency of ethnic conflicts in many parts of central Nigeria, has given rise to the phenomenon of failed communities within the seeming stable Nigerian State. In Takum, Taraba State, for instance, the town has been destroyed and many houses laid in ruin since 2000, as result of ethnic conflict between the Kutebs and Jukuns. The displaced people have moved to other cities or relocated to establish new settlements, which are quasi-refugee camps. One such camps is near the army barracks, where they hope to have security. The effect has been that people have lost their livelihoods and are not able to engage in normal economic activities. This has resulted in major economic setback for individuals and the community at-large. This is a picture that has been played out repeated in going back to the 1980s in Zangon-Kataf, Kaduna State; Tafawa Balewa, Bauchi State; Zaki Biam, Benue State; and many other communities.

In societies that are already dealing with the problems of underdevelopment, such as poverty, unemployment, short life expectancy, poor health care delivery, inadequate infrastructure these results of ethnic conflicts only further compound these problems. Often these conflicts result in destructions of businesses, homes, schools, health facilities, and any basic infrastructure that exists. In many cases the students are unable to go to school for long periods. These events result in significant economic loss and decline.

In addition to the destruction of the existing economic base, lack of security drives outside investment away from the community. Even the citizens of these communities take their businesses to other places when they know their lives, properties, and investments will not be exposed to the risks that come with war and conflict. The human development index in these communities tell the story of the havoc that ethnic conflicts have wrecked. Schools, hospitals, businesses, etc., have been destroyed by wars. Above all, trust no longer exists among the groups.

The traditional role of old media has not served the purpose of ethnic conflict transformation and resolution appropriately. This is because of how old media has defined news in terms on conflict, drama, sensation, and unusualness. Journalists are turned into thrill-seeking chases of violence or passive spectators who report the casualty rates of conflicts with detachment and indifference.

Such reporters fail to engage with their craft with any sense of responsibility. They confuse objectivity with neutrality, even in the face of evil and crimes against humanity. They are only concerned with bylines and occasional awards for their stories. The lives of the victims and the fate of the communities do not mean much to them. Even when they attempt to report on the conflicts, they are constrained by the exigencies of even-oriented inverted pyramid news style to fit the unique elements of each story into the routine straight jacket of the news hole and format. That is where new and social media's attributes can influence media, policy, and public agenda by focusing the light on conflicts that are easily ignored or under-reported by traditional media.

Media practitioners and citizens journalists are well-positioned to use their influence and role to set the agenda for peace. The journalism that focuses on event instead of process, conflict instead of community building, sensation instead of wholeness, will not help create the desired society. History has shown that this form of journalism only fuels the embers of conflict and the destruction of community. A new ethic of journalism that values harmony, peace and development will serve the needs of the society at large. It means putting the good of all above personal, parochial, and sectarian interests. It calls for a new kind of objectivity. It requires reporting the facts, with regards to violence, crimes, and human rights abuses, but not with the glee of a detached spectator. Media must be concerned with social responsibility.

The ethical responsibility of traditional and new media is to bring attention and the spotlight to bear on the low-scale conflicts that tend to be ignored, and sometimes suppressed. They have to find the balance between creating awareness about the conflicts, while not sensationalizing them. Their roles must transcend simple informing to promoting dialogue. Social media, in particular, has the potential to allow diverse viewpoints to be heard. This is a potential that is yet to harnessed, as many of these groups tend to congregate in their in-groups. Governments, community organizations, security agencies, religious organizations, and other groups can collaborate to enhance dialogue and understanding among the various groups.

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

The role of social media in conflict transformation is an emerging frontier in peace research. This primer identifies the key issues relating to the emerging mediascape and the implications for mediating ethnic conflict in society in transition. Nigerian society consists of close-knit communal societies as well as fragmented pluralistic societies. This primer has provided an overview of the issues, trends, and possibilities. It is both a survey and an exploratory study. Future research directions call for an analysis of the data on specific conflicts and the nature of coverage in individual traditional media and particular social media forum. One of the challenges that can beset this approach is the lack of readily available data on specific conflict incidents. Till today, many people rely on eye-witnesses and conflict participants or individuals affected by the conflicts for information. The scale of the conflicts and number of casualties are not well documented. Various stake holders should work together to ensure there is reliable data. In addition, there needs to be a special focus on how the media frame the conflicts, and whether or not those frames promote dialogue and set the peace agenda. There is need for research on the relationship between media narratives and policy agenda. There are just few of the directions for future research on how traditional and new media impact ethnic conflicts in Nigeria's Middle-Belt.

CONCLUSION

The media seem caught between the rock and a hard place. They are criticized for focusing too much on conflicts, coups, and disasters in Africa, on one hand, or are also faulted for failing to report on conflict in Africa. The main problem is not one or the other. The need is being able to report in a way that leads toward a solution.

Both traditional and new media journalists need to embrace the ethic of peace journalism (Musa, 2014). This will enable them focus on the nature of the story and see the affected groups and individuals as people. They will be able to bring a ne set of values to story selection and presentation.

Both old and new media have their strengths and liabilities when it comes to conflict reporting. The ideal approach is to draw on the strengths of each medium to achieve responsible and constructive reporting. A social responsibility approach to journalism calls for both the freedom to report the news and the sense of duty to seek justice for victims of war crimes.

For the media to do its job well in conflict transformation and furthering development in a society that is fragmented along ethnic lines and rife with ethnic conflict, it must adopt the ethos of peace journalism and development journalism. It must focus on setting the peace and development agenda. It has to avoid sensationalism and partisanship. It must be committed to the common good and communitarian ethics. The proliferation of social media make it possible for citizens to help set the media agenda as well as the policy agenda. It is no longer traditional media alone that can be counted on to inform or educate the public about ethnic conflicts. Thanks to new and social media, the average citizen has the wherewithal to capture, record, analyze, and disseminate information about ethnic conflicts.

If citizens take this role seriously, they will help train the light of public attention as well as global action on the seemingly intractable ethnic and religious conflicts that have bedeviled Nigeria's Middle Belt region for a very long time.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Agenda-Setting: The process by which the media tells the audience what to think about, not what to think.

Citizen Journalism: Gathering and dissemination of information by average person, non-professional news gatherer, using digital social media technology.

Communal: Pertaining to a group of people living in a relatively close knit local environment, in which there is familiarity in regular interaction among members.

Community Development: Activities designed to improve the quality of life of a people in the same local area as measured by increasing state of peace, well-being, justice, employment, income, literacy, life expectancy, productivity, and equality.

Dialogue: Communication that is characterized by mutual respect, openness, eagerness to listen to and understand the other.

Ethnic: Group of people who share ancestry, identity, and language, and geo-lineal association.

Ethno-Religious: Shared identity based on overlapping ancestry, culture, and religion.

Framing: How media peg, present, and slant an issue, such that the audience perceives it from a particular perspective.

Peace Journalism: The art of gathering and disseminating information with an emphasis on promoting mutual understanding and setting the agenda for conflict resolution as opposed to aggravating conflict through sensational news reporting.

Social Media: Digital media that enable many-to-many sharing of information through a variety of platforms like Twitter, Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram, Youtube, Blogs, etc.

Spiral of Silence: The media's failure to create awareness about an issue thereby preventing certain issues, ideas, and points of view from reaching the audience's attention.

Transformation: Steering the energy and emotions associated with a conflict toward a positive outcome, such as cooperation or productive competition.

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Section 2

Factual Reporting, Objectivity, and Verification

Chapter 6
Analyzing Verbal Narratives in TV News and Commercials

Dennis T. Lowry
Southern Illinois University – Carbondale, USA

ABSTRACT

This chapter acknowledges the truism that "television is a visual medium" but discusses six reasons for sometimes focusing scholarly attention on the non-visual, lexical content of TV news and commercials. It summarizes three different lexical analyses of network TV news dealing with economic news reporting, the reporting of presidential approval polls, as well as general presidential news coverage. All three studies were carried out within the context of charges of political news bias, and all three found evidence to support public perceptions of such bias. The fourth study summarizes a longitudinal analysis of presidential campaign TV commercials from 1952-2008. The particular focus of this study was to look for lexical differences in the content of commercials from winning vs. losing campaigns. The four studies summarized in this chapter demonstrate that, even in this visual age of television, words still mean things.

ANALYZING VERBAL NARRATIVES IN TV NEWS AND COMMERCIALS

Content analysis is one of the most frequently used research tools by mass communication scholars, along with survey research and experiments. While the range of content analysis topics has been wide, two content areas that have received considerable attention have been news and advertising.[1]

Traditional content analysis has employed manual reading/viewing of content by multiple coders, followed by inter-coder reliability checking to assure that the coders are applying the coding categories and definitions in consistent and replicable ways. The entire process is slow and highly labor intensive, thus placing pragmatic limitations on the amount of content analyzed. It is understandable, therefore, that many scholars have been switching to computerized analysis of textual material. This chapter will review the successful use of one such software program, DICTION 5.0 and 6.0, as well as one other program, to analyze network TV newscasts for political bias, and also to analyze rhetorical choices in a large sample of presidential campaign commercials.

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Both of these mass communication areas, TV news and TV commercials, are naturally assumed to be heavily visual in terms of information---and their texts or narratives are assumed to be relatively unimportant. Intuitively, TV content on the surface, would not seem to be a good area in which to conduct lexical analyses. This chapter will argue that the lexical content of TV news and commercials is often at least as important as the visual content, and for some research purposes, it is more important.

Importance of Analyzing Words on Television

It is a truism that television is a visual medium; however, this chapter focuses on the verbal rhetoric in news and commercials. Why? There are six reasons. First, Robinson (1984), in the context of TV news content analysis, argues that, "While television is regarded as an essentially visual medium (this being what differentiates it from print and radio) *sound dominates image in news broadcasts*" (p. 202, emphasis added). Thus, the studies described below were based in part on Robinson's ". . . first assumption that television news makes sense to us because the *verbal dominates the visual*. This verbal dominance is represented in the continuous flow of commentaries, reports, and interviews, emanating from anchor persons, reporters, and commentators' voice-overs" (p. 206, emphasis added).

An example of the importance of the verbal narrative in television news occurred while this chapter was being written---the day after 20 first grade students were murdered in Newtown, Connecticut. News anchors sat at their desks or on their sofas; correspondents stood in the streets; detectives, pathologists and psychologists sat on the news sets and gave their learned opinions about the shootings; but there was no visual action on the screens. Instead, there were hours spent repeating the basic facts, analyzing the facts, and giving opinions about what might have caused the shooting, and what might happen next. The important content was verbal; a TV viewer could have ignored the screen, listened to the discussion, and come away with a full understanding of what was happening in Newtown.

Another example of the importance of the verbal narrative would be when the TV news plays segments from the White House press briefings, or politicians giving a speech. The screen shows someone in a suit talking, but the important message, the news information value, is in the words.

A second reason for focusing on words is based on the inherent power of words in shaping political consciousness. In fact, Green (1987, p. ix) states, "Language is the most powerful of human weapons." Numerous examples could be provided to demonstrate this point.

The third reason for concentrating on lexical analysis rather than visual analysis is based on the expository nature of TV news. Butler (1994, p. 77) states, "Newscasts largely use an expository mode to present information," and "the basic logic of most news stories is an argument." He further summarizes the format of a typical TV news story as: "The reporter's opening lead . . . a first sound bite . . . the reporter's transition . . . a second sound bite . . . and the reporter's concluding stand-up" (p. 174). Throughout this process, as suggested by Robinson (1984), the visuals are supplemental to the verbal story narrative, even though television is thought of as a visual medium.

Fourth, according to Entman (1993), "Texts can make bits of information more salient by placement or *repetition* . . ." (p. 53, emphasis added). DICTION and another lexical analysis software program used in the studies described below measure frequency of word usage. Therefore, the network TV news and campaign commercial studies below analyzed the repeated use of certain words by the networks to make them potentially more salient to their audiences.

A fifth reason for studying the words reported by the networks is the successful precedent this lexical approach has already had in a related area of political communication, campaign commercials (cf. Ballotti & Kaid, 2000; Lowry & Naser, 2010). Television commercials are of course highly visual; nevertheless, the lexical analysis of commercial transcripts has been found highly useful to uncover the differences in the rhetorical appeals of winning vs. losing candidates.

Sixth, Groseclose (2011, p. 169) states, "words can reveal a person's political views, and . . . you can use words to judge the slant of the media." While no claim is made in this chapter that words are the only relevant variables worthy of study pertaining to network TV news or political commercials---an important qualification---there is more than ample support for the importance of lexical analysis per se.

Study 1: Biased Narratives in Network TV Reporting of Economic News

Economic news is a seemingly mundane type of television news. Facts such as the Dow Jones Industrial Averages are just the facts, right? While the scores themselves are just the facts, how they are reported---especially the narratives of the anchors and correspondents presenting and interpreting the facts---provided an opportunity to use lexical analysis software to detect news bias that would otherwise have been missed (cf. Lowry, 2008).

Study 1 Background

Serious early efforts to study media news bias go back more than a half-century (Klein & Macoby, 1954), with the focus then on newspaper bias. The vast majority of published studies on news bias have suffered from two major weaknesses in that the definitions of bias have usually been somewhat subjective, and also the coding has been done by subjective human coders. Niven (2002) argues on this point:

. . . one cannot begin to judge the bias of the media if there is no definition of what fair would be. And, one cannot meaningfully judge the bias of the media if the definition of fairness is arbitrary or based on plainly flawed assumptions. (p. 70)

Lott and Hasset (2004, p. 28), based on a 14-year analysis of newspaper headlines pertaining to economic news, found that, "Republican presidents receive about 20 to 30 percent less positive coverage from all newspapers and 20 to 40 percent less positive coverage from the top 10 papers than was provided on average for Democrats and these results are quite statistically significant." Thus, their results supported the partisan (i.e., pro-Democrat/anti-Republican) bias (Niven, 1999) hypothesis. Likewise, Groseclose and Milyo (2004, p. 2) studied major newspapers, the three network TV newscasts, as well as Fox News' Special Report, and concluded, "Our results show a strong liberal bias." Based on a study of news magazines, Sutter (2004) used an indirect measure of media bias and found that the *Time* and *Newsweek* data definitely supported the liberal media bias hypothesis, while the *U.S. News* data did not. Kuypers (2002, p. 214) states that the mainstream press is not totally liberal, but "it is reliably anti-conservative." It must be acknowledged, however, that some scholarly studies have concluded the opposite---i.e., that the news media are not generally biased. While a review of this literature is not part of this chapter, it is readily available to interested scholars (cf. Kuklinski & Sigelman, 1992; D'Alessio & Allen, 2000; Fico & Drager, 2001; Niven, 2002).

The overall purpose of Study 1, then, was to look for possible network TV news bias in the economic reporting of one Democrat president (Bill Clinton) versus one Republican president (George W. Bush). In doing this, one problem that had to be overcome was the usual subjectivity of determining the nature of the news events being reported. For example, if a president makes a speech at the United Nations, should it be framed as a speech that forcefully and effectively explained U.S. foreign policy to the world, or as one that was presented to a half-empty assembly hall? Was it a great speech or a boring speech? How should the news correspondents frame the speech? It is obvious that there is considerable latitude and subjectivity in the framing. However, some news events are objectively "good" events or "bad" events, and the framing, absent any news bias, should be almost automatic. One such category of news events is the Dow Jones stock market reports. By definition, when the market goes up, this is considered good news by traders, stockowners, and the business press. Likewise, when the market goes down, this is considered bad news. We never hear of corporations or stock owners who say, "I am so pleased that our stock went down today." Or, "I'm sorry to report that our stock went up by ten points today." Likewise, in the political realm, presidents always like to take credit when the market goes up, and their opponents like to criticize presidents when the market goes down. Thus, Study 1 used stock market change stories as input data. While this approach of using news events that are objectively "good" or "bad" is not new, it is relatively rare in the news bias literature (cf. Niven, 2002).

A second problem that had to be overcome was the usual subjectivity of human coding; this was done by using computerized content analysis. Human coding of mass media messages has a long and useful history, and there are some things that can be coded only by humans. Nevertheless, there is always the element of subjectivity, and of course the need to perform inter-coder reliability checking. Computerized content analysis, on the other hand, always produces 100% reliability. Conway (2006) compared both traditional human coding and computerized coding and found that each method produced useful results, but certainly not identical results. Each method has its strengths and limitations.

News bias as an inferred concept: As is the case with many useful variables in the social sciences, bias cannot be measured directly. This is true, for example, for such variables as "intelligence," "motivation," "attitudes," and even "validity." All of these concepts are inferred and cannot be measured directly. The same is true concerning the concept of bias.

Content analysis is a research method that allows us to make inferences about communicators or audiences (Riffe, Lacy, & Fico, 2005). In Study 1, it was not the absolute value of any one set of scores that could be interpreted as possible bias but, rather, the differential or comparative scores during six years under Clinton and six years under Bush. Thus, the basic design of Study 1 was both longitudinal and comparative in nature.

Relevance of DICTION: DICTION is based on the assumption that words mean things, and that repetitive patterns of words over time mean even more than isolated instances. Stated differently, the additional assumptions in the application of DICTION are that: (a) *word choices* are an important factor of news reporting or any other kind of public discourse, (b) word choices aggregate into *patterns of meaning* for news readers and viewers, and (c) patterns of words accumulate in news consumers' minds to form *identifiable tonalities* that become the politician's avatars during the course of a long period of reporting (Hart & Childers, 2005, p. 185). Thus, the underlying model of assumptions for DICTION is as follows:

Word Choices → Patterns of Meaning → Identifiable Tonalities

In the context of the present study, what Hart and Childers refer to as identifiable tonalities would be considered potential news bias or slant for or against the person in the news. The revised model would be as follows:

Word Choices → Patterns of Meaning → Possible News Slant or Bias

Of greatest methodological relevance to Study 1 was Davis, Piger, and Sedor's (2006, January) analysis of optimistic and pessimistic language in 24,000 corporate earnings press releases. Most DICTION studies of news coverage or other public discourse produce findings that are of considerable interest to communication scholars in that the studies provide insight into message construction patterns and trends. These findings enable the authors to make data-based inferences about the intentions of the communicators and/or the consequences of the messages. Davis et al. went far beyond this in that they also used objective data of market performance for the companies whose earnings press releases they were studying. They found that, "the market responds positively to the amount of optimistic language contained in earnings press releases" (Davis et al., 2006, January, p. 20). In other words, the DICTION optimism scores were not only of interest to scholars; they made a difference in the stock purchase decisions of millions of stock buyers. Thus, Davis et al. demonstrated the robust predictive validity of the DICTION results. "Taken as a whole, these results suggest that the optimistic and pessimistic language used in the narrative disclosures of earnings press releases contains information about future firm performance incremental to other factors that are commonly associated with future earnings" (Davis et al., 2006, January, p. 22). This was strong validation for the premise stated above that, "words mean things."

Since the Davis et al. study was conducted, Lowry, Xie and Witte (2008) used DICTION to assess the tone of network TV news sound bites in the presidential campaigns of 1992, 1996, 2000, and 2004. An unusually high correlation ($r = .98$) was found between optimism scores and actual presidential voting totals, suggesting that audience members are indeed influenced by optimistic lexical choices.

Study 1 Method

The content universe analyzed in this study consisted of the network TV (ABC, CBS, and NBC) news coverage of the Dow Jones market reports during the first six years of the Bill Clinton administration and the first six years of the George W. Bush administration. This provided us with equivalent time periods for the two administrations, but of course one president was a Democrat and the other was a Republican.

To obtain the content, we first went to the publicly available Dow Jones historical records and located the days when the DJIA increased or decreased 2% or more on a given day. Changes of 2% or more are considered major economic news events by market traders and the business press (including network TV news anchors and business correspondents). As it was, there were 50 such +/- 2% days during the Clinton six years and 86 days during the Bush six years. The next step was to use LexisNexis to locate and download the network TV stock market reports for those specific days. The LexisNexis search string was Dow OR Stock Market OR Wall Street. Not all three networks reported on the stock market every day; therefore, the number of stories ($N = 127$ for Clinton and $N = 226$ for Bush) was not equal to three times the number of days reported above. All stories were downloaded in Word format and then imported into DICTION.

The key DICTION variables used in this study, *Optimism* and *Accomplishment*, were selected because they were the variables that most closely fit the purpose of the research at hand and because the first one demonstrated strong predictive validity in Davis, Piger, and Sedor's (2006, January) study of corporate earnings press releases discussed above. Optimism is one of five master variables calculated by DICTION. Since DICTION is effective in picking up "tonal" qualities in a text (Roderick Hart, personal communication, 2008), the Optimism score thus is an index score of positive residual feelings and positive psychological motifs in a text. The user's manual further defines Optimism as "language endorsing some person, group, concept or event or highlighting their positive entailments" (*DICTION 5.0 The Text-Analysis Program User's Manual*, 2000). Thus, the Optimism variable was ideally suited to this particular study.

Accomplishment is one of the 31 different lexical variables calculated by DICTION. Hart (2000) defines Accomplishment as:

Words expressing task-completion (establish, finish, influence, proceed) and organized human behavior (motivated, influence, leader, manage). Includes capitalistic terms (buy, produce, employees, sell), modes of expansion (grow, increase, generate, construction) and general functionality (handling, strengthen, success, outputs). Also included is programmatic language: agenda, enacted, working, leadership. (n.p.)

Thus, there were three predictor variables used in analyzing the Clinton and Bush stories: number of words, Optimism, and Accomplishment. Number of words (i.e., length of stories) was included as a predictor variable because it is an indicator of the extent to which the networks play up or play down a story---e.g., whether they perhaps played up positive stories during the Clinton years and played down positive stories during the Bush years, as suggested by the partisan bias hypothesis.

In summary, the research design used in Study 1 employed equivalent six-year time periods for one Democratic president and one Republican president. It analyzed network TV news stories selected by strictly objective criteria (plus or minus 2% change scores in the Dow Jones averages). It used highly objective, computer-generated predictor variables, number of words, Optimism, and Accomplishment, to look for differences in how the networks reported objectively good/bad market news under a Democratic and Republican president. It used completely non-reactive measures with demonstrated predictive validity that could in no way have influenced the network news reports. Finally, since none of us can remember in detail for long exactly what we say or report, it measured lexical word choices that in effect were made subconsciously by the network reporters.

Study 1 Results and Discussion

This study had two major purposes. The first was a methodological purpose---i.e., to assess the usefulness of DICTION 5.0 as a tool for detecting potential news bias based on the repetitive patterns of lexical choices used in network TV news stories. The second purpose was to look for patterns of lexical choices that would either support or not support the frequent allegations of partisan (i.e., pro-liberal) political bias on the part of network TV news, a major component of the so-called "mainstream media."

Just as Davis, Piger, and Sedor's (2006, January) study of corporate earnings press releases strongly supported the usefulness of DICTION 5.0, the present study also demonstrated that DICTION 5.0 can be a useful tool in detecting lexical bias in news content analysis research. It successfully detected some small differences that would have been almost impossible to detect by normal human coding methods.

All three predictor variables accounted for an adjusted R^2 of .271 of the variance in the Dow Jones scores ($p < .001$), and Optimism alone accounted for an adjusted R^2 of .183 ($p < .001$).

If three DICTION variables could do this in analyzing such seemingly mundane content as stock market reports, then they could be even more likely to do this in more overtly political stories---e.g., political campaign stories and battles between the president and Congress. This indeed would seem to be a major contribution of Study 1, and also a fruitful area for future news bias research.

The second purpose of Study 1 was to measure the extent to which the networks used biased lexical frames when reporting objectively positive or objectively negative economic news under a Democratic and Republican president. The results here were somewhat mixed. In other words, three statistical comparisons did indeed support the partisan bias hypothesis, while one supported, in effect, a "reverse partisan bias"---i.e., Bush received more favorable coverage than Clinton.

In addition, there was clear evidence of a bias that was neither pro-Democrat nor pro-Republican, but simply a bad news bias. Objectively negative economic news resulted in longer stories on average than positive news. This finding supported recent research on this phenomenon (Niven, 2002), as well as older research demonstrating that bad news drives out good news (Lowry, 1971).

Study 2: Biased Narratives in Network TV Reporting of Political Polls

A second seemingly mundane area of network television news is the reporting of presidential approval scores (cf., Lowry, Eng, Katende, & Subramanian, 2012, August). As with the Dow Jones scores analyzed in Study 1, presidential approval scores are quantitative news variables. When the presidential approval scores go up, this is objectively good news for the incumbent; and when they go down, this is objectively bad news. This sets up a situation where lexical analysis software can be used to look for differences in the word choices used by the networks to report presidential approval for Republican versus Democratic presidents.

Study 2 Background

Opinion polling has become a staple of both print and broadcast news in America. Particularly in the realm of public policy and presidential news coverage, opinion polling seems to drive not only the political decision-making, but also the news coverage of the politicians (Herbst, 1993; McCombs, 2004). Indeed, all of the major print and broadcast news media invest heavily in their own polling operations.

While network TV opinion polling is done on a regular basis throughout the year, it reaches a peak during presidential election campaigns, where tracking polls are reported daily. Of course, such a heavy reliance on polls does not go without criticism (Berinsky, 2004; Splichal, 1999). One criticism is that poll-driven news stories sometimes create or drive the news; they are not just a tool for reporting the news. Crespi (1980) referred to this more than three decades ago as "polls as journalism." Nevertheless, the news media and opinion polls are in a symbiotic relationship, and this relationship is not likely to disappear.

In addition to the fairly large body of scholarly literature on the topic of political news bias, only a small amount of which is referenced in this chapter, the topic of news bias has also been studied by major polling organizations. A recent Gallup Poll (2011) reported that, "The majority of Americans (60%) also continue to perceive bias, with 47% saying the media are too liberal and 13% saying they are too conservative, on par with what Gallup found last year." In addition, Gallup (2012) reported that 60% of

Americans have little or no trust in the mass media to present the news "fully, accurately, and fairly." This distrust score was an all-time high in the history of the Gallup Poll.

Gallup is not alone in measuring public opinion on this topic. The Pew Research Center for the People & the Press (2011, September) also conducts regular polls dealing with media trustworthiness. A recent survey found that, "77% think that news organizations tend to favor one side"---i.e., are biased. More specifically, 63% of the respondents said that the news media are "politically biased in their reporting." To add perspective to this finding, the 63% figure was up from 45% when Pew first began polling on this topic in 1985. Only 25% said that the news media are "careful to not be politically biased." In a different study, Pew (2008) found that Obama received more positive coverage (36% positive in tone) compared to McCain (57% negative in tone) during the 2008 presidential elections.

Thus, the overall conclusion from polling data is that substantial segments of the public perceive problems with news bias. The author and three doctoral students (cf. Lowry, Eng, Katende, & Subramanian, 2012, August) addressed the extent to which the public's views were supported by objective measures of news content, at least insofar as network TV news was concerned.

The three major TV news networks (ABC, CBS, and NBC) have been declining in terms of their absolute audience size due to the increase of cable news and internet news sources. Nevertheless, they still provide the largest combined audience for national news coverage, about 24 million nightly viewers (Gorman, 2012, February 14). In addition, the networks have a strong presidential focus in terms of story selection. The networks were clearly the most relevant focus for this investigation of opinion polling stories, relative news bias, and the modern presidency.

Thus, the importance of Study 2 is based on three factors. First, it deals with an important and long-standing journalistic/public policy issue---i.e., the extent to which the news media with the largest combined audience in the nation are presenting their audiences with politically biased news coverage. It addresses the question of whether the public's perceptions of liberal news bias are supported by the evidence. Second, this study builds on the large body of news framing research by demonstrating the importance of lexical choices used by the networks to compose the news frames pertaining to a Democratic president versus a Republican president. Words mean things, and repeated word patterns over time mean even more when it comes to news framing. Third, in terms of empirical research methods, this study selectively uses two different computerized lexical analysis programs to objectively measure differences in verbal tone of presidential news stories. In doing so, the present study provides a working example for other scholars who want to conduct objective analyses of news story tone.

The overall purpose of Study 2, then, was to use carefully selected variables from two different computerized software packages (DICTION 6.0 and Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count 2007) to analyze parallel samples of network TV polling stories pertaining to Bush and Obama to assess the extent to which the networks may have engaged in relative news bias. This is a relatively new application of DICTION and a completely new application of LIWC. In terms of DICTION, Lowry (2008) found that Optimism was a useful variable in measuring relative news bias in network TV news coverage of presidents Bill Clinton and George W. Bush. The five LIWC variables used in this study (Positive Emotion, Negative Emotion, Anxiety, Anger, and Sadness) were selected because of their obvious relevance to measuring story tone, with story tone being an important aspect of news framing.

Thus, based on the literature review discussed above, and discussed in more detail in the original study, we tested the following hypothesis pertaining to DICTION:

H1: Network TV poll stories pertaining to Obama will have higher Optimism scores than a parallel sample of poll stories pertaining to Bush.

Likewise, we tested the following hypotheses pertaining to LIWC (cf. Tausczik & Pennebaker, 2010):

H2: Network TV poll stories pertaining to Obama will have higher Positive Emotion scores than a parallel sample of poll stories pertaining to Bush.
H3: Network TV poll stories pertaining to Bush will have higher Negative Emotion scores than a parallel sample of poll stories pertaining to Obama.
H4: Network TV poll stories pertaining to Bush will have higher Anxiety scores than a parallel sample of poll stories pertaining to Obama.
H5: Network TV poll stories pertaining to Bush will have higher Anger scores than a parallel sample of poll stories pertaining to Obama.
H6: Network TV poll stories pertaining to Bush will have higher Sadness scores than a parallel sample of poll stories pertaining to Obama.

Study 2 Method

The content for this study consisted of opinion poll news stories broadcast by three network TV evening newscasts (ABC, CBS, and NBC) during the first 32 months of the George W. Bush administration and the first 32 months of the Barack Obama administration.

We used LexisNexis Academic to obtain the transcripts of the poll stories. Our primary search terms were Bush OR Obama AND poll OR survey OR approval. Once the poll stories were downloaded, we then read them to select a sub-set of all poll stories that reported specific approval percentages---for a president's overall job performance or a president's handling of the economy, the war, or other major policies. If both percentages were reported, we then coded the president's overall job approval score. If two or three different policy percentages were reported in the same story, we then calculated the mean of the approval percentages; however, this was very rare. We excluded stories that simply referred to a president's approval in general terms but did not include at least one specific percentage connected with the man or his policies.

Following this story-screening process, we ended with a sub-sample of 85 opinion poll stories for Bush and 82 for Obama, each with its own specific public approval score. These stories were then formatted as Word documents for DICTION 6.0 and LIWC 2007 input. Both programs use algorithms that factor in the repetition of words.

Study 2 Results and Discussion

Since this study was a study of opinion poll news stories, we began our analysis by simply looking at the percentage approval scores the networks reported for Bush and Obama. We found that, overall, Bush's mean public approval score of 58.98% ($SD = 16.52$) for his first 32 months was significantly higher [$t = 3.83$, $df = 165$, p (2-tailed) $< .001$] than Obama's mean of 50.71% ($SD = 10.95$). In other words, public approval of Bush and his policies was substantially more favorable than that of Obama and his policies. We then began testing our six hypotheses.

As predicted by H1, and as calculated by DICTION, the lexical choices made by the networks were significantly more Optimistic [$t = 2.49$, df = 165, p (2-tailed) $< .05$] when reporting Obama poll stories than Bush poll stories. The respective means were 53.59 (SD = 11.28)) and 50.39 (SD = 2.79). Thus, H1 was supported. This finding also agreed with the results of Study 1 (Lowry, 2008) above using DICTION's Optimism score to compare network TV coverage of economic news under Clinton and Bush. In both studies, based on objective coding of lexical variables and comparing Republican and Democratic presidents, the networks were significantly more optimistic toward the Democratic presidents.

The remaining five hypotheses pertained to LIWC variables, not DICTION variables, and from the perspective of news bias research, the results were striking. Poll stories pertaining to Obama had significantly higher Positive Emotion scores than did poll stories pertaining to Bush. By contrast, poll stories pertaining to Bush had significantly higher scores on Negative Emotion, Anxiety, and Anger. There was no significant difference in terms of Sadness scores.

This study also contributes to the concept of relative news bias. While it may never be possible to demonstrate absolute news bias, the concept of relative news bias is highly useful. This study builds on a small body of earlier studies that have supported this approach to measuring relative news bias (cf. Groseclose, 2011; Iyengar & Kinder, 2010; Lowry, 2008). For example, while no one can say what a "correct" score should be on a variable such as DICTION's Optimism, or LIWC's Negative Emotion, it is definitely possible to analyze two different bodies of content, such as stories pertaining to a Republican president and a Democratic president, and then determine if the words choices employed in the stories favored one president more than would be expected by statistical chance. From the scholarly perspective, the notion of relative bias is much more achievable and useful than any forced attempt to come up with a measure of absolute bias.

In terms of research methods, this study demonstrates that two entirely different lexical analysis software packages, not originally developed for this purpose, can be used selectively to uncover relative bias that may be unintentional on the part of the network anchors, correspondents, and producers. They are highly useful research tools for news analysis. As with all research tools, however, they must be used selectively. The vast majority of scores generated by both programs are *not* relevant to measuring relative bias, but one major contribution of Study 2 is that it demonstrates empirically that several selected variables are highly relevant.

The results of this study are particularly interesting in light of the fact that Bush's mean public approval score was significantly higher than Obama's. Stated differently, Bush was perceived significantly more favorably by the public, but was framed significantly more negatively by the networks. Obama, on the other hand, was perceived significantly less favorably by the public, but was framed significantly more positively by the networks. To this extent, then, the networks were significantly out of touch with the views of the general public.

Thus, the primary conclusion of Study 2 is that the story tone (i.e., lexical choices) of the three networks demonstrated a significant amount of relative news bias consistent with the often-alleged liberal news bias. The empirical results are also consistent with overwhelming public perceptions of liberal news bias demonstrated in national opinion polls.

Study 3: Biased Narratives in Network TV News Framing of Bush vs. Obama

As with the first two studies, this one was part of the same long-term program of computerized lexical analysis research exploring network TV bias. Study 1 dealt only with network coverage of economic news, Study 2 dealt only with network coverage of poll news stories, while Study 3 (Lowry, Hossain, Hong, & Kang, 2013) was much broader in scope. While it still involved comparing the news coverage of one Republican president (G.W. Bush) and one Democratic president (Obama), it was based on a broad range of presidential news stories.

Study 3 Background

One of the dominant theoretical and research paradigms in mass communication research in the last three decades has been that of news framing. Indeed, a search on Google Scholar in September 2012 using the exact phrase "news frames" produced 3,730 citations. Tuchman (1978, p. ix) stated that the mass media play a central role in the public sphere when they "set the frame" within which readers or viewers interpret and discuss public events. News is a social construction, and the news frames are a vital part of the construction process.

Perhaps the most widely quoted definition of framing is from Entman (1993):

To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, 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)

More recently, McCombs, Holbert, Kiousis, and Wanta (2011), within the larger context of their monograph on news and public opinion, devote an entire chapter to the importance of analyzing the *tone* of news stories. They suggest that story tone is a major part of framing, but it has been often overlooked in past research. They state, "News stories are both denotative messages conveying substantive information and connotative messages conveying tone and emotion" (p. 110). The present study focuses on the lexical tone used by the networks in reporting poll stories pertaining to George W. Bush and Barack Obama. Moreover, the software packages described below are particularly suited to measuring story tone.

Assumptions underlying lexical tone analysis: As stated above, Entman (1993) pointed out that *repetition* is an important component of salience in the framing of text messages. As explained above, our underlying assumptions were as follows:

Word Choices → Verbal Frames → Possible News Slant or Bias

Word choices accumulate, due to repetition, and become verbal frames. These verbal mosaics, these lexical story frames surrounding a presidential news story, can be positive, negative or neutral, depending on the word choices made by the anchors, correspondents, and others in the stories.

It is not necessary to assume any intentional political bias on the part of those who select and write the news. Indeed, the authors of this study did not do so. This study was concerned with measuring the end reporting product of the possibly unintentional verbal framing mosaics communicated about Bush and Obama by the newscasts.

The overall purpose of this study, then, was to use carefully selected variables from two different computerized software packages (DICTION 6.0 and LIWC 2007) to analyze parallel samples of network TV news stories pertaining to Bush and Obama to assess the extent to which the networks may have engaged in relative news bias. In terms of DICTION, Lowry (2008) found that Optimism was a useful variable in measuring relative news bias in network TV news coverage of presidents Bill Clinton and George W. Bush. In addition, we selectively employed the following DICTION variables based on their seeming relevance to this study of political news bias: Satisfaction, Praise, Hardship, and Aggression.

Thus, based on the scholarly literature discussed above, as well as on public opinion polls on public perceptions of bias, we tested the following hypotheses pertaining to DICTION:

H1: Network TV news stories pertaining to Obama will have higher Optimism scores than a parallel sample of stories pertaining to Bush.
H2: Network TV news stories pertaining to Obama will have higher Satisfaction scores than a parallel sample of stories pertaining to Bush.
H3: Network TV news stories pertaining to Obama will have higher Praise scores than a parallel sample of stories pertaining to Bush.
H4: Since Hardship is a negative concept, network TV news stories pertaining to Bush will have higher scores than a parallel sample of stories pertaining to Obama.
H5: Since Aggression is a negative concept, network TV news stories pertaining to Bush will have higher scores than a parallel sample of stories pertaining to Obama.

In addition to the five DICTION Hypotheses, we also tested four LIWC hypotheses. The LIWC hypotheses and results are included in our full-length manuscript (Lowry, Hossain, Hong, & Kang, 2013).

Study 3 Method

The content for this study consisted of news stories broadcast by the three network TV evening newscasts (ABC, CBS, and NBC) during the first three years of the George W. Bush administration and the first 33 months of the Barak Obama administration. We used LexisNexis Academic to obtain transcripts of the stories. Our primary search terms were Bush/Obama OR President OR White House OR Administration. Stories were aggregated by months and formatted into Word documents for lexical analysis.

Study 3 Results and Discussion

We began our analysis by checking the overall amount of coverage given by the three networks to the two presidents. Results showed that the mean number of words per month was 6,466 for Bush and a significantly higher 8,225 for Obama [$t = 2.74$, df = 67, p (2-tailed) $< .01$]. Thus, in terms of the overall amount of coverage, the networks employed a larger overall news frame pertaining to Obama.

This finding, however, pertains only to the size of the news frame. It has no bearing on the quality of the lexical choices making up the mosaic of words in the frame. Therefore, we next turned our attention to testing H1, our most important hypothesis. Based on earlier research, this hypothesis predicted that network TV news stories pertaining to Obama would have higher Optimism scores than a parallel sample of stories pertaining to Bush. This hypothesis was supported by the data [$t = 3.01$, df = 67. p (2-tailed) $< .01$]. Obama's mean Optimism score was 51.81, and Bush's was 50.18.

H2 predicted that network TV news stories pertaining to Obama would have higher Satisfaction scores than a parallel sample of stories pertaining to Bush. This hypothesis was also supported by the data. Obama's mean satisfaction score of 5.07 was significantly higher [$t = 2.31$, df = 66, p (2-tailed) $< .05$] than Bush's score of 3.45.

With regard to the DICTION variable Praise, H3 predicted that network TV news stories pertaining to Obama would have higher scores than a parallel sample of stories pertaining to Bush. This hypothesis was not supported by the data. While Obama's mean score was higher than Bush's (4.39 vs. 3.85), the difference was not significant [$t = 1.29$, df = 64, p (2-tailed) = .20].

H4 predicted that the negative concept of Hardship would be more associated lexically with Bush stories than with Obama stories. The mean for Bush was 7.41 and the mean for Obama was 5.08. Thus this hypothesis was supported by the data [$t = 3.17$, df = 67, p (2-tailed) $< .01$].

H5, the final DICTION-related hypothesis, predicted that, since Aggression is a negative concept, network TV news stories pertaining to Bush would have higher scores than a parallel sample of stories pertaining to Obama. Bush's mean was 8.35 and Obama's mean was 4.67. H5 was therefore supported by the data [$t = 4.84$, df = 64, p (2-tailed) $< .001$].

Study 3 found striking support for the allegation that the networks demonstrated negative lexical framing toward Bush and positive lexical framing toward Obama. In terms of the five DICTION variables analyzed in this study, the networks portrayed Obama in significantly more Optimistic terms and by using more words implying Satisfaction. Conversely, they portrayed Bush stories using significantly more Hardship terms and more terms pertaining to Aggression. There was no significant difference in the coverage of Bush and Obama regarding Praise terms. While not included in this chapter, the four LIWC variables also favored Obama.

In interpreting the importance of these findings, the overall design of Study 3 must be kept in mind. We began by downloading parallel samples of network TV news stories pertaining to Bush and Obama. Since our corpus of stories was both longitudinal and large, encompassing the first three years of the Bush administration and almost the first three years of the Obama administration, the results were not influenced by short-term events in the political or public sphere. Likewise, the time periods excluded presidential campaign periods. On the contrary, the stories included in our corpus span a vast range of events and activities of both men and their administrations.

Unlike many political commentators, we make no assumptions about the intentions of the communicators---the network anchors, correspondents, and producers. We make no allegations that the relative bias we found in the framing of Bush and Obama's stories was intentional. Indeed, one of the advantages of these tools is that they can measure word selections and word frequencies that are quite possibly unintentional on the part of the communicators. Nevertheless, even unintentional, subconscious biases can have external manifestations. One thing is certain: the statistical findings of this study are not likely due to chance alone. If they were due to chance alone, then about half of the findings would have favored Bush. That was not the case.

Our results are statistically robust and objective. While we can make no claims about visual framing of the two presidents, our results provide one of the clearest patterns of lexical relative news bias of which we are aware. Further, our results corroborate public perceptions of liberal bias measured by national opinion polls. The findings of this study also corroborate and extend the findings of Lowry, Eng, Katende, and Subramanian (2012) above, who used DICTION and LIWC to study a selected sub-set of network TV stories---i.e., only stories reporting public approval percentages pertaining to Bush and Obama. The present study employed a much larger corpus and a broad spectrum of stories

In terms of research methods, a major contribution of Study 3 is in the application of two different lexical analysis programs, not originally developed for measuring relative news bias, to an important and long-standing issue. Until recent years, this issue has been explored primarily with laborious and somewhat subjective human coding. The present study demonstrates that, when used selectively, DICTION and LIWC can provide quicker, easier, and completely objective answers to specific research questions or hypotheses pertaining to bias. Some critics might argue that the construction of the DICTION and LIWC dictionaries was subjective---i.e., deciding which words to include in the various built-in dictionaries. While this is of course true, it is the application or use of these dictionaries---these research tools---that is objective, and that is what is claimed in this chapter.

In terms of substantive findings, and from a public policy perspective, our study raises serious questions about the extent to which the networks are well-serving the viewing and voting public. Is the watchdog function of the networks being subverted when the news framing is so politically one-sided, whether the networks intend to be biased or not? National polls indicate that the public clearly perceives a liberal news bias, and our findings clearly support the public perceptions.

Study 4: Lexical Analysis of Winning vs. Losing Presidential Campaign Commercials

This is the first longitudinal study (Lowry & Naser, 2010) of 15 presidential campaigns using lexical analysis to isolate differences between winning and losing commercials. The availability sample consisted of 1,227 commercials from Campaigns '52 through '08, and was analyzed with DICTION lexical analysis software.

Study 4 Background

While it is obvious that the analysis of presidential campaign commercials has been a rich area for scholarly investigation, it is surprising that analyzing the commercials in terms of winning commercials vs. losing commercials has received very little attention. What is it in the commercials that distinguish the rhetoric of presidential winners vs. losers? What can future presidential candidates learn from the rhetorical emphases of past successful candidates? What rhetorical emphases should future candidates avoid?

The primary purpose of Study 4 was to conduct the most comprehensive content analysis to this point of the rhetoric used in the presidential TV commercials of winners vs. losers. More specifically, our purpose was to explore the rhetorical changes in a 56-year collection of presidential TV commercials. Which rhetorical variables have been consistently used over time? Which variables have been particularly employed by one candidate, campaign or party? Most important, to what extent is it possible to differentiate using statistics between the lexical word choices in the TV commercials of presidential winners vs. losers? A secondary purpose was to continue to assess the usefulness of DICTION as a political advertising research tool. This study was both exploratory and descriptive, since no prior research has ever examined such a collection of winning vs. losing presidential commercials from a lexical perspective.

The study was guided by nine research questions and three hypotheses, five of which are listed here to show the direction of the study and the analysis:

RQ1: Overall, for all 1,227 commercials, what have been the most consistently-used lexical elements employed in presidential campaign commercials?
RQ2: To what extent have the rhetorical styles of Democratic commercials differed from Republican commercials?
RQ3: To what extent have the rhetorical styles of incumbents differed from those of non-incumbents?
RQ4: The most important question for this study was: To what extent have there been substantive rhetorical differences in the TV commercials of winners vs. losers?
RQ5: Were the Inspiration scores of winners higher than those of losers?

Study 4 Method

Out of the total 1,227 spots, 630 were for winning candidates while 597 were for losing candidates. There were 727 spots for Democratic candidates and 500 for Republican candidates. After retrieving the transcripts of the spots, we stored them in Word files before importing them into DICTION 5.0.

Study 4 Results and Discussion

Winners were significantly higher on the following variables:

- **Collectives:** Words such as *coalition, community, country, economy, family, group, housing, public, race, team.*
- **Inspiration:** Words such as *beauty, courage, dedication, faith, goodness, honor, hope, ideals, liberty, love, loyalty, pride, security, trust.*
- **Accomplishment:** Words such as *achieve, campaign, change, deliver, develop, employees, establish, expand, finish, generate, improve, organize, produce, results, work, workers.*
- **Temporal Terms:** Words such as *decade, elderly, elders, history, immediate, lifetime, memories, morning, present, senior, seniors, timeless, today, tomorrow, tradition.*
- **Concreteness:** A broad array of more than 700 specific nouns.
- **Centrality:** Words such as *conformity, core, custom, destiny, enduring, foundation, humanity, mainstream, majority, primary, reliable, standard, steadfast, steady, unified, unify.*
- **Rapport:** Words such as *affirm, agree, comply, confirm, conform, consent, devote, embrace, empathy, endorse, pledge, pledges, tolerance, unison, willing*.
- **Exclusion:** Words such as *alone, discard, displace, divisions, exclude, foreign, ignore, inequality, isolationism, opposed, prejudice, racism, reject.*

Winners were also significantly higher on the calculated variable Complexity and the master variables Activity and Commonality.

By contrast, the TV commercials of losers were significantly higher on:

- **Self-Reference:** The nine words *I, I'd, I'll, I'm, I've, me, mine, my, myself.*
- **Tenacity:** Words such as *be, did, didn't, doesn't, don't hadn't, hasn't, haven't, must, shall, we'll, you'll.*

- **Human Interest:** Words such as *brother, child, children, dad, daughters, friends, grandchildren, housewife, husband, kids, men, mom, our ourselves, parents, people, sons, us, we wife, women, you, yours.*
- **Denial:** Words such as *aren't, can't, didn't, don't, haven't, no, nobody, none, shouldn't, wasn't weren't, won't.*

Based on these findings, a clear lexical picture begins to emerge. First, while winners were significantly higher on Collectives (i.e., other-directed references to groups), losers were significantly higher on Self-reference (i.e., a self-directed I/me/my approach). Second, winners were significantly higher on "positive" lexical terms pertaining to Inspiration and Accomplishment, while losers were significantly higher on the largely negative variables Tenacity and Denial. Supporting this "positive" interpretation, winners were also significantly higher on Rapport, a largely positive lexical variable. Third, winners tended to use lexical terms pertaining to specific Temporal terms and specific Concrete terms. Fourth, winners in effect used a dual-track lexical approach: specifics, on one hand, and the higher order abstractions represented by the lexical variable Centrality, on the other hand. Fifth, both winners and losers were significantly higher on one variable that seems counter-intuitive. Winners were significantly higher on the seemingly negative variable Exclusion, while losers were significantly higher on the seemingly positive variable Human Interest. Given the pattern of the other findings above, one would expect the results on these two variables to be reversed.

In conclusion, DICTION, as employed in Study 4, provided insights into the rhetorical choices in presidential TV commercials that would have been almost impossible to code manually. The study documented striking differences in the lexical choices of winners vs. losers. Based on a longitudinal analysis of 15 campaigns, it provides new insights to help us understand the lexical variables associated with winning vs. losing the presidency.

CONCLUSION

The Stubborn Resilience and Relevance of Words in the Visual Age of Television

This chapter began by addressing the truism that "television is a visual medium"---and it continued by responding that, while the truism is certainly valid as a generalization, there are nevertheless solid scholarly reasons for focusing on lexical narratives in television content. Indeed, the four studies summarized above demonstrate that there are numerous non-visual socially significant, politically relevant, and empirically important topics pertaining to television that can be explored with lexical analysis software. At the same time, this is not to disparage scholars who choose to focus on television's visual content, or to study both. In a world of unlimited scholarly time and resources, studying both ideally would be preferred.

The decision of whether to study words and/or images comes down to the researcher's purpose. Methodological decisions should be based on scholarly purpose. Focusing on the lexical content of television should not be considered a second-class activity. By analogy, when a sick patient goes to see a medical specialist, the specialist does not run all available tests, but only those tests relevant to the sickness or symptoms at hand.

As with all research tools, DICTION, LIWC, and other lexical software must be used selectively. They produce so many scores and variables that the results can be overwhelming. Unless a study is truly a foundational descriptive study, as was Study 4 above, scholars would be well-advised to determine in advance which specific variables are most relevant to the research questions, and then to ignore the other variables.

Another implication of the studies summarized above is that, again, depending on one's research purposes, it is frequently helpful to employ DICTION and other lexical analysis programs in combination. In terms of research methodology, this would be akin to triangulation---i.e., studying the same lexical content from two or more perspectives. Each analytical program alone produces useful results, but combining them sometimes produces even greater insight.

To return to the title and opening section of this chapter, of course the truism that "television is a visual medium" still stands. Moreover, there are certainly instances when the powerful visuals are almost all that matter---one of the best examples being when the twin towers fell in Manhattan on 9/11 of 2001. Such powerful visuals are impressed in our minds for the rest of our lives.

The mistake some scholars make, however, is to assume that from the longitudinal perspective of months or years, and considering day-to-day reporting on political or other topics, television's visual images are all that matter. They are not. The four studies summarized above demonstrate that, even in this visual age of television, words still mean things. Words have a stubborn resilience and a relevance that will not go away.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Alternative Version: Commercials selling political candidates.
Alternative Version: Stories presented on TV news shows.
Content Analysis: Quantification and measurement of message content.
Political Commercials: Television commercials advertising presidential candidates.
Short Version: Stories communicated in words.
TV News: Stories presented on network news shows.
Verbal Narratives: News or advertising stories communicated in words.

ENDNOTE

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Chapter 7
The Biased Truth:
An Objective Perspective on Nonobjective News Reporting

Andre Nicholson
Middle Georgia State University, USA

ABSTRACT

Consumers of news should expect to consume reports, which are an accurate and unbiased reflection of local, national, and world events. However, due to limitations that affect the packaging and presentation of many news stories today, consumers may not be experiencing a true reflection of those issues. This exploratory study examined three genres of news for objectivity and bias in the reporting of news stores: local news, national news, and satire news. The study found that although local news reporters attempt to report news stories with an objective narrative, it is often the news story's subject that impedes the process of objectivity. National and satire news programs also lose their objectivity based on the narrative presented by the hosts of the program.

INTRODUCTION

It is practically impossible to tune into any national news station and not be bombarded with stories of a broken health care system, a do nothing Congressional body, and polarizing social movements that bring out some of the most visceral hate rhetoric that can be aired on cable television. Surprisingly, or possibly not so surprising, with just a few clicks on the remote control, the local stations are broadcasting neighborhood news laced with the latest crime, violence, and corruption. These stories are brought into homes through the perspective of broadcast journalists. But what role, if any, does the journalist play in reporting these stories through an objective lens to their viewers? The journalists' role begins and ends with reporting an unbiased version of the facts. Potter (2016) posits that the challenge and reality is that it is impossible for journalists to obtain objectivity in reporting.

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NEWS GENRES

This chapter addresses the objectivity in news reporting, or lack thereof, through an analysis of national, local, and entertainment news, which for this analysis can be categorized as comedy or satire. National news reaches a broad audience and focuses mostly on national events as well as world events. Local news is tailored to the city/county of its geographical location and offers reports on issues affecting those areas. Certain satire news programs or comedy shows, which are hosted by comedians, can be considered satirical in its format. These specific programs interject a humorous spin on current events, usually with a slanted view. It is important to examine these different genres of news to extrapolate how stories are being framed for viewer consumption. Also, what are the implications of news reports if viewers are not considering news stories with a media literate lens? The analysis critically examines the reporting patterns of journalists in these different genres of news reporting.

As gatekeepers of the information being broadcast to viewers, journalists hold a responsibility to report stories that offers the viewer the ability to come to his/her own conclusion based on the principles of a good news story – accuracy, fairness, and objectivity. The average media consumer tunes into these networks expecting reports to be crafted through an objective, unbiased frame. Journalists make inferences and offer conclusions on the events they report, but in doing so are they then placing their own personal bias on the story? Objectivity in news reporting can be defined as the reporting of facts through an unbiased frame. Bias for the purpose of this analysis is defined as the distortion, fabrication, or embellishment of a story in an effort to slant the report in one direction or the other.

Introductory news writing and reporting course students are taught that journalists search for the truth through accuracy, fairness, and objectivity. Reports that strive to incorporate these elements lend themselves to a fair and balanced story. Media consumers are then offered the opportunity to take a stance on events based on their analysis of the report. Depending on the consumers level of media literacy will determine how much agreement or disagreement they will have with the story.

The goal of this chapter is to have media consumers critically analyze how broadcast news anchors, of three different genres of news, report stories to their audience. The analysis does not attempt to understand the effects of the reports on consumers. Therefore, an audience analysis is not the focus of the study. The broader analysis examines how reporters frame the stories and does objectivity remain in the reporting? Throughout the chapter the author will pinpoint areas in which reporters and television personalities, who report on current events, make the news entertaining for viewers based on their perception of what is news and what needs to be reported. Media consumers are then left with the challenge of examining their viewing habits, through a media literate lens, based on the genre of news they consume.

BACKGROUND: NEWS MEDIA LITERACY

Being media literate requires people to critically analyze media messages with the goal of becoming informed media consumers (Livingstone, 2004; Potter, 2004). Consumers have a variety of ways to access information and messages, either visually, textually or auditorially, and these messages are continuously being presented to audiences several times throughout any given day. How does one begin to navigate through the bombardment of messages? Becoming a critical consumer of these messages is difficult to do when information is coming left and right, therefore, making the deconstruction of messages a taunting task. Potter (2016) argues that since the rise of mass media, society has shifted from a time when the concern was generating enough information about important issues in life and then providing access to that information. Now, the concern has shifted from gaining access to information to having access to way to much information and how to be critical consumers of it. According to Potter (2016) media literacy is:

> A set of perspectives that we actively use to expose ourselves to the mass media to interpret the meaning of the messages we encounter. We build our perspectives from knowledge structures. To build our knowledge structures, we need tools, raw material, and willingness. The tools are our skills. The raw material is information from the media and from the real world. The willingness comes from our personal locus. (p. 19)

This offers a broad definition and understanding of media literacy, but in order to understand how news messages are produced and distributed to audiences there must be a clear understanding of news media literacy. News media consumers should consider the messages they are receiving through an even narrower lens. According to Tully and Vraga (2017), "News media literacy is focused on how individuals apply media literacy skills to the interpretation of news" (p. 144). Audiences are encouraged to develop the necessary skills in order to critically evaluate news media messages. Scholars who promote news media education also acknowledge the importance of and necessity of news and journalists to sustain informed publics (Mihailidis, 2012). So, the argument is not that the news media shouldn't exist, but that there should be accountability on both sides. The news media should remain objective and consumers should become engaged with the news by becoming media literate individuals.

Although journalists should offer diverse viewpoints when reporting a story in the search for the truth, it is not always possible to obtain these viewpoints. Therefore, it is understandable that some viewpoints will be excluded and not all arguments will be included in a report. However, journalists and the news media should strive to achieve unnecessary bias. This chapter analyzes different genres of the news media to explore if this level of objectivity is possible. Individuals who go through formal education or training programs to become a journalist will at some point learn about objectivity, bias, accuracy, and truthfulness in reporting. Then, there are those without the training or education but are given a platform to report the news or their take on the news. These individuals appear in a variety of media outlets to include television, radio, print, and more recently social media. Television offers several genres for this reporting such as local and national news, and comedy or satirical news. This chapter examines the reporting by journalists and hosts of these programs in relation to their bias in reporting stories.

NEWS CONSTRUCTION

An hour-long television news broadcast appears to be a well packaged presentation of stories that based off real world events. For the most part people expect the news to be a reflection of things that have occurred in the world. So, in a sense, the news is a mirror or reflection of the real world. Potter (2016) suggests this is not the case and never will be. News is not a reflection of reality and it cannot be. Instead it is a construction by journalists. A story told based on real world events. Furthermore, these constructions are presented under constraints that are out of the control of journalists. Constraints such as deadlines, resource limitations, and geographical focus, limit the ability of journalists to tell the complete story (p. 139).

Also, other factors play a role in the construction of news stories. For example, most newsrooms have a news director, producer, and videographer or camera person. Whenever other individuals have a role in the construction of a news story the initial viewpoint that a journalist intended to express may get lost, changed or deleted (purposefully or accidently) by the time the final broadcast airs. In other words, people themselves play a role in hindering how stories are presented to audiences.

FRAMING ANALYSIS

The way news organizations package their stories for viewer consumption is considered a "frame". Framing is a process in which newsmakers construct a message in a specific manner that encourages the facts in that message to be perceived in a particular way (Kuypers, 2005). This can be achieved by highlighting some information and downplaying other information in that message. News framing is simply a method used to dictate what stories get selected and broadcast as news. It is a formulaic system used by journalists as a shortcut approach to select and report a story. In hard news reporting journalists use the inverted pyramid style to construct their stories, starting with the basic questions of who, what, when, where, why, and how. In entertainment or satirical type reporting, the TV personality will use the narrative format for reporting a story. Reporters will begin the story with a statement to grab the viewers' attention and narrate the story from their own view point. News media use these framing techniques as a way to have their audience draw the same or similar conclusions to that of a constructed story by a reporter.

Frames also serve to introduce or raise the apparent importance of certain ideas that encourage viewers to think, feel, and decide in a particular manner (Entman, 2007). This is not to suggest that framing by news organizations is always intentional. It is, however, their choice on how to present a story. For example, the media may present the facts of a story in such a way that the audience is given a particular point of view or frame of reference and interpretation. The media may report that a new medicine is harmful, a political candidate has a strong stance on an issue, or a city budget cut will impact a certain group. By reporting stories in this manner the media has presented a frame through which the story is interpreted by an audience.

Entman (1993) suggest there are certain characteristics that make up a frame within a news report: defining a problem; identifying the cause; making a moral judgment; and finding a possible solution. These characteristics are embedded within a story and viewers who are not analyzing stories through a media literate lens will not pick up on them.

The concept of framing is related to the agenda-setting theory but expands the research by focusing on the core of an issue rather than on a particular topic. The basis of the framing theory is that the media focuses attention on certain events and packages or frames those events for viewers to come away with a specific meaning. The theory was first put forth by Erving Goffman (Goffman, 1974). He suggests people interpret what is going on around their world through their primary framework. Both framing and agenda setting focus on how media are able to center the public's attention on a specific topic, in essence, setting an agenda. Framing takes it a step further by merely understanding that the way news presents information is a frame for that particular bit of information. This analysis uses framing theory to explore how local news reporters, national cable news hosts, and satirical news hosts present the stories they tell.

The research questions guiding the analysis are:

RQ1: Are local reporters in a large metropolitan city capable of presenting stories objectively?
RQ2: Is a national cable news program capable of presenting stories objectively?
RQ3: Is a national cable satirical news program capable of presenting stories objectively?

METHODOLOGY

This study examines a local news station based in the metropolitan city of Atlanta, Georgia; a national cable news station; and a national cable entertainment (comedy) program. The local and national news programs were selected based on their market ratings. The comedy program was selected on its popularity in popular culture and the fact that there are fewer comedy news programs to analyze therefore limiting the selection of programs to choose from.

Atlanta is the capitol of Georgia and has a population of approximately 450,000 residents. The author resides in the city of Atlanta and often consumes various local news stations for a recap of daily events, issues and important information. The analysis of news in this geographical area was based on convenience, but the selection of the specific news program was based on ratings. The *Atlanta Journal Constitution* (2016) reported that *Atlanta Channel 2 Action News* has dominated in ratings for the past year and the 6 p.m. time slot is the most watched news program during that hour of the day, therefore lending itself to an analysis of the reporting during this time.

On a national level MSNBC's 9 p.m. program *The Rachel Maddow Show* led in ratings among the 25 – 54 year old demographic for the month of May 2017. It had continuously remained among the top 3 prime-time programs according to AdWeek (2017), which categorizes and rates cable programming. The author selected to analyze this particular program due to its consistent level of high ratings among other popular prime-time national news programs.

The Daily Show with Trevor Noah is one of a handful of entertainment news, also considered comedy programming. Noah himself is a comedian by trade and took over as host of the popular satirical program from Jon Stewart in 2014. The show is broadcast on Comedy Central at 11 p.m. week nights and records high ratings among 18 – 49 year olds (Comedy Central, 2016).

The purpose of this analysis is to examine objectivity in the reporting of news events by three different genres of news programming, but even more specifically to understand how a reporter or host's personal bias can be interjected into the report. Can those who are reporting the news or hosting programs about current events be objective in their account of those events? The author used a qualitative based, framing analysis of the three programs.

Sample

For the purpose of this study the author did a simple Google search to obtain ratings for the Atlanta local news programs as well as the national news programs. The Comedy Central program was selected based on word of mouth popularity but a Google search revealed that the program has received high ratings and many accolades during the new host's tenure since 2014. *The Atlanta Channel 2 Action News* with Jovita Moore and Justin Farmer at 6 p.m. held steady in the number one slot in 2016. *The Rachel Maddow Show* on MSNBC has been rated in the top three prime-time news programs over the past year and was recently rated number one with the 25 – 54 year old demographic.

Data Set

The author watched the Channel 2 Action News at 6 p.m. April 3 – 28, 2017. During the 6 p.m. hour of the news program the anchors and reporters cover approximately 25 – 27 stories. However, some stories can be considered short briefs or "readers" that the anchor simply reads with no visuals and no sound bite or sound on tape (interviews with anyone involved with the story). The other stories were as long as 2 minutes and a field reporter usually offered a more detailed narration of the story. The author viewed the local news 16 out of 20 week days and examined (N = 415) reports, accounting for the days the news was not viewed and also discounting weather and sports reports, which were not calculated in the analysis.

The Rachel Maddow Show analysis consists of watching the 9 p.m. program for the months of April and May 2017, which coincides with the time frame that her show was rated number one for the first time among the 25 – 54 year old demographic. During the hour-long program Maddox covered events from the day (mostly political) and placed them in a wider context through a review of laws and policies, prior statements made by politicians and public servants, as well as appearances from guest on all sides of an issue. Maddow dives into much more detail than local news reporters and therefore the host often covers one story from 10 -15 minutes. Over the course of her show she touches on 5-7 stories depending on whether a guest is scheduled to appear or not. The current analysis examined (N=82) stories narrated by the host.

The analysis of *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah* was spread out over a two month period from April – May 2017. The show airs at 11 p.m. Eastern Standard Time therefore the author was not always able to view each night's broadcast. Similar to *The Rachel Maddow Show, The Daily Show* covers about 5-7 stories and the host's narration can range from 10-15 minutes. These stories, again similar to those broadcast by Maddow, usually revolve around politics, and more specifically the president or his administration. For this analysis the author only included stories that the host went into lengthy dialogue about (N=28).

Although each genre of news broadcast is separate from the other, the author examined how each of these programs framed their stories and what are the implications of that framing for viewers. A total of (N=525) stories were reviewed. The results of this analysis are exploratory and are focused specifically on the three news programs identified.

RESULTS

The first research question asked, are local reporters in a large metropolitan city capable of presenting stories objectively? To answer this question a breakdown of the stories placed into categories is needed. Broadcast journalists, anchors and field reporters, have a limited amount of time to narrate a story for viewers. In that time period, 30 seconds to 2 minutes on average, they are confined to offering their account of the news event in the best way they know how. On average, during any given night, the 6 p.m. *Atlanta Channel 2 Action News* covers 25-27 stories. These stories can be categorized into five groups: 1) Crime and Punishment; 2) Accidents and Death; 3) Politics; 4) Social Issues (such as healthcare and economics); and 5) Fillers.

Local News Categories

The category of Crime and Punishment captures any stories that involve the reporting of a crime or the follow up to a previous story about a crime when the anchors or reporters are giving an update about the punishment or outcome. These stories, as well as the next category of Accidents and Death, usually lead the evening broadcast. Only a small percentage of people actually have contact with the criminal justice system so what they know and learn about crime comes from the media (Roberts, 1992). Reporters often tell these stories with stern or serious expressions and the author found that they are conscious and selective in their word choice. However, if these types of stories are being narrated by a field reporter who often obtains an interview from an eyewitness, authority figure or subject matter expert, their sound bite then becomes the focus of the story. For example, eyewitnesses often add colorful dialogue to a crime that they witnessed or a dramatic story if it happened to them or someone close to them. The story is framed around the interviewee's sound bite, which can also be confirmed through the anchor's comment when the segment is thrown back to the desk reporter. Jovita Moore or Justin Farmer will usually follow up with their condolences such as "That's such a sad story." A simple statement such as this takes the focus off the facts of the story and places the attention on the interviewee's emotional reaction. The anchor is more than likely expressing genuine concern, but it takes the story from being one of facts about a crime to the emotions or opinion of the interviewee. Initially this seems innocent enough, but how does that focus then play out in the minds of viewers who may later have to recall details of the story for one reason or another or possibly even serve as jurors on a case for that crime later down the line? Will they be able to remain objective based on the facts or does some level of emotion seep in based on their recollection of the news report and the opinion they formed based off of that report? Also, the opposite may hold true about crime stories when one of the interviewees is an authority figure such as a police chief, who is often vague in their responses as to not give away to much information before the investigation can be concluded. This then frames the story as if they are hiding information or not being forth coming with information that they could have shared with the public. Reporters will often ask more probing questions, especially if it is a live press conference and the incident recently took place, but the person in charge is trained to craft their messages purposefully and precisely. Again, the facts surrounding the story get lost in the interviewee's sound bite.

Accidents and Death describe stories that cover any type of accident or death (homicide or suicide). Accidents usually involve some type of motor operated vehicle, but could also range from animal attacks to children mishaps to fires. Similar to the reporting of Crime and Punishment stories, the author found that Channel 2 Action News laces their news hours with these types of stories more than any of the other categories. On average, Accidents and Death account for 50 - 60 percent of the hour-long broadcast. An analysis by David and Lee (1995) found that local newscasts had a preference for airing sensationalized stories that feature violence and sex. These findings appear to still carry some weight 20 years later. Again, reporters use the sound bites of interviewees to add emotion to the story. This framing technique adds a human interest element and probably pulls at the heart strings of most viewers.

The category of Politics covers both local, state and national stories that involve politicians, laws and policies that effect residents at each of those levels. Anchors often add updates to previous stories in these reports. Field reporters will often interview the policy maker such as a state legislator, a supporter of the new policy and on the opposite end someone who opposes the policy. This is when the story then becomes about the negative or detrimental effects of the new policy and takes the focus away on the actual facts surrounding the policy or law. The frame of the story is placed on the loss of benefits or services versus anything positive that the new policy might do for residents.

Social Issues describes topics such as healthcare, the economy, and civic issues. Reporters will often add balance to these stories and report both opposing views. This is done by interviewing someone affected by an issue and a policy maker who has expertise on the issue or someone in law enforcement. This framing technique is quite often used as a debate tactic to get opposing sides sparring with one another and although not face to face, the framing of the story makes it appear that the two sides are in juxtaposition.

The Fillers category captures all the stories (usually light hearted in reporting) that come in between the other four categories. These stories are dispersed throughout the broadcast and can cover topics such as road closures, recreation activities, and inspirational or motivational pieces. These stories seldom open the evening broadcast, but are often the anchor story to the hour-long program. One has to wonder why the news hour is framed in this manner. Is it so viewers are left on an upbeat note after nearly an hour of crime, punishment, and death?

National News

The second research question asked, is a national cable news program capable of presenting stories objectively? To answer this question the author examined stories presented on a top rated evening program. *The Rachel Maddow Show* on MSNBC is an Emmy Award winning show that features the host's take on political issues, as well as other current events. Maddow holds a Ph.D. in political science and has an extensive background in television and radio. Although not trained as a journalist, she has been in the business of broadcast journalism long enough to understand the nuances and influences of the medium. Throughout the analysis of the (N=82) stories narrated by the host one of the first observation is that the host has a unique method to telling a story or "reporting" the news. Maddow uses a mix of her own critical analysis, humor, previous footage, documents and any artifacts at her disposal to prove her point on an issue. Now, just in making this statement, it alludes to the fact that the host frames her stories based on her personal opinion. However, Maddow is quite methodical in using concrete facts to form her analysis that she then relays to viewers through 10-15 minutes of dialogue.

The majority of Maddow's topics cover politics, which is fitting since she holds a political science degree. After hearing her stance on many of the issues she addresses one would come to the conclusion that she leans toward the liberal side more so than a conservative one. There may even be affirmation of her political affiliation, but it was not important or necessary to know for this analysis. The author was aiming to understand how the host frames her stories based on an observation of her show, not on preconceived ideas of how a liberal host would report a story. However, it does play into how Maddow critically analyzes the stories and relates that to her audience. For example, in one particular show Maddow opened up the program with a story about the state of Arkansas deciding to execute eight prisoners in 11 days simply due to the fact that the medicine being used to inject the prisoners would expire soon (The Rachel Maddow Show, 2017). She went on to offer documentation showing that even one of the Supreme Court Justices expressed that the decision to kill these eight men was arbitrary and random. She goes on to make the point that it is illegal to do so under the Constitution of the United States. The host then bridges the story from what the state of Arkansas is doing to a story she previously reported in 2013 about the state of Florida in reference to the governor and attorney general of that state attempting to speed up executions in Florida. The attorney general argued and fought to have executions carried out sooner at the request of the governor, according to Maddow's report.

The host then drops a bombshell and airs local news footage from a Florida station that reported the attorney general asked the governor to hold off on executing a certain prisoner on a specific date because it conflicted with her fundraising event. Maddow goes on to suggest that a week later a story came out about lawsuits being filed against Donald Trump and his Trump University. Some of the plaintiffs in that case were from Florida and the attorney general was reported to be weighing the decision whether or not Florida would join in on the lawsuit with other plaintiffs from other states. However, a few days later the Donald J. Trump Foundation sent a $25,000 check to the attorney general's fundraising campaign. Needless to say the attorney general's office later announced that the state of Florida would not be joining in on the lawsuit against Trump University, according to Maddow.

This is one story extrapolated from all the stories viewed in this analysis and although the topics change, the formulaic nature of the reporting remains the same. The host introduces a topic that is currently circulating in the media, she pulls out old documents or footage of something that contradicts the current issue or person in question, and then offers her narrative of what it all means. Viewers are then left with what appears on the surface to be a critically and well organized news report that has shed light on another corrupt or underhanded public servant. But, in reality, consumers of the program have experienced a framed and slanted version of an issue through the lens of an articulate, highly educated political scientist, who by all accounts is doing what the network hired her to do.

Comedy Programming

The third research question asked, is a national cable satirical news program capable of presenting stories objectively? *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah* is a Peabody Award winning talk/news satire program (The Daily Show, 2017). The current host took over in 2014 from then host and comedian Jon Stewart. Noah is a standup comic from South Africa who made his first television appearance on the Jay Leno show in 2012. The late night host uses comedy to add an element of humor to the topics he discusses that appeals to his 18 – 34 year old demographic. The majority of his stories, similar to those of *The Rachel Maddow Show* revolve around politics, even more specifically, the president or his administration. According to Holbert, Lambe, Dudo, & Carlton, 2007), "The Daily Show uses the audience's familiarization with the national nightly newscast as a means by which to satirize the profession of journalism" (p. 23).

In two months of viewing the broadcast it was noticeably evident that the Noah, as with most television programs, adheres to a formulaic template. There are two main findings that were noticed in the observation. First, the host opens with a brief story usually something current, then segways into a lengthy dialogue about a political policy or person. Viewers are entertained with his sense of humor that usually pokes fun at someone in the political arena. For example, in one particular story, Noah discussed the current investigation and controversy surrounding the president and his ties to Russia. "Wouldn't it be funny if everyone in Trump's administration was dealing with Russia except Trump because they (the Russians) didn't trust him," the comedian joked (The Daily Show, 2017).

The next story in that same broadcast focused on the president's international trip to the Middle East where he met with prime ministers, dignitaries, and presidents of other countries. However, Noah's focus was on the controversy surrounding the hand slap by his wife Melania Trump so the host named the segment "International Hands Stuff" which focused on all the hand gestures made by the president that were caught on camera by the press pool who travel with the president. There were a laundry list of policies and issues that the president dealt with during his international travels, but the comedian's focus was on hand gestures. One of the reasons viewers of The Daily Show tune in each night is to be entertained by Noah's comedic spin on current issues and these viewers are probably consciously aware that his reporting is just that, comedy. However, many viewers of this broadcast are only getting their news from the Comedy Central program hosted by Noah. Therefore, does the framing of these comedic stories hinder what viewers are learning or could be learning by only consuming The Daily Show as a news source?

The second finding highlights another aspect of Noah's show. Unlike that of local news and the national news program hosted by Maddow, the comedy host highlights something another news reporter or host may have said on another station and uses that as satirical fodder. For example, some of the FOX news hosts often have opposing views from that of Noah and he uses footage from those broadcasts to frame his segment followed by a witty punch line. It is clear to viewers that Noah's point is to demonstrate from his perspective, again through humor, the ridiculous narrative put out by the FOX hosts. This framing of the story makes the FOX hosts appear wrong or sometimes hypocritical in their views by airing only a segment of their broadcast, in essence taking it out of context.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The findings for local news reports for the number one rated 6 p.m. broadcast in Metropolitan Atlanta revealed that stories fit into one of five categories. Anchors and field reporters are trained and conscious of choosing their words carefully as to not come across to biased or opinionated in their reporting. However, it becomes problematic when the sound bite from interviewees becomes the focus of the story and overshadows the facts surrounding that story. Viewers are then left with remnants of a colorful or dramatic account of events.

The Rachel Maddow Show remains in the top three among national news cable programs, solidifying that the host garners a large audience. Her commentary on the stories she reports is seen and heard by millions of viewers each week night. The framing technique used by the host to narrate her stories unfortunately offers viewers with an often one-sided slanted view of an issue. Although the host puts much effort into using concrete facts and artifacts to make her point, it is often wrapped in her own personal, yet critical analysis of the story. So, one must ask is there objectivity in the report? Also, the author recognizes that Rachel Maddow is more than likely not attempting to achieve objectivity in her narration of events. Although MSNBC is known for broadcasting hard news reports by traditional journalists, this is not the lane Maddow falls into. In all summations of the show and of her analysis, the host is a political pundit offering a critical, subjective, nonobjective viewpoint on politics and current affairs. This is problematic in the sense that her millions of viewers are getting a slanted version of the story and often not the opposing side. For example, in the report about the Florida attorney general, Maddow provided video footage showing the attorney at different events and it was framed that she could be doing something immoral or ethically wrong. However, there was never an interview with the attorney general to share her side of the story or offer her analysis of Maddow's narrative. The viewers are then left with the host's viewpoint as the only viewpoint.

When one considers the talk/news satire program hosted by Trevor Noah, the average person would probably suggest it is the responsibility of the viewer to seek out additional or alternative forms of news to get the necessary information. But, if viewers believe they are getting the facts about a story and it is also being laced with a little humor, why should one seek out other news sources. In the minds of these viewers, it is possible that they believe they are well informed on political topics based on Noah's narrative.

Potter (2016) suggests that objectivity in reporting is impossible to achieve and his conclusion is directed toward hard news reporting by traditional journalists. This analysis of news genres examined more than just hard news reporting that one would find in local and national news, but not necessarily in satirical news. The author slightly disagrees with Potter's suggestion due to the fact that local news reports in this analysis were found to achieve objectivity in reporting the facts of the story. The bias comes from the interviewee who the reporter uses in the story. The words of the interviewee are not the words of the reporter and should not reflect on the reporting of the facts. However, daily viewers of local news must recognize the framing of the story around the interviewee and ask the question, "Does that sound bite alter my opinion of the story which should be based on the facts?"

This study opens a broad area for a future research trajectory. Research along these lines with a quantitative design may attempt to compare top rated local or national news programs across the country to solicit responses from the people reporting the stories, the journalists, and examine how they perceive their profession when it comes to objectivity in reporting. Also, a mixed method study that involves a quantitative content analysis of local news stories with a focus on the interviewees or sound bite with qualitative interviews of news consumers to understand whether the interviewee within a story shifts the focus of objectivity in the report from the consumer perspective. However, consumers who view these messages through a media literate lens are better equipped to identify when instances of bias creep into a news report.

Watching the nightly news, reading the newspaper, or reading a news story posted to social media provides people with a sense of being well informed on all the important events of the day. It is critical for media consumers to realize that the news is constructed from the events of the day by people who guard the information and release segments of it to the public based on what they deem important. Does the public take into consideration that the full story is not being told by reporters, and not because there is a hidden agenda, but simply due to time constraints or space? However, what is reported to consumers is a selection of topics or stories that the gatekeepers place into a specific context through the use of formulas that enable them to tell the most compelling story. Their selection of these stories and how they form them is based on their own set of biases. So, what is missing? The answer is simple, the rest of the story.

Media consumers must take it upon themselves to not only be aware of this news construction, but to also take an active approach to their consumption of news. There are certain things consumers of the news media can do to become more aggressive in their news consumption, therefore making them more media literate in the process. First, consumers must understand the context of the stories being reported. Ask the question, are these stories being reported for emotional reaction or are they actually offering some valuable information? Understanding the context of a story means getting more than just one perspective. This leads to the next point. Consumers should broaden the scope of their news and information sources, which then exposes them to more news. Other news sources will also have a perspective that could very well differ from the first source one was exposed to, but this difference allows the same story to be put into another context.

Most people would agree that they want to be kept informed on the events of the day and what is happening in the world, specifically in the world around them, their local surroundings. The news media is one of the best avenues to achieve this level of awareness. But, when people only receive their news or information from one source they are limiting themselves from the other side of that story. Media literacy involves exposing oneself to a wide range of sources that offers similar and opposing viewpoints because what lies between the two is a set of facts that reveal the essence of a story.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What kind of stories, topics, or issues are not being covered by the mainstream media?
2. Do you think the profession of journalism as a whole has lost credibility in this era of "fake news" claims?
3. What can media consumers do to ensure the news reported by journalists is accurate, fair, and balanced?
4. Do you think it is possible for journalists to remove their own personal biases and report stories without bias?
5. Do you think people who get their news from entertainment outlets understand these stories are fabrications of "real" news stories, but reported with a biased perspective for entertainment value?

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Accuracy: The quality of being true, exact or fair. Free from error in facts and mistakes.

Agenda-Setting: The ability to center one's attention on a specific topic.

Bias: The distortion, fabrication, or embellishment of information in an effort to slant one's view in one direction or the other.

Entertainment News: The reporting of events based on real world events. Organizations often interject a level of bias in telling the stories.

Fairness: The ability to be free from bias or injustice.

Framing: It is the process of constructing a message in a specific manner that encourages the facts in that message to be perceived in a particular way.

Inverted Pyramid Style: Crafting a news story that places all the important information at the beginning of the story. The reporter starts with the who, what, when, where, why and how.

Local News: The reporting of events in close proximity to the news outlet through traditional and new media formats. Organizations report the facts without bias.

Media Consumer: A person who receives and interprets media texts or images.

Narrative Format: Reporting a story by leading with a statement to grab the viewers' attention and then telling the story from the reporter's view point.

National News: The reporting of events around the country through traditional and new media formats. Organizations report the facts without bias.

News Framing: A method used to dictate what stories get selected and broadcast as news. It is a formulaic system used by journalists as a shortcut approach to select and report a story.

Objective: Not being influenced by one's personal feelings, interpretations or prejudice. The ability to state or report the facts without bias.

Objectivity in News Reporting: The reporting of facts through an unbiased frame.

Satire: The use of sarcasm, irony, or humor to make a point based on a real-world story or event.

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Chapter 8
Ethical Pitfalls in the Digital Age:
When the Desire to "Serve Hot" Gets in the Way of Verification

Tendai Chari
University of Venda, South Africa

ABSTRACT

Using the case study approach, this chapter examines ethical shortfalls confronting the media in the Internet era. The one case is drawn from a story published in The New York Times in 2015, while the other is a story published in a Zimbabwean newspaper, the Daily News. The objective was to broaden knowledge on how the Internet is impacting ethical practices in local and global political environments. The chapter argues that the Internet's architecture predisposes journalists to a host of unethical practices that were uncommon to the legacy media environment. Its immediacy exerts pressure on journalists to publish stories without adequate verification out of the fear of being "scooped" by competitors and citizen journalists who are less constrained to adhere to old-age journalistic ethics such as factual reporting and verification.

INTRODUCTION

There is no technological innovation that has had a contradictory impact on journalism practice more than the Internet. On the one hand, the medium has been an enabler of journalism practice, unlocking new opportunities for practitioners. On the other hand, it is viewed as a bane for journalism, inviting in its wake a plethora of ethical pitfalls linked to its ability to 'instantly distribute highly searchable information without space restrictions..." (Mendoza, 2012). This chapter examines the impact of the Internet on journalism ethics in order gain deeper insights on the transformative impacts of new communication technologies on journalism practice. Empirical data were drawn from two review cases illustrative of the adverse impact of the Internet on journalism ethics in local and global environments.

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Previous studies tend to romanticise the role of the Internet on journalism practice, foregrounding the Internet as an enabler of journalism (Berger, 1996, 2005; Moyo, 2007, 2009; Mudhai et al, 2009; Lee, 2012), while overlooking its negative impacts. This has tended to mask the Internet's negative impact on ethical practices. Klein and Kleinman (2002, 38) rightly assert that that different social groups interpret technologies differently and seek to shape them differently as well. Mabweazara (2010, 1) concurs when he states that new media technologies should be viewed as "embedded in in existing social, cultural and political and economic networks in which journalism is entrenched".

Although the social constructivist perspective accentuates social agency in the use of new communication technologies (see Mabweazara, 2010, 2011; Lee, 2015) debates have not broadened to encompass the negative effects of the Internet on journalism practice. As a result, there is a lacuna on threats posed by the Internet on journalism practice. This chapter fills this gap through an exploration of two review cases in which the Internet's architecture, could be directly or indirectly implicated in aiding unethical practices. The first case is the *Daily News* (Zimbabwe)'s publication of a fictitious story claiming that a woman had been beheaded by ruling Zanu PF supporters in front of her daughters. The second is a story published by the *New York Times's* East African Bureau Chief, Jeffrey Gentleman in December 2015, alleging that Zimbabwean President, Robert Mugabe had called Kenyans "thieves". These two stories, about separate incidents separated by more than a decade are illustrative of the Internet's negative impact on ethical journalism. The two case studies mentioned above are used as illuminating rods to shed light on how the Internet is negatively impacting on journalism ethics.

The rest of the chapter is divided into five parts. The first part is a discussion of the theoretical framework which underpins this article, namely the concept of global media ethics. It critically reviews the debate on global media ethics in order to situate the present study in a context. The second part discusses the methodological design and outlines the research questions. The third part gives a synopsis of the two 'case reports' (Zucker, 2009) which are the focus of this article, namely the *Daily News* (Zimbabwe) and *the New York Times* story referred to above. In the fourth part the two case reports are discussed through the prism of the global media theoretical framework. Part five, which is the final part of the paper is the conclusion and is a critical reflection of the chapter's findings and their implications on journalism practice in local and global political environments.

GLOBAL MEDIA ETHICS AND EMERGING NORMATIVE ETHICS: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

"Ethics" is a slippery term which suffers from semantic entropy. However, the term generally relates to whether actions are either right or wrong. "Media ethics", thus, connotes wrong or right in media practice. Ward (2008, 139) defines media ethics as a type of applied ethics which entail the analysis of media practice and "the application of its principles to situations and issues". Since what is right or wrong depends on the cultural and political context in which journalism is practiced, it is difficult to pin down what is ethical or unethical behaviour by the media. Media ethics are not static but forever evolving, implying that they are bound to be change as contextual factors change.In the Internet age journalism ethics are being redefined in an irrevocable way (Ward, n.d.; Lasica, 1997; Arant, 2000; 2003; Friend, and Singer, 2007; Ess, 2009; Ward, 2010; Berman and Shumway, 2003). How journalists should navigate the rugged ethical terrain in the digital age is a more of a conundrum. It is however incontrovertible that the Internet has enabled the media to have a global reach, thereby rendering geographical boundaries superfluous. With this global reach,the power of the media has increased tremendously. In addition, different media now co-exist in different platforms, thus rendering the 'Berlin' wall that used to separate print and broadcast media invisible. News stories can now be distributed instantaneously to a mixed audience globally via different platforms, thereby exerting pressure on news organisations to publish before verification of facts. Some news organisations have fallen prey to rumours published online withequally telling consequences on their credibility. The internal logic of the Internet lends itself to anonymity, meaning that it is difficult, if not near impossible to verify information published online. Ward (2013) argues that there is need to reconstruct media ethics to suit the changed physical and cultural context of the new media because of the increased power of the media. Similarly,Arant (2000) arguesthat the myriad of ethical challenges occasioned by the online media require that journalists "formulate, utilize and regularly update ethics methodologies".

The process of transforming traditional journalism ethics into global ethics should of necessity entail adapting journalistic norms that are in tandem with the changing media scene in a globalising world, while at the same time ensuring that the core principles that have guided journalism remain. It is within this spirit that scholars like Ward (2013) advocate that journalism should be guided by global media ethics because technological changes and new ownership patterns in geographic regions where journalism practice is now characterised by plurality of traditions, cultures and values. Ward (2010) further asserts that "current media practices are narrowly based within the borders of a single country and thus unable to inform the public about a globalised world". As a framework for guiding journalistic behaviour in the digital age, global media ethics is still underdeveloped and there is no consensus what it is, what it should be or how it can be developed. Ward (2010, p.2) defines global media ethics as "an evolving field that motivates a loosely connected set of activities and studies united by the belief that ethics must go global...". Thus,journalists should go through some form of "global revolution" in their self-consciousness and in the manner in which they practice their profession Ward (2010, p.2). In this vein journalists should view their responsibilities from a cosmopolitan perspective by resisting parochialism, narrow patriotism and extreme nationalism (Ward, 2010, p.2).

Journalists practice their profession in different spatial, political and cultural contexts and their consciousness is shaped by the local environment in which they operate, even though their work has a global impact. It is not clear how journalists may bridge the gulf between their local socialization and their new status as cosmopolitan citizens whose work has impact beyond the confines of their geographical boundaries. Questions have been raised about the fact that global media ethics is characterised by different approaches and a "plurality of types of theorizing" and "a plurality of contending views"on global media ethics, thus making it difficult to concretise global media ethics. Ward (2010, p.2) as much acknowledges this conundrum when he describes global media ethics as an "evolving" or "emerging" project. Ethical values contemplated in global media ethics are therefore, work in progress and there is no agreement on a single global media ethics. Hence, the core values embedded in global media ethics are underdeveloped and there islittle or no empirical data about the ethical challenges confronting the media in the new media dispensation.

The development of a global media ethics framework must therefore, be informed by a deeper understanding of the new ethical challenges facing the media of the digital context. As Wasserman (2010) rightly asserts, the role of the media is not similar globally, implying that there should be contestations about the normative role of the media in such non Western contexts, such as post-apartheid South Africa where journalists are torn between "the democratic value of individual responsibility" and the group loyalty required to build a fractured nation. Wasserman's argument that such "one size fits all" approaches to global media ethics and freedom of speech may not work is plausible. A relativist approach to ethics calls for journalists to be sensitive to the cultural peculiarities so as not to cause unnecessary harm. Wasserman (2011, p.86) argues that if "human dignity is to serve as a universal value strived for globally, it would have to be interpreted and applied within local contexts, but in relation to a global set of power relations within which media producers, audiences and participants are mutually interdependent". Given the lopsided global power relations whereby normative ethical values tilt more in favour of the global North's universal morality, understanding of global media ethics appears to be influenced by the Western epistemologies at the expense of other world regions. Christians (2010,p.6) argues that global media ethics should be guided by universal principles – in particular a "universal ethic of humanity, dignity and truth", three ethical principles that bind humanity, while Shakuntala (2010, p.103) proposes an "epistemic syncretism", where media personnel can adopt both Western theories of ethics as well as local traditions and practices. To this end, "the local should be borne upon the Universal in a non-coercive way" (Shakuntala 2010, p.103). For Shakuntala, both the Western and the local ethical theories should be acknowledged and appreciated (Shakuntala 2010, p.103) but, again it is not clear how such a syncretism can be achieved given the global hegemonic order whereby journalistic practices in the global South are dominated by the journalistic ethos of the North. Against this backdrop, one may argue that even Banda's (2010) claim that journalistic practices in Zambia are a product of the fusion of Western and local practices (glocalisation) sounds too optimistic in so far as it portrays a false sense of equality between global and local cultures, when indications are that local cultures are suffocated by Western cultures in the new global order. Gebremedhum (2010, p.169) notes that local realities have a strong bearing on how media ethics are manifested in a local context, adding that there is "need for further investigation in the areas of culture-specific codes which are at work in determining the perceptions of the journalists and their professional ideology".

Using the neo-Aristotelean virtue of ethics Couldry (2010) proposes a framework of global media ethics which integrates media producers and consumers. He argues that because media production and consumption have become part of the same continuum, it is no longer necessary to separate media ethics from the citizens. In this spirit, the construction of a global media ethics framework entails the reformulation of the scope and fundamentals of media ethics in order to cater for the exigencies of the digital era. The construction of such an ethical global media framework should begin with the accumulation of knowledge on emerging ethical practices in the digital age. This chapter makes an attempt at gaining deeper insights on these emerging journalistic experiences through an examination of the ethical pitfalls that confront journalists in the Internet age.

Methodological Discussion

This article sought to examine the nature of ethical pitfallsconfronting journalists in the context of the Internet. How ethical pitfalls directly and indirectly induced by the Internet manifest themselves and their broader implications to journalism practice are questions that are germane to this study.

Following Newman and Benz's assertion that the choice of a research method is dictated by the research questions,this study adopted the qualitative case study method (Newman and Menz, 1998). Yin (cited in Zainal, 2007, p.2) defines a case study as "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real – life context; when boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used". Bromely (1990,p.302) conceives a case study as a "systematic inquiry into an event or set of related events which aims to describe and explain the phenomenon of interest". Zucker (2009, p.2) notes that the value of the case study research strategy lies in its "scientific credentials and evidence base". This clearly distinguishes the other loose applications of the term such as the "case review" or the "case report" (Zucker, 2009), terms which are more applicable to the present study.

The choice of the case review was influenced by Yin's (2004) recommendation that when the focus of a study is a descriptive question (what?) or an explanatory question (why?) a case study becomes the most appropriate strategy. This study sought to examine the nature of ethical pitfalls that journalists when practising journalism in the digital environment. The case study strategy was therefore, found suitable to explore ethical pitfalls in the media through an in-depth explanation of the phenomenon in question (Yin, 2004). Baxter and Jack (2008, p.544) note that when the case study approach is used appropriately, it can be a valuable tool for developing theory, evaluate programs and developing interventions.

The process of formulating the case study followed the method recommended by Yin (2004) namely, design, selection, analysis, and reporting. Since the main purposive was to give a description and an explanation of the ethical pitfalls in the context of the Internet, the case review was descriptive cum- explanatory. The two cases were selectedbecause they were considered revealing in relation to the contradictory impact of new the digital media in the practice of journalism, and were also typical in that they they represent the real-life ethical challenges in the Internet era. Although there could possibly be numerous cases of newspapers and journalists falling prey to fake online stories, the two cases were chosen because they were widely publicised in the Zimbabwean and other media. Because of this publicity, the author figured out that sufficient data could be obtained to enable meaningful analysis. Yin (2004, p.7) asserts that cases studies do not necessarily have to "represent a "formal" sample from some larger universe, instead generalizing from case studies reflects substantive topics or issues of interest". Thus, the value of case studies lies in their ability to make logical inferences that can contribute to theory building. Using two cases was imperative in order to demonstrate how journalists, regardless of their geography, social or economic status could become amenable to unethical journalistic practices in the Internet era. As will be demonstrated in the next section, although the two stories and their newspapers differ in terms of context, geography and global status, they share a number of similarities in relation to how the Internet predisposes journalists to unethical actions.

The Unit of Analysis

In this study, the unit of analysis is the whole story. Empirical data were thus derived from a corpus of archival material published invarious local and international newspapers. The first story was published in the *Daily News* (Zimbabwe) on 23 April 2002. The story claimed that ruling Zanu PF supporters had beheaded a woman, Blandina Tadyanemhandu in front of her daughters, allegedly because "she was an opposition supporter". The second one is a story published by the *New York Times's* East African Bureau Chief, Jeffrey Gentleman claiming that Zimbabwean President, Robert Mugabe had called Kenyans "thieves". In both cases the stories turned out to be fictitious. The stories were retrieved from online archives of various newspapers. The stories were content analysed with a specific focus on key phrases, words, and sources used. Additional insights were drawn from various newspaper reports and commentaries on the ethical content of the stories, their implications, the reactions of various parties and actions taken after the stories had been published. The analysis also focused on similarity/difference of circumstances of the two cases with a view to map out discernible patterns in the manner in which ethical lapses manifest themselves in papers operating in different environments. The data from the different newspaper stories were synthesised thematically, interpreted using the hermeneutic method, and presented in the form of a narrative report.

The study sought to examine the nature of ethical pitfalls confronted by journalism in the Internet age, but did not seek to understand these ethical challenges from the perspective of the journalists who experience them. As a result, analysed data was limited to textual and archival sources. The study could therefore not shed light on what measures were being taken to prevent a recurrence of such ethical pitfalls or how journalists negotiated these ethical decisions in their day- to- day operations. In addition, the fact that only two cases were selected limits the scope and potential for generalising findings from the study. Zainal (2007, 5) rightly notes that the dependency on the exploration of one or few cases or samples makes it difficult arrive at a generalised conclusion.

In spite of these limitations, the case study strategy enabled the researcher to describe actual real-life ethical experiences in journalism practice in the Internet era, which might not have been possible if say an experimental or survey research design had been utilised.

The Selected Newspapers

The New York Times is an influential global newspaper published in New York City (United States of America) founded as a penny paper in 1851 by Henry Jarvis Raymond and George Jones. It ispublished by *The New York Times* company and commands a circulation of 1.865,827, ranking second in the US, after the *Wall Street Journal* and 39th in the world (Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_newspapers_in_the_United_States). *The New York Times* has long been regarded as a "newspaper of record" (EncyclopaediaBritannica 2015) on account of its compelling journalism which rests on three ethical pillars, namely fairness, integrity and truth (*The New York Times,* 2004). Going by the motto "All News Fit to Print", the newspaper's commitment to objective and restrained reporting of news is flagged in its ethical charter which puts premium on "creating, collecting and distributing high quality news and information", impartiality, treating news readers and sources with respect, practising journalism that is beyond reproach as well as a commitment to "checking facts, the exactness of quotations, the integrity of photographs" and distaste for "anonymous sourcing" (*The New York Times,* 2004). The newspaper is well aware of its global status and commits itself to correcting all errors great and small. It states thus:

Because our voice is loud and far reaching, The Times recognizes an ethical responsibility to correct all its errors, large and small. The paper regrets every error, but it applauds the integrity of a writer who volunteers a correcting of his or her own published story. (The New York Times, 2004)

The Daily News is a tabloid size mass market privately-owned, daily newspaper published in Zimbabwe by the Associated Newspapers Zimbabwe (ANZ), a company founded by a consortium of local and foreign businessmen in 1999. The Newspaper was shut down in 2003 after failing to comply with the requirements of a new media law, the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (2002) but was relaunched in March 2011 after a protracted legal battle. As was before its closure, the paper remains pro-capital, pro-opposition and highly critical of the ruling ZANU PF party and government led by President Robert Mugabe. According to a Zimbabwe All Media Products Survey,(ZAMPS) (2014) first half results the *Daily News* had a readership of 15% of the print media market share (IMPI Report, 2015). Moyo notes that the *Daily News* assumed the role of the opposition, becoming President Mugabe's government's most strident and 'fearless' critic of President Mugabe's government and its print run rose from 60 000 to 120 000, torpedoing the state-run daily, *The Herald* whose circulation stood at 90 000. Flagging the tag line “Telling it like it is”, the *Daily News* was viewed by some as being able to provide a “counter-narrative” to the state media but Zanu PF officials labelled it an “enemy of the state” (Dombo, 2014), thus setting it on a collision course with the government of the day.

The Daily News ‘Beheading’ Story

On 23 April 2002, a privately-owned Zimbabwean newspaper, and a staunch critic of the ruling party and government published a story claiming that one Brandina Tadyanemhandu, an opposition party supporter in Magunje, a district of Mashonaland West province had been decapitated by alleged Zanu PF supporters while her two daughters watched (see Excerpt 1). The story ran under the headline ‘Young Girls see their Mother’s head being cut off’. The newspaper reported that Tadyanenemhandu, aged 53 had been “butchered” by about 20 Zanu Pf youths for being an opposition party supporter (the *Daily News,* 23 April 2002). It however, turned out that the story was false as the newspaper had fallen prey to the antics of a confidence trickster, one George Nyadzayo, alias Enos Tadyanemhandu, who was husband to the deceased. The paper later claimed that Nyadzayo had approached an opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) Member of Parliament for Seke, in the dormitory town of Chitungwiza, one Bennie Tumbare-Mutasa for financial assistance after his home had been burnt by Zanu PF supporters. This also turned out to be a lie. After the newspaper discovered that the story was false, it retracted the story and apologised to both government and Zanu PF. In a comment published in the paper’s 27 April 2002 edition, the paper stated that:

It appears we were misled. It is difficult to believe Mr Tadyanemhandu could have made up such a story. What remains more of a mystery is why he took such a pain to create a story that has potential to undermine the credibility of The Daily News. (Daily News, 27 April 2002)

The paper added that:

A Daily News team has failed over the past two days to locate the grave of Brandina Tadyanemhandu, whose husband, Enos, claimed this week that she had been murdered by having her head chopped off by assailants alleged to be Zanu PF youths as her two daughters watched….Until (Brandina) Tadyanemhandu’s grave is located and positively identified, we were left with no option but to…tender our most profound apologies to Zanu PF, whose image was tarnished by the report in question. (The Daily News,27 April 2002)

Although the newspaper retracted the story and apologised to the affected parties it had been reproduced by various media outlets worldwide, including *Guardian* (UK) whose correspondent, Andrew Meldrum then based in Zimbabwe could not authenticate its veracity. The story still exists online and can be accessed via the link http://www.freerepublic.com/focus/news/671152/posts. This means that, although the story might have been removed from the *Daily News* website, it is still available to a global public on different online platforms and continues to attract comments from the public as if it were a true story. It worth noting that apart from its ethical dimension, the story also had a legal dimension as its publication resulted in the arraignment of the reporters who wrote the story, Collin Chimwanza and Lloyd Mudiwa, then editor of the newspaper, Geoff Nyarota and the *Guardian* (UK) correspondent, *Excerpt 1. Part of the story from the Daily News*

April 23, 2002 | Lloyd Mudiwa
Posted on 2002/04/23 12:36:09 PM by Clive
TWO young girls aged 10 and 17 watched in horror as their mother was brutally murdered by having her head chopped off at the neck.
Brandina Tadyanemhandu, 53, was butchered inside her hut by about 20 youths, suspected to be Zanu PF supporters, in Magunje on Sunday.
The reason for Tadyanemhandu's grisly murder was the accusation by the youths that the deceased was a supporter of the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC). Tadyanemhandu will be buried today at Magororo village in Magunje, Hurungwe East.
She was the mother of MDC youth activist Tichaona Tadyanemhandu, 20, who went missing in Hurungwe in June 2000. His body was found six months later in the mortuary at Harare Central Hospital.
Brandina Tadyanemhandu's attackers, who were allegedly led by a war veteran known as Cde Chifamba, also burnt the family's main house, destroying property worth thousands of dollars.
Tadyanemhandu's husband, Enos, 63, yesterday said: "They killed my only son in a family of eight children and now they have killed my wife. Why are they fighting us after they won the election? I will not be silenced. I will speak out against this evil."
A distraught Tadyanemhandu said it seemed like a normal day when he drove his herd of cattle to the dip tank at Magororo township at about 6am on the fateful day. On his way back, at about 10am, he said he was surprised when his 17-year-old daughter, Chipo, weeping, approached him.
"She was crying," he said. "My first thought was that she had been assaulted by a friend. She struggled to tell me that her mother's head had been cut off by Zanu PF supporters." Tadyanemhandu said……..

Source: Free Republic http://www.freerepublic.com/focus/news/671152/posts.

Andrew Meldrum, who was later deported after his acquittal by a Harare court. Meldrum was acquitted on the grounds that he had taken reasonable steps to contact the police who could not confirm the story to him (even if he went ahead and published it) (International Freedom of Expression Exchange, 2002; Gaingons, 2008).

The New York Times Story on Mugabe

On November 4, 2015, *The New York Times* published a feature story with fabricated quotes attributable to Zimbabwean president, Robert Mugabe. Headlined, 'An Anti-Corruption Plea in Kenya: Please Just Steal Less', the story, authored by the newspaper's East African Bureau Chief, Jeffrey Gentleman used fabricated quotes from a Kenyan satirical news magazine, Spectator C.O.K.E claiming that Mugabe had called Kenyans 'thieves'. Mugabe is alleged to have said:

Those people of East Africa shock me with their wizardry in stealing sometimes. I tend to believe that stealing is in every Kenyan's blood. These people go their schools and read good courses but they qualify as the best thieves. You can even think that there is a subject in their universities called Bachelor of Stealing. Whenever they get an opportunity as employees, they never disappoint. They steal enough money to buy their freedom because even the judges who listen to their cases are financially powerless. I urge my people to be on high alert in case you by bad luck happen to visit that East African nation. They might infect you with that disease and we don't want it here. Zimbabweans are honest people who love their country and don't want such stealing tendencies. (iMediaEthics, 8 November 2015)

It however, turned out that the fake quotations attributable to Mugabe had been fabricated by The Spectator C.O.K.E, a Kenya satirical online which later explained that it was using 'satire to fight corruption in Kenya' (iMediaEthics, 8 November 2015). *The New York* Times removed the fake quotations from the story and in its 12 November edition and explained that:

Excerpt 2. The New York gentleman's response to the fake Mugabe quotations

> Corruption in Kenya is real but that Mugabe quote was fake.
> I want to explain what happened. A source sent me an article from the Spectator magazine that included harsh quotes from Mugabe criticizing Kenya's corruption, which many people in Kenya and beyond say has reached an outrageous level.
> The article: http://www.spectator.co.ke/…/robert-mugabe-god-should-neve…/
> I emailed it to a Zimbabwean journalist in Harare to check if Mugabe had actually said those things. The Zimbabwean journalist told me that it appeared he had.
> Many Kenyans, too, believed Mugabe had said those things.See this link: http://www.bbc.com/news/blogs-trending-34735212
> After my article was published, I started receiving messages that the Mugabe quote was fake. I looked into it immediately and contacted the Spectator and an official in the Zimbabwean government. The Spectator admitted to fabricating the story, saying that it was using satire to fight corruption.
> We have amended our article, which can be found here:nytimes.com
> I deeply regret the way I presented that part of the story and I've learned from this mistake. Unfortunately it has drawn attention away from what many believe is an alarming problem in Kenya: runaway graft. As that story revealed, Kenyan officials are believed to have stolen millions of dollars in public money through a scheme of wild purchases, like buying simple ballpoint pens for $85 each.
> The Kenyatta government's response is that it is investigating these allegations seriously.
> Many Kenyans have told me that corruption is the single greatest problem in their country.

Source: Watiri Sue: New York Times Journalist Forced to Apologise for Publishing Part of the Fake Mugabe story That Triggered KOT's War Against Mugabe', GHAFLA, 10 November 2015.

An article last Thursday about extraordinary rise in public corruption in Kenya, no stranger to graft, erroneously included remarks attributed to Robert Mugabe, the Zimbabwean president, saying that Kenyans were thieves and telling his countrymen to be on alert when visiting Kenya so as not to "catch that disease". The Spectator, a Kenyan newsmagazine that published the remarks, said last week that they had been fabricated, and were intended as satire. (The New York Times, 12 November 2015)

The Zimbabwean government, through the presidential spokesperson accused Gentleman of being a "blunderous, if not outright racist" bent on "contriving a conflict between Zimbabwe and Kenya" (*The Chronicle*, 13 November, 2015). Gentleman admitted to have made an 'error' and said he took "full responsibility for the mistake" (*The Chronicle 12* November 2015). Responding to a barrage of harsh Tweets by Kenyans and Zimbabweans who took umbrage with his 'unprofessionalism', Gentleman tweeted that "Guilty as charged. The Mugabe quote was fake. I deeply regret the way we presented it" (*The Southern Daily*, 13 November 2015). He also gave a background about how the story had been originated (see Excerpt 2).

Gentleman further claimed that, in trying to verify the story he had contacted a Zimbabwean journalist in Harare whom he sent a copy of the story before it was published to check with the President's Office if Mugabe had indeed made the statement attributed to him. According to Gentleman the journalist he requested to verify the quotes came back to him 'several hours later; before the story was published confirming that Mugabe had made 'appeared' to have uttered the statement. According to Gentleman, this was his "own attempt to verify the story and it was only after the story was published" that it dawned on him that the journalist in Harare had not checked with the president's office or "other appropriate sources" (*The Southern Daily*, 13 November 2015). It was later reported that police in Zimbabwe had launched a 'witch-hunt' on the journalist who had corroborated Gentleman's fake story, and would be prosecuted under the law of the country (*The Standard*, 15 November, 2015).

The Internet, Misinformation and the Erosion of the Verification Ethic

Although the contextand circumstances in which the two stories differ considerably, there are a number of similarities that underscore the tensions between traditional and global journalism ethics (Price, 2015). The two stories underline the fact as journalism gets into the supersonic mode, aided by new communication technologies such as the Internet,the core values of traditional journalism such as verification are shunted to the backburner. Both the *Daily News* and the *New York Times* story illustrate how journalism ethics take a back stage when journalists succumb to the desire to publish at the first instance. According to the Verification Hand Book (2013), verificationhas come back to the fore of journalismbecause of the digital explosion.Both the *Daily News* and the *New York Times* reporterpublished their stories without adequately verifying their stories.The fast pace of journalism in the digital age leaves journalists without enough time to verify their stories while the imperative to publish instantly has become more compelling. Brandtzaeg, Luders, Spangeberg, Ruth-Wiggins and Folstad (2016, p.323) conceives verification as a critical element of the newsgathering and dissemination process which requires skilled determination of the accuracy or validity of the content in question. In the age of the digital era, print publications operate under perpetual fear of being scooped by online newspapers and social media and the trade-off between verification and supersonic speed journalism often plays itself out in an unpleasant manner. The Verification Handbook published by the European Journalism Centre (Silverman & Perlman, 2013, p.1) notes that “The abundance of content from disparate sources spread all the world, make the application of verification more essential than ever before”, while Buttry (2013, p.16) asserts that “verification is the essence of journalism”. Both the *Daily News* and the *New York Times* highlight the risk of misinformation and the declining importance attached to verification and fact checking in the Internet age.

As will be demonstrated below, both journalists did not exercise rigour in verifying the authenticity and validity of their information or stories before publication. This shows that regardless of their political and social context the mainstream press is becoming more amenable to factual inaccuracies because fear of losing stories to competitors in the context of citizen journalism. Buttry (2013, p.17) argues that the 24/7 news cycle and the rise of the social media and user generated content requires journalists to “gather and report as events unfold, making swift decisions about whether information has been sufficiently verified…”. This means that journalists must be more committed to question their sources and the material they use in developing their stories and to resist the temptation to be presumptuous about bother their sources and the events and people they report on.

The desire to undercut competitors and the obsession with speedy publication means that journalists are increasingly less worried about the accuracy of their stories as their attention is fixated on scooping competitors. It could be argued that the Internet has somewhat exacerbated this cut throat competition in the sense that mainstream publications are not just competing amongst themselves, but also with online publications and websites which leverage their digital presence for instantaneous publication. Wood (2013) rightly asserts that “If speed is the currency of the modern information era, misinformation is the increasingly high cost…We have more information, but it’s a morass of the truths, and what we used to call libel. Its fast, but it’s bad. And bad information is a cancer that just keeps growing…”. This shows that the desire to publish instantly has resulted in core journalism principles like fact checking and verification being downplayed in the digital context. As demonstrated in the two cases reviewed in this chapter, verification is no longer as rigorous as it was in traditional journalism as journalists devote less time towards verifying stories as the determination of the credibility of news sources is sometimes "outsourced" to third parties, who might even an interest in the story being investigated (Godler & Reich, 2015). In the two cases outlined above, both *The Daily* News and the *New York Times* became victims of 'spooky' sources because they outsourced the credibility of their sources to second hand sources, who possibly might have an interest in the stories under investigation. In the case of the *Daily News*, Geoff Nyarota, the then editor of the newspaper admitted that his paper had been misled by a source "who had not been sincere" (Afrol, 2002). However, using the insincerity of a source is an unacceptable alibi for not getting facts right. Given the sensitivity of the story the *Daily News* was supposed to cross-check the story until it found irrefutable evidence that indeed the alleged murder of Brandina Tadyanemhandu had happened. In both the *Daily News* and the *New York Times*case story verification was done after publication rather than in the pre-publication stage. Whenthe *Daily News* was challenged about the authenticity of its story it dispatched a team of reporters to look for the grave of the alleged murdered woman but did not find it. Geoff Nyarota later stated that:

A Daily News team has failed over the past two days to locate the grave of Brandina Tadyanemhandu whose husband Enos, claimed this week that she had been murdered by having her head chopped off by assailants alleged to be Zanu-PF youth as her two daughters watched. (Daily News, 27 April 2002)

The *Daily News* was supposed to do this kind of verification before it published the story, but the newspaper chose to do so after the truthfulness of the story was questioned. The newspaper became a victim of the "publish first, verify later" syndrome, which afflicts mainstream publications against the backdrop of intense competition in the digital age.Similarly, the *New York Times* sought to verify the false quotes attributed toMugabe afterthe newspaper was exposed by President Mugabe's office, thus demonstrating a case of "closing the stable after the horse had bolted out'. In addition, both papers ignored the 'Two Reliable Sources Rule' (Brewer, 2011) which requires journalists all facts about sensitive stories be confirmed by at least two sources. The failure by the two newspapers to triangulate their sources clearly shows that in the Internet age, verification is no longer accorded a higher priority as the veracity of stories can now be outsourced to second hand and third hand sources.

Outsourcing Credibility: The Emergency of Second and Third Hand Sources

It is worth noting that although the original source of the *Daily News* was an offline source, (while that of the *New York Times* was an online source (the Kenyan Online Satirical Online Magazine) in both cases, the laxity of verification was manifested through the reliance on second hand/third hand sources.

As was noted above, the *Daily News* relied on the supposed husband of the deceased (who was introduced to the newspaper by an opposition, MDC Member of Parliament) while the *New York Times'* lifted the fake quotes from the Spectator C.O.K.E). While 'trust' could have played a role in the publication of the fake story, in the case of the *Daily News*, and to some extent the *New York Times* (in the sense that Gentleman trusted the unnamed Zimbabwean journalist who reportedly confirmed the fake quotes), it would appear that the anonymity of the Internet was more influential in the publication of the fake quotes by the *New York Times*. Given the millions information sources on the Internet, it is difficult for journalists to verify the authenticity of every story, hence they become prone to hoaxes, rumours and fabrications. Schifferes and Newman (2013, p.876) rightly point out that most of the challenges faced by journalists in the Internet age are not entirely new, but the Internet has made them more complex in a world "where the volume and speed of information is growing exponentially". Whereas the *Daily News* journalists fell prey to the shenanigans of an "insincere" off-line source, the *New York Times* was a victim of an online source that looked too authentic not to be doubted in a context where, to quote Godler and Reich (2015, p.9) "journalistic practices of fact-finding are merely rituals brought about source-characteristics and journalistic –source exchanges and negotiations". Against this backdrop "journalists are not to believe anything on the basis of evidence, but rather choose or decide to believe due to the specific interactions with sources (including sympathies, negotiations, trust)". The ritualistic way in which news is verified makes journalists amenable to second hand and third hand sources who are equally detached from the situation under investigation, thus compromising the credibility of news stories. That *New York Times* journalists relied on another journalists based in Zimbabwe to verify President Mugabe's remarks on his behalf suggests that in the age of the Internet, second hand news sources are gaining currency and 'lazy journalism' is taking root. It is now generally acknowledged that the Internet promotes 'lazy journalism' because journalists rely on Internet based tools such as email and Facebook to interact with their news sources rather than themselves venturing outside the newsroom where they have personal contacts with news sources (Chari, 2013).

Pavlik, (cited in Mabweazara 2010, p.183) observes that using email to interview news sources is increasingly becoming a viable option especially for interviewing sources in distant locations. Mabweazara (2010) points out that using email as an interviewing tool is largely predicated on "prior relationships cultivated over time between the reporters and sources" as is the case with the *New York Times's* Jeffrey Gentleman who 'interviewed' a fellow journalist based in Zimbabwe. Although their prior relationship helped to build trust, it must be remembered that, in the specific case of the *New York Times* the 'interview' was between a journalist and a fellow journalist, which brings another ethical dimension in relation to whether a journalists should rely on another journalist to ascertain the authenticity of a story. *The NewYork Times's* Jeffrey Gentleman stated that he emailed the Zimbabwean journalist in Harare to check if Mugabe had uttered the disputed statements and the journalist confirmed that Mugabe had made the statements. By not contacting Mugabe's office before the publication of the story, the *New York Times*, like the *Daily News* over-relied on a second hand source. Like the *Daily* News, the *New York Times* only contacted President Mugabe's office and the Spectator C.O.K.E, the originator of the quotes after the story had been published and disputed, thus underscoring the tendency of "publish and verify later" syndrome. It is evident that in both cases the normative requirement for verification and fact-checking did not go beyond the threshold permitted when dealing with sensitive stories because the authenticity of the story (in the case of the *Daily News*) and quotes (in the case of The *New York Times*) was not established with certainty as if to suggest that what certain individuals say or do (in this case Mugabe and his government) scepticism can be suspended and treat whatever allegations levelled against the personality as common cause. Gentleman's statement that the Zimbabwean journalist said Mugabe "appeared" have uttered the fake statements, and that "Many Kenyans, too, believed Mugabe had said those things" is proof of this lack of certainty and the laxity of verification standards. It is disingenuous for the press to have separate ethical standards for different people, whatever their social or political standing or alleged blemishes and the two cases highlighted above should serve as a lesson that the press must always exercise impartiality consistent with Rawls's theory of ethical theory of "Justice as Fairness behind a veil of ignorance", whereby every citizen enjoys equal treatment "when they access the hypothetical social contract and when the principles of justice are created" (Runcheva, 2013, p.1) Kasoma concurs with the need for fairness and impartiality in journalism practice regardless of the circumstances when he states that:

… the harm that unfounded accusations against those in government can do to society and individuals who constitute it can be devastating. Even Africa's dirty politicians, as most of them are, deserve justice and fair play from media and should not be accused, tried and sentenced by the press of wrongs they have not committed. (Kasoma, 1996, p.101)

The lack of scepticism means that journalists have become "susceptible to partisan interests" (Price, 2015, p.8) thereby limiting their capacity to provide reliable information, particularly in conflict situations. Because of the fast pace of journalism, legacy journalism appears to be lagging behind the online media or citizen journalists who publish as events happen and operate outside the ethical constrains (and legal regimes) of traditional media. Because they allow online media to set the agenda, traditional journalists are forced to parrot the rumours and propaganda in online media rather than debunking them, thus contributing to "misinformation and scaremongering" (Price, 2015, p.8). In this case *The Daily News* and *New York Times* were presumptuous about the correctness of their sources and as a result suspended any form of scepticism. Yet traditional journalisms requires that journalists be sceptical of their sources whoever they are, and whatever they social standing is. Buttry corroborates this view when he asserts that:

The need for verification starts with the simple fact that many of our information sources are wrong. They may be lying maliciously or innocently passing along misinformation. They may have faulty memories or lack of context or understanding. They may be in harm's way and unable to provide everything they know, or unable to see the full picture of events as they unfold. Our job is not to parrot sources and the material they provide, but to challenge them triangulate what they provide with other credible sources and verify what is true, weeding from our work (before we publish, map or broadcast) what is false or not adequately verified. (Buttry, 2013, p.17)

By publishing their stories on the basis of shaky evidence, it means that the two newspapers were prepared to parrot their sources. Although the actual reasons for the publication of what turned out to be false stories are outside the purview of this chapter, it can be argued that in both cases reviewed in this chapter the journalists concerned failed to question seemingly authoritative sources, and as a result they fell prey to hoaxes. The anonymity of the Internet and the fact that the medium is host to unlimited information exacerbated the challenge to verify the information as they had to rely on second hand and third hand sources. As will be argued below, this reliance on second hand and third hand sources might further compromise legacy journalism's capacity to provide the citizenry with information to make informed decisions and democratic participation (Godler & Reich, 2015).

Intra-Media Agenda-Setting and Challenge of Retraction

Smith (cited in Nieves-Pizarrro, 2015) defines a retraction as "a public statement made about an earlier statement that withdraws, cancels, refutes, diametrically reserves the original statement or ceases and desists from publishing the original statement". The essence of a retraction is to correct or withdraw the offending story. Although both newspapers retracted their stories, millions of people had already read them and numerous other publications had picked up the stories for wider dissemination. For instance, and as mentioned earlier, the *Guardian* (UK)'s correspondent in Zimbabwe at the time, Andre Meldrum had published the story from the *Daily News* without verifying it and appeared in the Guardian's edition of 24 April 2002 (Chari, 2007). The millions of people who read the story might have believed it to be true, particularly given the fact that at the time there was of political violence in Zimbabwe. At the time of writing, the original story was still available online (see Excerpt 1),fourteen years after it was published. This is an affirmation that the Internet makes it easier to propagate falsehoods and rumours to a global audience, and once false or fake stories are published it is not guaranteed that the damaging stories can be retracted as was the case with the print media. Since false stories cannot easily be retracted this has far reaching ramifications on the global image of individuals and nations that are in dire need of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) or are dependent on tourism.

It is trite to say that had it not been for the Internet it would not have been possible for other journalists to dispatch a story that had not been adequately verified, and in the case of Gentleman, it could no not have been possible for him to lift fake quotes from the Spectator C.O.K.E, the Kenyan satirical online that published the 'Mugabe' quotes. Because online stories are downloadable and can be shared among many people easily, they cannot be retracted. A retraction or recall of the damaging story cannot stop the propagation of false stories, thus giving credence to the adage that "A lie can travel halfway around the world while the truth is putting on its shoes". This means that in the digital era,journalistic inaccuracies have far reaching implications for both individual and national reputations since offending stories cannot be totally recalled due to the seamlessness of the Internet. The very architecture of the Internet negates the verification process yet it is verification which sets journalism apart from other forms of communication. Nieves-Pizarrro (2015) rightly asserts that it is verification which gives journalism credibility and believability and without it journalism's claims to truth-telling will be seriously jeopardised.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has discussed ethical pitfalls confronted by journalists in the age of the Internet with special attention on verification. The study used two cases to highlight how core ethical principles of journalism such verification are taking a back seat in the digital age. The chapter argues that the fast pace of journalism in the Internet age and the desire by journalists to publish real time negates core cannons of journalism such as verification and further predisposes journalists to the use of 'second hand' and 'third hand' news sources.

The anonymity of the Internet and the vast information it carriers makes it difficult for journalists to ascertain the authenticity of its sources or its veracity, thereby exposing journalists to a very dangerous ethical minefield. As has been argued in this chapter, the difficulty of verifying information online may force journalists to defer the responsibility of verifying information to third parties rather than witnesses, thereby outsourcing the credibility of their stories to outsiders. The increasing trend by of relying on second hand and third hand sources among journalists, instead of eye-witnesses means that journalists are outsourcing the credibility of their work. The chapter has also argued that the Internet makes it difficult for newspapers to retract inaccurate or false stories because of its seamless architecture which allows people in different parts of the world to download and share stories. Even where a newspaper deletes an inaccurate story, such a story continues to circulate through other websites or email, meaning that more people get exposed to this misinformation. This has serious implications in so far as it erodes the credibilityof the media, which in turn might negatively compromise the media's capacity to influence the deepening of democratic cultures globally.

The chapter concludes by hazarding that, although the Internet has contributed to journalistic sloppiness occasioned by its architecture and political economy by making fabrications more acute or difficult to detect, its real impact and the threats and risks it poses on journalism ethics remain fully unexplored. The two cases reviewed in this chapter help to open debate on the possible threats of the Internet on journalism ethics. Such a research agenda does not in any way pretend to be blind to the numerous positive roles that new communication technologies in general and the Internet plays in enhancing journalism ethics. In the final analysis, how the Internet shapes journalism will in large measure depend on the attitudes, the pre-dispositions and agendas of those who use it. The preponderance of journalistic manual guides on online verification fundamentals and "essential" online tools for journalists to minimize ethical risks in the digital era is not only testament of the self-correcting capabilities of technology, but also evidence that technology is as good as those who use it. Since this study sought to examine how the Internet predisposes journalists to ethical pitfalls, its inclination was illustrative rather than conclusive. Future studies could employ ethnographic methods examine ways in which the numerous Internet based tools can be utilised to enhance journalism ethics in order to bring broader insights and expand knowledge on the dialectic that the Internet brings to bear in journalism practice in general and journalism ethics in particular.

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Chapter 9
Media-Invented Stories and Outright Lies a Threat to Journalism Ethics and Media Credibility

Agnes Lucy Lando
Daystar University, Kenya

ABSTRACT

Several authors have researched on diverse challenges affecting media practice in different parts of the world: the growing influence of bribery (Dirbaba, 2010), one-sided and distorted reporting (Mfumbusa, 2008), pornographic and oversexed content, an inclination to acceptance of the brown envelope (Kasoma, 2010; Skjerdal, 2010; White, 2011; Nwabueze, 2010), and the disconnect between media training and practice (Lando, 2013). But with ICT, contemporary challenges include sources of news. With the aid of modern technology, a story that has appeared in one media house or platform can be reproduce in another without the reproducing journalist citing the previous source, and without disclosing to audiences that the story being presented is not original. Further, some journalists have presented stories that only exist in their fantasy. All these are cases of media lies. This chapter examines select cases of media lies and the ethical and credibility threat they pose to journalism.

INTRODUCTION

On 23rd October 2014, the newspaper with the largest circulation in Kenya, also generally considered most credible, The Daily Nation, carried a unique photo story on the front page. The story indicated that a cow from Chepkeche in Uasin Gishu County was allowing two little lambs feed on her milk after the mother of the lambs wondered off in search of green pastures (Awiti, 2014). Noticing the unique fur on the lambs, a bizarre feature for lambs in that part of Kenya, readers quickly brought it to the attention of others that the newspaper had lifted the picture and caption from a website. The occurrence had actually taken place in New Zealand and not Kenya and the story had been reported on 21st June 2014 in New

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Zealand (Bletchly, 2014). Whereas major parts of the story (the incidence) are correct, changing the location to Kenya and attributing the coverage to himself was a misconduct on the part of the journalist. The presented story is partly plagiarized and partly *cooked*.

This is not the only newspaper in Kenya that has *lifted* a story from a different source and presented it as their own. Other media practitioners have, for example, created a full story out of their imagination (Elbagir, 2013). Further, this is not a Kenyan problem, but a challenge that reputable media practitioners and media houses are involved in, worldwide. World famous news media, such as CNN, is an example where the media and media practitioners have created realities to portray what is not the case. This includes, but not limited to, generating non-existing content and presenting it as a factual occurrence. That is, media *creating* news and stories purely based on the imagination of the particular journalist. For instance, during the build up to the 2013 General Elections in Kenya, CNN carried an exclusive story that private armies/gang groups in Kenya were already being recruited and organizing themselves ready to fight. They referred to this as Post-Election Violence (PEV) in the making. The CNN story depicted Kenya as preparing for war ahead of the 3rd March 2013 General Elections (Elbagir, 2013). The video clip titled “Kenyans armed and ready to vote” was uploaded on the CNN website and broadcast a few days before the General Elections. The clip featured four people whose faces were beclouded carrying what the CNN reporter Nima Elbagir described as “guns fashioned from iron piping, home-made swords and bullets bought from the black-market”. This was followed by a social media campaign by Kenyans with the #tag, someonetell CNN. Eventually CNN apologized.

Such kind of practice would be excused of the gutter press or citizen journalism whose practitioners have had little or no formal training at all on professional communication and media ethics. The questions that this practice raises are numerous, for example, why do trusted mainstream media choose to lie to their audiences? Surrounded by ICT world that is full of information that is just a click away, and thus tempting to google, copy and paste, how can media practitioners remain faithful to their special and unique profession and vocation? This is especially important because many persons still believe in the traditional print (newspapers) and electronic media (radio and TV) as credible news sources. When these present a view that is not accurate, what harm can they cause to the society? And to what extent do they taint the name/image of media practitioners, specifically those not involved in the practice? In this researcher’s view, both plagiarized and cooked stories are media lies.

By examining select-cases of media lies, this chapter intends to highlight stories from the print and electronic media that have been presented by media houses as their own stories when the contrary is the case; or where a media practitioner has *cooked* up a story when that story does not actually exist. This reflection paper covers the malpractice of journalists – of fabricated and / or plagiarized stories.

Methodological Approach and Theory

This study employs content analysis where the author examines a number of stories that have been *cooked* by media practitioners and houses, or copied and pasted from varied sources, and the implication therein. Interpersonal deception theory helps explain why mainstream media tell lies on their stories. According to Littlejohn (1999, p. 146), the source attempts to manipulate a message so as to be untruthful, “which may cause them apprehension concerning their false communication being detected. Simultaneously, communication receivers try to unveil or detect the validity of that information, causing suspicion about whether or not the sender is being deceitful.” The process usually starts off when a sender’s expectations, goals, prior knowledge and skill set all combine and result in a communication that is true or not true. It is important to note that the communication is accompanied by an initial behavioral display. Deceptive messages are inclusive of the content itself and also the extra effort put in by the sender or even the strategic plan that the media house may use in an aim to make the story believable (Par Anders Granhag, 2015).

As technology becomes more and more of an intricate part of contemporary society it allows for information to travel quickly and more widely available. By this information being so widely available some ethical issues have come to light when it comes to proper credit received to the owners of these ideas. Interpersonal deception theory explains a sender's attempt to manipulate messages so as to be untruthful which may cause them apprehension concerning their false communication being detected.

According to this theory, receivers try to unveil or detect the validity of that information, causing suspicion about whether or not the sender is being deceitful. Deception in this theory is defined as an "intentional act in which senders knowingly transmit messages intended to foster a false belief or interpretation by the receiver" (Littlejohn, 1999, p. 147). Another set of authors, Buller & Burgoon (1998), explain that people often find themselves in situations where they make statements that are less than completely honest in order to avoid hurting or offending another person, to emphasize their best qualities, to avoid getting into a conflict, or to speed up or slow down a relationship. Weasley (2015) concurs, adding that reputable journalists and mainstream media may choose to lie to their audiences because of various reasons: First, high pressure from the working environment; second, high expectations from people around them, fear of not living up to what people expect from you); third, increased worry over ratings and; last, competition for jobs as more and more people are laid off.

These findings are in agreement with an earlier study (Lando, 2013) in which media practitioners admitted to being guided in their profession not by professionalism and ethics but by ratings, competition for by-lines and Advertisements. This reality is despite the fact that Journalism is centred on a set of essentially ethical concepts of, but not limited to, freedom, democracy, truth, objectivity and honesty. The journalists are therefore expected to have these in mind and maintain the quality of the information they put out to the world. As clearly presented by Christians, Fackler, McKee, Kreshel, & Woods (2009), actions of fabrications and plagiarism decrease a paper's integrity as a credible source of news. They note that:

The credibility of a newspaper is its most precious asset, and it depends almost entirely on the integrity of its reporters. When that integrity is questioned and found wanting, the wounds are grievous, and there is nothing to do but come clean with our readers, apologize to the Advisory Board of the Pulitzer Prizes, and begin immediately on the uphill task of regaining our credibility. (Maraniss, 1981, p. 37)

This scenario can further be explained by News Framing theory as described by Pinter and Willis (2016) who write that "when journalists frame an issue, they select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described" (p.. 92). This is especially true of *cooked* stories whose motive why they are told and how they are told is only known to that particular dishonest journalist.

SELECT CASES OF MEDIA LIES

The media are such a powerful force because a good percentage of people tend to trust them as their primary source of information. The media are also sources of reference. For instance, during the hearing of the 2007 Post-Election Violence case of Kenya at the International Criminal Court (ICC), the lawyers for the defence and prosecution utilized Kenyan Newspaper stories and video clips to argue their case. Yet as recent research has shown, the pressure is high for journalists on who is first to break the news, to come up with the most unique stories that will set their media house apart and make it stand out to attract a large audience and by extension, advertisers (Lando, 2013). On the flipside, in the rush to be the first, facts are not double-checked or are ignored, costing reporters their jobs and media their credibility. This is why David and Gordon (2011) argue that the success of new media attracts strong critical reaction, especially when they use questionable strategies to produce content to attract consumers.

In the next section here below, the author presents a number of cases from different parts of the world where media practitioners have simply lifted a story or a photo or a concept from the website or another media house and presented it as their own. This is plagiarism. Whereas the plagiarized story (whole or part) might be factually correct, the act (plagiarizing) is misconduct on the part of the journalist. This, in return, has impact on the manner in which the audiences view the profession and practitioners. Also being examined are examples of *cooked* stories. This is when a journalist comes up with a story that has not happened, but one originating out of his/her imagination, and presenting it as a news (not feature or fiction) story. These twelve (12) cases – plagiarized and *cooked* stories - enunciate the challenges on journalism ethics and media credibility.

Case 1: Felician Kabuga Story

In 2012, Kenyan Nation TV (NTV) aired a feature on Rwandan fugitive Felician Kabuga, entitled, *In the footsteps of Kabuga*. They showed a photo of a man whom they claimed to be Kabuga peacefully residing in a town in Kenya and freely going about his business. However, the photo in the story turned out to be of a Daniel Muthee Ngeera, who later sued the media house for defamation. Mr Daniel Muthee Ngeera, a 58-year-old man who retired from the civil service in 2000, said the photos published in the Daily Nation of 12/7/2012 and aired in an *NTV* investigative documentary, were of him taken in his timber workshop in Isiolo. The man was accompanied by his wife and children at a press conference organized by the police at Vigilance House, the police headquarters. Daniel claimed that He was born in Meru and he had never been to Rwanda and the furthest he had travelled was Kisumu, Moyale and Garissa in Kenya. That story brought Mr. Ngeera undue publicity and he was provided with two armed police officers to guard him and his family round the clock after he expressed fear that the news had exposed him to danger. Had NTV taken the time to approach Ngeera before publishing the story, he would have been able to clarify his identity and the journalist and media house saved themselves embarrassment.

Case 2: Baltimore Shooting

The Baltimore shooting is an example of a *cooked* story. On 4th May 2015 Michael Tobin, a reporter for Fox News, called in live at 2.45 pm on a ‘into Fox News *The Real Story* show hosted by Gretchen Carlson. Tobin claimed he had seen police officers chase after a man, as one police officer drew his weapon, shot at the escaping suspect who fell to the ground (Kirell, 2015; Farhi, 2015; Bellware, 2015; Parco, 2015). The video apparently showed the wounded man handcuffed, put on a stretcher and loaded into the ambulance as the police tried to secure the area using pepper spray. This gave the impression that another black man had been shot at, making the Baltimore community restless, causing unreasonable tension. The Baltimore Police Department saw the situation was getting out of hand and sent a message that there had been no shooting. Tobin noticed that and called back saying he had not witnessed the shooting, he only heard gunfire. Leland Vittert, another Fox News reporter, found out that while the man was being taken into custody his gun went off in his pockets, but no one was hurt. He was being taken to hospital as a precautionary measure (ibid).

Shep Smith, a Fox News anchor, was forced to make a formal apology from the network live on air and talk about the facts of the story.

Case 3: Fox 5 News – False Story on the iPhone 5

On 17th September 2012 during the late night news, Fox 5 news reported that the iPhone 5 would have a laser keyboard that would be able to project holographic images into thin air. The reporter covering the story, Lydia Curanaj was out in the streets interviewing people who had stayed on the line for days waiting to buy the iPhone 5 as soon as it was launched. In her report, the Fox 5 reporter included images showing a laser keyboard and holographic images being projected from the supposed iPhone 5. However, according to Michael Rose (2012), a blogger who appears regularly on Fox Business news to speak about apple products, the video clip showing the images of the iPhone 5 were from a one year old concept video done by Aatma studio. He explained that the concept video was a wishful thinking kind of video that predicts the kind of features a phone would have or even just an imagination of a creative person.

A few hours after the airing of the story, various people took to the internet to say that the features presented in the news story were actually fake and not exactly what should be expected in the real iPhone 5. Fox 5 news also later issued a clarification on the story admitting that their report had not been right and that the iPhone 5 would neither have a laser keyboard nor holographic projection of images.

Case 4: ‘A Letter to My 20 Something Self’

On 3rd September 2012 famed Kenyan radio host Caroline Mutoko featured an article named ‘A letter to my 20 something self’ in her weekly column ‘Mutoko on Monday’ in The Star Newspaper. This was in the wake of the infamous Facebook group “Campus Divas for rich men” created by young female university students who referred to themselves as ‘divas’. Their agenda was to provide a networking forum where the divas would arrange to provide sexual pleasures for rich men in exchange for money and an extravagant and elegant lifestyle in universities.

In the article Mutoko seemed to be taking on the role of an older sister, the letter was aimed at the young ladies who were in their twenties in an effort to avert them from following in the footsteps of the Campus Divas. Mutoko spoke in retrospect to her younger self giving life lessons that she had learned while growing up. The article was well received by the public and was seen as the voice of reason in the uproar that followed the launching of the scandalous Facebook page.

Following the popularity of the article, The Star Newspaper received many complaints that Mutoko had plagiarized the article from a feminist blog online. These accusations culminated when controversial blogger Robert Alai featured Mutoko's plagiarism on twitter by posting a link to Mutoko's article and a link to the original post in the 'Crunk Feminist Collective' blog. Mutoko had lifted the story from a 2011 internet post titled '20 Things I Want to Say to My Twenty-something Self'. The author of the post was Robin M Boylorn, an assistant professor at the University of Alabama in the US. Dr. Brittney Cooper of Rutgers University, a co-founder of the blog, sent a letter of complaint she had sent to The Star after being alerted to the problem by an email and a comment on the Crunk blog (WMEA, 2012). The original post had appeared on a blog called the Crunk Feminist Collective. The story was copied word for word save a few lines of commentary in brackets at the end of some of the phrases to localize it.

Even after the story went viral Mutoko did not cave to the calls for her to make an apology. "I will not apologize or respond to nonsense that tries to imply I may have borrowed something from the internet," she wrote. "I borrow from everything around me—cocktail parties I go to, baby showers, I borrow from drunkards, thieves, cab drivers and my housekeeper—I borrow from the lines of songs I listen to and tweets I read and even posts on Nicki Minaj's FB wall….I am no copycat—I am the original and I'm different and that's tough for some people to take" (WMEA, 2012). The Crunk Feminist Collective blog requested that The Star Newspaper either acknowledge the improper use of Boylorn's post in a retraction or that it take down the column. The newspaper did the latter and sent their apologies for the unattributed use of the blog's content.

Case 5: The Late Njenga Karume's Story

The late Njenga Karume was prematurely declared dead on NTV's social media platform while he was critically ill and admitted in hospital on 4th February 2012. This incident was referred to as "one of the biggest media goofs of the year" (Oyugi, 2012). Critics lashed out at the NTV;s social media wall terming the story "a serious offence of journalism". They pointed out to Journalists that they are not in a position to declare anyone dead, only medical professionals can, no matter how critical the person is (Luke, 2012). Njenga Karume died 20 days later.

Case 6: An Argentinian Teacher Suspended for Having Sex With Student

Several magazines in Argentina; Latin Times, Malaysian Digest, and Mirror carried a story of a teacher who reportedly had sex with a 16-year-old pupil who secretly took a video of the tryst. The various media reported that Lucita Sandoval, a 26-year-old teacher from the city of Santiago del Estero, in north-central Argentina, was facing disciplinary action over the video. It later emerged that the teacher in the video wasn't Sandoval, but an entirely different woman from the city of Corrientes. It was widely reported that Lucita Sandoval was filmed having sex with a student but the man in the video is actually in college and the woman in the footage is not Sandoval. A Journalist from Nuevo Diario, an alternative media, was able to track down the man in the video. It was also falsely reported the 'teacher' has several times faced disciplinary hearings over inappropriate relationships with pupils. The video was posted on a pornographic site in September 2014. Mystery still surrounds where the story emerged from, and why Sandoval was targeted in this way.

Case 7: Maureen Dowd's Plagiarized Paragraph

Maureen Dowd is a New York columnist who plagiarized a 43-word paragraph from a blog by Joshua Marshall (editor and chief impresario of the liberal blog Talking Points Memo) on 16th May 2009. Marshall protested that Dowd had lifted the paragraph word for word placing the evidence on his blog on 14th May 2009. Dowd's defense in an email to the Huffington Post claimed that she got the paragraph from a friend who must have read Marshall's blog and never informed her. This was however unbelievable because she plagiarized a whole forty three words with only a slight alteration.

Dowd's column was later fixed with an acknowledgement to Marshall's paragraph. The paragraph was serving as contribution to her column on the then vice president Dick Cheney's torture policies. The article was titled, "Cheney, master of pain".

Case 8: Fareed Zakaria's Plagiarized Story

Fareed Zachariah was suspended for lifting parts of a story from the New Yorker. The similarities were picked by a conservative watchdog news buster concerning an article did on gun control by Fareed and an article on the same by New York writer Jill Leopore in April 22nd. Leopore wrote; "As Adam Winkler, a constitutional-law scholar at U.C.L.A., demonstrates in a remarkably nuanced new book, "Gunfight: The Battle over the Right to Bear Arms in America," firearms have been regulated in the United States from the start. Laws banning the carrying of concealed weapons were passed in Kentucky and Louisiana in 1813, and other states soon followed: Indiana (1820), Tennessee and Virginia (1838), Alabama (1839), and Ohio (1859). Similar laws were passed in Texas, Florida, and Oklahoma. As the governor of Texas explained in 1893, the "mission of the concealed deadly weapon is murder. To check it is the duty of every self-respecting, law-abiding man." The Times and CNN later suspended Zachariah.

Case 9: The Kronen Zeitung (Krone) Newspaper Syria Photoshop

According to the Media Ethics News & Investigative Reports website, reporter Richard Wolf reported about an Austrian newspaper that apologized for publishing a doctored photograph of a family fleeing from a 'war-torn' Syria. Wolf, R. (2012) claim that Kronen Zeitung (Krone) is Austria's biggest selling newspaper. He wrote, "The Krone does boast a readership of 2.7 million, which in a country of just over eight million, backs the claim to it being one of the world's most successful tabloids."

On July 28, 2012, page four, the Krone published a photograph of a man carrying a child with a woman beside him, "as they hurry through what appears to be the bombed out ruins of the city. It was being used to illustrate a story on people fleeing the city as government forces clash with rebels" (Wolf, R. 2012). However, sharp-eyed bloggers at the social news website Reddit noticed that while the family image was genuine, the background had been photoshoped. The original photo was first published on the European Press photo Agency's website just two days before. "The original… shows an ordinary family walking along an undamaged street" wrote Wolf. "Austrian newspaper publisher Christoph Dichand apologized after Kronen Zeitung was caught using a faked dramatic photograph." A news site from Libya commented on the photograph, claiming that it was"… a blatant deception of the reader with Photoshop." (Wolf, R. 2012).

Case 10: Kenya Today.com Copy-Pastes Condom Story From China Daily.com

Kenya Today (kenyatoday.com) deceived Kenyans with a counterfeit condom story, picked directly from a story that ran in China. On 22nd April 2015, Shanghai Daily online,(shanghaidaily.com) published a story on a fake condom ring bust, by Shanghai police, where 3 million *Durex* & *Jissbon* counterfeit condoms were seized. Two days later, on 24th April 24, the Kenya Today published the same story claiming that Shanghai police officers had busted an operation manufacturing fake high-end condoms destined for the Kenyan market.

Case 11

On 28th April 2003 San Antonio Ex-Press News reporter Macarena Hernandez called the NY Times national reporter with concerns about similarities between an article in the NY Times and his own article in his paper. This resulted to inquiries and the NY Times discovered that the writer, Jason Blair, had plagiarized and cheated his way through dozens of stories. They discovered that he wrote about locations he never visited, ripped off quotes from other publications, and fabricated events that never took place. One such story was the beltway sniper attack story. It wasabout a series of coordinated shooting attacks that took about 3 weeks during the month of October 2002 in Maryland, Virginia and Washington DC resulting to the death of 10 people and 3 injured. His was a combination of plagiarism and fabrication.

"Correcting the Record" is a 7,239-word article that ran in the front page of the NY times on May 11, 2003. It shows evidence of witnesses and reports that unveiled the deception in Blair's work. The report outlines some of the 36 out of 73 articles he is believed to have misrepresented. His reason for plagiarism and fabrication was the fear of not meeting the expectation set for him by himself and others.

Case 12: Accident Caused by Pastor

On July 26th 2015, an accident occurred in Kiambu County, Kenya. The accident involved a range rover sport and a small Nissan March that was at the time being driven by Mr. Martin Mbugua who was with his wife Mrs. Mercy Njeri. Mercy died on the spot while Martin sustained serious injuries. Conflicting media reports emerged relating to the accident, who was driving the vehicle that killed Mercy Njeri, why the original driver of the range rover hurriedly left the crime scene, who helped them escape and why the details from the police seemed inconsistent.

The media rushed to conduct their own investigations but some of the details they gave were later found to have been false. In a follow up story published in the Daily Nation on 6th August 2015, titled "*Pastor denies driving crash vehicle amid reports he was treated in city*", a Daily Nation reporter wrote that "Investigators believe that after the accident, Pastor Ng'ang'a got out of the driver's seat and into another vehicle belonging to Pastor David Muriithi, the Senior Pastor of House of Grace Church in Lang'ata."

Pastor David Muriithi denied the allegations of involvement and immediately asked the Daily Nation and the Police to reveal the sources to clear his name. On 6th August through his Facebook page, the Pastor demanded an apology from the Nation newspaper. "Linking my name to this unfortunate incident has caused distress to me, my family and the House of Grace congregation. I, therefore, demand that the said statement be withdrawn and an apology issued failure to which I will seek legal redress." Two weeks after publishing the story, the Daily Nation finally apologized to Pastor Muriithi.

Audience's Reactions to the Stories

With such cases of plagiarism or *cooked* stories, the audience tends to get disappointed and slowly losing faith in the media; and the media thereby beginning to slowly lose credibility. The result could also be the audience seeking alternative sources of information, audience becoming suspicious of certain media outlets and practitioners or even audiences confronting news sources. This latter was the Kenya reaction to CNN *cooked* story on PEV preparation in Kenya. This phenomenon impacts negatively also on the true stories and honest sources. Regaining the trust of such an audience might be an uphill task because audiences will then consume stories with doubt and caution. This aspect has been very well captured by the Interpersonal Deception Theory. The stories also cause dissonance to the audience. Media are generally perceived as the watchdog of the society yet their plagiarized and *cooked* stories are doing the opposite, leaving the audience angry, trying to reconcile their beliefs in the fourth estate verses the behavior of the fourth estate. This is why it is now very common to find people shunning certain news sources, or double-checking a story with an alternative source. These adverse effects of audience loss of credibility on the source are very well captured and expressed by Christians et al (2009) who indicate that when a news source's integrity is questionable, the credibility restoration is almost irreparable.

SOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS: DEVELOPING OWN ETHICAL BASE

There is growing need for adherence to journalism ethics as seen from the stories above. According to the Kenya Media Council Act (2007) on Accuracy and fairness "a person subject to this act shall write a fair accurate and unbiased story on matters of public interest." This was clearly contravened in all the 12 cases presented in this chapter. These cases show that media practitioners who are highly trained or otherwise, are all gullible to producing and presenting stories that violate the journalistic ethics and professional practice. It is therefore, in the researcher's view, not so much knowledge or exposure, but one's ethical base that can contribute to one's communication and journalism excellence while carrying out the duties. It is therefore imperative that media practitioners, in addition to their professional trainings, develop a personal work ethic that will guide them individually into making ethical decisions on their trade, whether alone or in the company of others. Further, development of such a code will enable the specific media practitioner to stand the pressures that come with ICT – such as the pressure to be the first to report, the pride of presenting the most bizarre story, and the pressure to have a story at all costs. Media lies essentially challenge the integrity of individuals. In examining how recommending how to deal with the issue of media lies, the author proposes media practitioners developing own ethical base. This will guide every practitioner in facing every scenario that presents itself. This could also include Day 2 journalism which is telling the same story to the same audience for the second time but on a different day, or to a different audience for the first time, but using a different approach. That is, Day2 journalism acknowledges that the story has already happened, but then brings in additional or new development on the same. Thus adding updates to the story, and hence making it appear new. Day 2 Journalism might try to contextualize things by getting an expert in the said field to tell more about it than what was reported the first time.

Hasan (2013, p. 174) describes Journalism as a "discipline of collecting, analyzing, verifying and presenting news regarding current events, trends, issues and people." From the 12 cases presented, it seems that *verifying* is the missing element in contemporary journalism. Could *verifying* have been removed from the definition or journalists just pay very little attention to it?

This might be due to the fact that upto now, in many countries, journalism is a profession that does not, unlike other professions such as teaching, nursing, medical or law; require specific specialized education, qualification, training or registration for one to practice. Journalism tends to be an open for all profession, embracing all and excluding none. In the larger Eastern Africa region, for example, some popular media practitioners found their way into the industry because of their good looks (for TV), good voice and ability to crack an ethnically-accented joke (for radio) or simply by blood relationship or some other association to certain individuals or groups in the business or political arena. Such non-professional qualifications would never admit anyone in the bar, bench or in the medical field.

Further, while we acknowledge that a number of countries now have Codes for Journalists through their various Media Councils, these are rarely enforced. This researcher thus is inclined to concluded that lack of collective ownership of the journalism profession is one major challenge leaving journalists on their own in terms of practice. It is in this regard therefore that this chapter proposes, to serious journalists, development of one's ethical base, in addition to the existing codes and laws, as a daily guide for one's journalistic practice. While it can be argued that development of an individual ethical base leaves the proposed solution open-ended and thus even open to abuse, the recommendation here is intended for individuals with already high personal integrity and with the intention to further develop oneself and hold oneself in high regard in the profession. This personal ethical base pushes the journalist to be driven by nothing but by values that build oneself and society while upholding the journalism profession to its intended level.

As Hasan (2013) posits, probably self-censorship could be a major contributor in developing one's ethical base. Self-censorship is "the act of censoring or classifying one's own work (blog, books, film or other means of expression), out of fear and a degree to the sensibilities of others without an authority directly pressuring one to do so" (p. 580). Whereas journalists are not forbidden to refer or copy from other sources, the best approach to avoid plagiarism is to give credit, and the best way to avoid *cooked* stories is to be honest with self and then with others. The Washington Post Writer's Group laments that occasionally reporters are caught not doing their work and not attributing it to the person who did it . "If somebody else writes it first, it's theirs. For people whose commodity is language, plagiarism is stealing, as much as taking someone else's tape recorder and selling it on the street" (Washington Post Writer's Group, 1990:345 – 346).

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

This chapter has focused on identifying cases of media lies from different contexts. However, the chapter did not succeed in finding those particular reporters to share what motivates them to *cook* or plagiarizing news stories. Therefore, a possible area for further research would be reaching out to the media practitioners who have *cooked* or plagiarized stories, and interview them on why they are involved in the practice. Another area of further study would be to listen to editors on the challenges journalism in the digital age is adding to their already full plate. This is because, when a journalist *cooks* or plagiarizes a story, the Editorial too bears the blame.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has presented media practitioners with the reality that media lies - be they plagiarized or *cooked* stories are very costly to the particular media house and journalist involved in the practice. The high cost comes in the fact that media lies have the potential to taint one's image, and the image of the particular media house. The chapter has also brought to the awareness of the media practitioners that audiences who consume their content have a certain level of intelligence and capability to cross-check factual (but plagiarized) or imaginary stories; hence exposing the fact that audiences are not *tabula rasa.* The chapter has, hopefully, persuaded those in the media industry to exercise professionalism, ethics and uphold their integrity. Media is one of the most powerful tools of communication today. It is unfortunate that some journalists, editors and media house create their own stories or copy word for word someone's work without citing or acknowledging them. It is within media ethics that media practitioners tell the truth because at times their word is final and the audience takes it as the 'gospel truth'. This is posing new challenges for the editors because they have to get involved in extra work of verification of all stories that they receive. Frequently running apologies do not augur well with any given media house or journalist. Media practitioners need to be truthful. They are tasked with informing and educating the general public and they must be honest with that *call* at all times.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Cooked Story: This term, as used in this study, refers to the tendency of media practitioners to come up with stories, which are neither true nor factual. These are from the imagination of the respective journalist.

Day 2 Journalism: A journalist telling the same story to the same audience for the second time, but on a different day, and using a different approach. Day 2 Journalism might try to contexualize a story by, for example, getting an expert in the said field to share more about it than what was reported the first time.

Framing: Skewing or angling a story.

Media Lies: Non-factual reporting of stories by media. This is where facts are either distorted or exaggerated. Further, the term refers to stories, whether factual or not, that have already been published elsewhere, but then a journalist re-submits them as new stories; with the particular journalist as the first/original authors. These are plagiarized stories. This term also refers to media concocted stories, those that do not exist or have not happened, but formulated in the mind of a particular journalist, who then proceeds to report it as an occurrence. The reporting could be in print, electronic or social media. So both plagiarized stories and / or those that are as a result of the journalist's fantasy are both media lies.

Personal Ethical Base: Each journalist developing a professional and ethical self-censorship device to guide his or her media work. This practice should be irrespective of whether or not an authority is watching them. This recommendation is intended for individuals with already high personal integrity and with the intention to develop one professionally.

Professional Ethics: Every profession has certain professional code of conducts within which the practitioners operate. These could be derived from various sources. However, in this chapter, the term professional ethics is used to refer to the society's expectations of the high moral level for the media to operate. The term further refers to someone who is qualified in Journalism so that his knowledge and training in the same can enable him know and apply the rules learnt. This can then bring rules and order in the practice, detailing who can and cannot enter the practice, and also put down the rules for inclusion, exclusion and striking off of an individual from the profession.

Select Cases: There are many such instances, but these few have been singled out for the indicated purpose.

Sources of News: Where the journalists obtain their news from. This could be from other media serving as sources, individuals or even an event.

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Chapter 10
Real-Life and Virtual News Sources Can Be Flat-Out Wrong:
Teaching the Importance of Libel Law and Media Literacy in a Single Class Session

Robin Blom
Ball State University, USA

ABSTRACT

Eyewitnesses play a very important role in news coverage. Yet, scholarly research on eyewitness misidentification and memory distortion is virtually absent in scholarly work in journalism and related academic fields. This chapter emphasizes the need for such a research agenda by analyzing the amount of mistakes student journalists made in a news report they wrote during a 20-minute classroom exercise. Each of the stories about a staged bar fight, except for one, contained pieces of misinformation because the students often blindly trusted eyewitnesses and messages on social media accounts. The results indicated that there is a need for more advanced information and media literacy modules in journalism curricula to avoid inaccurate information from eyewitnesses to be disseminated to the public.

INTRODUCTION

Journalists are vulnerable to the possibility of making mistakes in an effort to deliver news in a short amount of time, if not instantly through live coverage, with the 24/7 demand for news. As a result, many stories include one or more errors (Maier, 2005) and it is neither a surprise that, subsequently, trust in news has been declining for decades. A recent study indicated that only about one-fifth of U.S. adults trusts local and national news outlets to a high degree (Mitchell, Gottfried, Barthel, & Shearer, 2016). According to Porlezza and Russ-Mohl (2013), "No tenet of journalism is as widely accepted as the obligation to report the facts accurately. But from the public's point of view, journalists show short of their high-held principles" (p. 45).

This downturn in support of the press has been evident for years, but news outlets and other types of media are still utilized by the masses to make sense of the world around them. Consequently, it is

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important for members of the public to understand how "media messages are constructed and the skills needed to interpret them" (Maksl, Craft, Ashley, & Miller, 2016, p. 229). This kind of knowledge would make them better equipped to decipher truthful reports from misinformation (Tully & Vraga, 2017; Whitworth, 2009).

Journalists, thus, play an important double role in this process: First and foremost, they are news consumers themselves as any other regular person within a community, but they have a special position by also contributing and shaping the media ecosystem. Not only do they need media literacy skills to process the information they receive throughout each day, they also must use those skills to better interpret information that they gather for their news reports. Ideally, that would lead to lower amounts of misinformation disseminated by news media and better-informed citizens as well (Wright, Shemberger, & Price, 2016).

Therefore, it is very important that new generations of journalists are trained to the fullest extent to untangle truth from lies when they attempt to relay information from their sources to the audiences they serve (Claussen, 2006), especially since some recent research boldly concluded that "most young folks are completely unprepared to be responsible news consumers in the Internet age" (Dyer, 2016). The opposite of this statement must be true for a society to thrive, and educational efforts are indispensable to help people to become better evaluators of media messages. As Van der Linde (2010) pointed out, media literacy education could "empower both media professionals and consumers thereby allowing them to analyse critically, monitor and moderate media messages in order to reduce any negative impacts of the media and ensure enhanced enjoyment and discourse" (p. 1).

That means, among many other things, that journalists and other people alike need an advanced understanding of how their own cognitive biases and perceptions play a role in assessing information. Those processes encompass instants in which people make decisions about what information gets included or excluded when they communicate with others—either in their private life or as professional gatekeepers of (news) information to larger audiences. Without such an understanding, people erroneously may think they are invulnerable to being misled by misinformation. Instead, it is very important for individuals to realize that further development of media literacy skills is beneficial to themselves and others. For instance, it is important for reporters and editors to detect mistakes or falsehoods by human sources, including eyewitnesses on which journalists rely on almost daily.

For student journalists, it is also of utmost importance to be well-versed in news media law and ethics (Helle, 1991), because disseminating inaccurate information from third parties could have large legal and ethical implications. Not only is the knowledge in those areas important for when student journalists graduate and pursue careers in the journalistic realm, but also for the years leading up to commencement day while they are working for campus media and/or other professional publications during internships. Undergraduate journalism students, at least in the United States, often have to wait until their junior or senior year until they can take media law and ethics courses, or a combined media law and ethics course. However, some programs allow students to take a one-credit course early in their college career, followed by another two-credit course at a later point in their program. Early exposure to concepts such as defamation, intellectual property, and trespassing are important for any journalist to know. Teaching of these concepts helps improve critical thinking skills that can be applied to all aspects of journalism, including instant judgments that need to be made when assessing correctness of information and, later on, distributing it to their audiences.

However, this approach comes with a caveat: strictly providing lectures on what journalists should know about law and ethics may not be the most effective manner for students to learn. Educators could adopt problem-based and collaborative teaching strategies to encourage students to take an active approach to learning, which is important for student progress (Meadows, 1997). This chapter is focused on the results of a content analysis of stories produced by 185 journalism students during a problem-based class exercise to examine to what extent they were able to avoid putting misinformation in their stories, while also trying to avoid committing libel and other legal and/or ethical violations.

BACKGROUND

Every journalist ought to avoid bias and inaccurate portrayals of reality by providing all sides of a story without any favoritism toward any of those sides to uncover the facts (Mindich, 2000), although some news media organizations do a better job than others when it comes to accurate and balanced reporting (Lacy, Fico, & Simon, 1991; Wahl-Jorgensen, Berry, Garcia-Blanco, Bennett, & Cable, 2017). Many reporters adhere to a set of practices that are considered "objective" to report impartially and they frequently point to those practices when they want to circumvent criticism that personal biases and beliefs have tainted their news coverage (Gans, 1980; Shoemaker & Reese, 1991; Stoker, 1995; Tuchman, 1972), although small groups of journalists have embraced subjectivity as a structuring principle for stories (Harbers & Broersma, 2014). Even though editors have acknowledged that it is practically impossible to be neutral and impartial in all news stories and for decisions regarding the overall news selection (Boyer, 1981), objectivity is still one of the imperatives of journalism practice and is regarded as the "cornerstone of the professional ideology of journalism" (Lichtenberg, 2000, p. i).

Such objectivity ought to translate in accurate reporting, because "citizens have strong expectations that news media publish correct information and they have little tolerance for errors" (Karlsson, Clerwall1, & Nord, 2017, p. 148). D'Alessio (2005) emphasized that perceptions of bias have been negatively associated with the perceived accuracy of stories. Consequently, that could lead to perceptions "that journalists are not fair and objective in their reports, that they do not always tell the whole story, and that they would sacrifice accuracy and precision for personal and commercial gains" (Tsfati & Cappella, 2003, p. 506). And even though there may not be actual bias, the press has frequently been accused for being hostile toward political positions or figures that those news consumers support. This distrust has been witnessed for decades and has increased in recent years (e.g., Ardèvol-Abreu & Gil de Zúñiga, 2017; D'Alessio & Allen, 2007; Watts, Domke, Shah & Fan, 1999).

Gans (1980) pointed out that journalism appears to be an empirical discipline and profession. But newsmaking is not like science; there are important differences in terms of methods and goals, even though journalism appears to share the core values of the scientific method (see also: Ryan, 2001). According to Post (2015), "Journalists and academics define objectivity in different terms. Journalists think objectivity demands 'trying to let the facts speak for themselves', and academics think it requires systematic methods and transparent accounts" (p. 730).

Regardless of the different meanings of objectivity in presenting news, even when journalists reported neutrally about a topic, they still had to make a selection of what topic to cover—a decision that is often not, and cannot always be, made in an objective way. Such choices lack a structured process that would enable journalists to come up with scientific-based answers that are only possible in actual sciences such as math or physics. As Kovach and Rosenstiel (2001) concluded, when journalists assess the credibility of information, subjectivity plays a large role. That has even been the case for reporters whose stories eventually were awarded a Pulitzer Prize (Wahl-Jorgensen, 2013).

This is particularly worrisome when reporters need to evaluate information about events that they have not witnessed themselves, because journalists are often not on the scene of unexpected events. Therefore, they need to solely rely on others to explain what happened when there are no visual recordings of the events available (Berkowitz & Beach, 1993; Carpenter, 2008; Sigal, 1986; Zelizer, 2007) or they rely on photography or videos content provided by eyewitnesses (Blaagaard, 2013). One step further, even when reporters are on the scene to observe an incident themselves, often they remain "reluctant to offer interpretations" and, instead, "rely on news sources," thus "most news is not what has happened, but what someone says has happened or will happen" (Sigal, 1973).

Thus, accuracy of the reporter depends to a large extent on the accuracy of others, yet there is often not enough time to check out claims by sources to publish an article instantly. On many occasions, verifiable facts are not available, leading reporters to report the truth-claims of sources—which is not necessarily the truth (Perloff, 1998). Additionally, afterward, journalists have little time to reflect on whether they have gotten at the truth (Shoemaker & Reese, 1995).

MAIN FOCUS OF THE CHAPTER

Journalists have been clearly wrong in their stories in many instances when they relied on eyewitness accounts that did not accurately recollect the events that transpired. Those discrepancies with the truth are usually not deliberate actions by the sources, but caused by severe limitations of human episodic memory that leads to distortions and omissions. According to Resnick (2014), "Eyewitnesses may overestimate the quality of their memory in accuracy and precision. They may be unaware of the potential for false details to merge into their episodic memories of an event" (p. 539).

One of the key factors that lead to faulty eyewitness accounts is that the eyewitnesses may not have anticipated an incident, and subsequently when the event unfolded, they did not analyze the scene anticipating specific questions from journalist and law enforcement officials, as well as other figures during judicial processes. They may have been solely focused on their own well-being and that of any of their loved ones nearby; yet, frequently, eyewitnesses are asked to recall events from before, during, and after a particular incident. And it certainly may be that the questions asked are focusing on elements that were not of importance to the eyewitness and, therefore, never encoded those elements in memory (Migueles & Garcia-Bajos, 1999; Conway & Howe, 2013). Additionally, eyewitnesses are vulnerable for misinformation suggestibility when they are exposed to additional information about an incident they experienced themselves, after they have recalled information soon after the incident took place (see: Gordon & Thomas, 2017).

The extent to which details are remembered may also be caused by the type of incident that was witnessed and the type of characters involved. Meissner and Brigham's (2001) meta-analysis indicated that a chance of misidentification increased when someone is describing a person from another race; the meta-analysis by Deffenbacher and colleagues (2004) pointed out that high levels of stress negatively impact identification of perpetrators and other details of crimes; and Clifford and Hollin (1981) found that eyewitnesses were less accurate when they witnessed a violent incident, especially when multiple people were involved.

But despite not remembering important aspects of an event, eyewitnesses will often not admit that they do not remember those aspects. Instead, unconsciously, they may present impaired accounts as humans often fill in the gaps of the memory with their imaginations. For instance, Braun, Ellis, and Loftus (2002) presented an advertisement to study participants in which it was suggested that they had met Bugs Bunny in a Disney resort (even though the cartoon character is not part of the Disney franchise). About 16% of the participants acknowledged that the meeting, indeed, had taken place—even though that was really not the case. A much lower percentage of participants indicated remembering such a meeting in a control group without exposure to the misleading text. Thus, the false information in the advertisement led people to believe to a higher extent that they have been a part of an event that had never actually happened, and further could have been impossible from occurring due to Bugs Bunny not being a Disney character

Interviewing Eyewitnesses and Suggestive Memory

Brewin and Andrews (2016) concluded that it is certainly possible that people develop false memories about events that would have taken place earlier in their life, but that such susceptibility is also relatively limited. That does not take away that some misinformation that an eyewitness received after a particular incident could also distort memory of an original event (Lotus & Hoffman, 1989). Thus, it is possible that memories differ from reality based on the questions that are being asked by reporters, law enforcement officials, and others. Both style and wording of questions play an important role in the level of accuracy of recalling information for people of all ages (Krähenbühl & Blades, 2005). Discrepancies could be the result of whether eyewitnesses respond to direct questions or are given the opportunity to deliver unstructured free recall. And, if questions are asked, there may be discrepancies based on whether the answers were open-ended or multiple choice, as well as whether the questions were biased (i.e., leading) or neutral. It also makes a difference when the testimony is made—immediately after an incident or with a delay of days, weeks, or longer (Lipton, 1977).

Simple variations in questions could lead to different accounts of what happened during an incident. Asking whether someone saw “a” or “the” broken headlight after a car incident may look trivial at first. But “the broken headlight” question makes it appear that there was a broken headlight and the eyewitness is asked whether it was noticed. Yet, “a broken headlight” does not convey the meaning that it is a sure thing that there was a broken headlight. Loftus and Zanni (1975) concluded that “questions asked subsequent to an event can cause a reconstruction in one’s memory of that event” (p. 86).

Similarly, participants of a lab experiment estimated the speed of cars in a collision to be higher when they were asked “About how fast were the cars going when they *smashed* into each other” (emphasis added) compared to when they “collided,” “bumped,” “contacted,” or “hit” each other. Further, after a retest a week after seeing the accident footage, participants who had received the “smashed” question were more likely to indicate that they had seen broken glass at the scene than participants who received one of the other question variations—even though there was no broken glass in the video (Loftus & Palmer, 1974).

The person asking the questions may not even be aware that the eyewitness account is impaired by leading questions or by their reactions upon hearing certain pieces of information. However, interviewers—unconsciously—could signal positive or negative feedback by stating that the eyewitness confirmed accounts of others or telling the eyewitness that information is helpful for piecing elements of an incident together. Additionally, the eyewitness may become more or less confident in their own recollection based on non-specific feedback (Hafstad, Memon, & Logie, 2004). That is an important reason for why law enforcement agencies have been recommended to use double-blind procedures during police line-ups. In that case, the police officer administrating the line-up to an eyewitness or victim is not aware who the suspect is and whether the suspect is actually in the line-up. This way the officer should not be able to provide feedback on whether the correct suspect has been identified or when the suspect was not present (Bradfield, Wells, & Orson, 2002).

Knowledge About Memory

Importantly, a large majority of people have not been very well informed about the working of the brain and how memories are stored, as well as how they could be distorted. Simon and Chabris (2011) found that the public to a large extent agrees with the statement "People suffering from amnesia typically cannot recall their own name or identity," whereas experts strongly disagree. Similar large gaps were noticed for other statements as well, including ones suggesting that "human memory works like a video camera" and "hypnosis is useful to accurately recall details of crimes" (p. 3). The authors pointed to potential consequences of misunderstandings about how the brain works: "The media conflate normal forgetting and inadvertent memory distortion with intentional deceit, juries issue verdicts based on flawed intuitions about the accuracy and confidence of testimony, and students misunderstand the role of memory in learning" (p. 1).

To make it even worse, many within judicial ranks are not very knowledgeable about the potential flaws of eyewitness memory. Wise and Safer (2014) presented fourteen statements about memory processes to a sample of U.S. judges and—despite some judges only having one mistake—many only had three correct answers or fewer. On average, the judges scored 55%. The group had been on the bench for an average of 12 years and a majority had previously served as a prosecutor, defense attorney, or both prior to becoming a judge. Thus, they had had much experience in judicial settings from a variety of perspectives within the system in the years leading up their positions as judges.

In another study, Benton, Ross, Bradshaw, Thomas, and Bradshaw (2006) demonstrated that the judges indicated that they knew more about memory processes than jurors and about a similar amount as law enforcement officials, yet knowledge was generally average to low across all groups. A similar research project conducted in Norway reiterated the overall lack of comprehension of memory distortions. Judges, again, did better than jurors, as well as the general public, but more than a quarter of them still had at least half the questions wrong (Magnussen, Melinder, Stridback, & Raja, 2010).

Due to this incongruence in terms of perceptions of how memory functions, consequences have been stark for many individuals in the criminal justice system. Eyewitness misidentification has been rampant during court cases, and as a result many innocent citizens have ended up in jail or received the death penalty. The introduction of DNA evidence has exonerated a number of these wrongful convictions, but for many others this came too late. They either served out their sentences or were wrongfully executed. In sum, eyewitness misidentification is one of the leading causes for why innocent people are sentenced (e.g., Saks & Koehler, 2005; Wells, Memon, & Penrod, 2006).

Journalists have frequently reported on those court cases, but also did not demonstrate uncertainty about questionable procedures or statements when it came to the eyewitness (mis)identification portions of the trials. This indicates that the knowledge of reporters and editors about memory distortions is likely to be limited, which already has resulted in many flaws in criminal justice reporting, as well as all other areas of news coverage.

The Exercise

The scholarly literature on eyewitness (mis)identification is primarily focused on settings in the criminal justice field. The attention to eyewitnesses (mis)identification in journalistic settings has been minimal in academia—both as research and teaching subjects. Therefore, a classroom exercise to train student journalists at the collegiate level was developed to construct more robust areas to strengthen coursework and scholarly literature in that area. This is necessary because journalists most likely (similar to judges, jurors, and anyone else of the public) do not possess much knowledge about how memories are stored and further, can be distorted. In fact, this exercise was not designed exclusively for journalism students and could be applied to all majors: Every student needs to make sense of eyewitness accounts for many different purposes in their lives and they have access to much of the same information journalists rely on for their work through numerous publicly-available social media channels, such as Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube. Additionally, this may lead to more empathy for the journalism profession when people realize that it may be harder than previously imagined to accurately report the facts and keep out misinformation.

The Exercise: A "Bar Fight" and a Barrage of Information

This exercise was created in 2010 as part of an introductory journalistic reporting course at a large university in the Midwest. Later iterations of the exercise were conducted at four other colleges as a guest speaker, each slightly modified to localize important story elements, such as the city or town where an incident supposedly took place, the local newspaper for which the students "wrote" the news report for, and the local bar or restaurant where the incident allegedly took place.[1] The author continued to use the exercise as part of his teaching assignments at his current institution, in particular a one-credit introductory media law and ethics course that is primarily taken by freshmen and sophomores, although there have been some juniors and seniors in the classroom as well. The exercise was usually conducted on the first course day of the semester. Ten different class sections were exposed to the material, with around 18-20 students per section.

The instructor asked for three volunteers at the start of the class. They left the classroom with the instructor to watch a video of a staged bar fight. The footage was originally from a BBC documentary series about eyewitness misidentification. The volunteers watched only a 90-second clip of the fight. The incident started with a man standing upright talking to a woman, who was seated. Within seconds, another man entered the scene who confronted the other man and told the women to "stay down" before pushing the man backward towards the door. Then a third man, possibly an acquaintance of the first man as they both had construction vests with them, walked in and tried to separate the others. However, the third man took the second man to the floor after some pushing and shoving. While they struggled on the ground, the second man was stabbed, bleeding heavily from his abdominal area. At that point, other visitors of the bar were getting restless while wondering whether they just had witnessed a stabbing. Meanwhile, one of the bar employees called the ambulance. The scene then cut to the outside area where an ambulance arrived. Just before the end of the clip, the woman who was talking to the first man was heard screaming that "he's not breathing."

The volunteers were then told that they should act like they were among the visitors of the establishment—visiting and having a meal, etc., just before going to class, and that they would be called into the room to answer questions from reporters. The other students, waiting in the classroom, were told that they were all journalists working for a local newspaper and that they just had noticed Twitter messages describing some sort of incident in the downtown area of the city. The reporters were also told that their usual sources did not pick up their phones so that they could not acquire more information and that they were kept away from the scene by police officers. However, they were told that they found three eyewitnesses that could reveal information about the incident, but that the eyewitnesses only have a few minutes to answer any questions.

After those instructions, one of the "eyewitnesses" was asked to enter the room and answered questions from the reporters. After the questions were asked, the eyewitness returned to their seat, being replaced by the other two eyewitnesses who answered the follow-up questions together. This was done to provide an example of eyewitness testimony contamination—when one eyewitness retracts an initial statement to agree with the description of another eyewitness—for later classroom discussions. After the two eyewitnesses answered all the questions from the reporters to the best of their abilities, the reporters were asked to each write a story about the incident.

At that point, they were also informed that they had access to "their" Twitter account to possibly encounter additional information about the incident, as well as a cell phone for text and social media messages. The Twitter account was created by me, the instructor, to contain both true and misleading information. The tweets and cell phone screen were presented on a large projector screen in the front of the classroom so that everyone had access to the same information. I changed the slides every minute or so to mimic the real-time addition of new tweets and phone messages.

The first slide contained five tweets. Some of them had nothing to do with the incident. There was a tweet containing support for the university's football team, a welcome back to school message from the university's communication college, and a metro newspaper report about a high school student winning a Smithsonian award for discovering a new method to detect pancreatic cancer. The two other tweets were focused on the incident at the local "restaurant". One of them stated, "Did somebody leave [restaurant name] without paying the check? Police everywhere… #whatthequack" and the other stated, "Police has surrounded [restaurant name]? I hear some ambulances too. What happened? #mystery" (The Tweet deliberately contained the plural "ambulances" to possibly indicate multiple victims, which was not the case.)

In the following minutes, the students were exposed to additional information about the incident in six other tweets. Half of them were particularly important, because they contained important pieces of misinformation. The first one was an account impersonating celebrity gossip blogger Perez Hilton (the account shows his photo and name, but the Twitter handle is not the same as the officially confirmed account of him). The related tweet stated, "OMG! Stalker got stabbed right in front of my eyes. Police surrounded [restaurant name]. #scared" This included a reference to a stalker, even though there was no official evidence in this case demonstrating that the person who got stabbed in the video was, indeed, a stalker. The second tweet was one attributed to the Associated Press stating, "BREAKING: One dead and one injured in [City name] bar fight on [road of restaurant] #wegotthenewsfirst". This tweet was not correct in the sense that only one person got injured in the fight and the fact someone died could not be confirmed by the eyewitnesses who did not witness a dead body in the video of the incident. The third tweet was attributed to an account that claimed to be a news network from a nearby metro area, but with a picture of actor Jim Carrey in his role of news anchor/reporter from the movie *Bruce Almighty*, which most students probably would recognize as a fictitious figure. Yet, the tweet itself could be perceived as an official account about the incident: "One man died in #[City Name] bar brawl. Police and ambulances at the scene. It's chaos out here. "thatishowthecookiecrumbles" (also here the plural "ambulances" was used).

After those tweets, the reporters noticed their first message on the cell phone, a text message from the owner of the restaurant responding to a voice mail left behind by the reporters, as part of the overall cover story for the exercise. The voicemail said:

I got your voicemail. I can't believe what just happened. I think it was this woman doing something. Screaming. And suddenly we've a guy on the floor. Not moving at all. This is the first time there has been a fight in this place. And now we get this. Madness. I still can't believe this is happening…

The message contained some interesting pieces of information for the reporters. First, it seemed to indicate that a woman injured a man who—at some point—was not moving at all. This could be interpreted as a deadly injury, but is not quite a valid piece of evidence either.

Soon after, the reporters were exposed to a news report on Facebook, attributed to the local PBS station, containing a photo of two people in handcuffs as seen from the back while being directed to a police car by officers. The screenshot also included the caption, "Woman arrested near first Baptist Church in [City Name]." There were no indications that the arrests were part of the incident of interest. And, notably, the headline was wrong to state that only one woman was arrested with clearly a second arrestee in the picture.

This was followed by another significant piece of misinformation, a tweet stating, "Why does it always take so long before the ambulance arrives? TWENTY MINUTES!!!! "slowww #hurryupnext-time #turtle". Also here, there was no indication that this tweet referred to the particular incident under investigation by the reporters, and should not have been included in the news coverage unless another source provided evidence that the ambulance arrived at the restaurant 20 minutes after the emergency call was placed by one of the restaurant workers.

The next PowerPoint screen contained more misinformation. The cell phone showed an email attributed to an officer of the city's police department. The message warned the reporters of an upcoming press conference about the incident at the restaurant that day. It also included details about the crime under investigation ("Stabbing") followed by an address. However, the address was intentionally that from a neighboring restaurant. Only students double-checking the address would understand that they needed to provide another street number to have the accurate location. Additionally, the press release stated that one person was arrested, Pat Johnson, which is a gender-ambiguous name. The press release did not contain any gender information about the arrestee. A few minutes later, the press release was replaced by a message from Gmail, claiming that the "Google account is currently experiencing errors" and that engineers were working on the issue. In other words, only students who took notes still had access to the information of the press release - another important lesson for student journalists.

The last part of the exercise contained nine more tweets. Three of them were attributed to legitimate news sources and two of them mentioned a stalker. The news tweets were contradicting earlier news reports. For instance, the Associated Press reported that a woman was arrested for the incident at the restaurant (although did not specify location of the arrest). Meanwhile, a metro news station reported that a female suspected of stabbing a man at the restaurant was arrested while "on the run." Another news station reported that a man was arrested near the First Baptist Church (although no connection to the incident at the restaurant was included). The two tweets mentioning a stalker also did not provide any indication that the tweets were related to the stabbing. The first tweet was taken from a real news story ("Crazy! Fungus that controls zombie-ant has own stalker."), although it had nothing to do with crimes involving humans. The other tweet was also very ambiguous as well, and the students only saw the lower part of that tweet, attributed to the local PBS station: “sources familiar with the case tell reporters that the suspect has been a long-time stalker. #PBS”. Importantly, the first part of the tweet, that could have provided more context, was invisible to the reporters. Therefore, there was no clear indication that the news tweet is a reference to the incident at the restaurant.

The students had about 10-12 minutes to write the story based on the eyewitness interviews and also needed to revise details based on the information received through the Twitter feed and phone/email messages. Afterward, the instructor asked them a variety of questions about details regarding the suspect (Who did it? Is the suspect a man or woman?) and victim (Did the victim die or got injured in any other way?), as well as other areas of possible misinformation, such as whether the students described an ambulance arriving after “20 minutes” and specifics about the location of the restaurant. The contradictory stories then formed the basis of a discussion about eyewitness misidentification and cognitive bias for linking unrelated pieces of information together. In the following weeks, certain elements from the exercise were used as examples during lectures about defamation and privacy, as well as other media law and ethics topics.

Analysis of the Student Stories From the Exercise

The exercise was intended for the students to learn about important legal and ethical issues that are part of news reporting. Studying all the stories produced during the exercise in numerous class sections would provide a picture about the extent to which the students, in the aggregate, included misinformation in the articles. Consequently, such examination would allow educators to identify areas of media and information literacy that need to be more emphasized in journalism training. Therefore, a variety of research questions were formed to investigate what areas of misinformation caused students to include wrong information in their stories. They are as follows:

RQ1: What percentage of the stories included information about the victim’s alleged death?
RQ2: What percentage of the stories included information about the victim having an injury?
RQ3: What percentage of the stories included information about the suspect being a male?
RQ4: What percentage of the stories included information about the suspect being a stalker?
RQ5: What percentage of the stories included the correct address of the restaurant where the incident took place?
RQ6: What percentage of the stories included a description of an ambulance?
RQ7: What percentage of the stories included information that the ambulance was seven minutes late.
RQ8: What percentage of the stories included more than two pieces of incorrect elements regarding the death of the victim, address of the restaurant, suspect being a stalker, ambulance arriving 20 minutes late?

CONTENT ANALYSIS METHOD

The students were asked to turn in their story at the end of the class period. About 69% of the students submitted a handwritten story and about 31% of the students submitted a typed story. A total of 186 articles were collected this way among the ten sections of the introductory media law and ethics course in which this exercise was conducted. However, one handwritten story was illegible and was thrown out, leaving 185 articles for analysis.

A codebook was designed to measure to what extent the student reporters included facts and misinformation in their news stories about the incident. There were seven items capturing important elements of the exercise: (1) the number of people who died; (2) the number of people who were injured; (3) whether the suspect(s) was (were) a man or a woman; (4) whether someone was described as a stalker; (5) the address where the incident took place; (6) whether there was an ambulance in the story; and, for only those participants who mentioned an ambulance, (7) whether it took 20 minutes for the ambulance to arrive. For each story, it was also coded whether it was handwritten or typed and a unique story number was noted as well to allow for intercoder reliability testing.

Two graduate students were asked to code a sample of twenty stories (11% of the total sample). Eight comparisons were made (excluding the story number item from the reliability testing). Cohen's Kappa was calculated for each comparison. The coders were in full agreement for four variables (type of story, stalker, and both ambulance items) and to a high extent for the remaining four items: number of deaths (0.7); number of injuries (0.8); gender of suspect(s) (0.7); and the address of the restaurant (0.9). This indicated that the intercoder reliability was sufficient enough to continue coding the other stories, which was done by one of the graduate students who was unaware of the purpose of the content analysis.

RESULTS OF ANALYSIS

The exercise was developed to allow students to learn more about eyewitness identification and their own cognitive biases when it comes to information gathering in an engaging and practical atmosphere. The intention of this study was to document the extent to which the students were including misinformation, which allowed them to learn about their future profession and about their skills to evaluate information messages, including those disseminated by outlets in their future profession.

One of the most important elements was whether the victim in question had died. In a legal sense, there is a large difference between murder or manslaughter and heavily injuring someone. For journalists, this distinction is very important too: the facts ought to be right. It was rather ambiguous whether someone had died in the incident. The friend of the victim screamed that the victim was not breathing and several tweets attributed to official and unofficial news sources had claimed that someone had died. Even some of the witnesses told the reporters that someone had died. Yet, there was no official confirmation by authorities and, obviously, the reporters did not see the dead body themselves either.

About 62% of the stories still contained information that certainly one person had died in the incident. The remaining stories did not mention that anyone had died (RQ1). About 63% of the stories contained information that one person was injured and about 2 percent of the stories mentioned two injured people. In the other stories, there were no indications that someone was injured (RQ2).

The stories differed to a large extent on the gender of the suspect(s). The smallest group of stories (14%) mentioned that there was one suspect that was a man. On the contrary, a slightly larger group of articles mentioned a suspect that was a woman (22%), whereas almost as many stories mentioned that there the suspects were both a man and a woman (23%). The remaining stories did not mention the gender of any suspect (42%). This indicates that only one out of seven of each participant relayed correct information about the suspect's gender (RQ3). Additionally, about one out of ten stories labeled one of the key players in the incident as a stalker (8 percent) (RQ4).

About a quarter of the articles mentioned the wrong address. Only two stories, representing one percent of the stories, mentioned the correct address of the restaurant, which was not part of the information provided to the students. The remaining articles did not mention an address of where the incident took place (RQ5). About half the stories included a description of an ambulance arriving at the scene (46%) (RQ6). Of those reports, 30% mentioned that it took the ambulance "20 minutes" to arrive, representing 14% of all the submitted news articles (RQ7).

Many stories included one or more elements for which there was no conclusive information available. In fact, out of 185 stories there was only one that had not included that the victim died, the suspect was a stalker, the wrong address, and the ambulance arrived after 20 minutes (0.005%) and, unfortunately, one story actually included all of those unknowns (0.005%). However, only about half the stories contained a reference to the ambulance (it may not be important enough compared to some of the other details that were part of the story). Therefore, the number of people with four mistakes would be limited by default. Looking at the three other elements, 6.5 percent of the stories still included information that the victim died, the suspect was a stalker, and included the wrong address (RQ8).

SOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The results indicated that the student reporters wrote interesting stories, yet many included falsehoods. In fact, only one story did not include the four main pieces of misinformation. Even though this was a classroom exercise and none of the articles were read by anyone other than myself and my graduate assistants, the data demonstrate—once again—the challenging position journalists are in: The public would like to receive news coverage that is instant *and* flawless, which is not an easy thing to do. This, I believe, is the main lesson that the students reporters took away from this exercise.

Notably, though, the students made different kinds of mistakes. For instance, a majority declared someone dead before receiving valid evidence about that detail. They did not get any confirmation from authorities or witnessed the casualty themselves. Instead, they often relied on information from eyewitnesses – and some speculated during the impromptu press conferences that the victim had died – as well as tweets from other news organizations without any additional types of evidence.

Many students also accidentally mixed information from different incidents together by misperceiving information from the eyewitnesses and the Twitter stream, as well as certain phone messages. Subsequently, almost one-out-of-ten stories contained one or more references to a stalker. There was no valid evidence that anyone involved in the incident has been stalking one of the other figures. Some eyewitnesses interpreted the events in the video clip as two men fighting over a woman. Multiple eyewitnesses actually have described this event as evidence for a "love triangle" when they were answering questions from the reporters. Additionally, several tweets were mentioning stalkers, although none in relation to the incident and one of them not even describing interactions among humans.

The students also did not double check some of the information that they received, a procedure that often serves as a safety net to avoid making mistakes in news coverage. Consequently, only two stories contained the correct address of the restaurant where the incident took place. Other stories that included an address did so by referring to a neighboring restaurant. In some stories, the reporters only included the address but not the name of the restaurant. This is problematic when readers would enter the address in a search engine and, upon seeing the restaurant located at that address, avoid the establishment where the incident did not take place, making the reports liable for possible accusations of defamation.

The exercise demonstrated to the students that they could make significant mistakes, which could cause expensive lawsuits or legal settlements, within only twenty minutes of work. Therefore, it is important that student journalists are exposed to lessons about eyewitness (mis)identification and perils of social media when it comes to recognizing misleading or outright false information, as well as personal reflections on cognitive shortcuts that could lead to flagrant mistakes—even when made accidentally without any harmful intentions. Furthermore, not only student journalists should be exposed to these kinds of lessons. This information should be part of university-wide coursework focusing on literacy in important civic areas, such as media literacy and scientific literacy.

Of course, this exercise did not automatically turn any of the participants into media literacy gurus. But it may have alarmed some of the students that there would be a need to acquire or increase skills to better analyze and interpret information messages. Therefore, the exercise should be seen as only the beginning of a much longer-term educational process in which the students can become better equipped to analyze information. Yet, before such a process can commence, it requires recognition of the need for literacy education, which was one of the main objectives of the exercise.

It is surprising that journalism courses and, in particular, widely-adopted textbooks used in the field do not spend much time on interpreting eyewitness accounts. Of course, most of the textbooks contain much information on executing effective interviews with people on a scene and many will even point out that eyewitnesses can be wrong. But there is often no in-depth discussion featuring research from neuroscience, memory, and cognition scholars about the many issues that keep eyewitnesses from correctly describing essential facts of an event, as well as the many smaller details. This lack of information is detrimental to the progress of future reporters for their profession, and many current journalists at professional news outlets have not received lessons about the workings of the brain when it comes to memory distortions.

Similar to the growing attention to trauma reporting, more education on eyewitnesses in general is needed. Some scholars have been encouraging interdisciplinary approaches from journalism and memory studies fields to better understand the role of eyewitnesses in manufacturing news, because journalists rely on other people for almost all news coverage and are often responsible for creating the first draft of history (see: Olick, 2014). Therefore, it is very important for journalists to exclusively include factual information. An important first step would be for students to ask the names of the people they interview and, ideally, ask those names to be spelled in case of any ambiguity. Most of the sections in which this exercise was conducted overlooked this as an important part of the reporting process, which can be a significant error in reporting.

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

This study provided empirical evidence for the need to train student journalists on interviewing eyewitnesses and interpreting media (social and otherwise) messages. There is a lack of research on how journalists extract information from all kinds of information sources. Therefore, it is hard to identify specific areas in which student reporters need additional coursework and training. Future research should examine interviewing eyewitnesses in classroom, quasi-realistic, and real-world settings. Similarly, future research should examine extracting information from social media accounts in the same settings. Ideally, such research projects should be led by interdisciplinary research teams in which (mass) communication scholars work together with experts in cognition and memory from other fields.

Future research should also address some of the limitations of this particular study. For instance, the participants in this study were not exposed to the same eyewitnesses and the information they provided. There were differences for each class section depending on the quality of the eyewitnesses, as well as the level of questions that were asked by the student reporters. Only anecdotal evidence indicated that the eyewitnesses did not differ much in their performance and often provided similar types of information. Importantly, however, across all of the sections, none of the eyewitnesses have been able to correctly identify the suspect of the stabbing.

If this study was to be replicated in an experimental classroom setting, a better approach would be to use three confederates as eyewitnesses to have the best possible chance that the student reporters receive the same information delivered in the same fashion, although small discrepancies may take place depending on the questions being asked in each section. A follow-up study should also include multiple institutions to have participants with varying types of journalism training. Unfortunately, the stories created during the exercises at other universities before my position at my current institution have not been saved for a content analysis, and are thus not included here. It would also be possible to create different types of story scenarios that can include other types of misinformation, thus providing researchers a more robust view of the phenomena in different contexts.

Hopefully, what this study has demonstrated is a practical and engaging way of teaching these media literacy skills to students (and possibly others) to create a more democratic and knowledgeable society. Misinformation abounds not only in the media we consume but also in our own minds how we recollect events, such is the human condition. However, steps can be taken to overcome these inherent biases that often present themselves in the things that we, as reporters and citizens, create. Acknowledgment of this shortcoming is the first step, and addressing it through reinforced education is the second.

CONCLUSION

Journalists need to be more aware about potential issues with eyewitness accounts. That means that student journalists should be exposed to more materials detailing those problems. This chapter documented the results of an in-class exercise that raises awareness of the topic. However, the exercise is not exclusively for future journalists. Any student should learn about flaws in recalling events, because they are also eyewitnesses to many events or ask others to recall information—although, most of the time, it is not related to a breaking news event that is covered worldwide. Yet, the consequences of misremembering could be negative. Additional instruction in media and information literacy is vital for good citizenship in a society.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. To what extent can news reporters rely on eyewitness accounts in their stories?
2. How can journalists avoid publishing misinformation by relying on false social media reports?
3. What professions could benefit from increased knowledge about memory and eyewitness (mis) identification?

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Cognitive Bias: A person's subjective judgement based on inferences that are incorrect or removed from reality.

Eyewitness: A person providing a first-hand description of an event.

Media Literacy: Ability to analyze and synthesize mediated messages.

Memory: Information that is accessed after it was stored in the brain in the past.

Misidentification: An erroneous identification of a person of object.

Misinformation: Information that may be perceived as real, yet actually incorrect.

Objectivity: Presenting information without favoring one person or party over others.

ENDNOTE

1 In other words, the incident described in the exercise was fake but not the locations. To avoid any confusion or insinuation that anything of that nature took place in those establishments, this chapter will not name any actual restaurant names. References in this text focusing on a specific restaurant, the name is replaced by [restaurant name]. The street address, which plays an important role in the exercise, has been withheld as well.

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Chapter 11
Media Literacy and Fake News:
How Media Literacy Can Curb the Fake News Trend

Tracy Simmons
Gonzaga University, USA

ABSTRACT

"Fake news" isn't a new phenomenon, but it began trending in 2016 during a contentious presidential election. Particularly with the rise of social media, people saw the dangerous impact this movement had, and continues to have on society. People easily bought into false stories, shared them online and even acted on them. Because of this, the importance of fact checking and analysis has surged, and the responsibility falls on both news consumers and practitioners. Additionally, the term fake news has been used repeatedly to inaccurately label news that people do not agree with or do not like. By learning to identify the differences between truth, satire, falsity, dislike, error, and learning why fake news has gone viral, individuals can enhance their media literacy skills. This will in turn improve the media landscape because news consumers will be required to become proficient in knowing how to produce, interpret, and share news in an ethical and honest way.

INTRODUCTION

Since the 2016 United States Presidential Election the term 'fake news' has become commonplace, and even more so in 2017 since the inauguration of U.S. President, Donald Trump. However, the phrase is misunderstood and wrongly used by many news consumers. It has been used by politicians to insult reporters, by officials to deny threatening news reports and by observers who do not want to hear what is being reported because it conflicts with their opinions or values. It has also been used to label mistakes made in news reports. It has become a term to discredit the mainstream media. In a *Huffington Post* column, writer Caren Lissner said it this way:

…if I said I was avoiding all of the "Mainstream Dentists" (MSD) because I'd had problems with a few of them, you'd likely shake your head, particularly since there are 195,202 licensed dentists in this

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country and many work hard, volunteer on the side, and have a record of results…Yet, in the recent past, you've decided that because you are frustrated with certain television news outlets, you'll help government officials discredit an entire field of professionals — journalists — who are sometimes the only ones to shine a light on corruption or aid an individual who's been the victim of injustice. (Lissner, 2017)

Good journalists, she argues, do their best to put their biases aside and tell all sides of a story. If a news consumer believes one media outlet is unjust or slanted, they should spend time seeking out a news source they trust. They should not, however, cast all journalists and the entire mainstream media as "fake."

The overused and misapplied term is causing great harm in three ways. First, news consumers are believing 'fake news' stories to be true and sharing these falsities across social media platforms. Second, 'fake news' creators continue to produce false information that appeals to an easily-led audience. And third, the combination of actual 'fake news' being shared, and the misuse of the term is causing great damage to the journalism industry — a service crucial to American democracy.

There are ways to stop the spread of 'fake news.' Those who consume news, as well as journalists, need to take to responsibility in stopping the proliferation of 'fake news.' There are digital tools available, which will be discussed in this chapter. The first step, though, is understanding why the phenomenon has gone viral, which is in part due to social media. In November 2016 Eric Tucker, a marketing professional who then had 40 Twitter followers, sent out a tweet that read, "Anti-Trump protestors in Austin today are not as organic as they seem. Here are the busses they came in. #fakeprotests #trump2016 #austin." Embedded in his tweet were three photos of parked tour busses. His tweet was shared more than 16,000 times on Twitter and was cross-shared on Facebook, where it was liked 350,000 times, causing a huge uproar. His post, however, was incorrect and has since been deleted. With social media, it only takes seconds for false information to spread like this. A study conducted by the Shorenstein Center on Media, Politics and Public Policy explained three factors contributing to the psychology of 'fake news.' First, news consumers tend to trust information when it comes from familiar sources, and from sources that align with their own worldview. Additionally, individuals are biased information seekers. This means they prefer information that confirms their existing views. Finally, people are critical of new information when it comes from an opposing or unfamiliar source, and often will ignore this information (Lazer, 2017). Through these means 'fake news' creators generate content that resonates with its targeted audience. Tucker's tweet shows how easy it is to transmit information in the Digital Age, and how common it is for audiences to choose to either accept or reject that information, depending on whether it confirms or rejects their personal biases. It is unlikely that the spread of 'fake news' cannot be prevented, but it can be slowed with more media literacy and fact checking skills.

Understanding the 'fake news' trend also includes studying the history of false news, i.e. the checkout line tabloids that have been part of American culture for decades. For example, The *National Enquirer*, which began in 1926 as the *New York Evening Enquirer*, has always printed sensational stories. Because of this, today most customers do not believe those embellished headlines to be true because as a society citizens have learned to categorize those print publications as entertainment. They have not yet learned how to do that in the Digital Age with the stories they are seeing on their screens.

The news media has a long history of yellow journalism and sensationalism. This history is part of the story leading to 'fake news' and will be discussed in this chapter. Satire, like *The Onion*, and "Saturday Night Live" and comedy news shows like "John Oliver" and "Trevor Noah" also add to the growth of 'fake news' because viewers confuse this as real news. For example, when a Washington state resident jokingly posted on his blog that the United States would be housing 250,000 Syrian refugees on native reservations, it didn't take long for it to go viral on Facebook. News anchor Sean Hannity of "Fox News" began quoting the satirical story as fact, and eventually so did President Donald Trump. The author of the satirical post told *The Guardian* newspaper that the traction his false story got was surprising and unintended. "That was very unsettling," he told *The Guardian.* "I was, like, this is incredible" (Woolf, 2016). Believing what one wants to believe, whether it's true or not, is what psychologists call "naïve realism." *Psychology Today* explained that naïve realism and 'fake news' indicate that people (a) think they can determine the legitimacy of the news source with more objectivity than they probably can, (b) think that information that aligns with their existing beliefs - even if it is fake - is more credible than information that does not, and (c) will overestimate the extent to which other people will agree with the news, once they believe it themselves. "This latter point could play a large role in choosing to share fake news, for example, on social media," *Psychology Today* reported (Heflick, 2017). Perhaps this explains the 2016 study by Columbia University and the French National Institute, which showed that 59% of links shared on social media have never actually been clicked (Dewey, 2016). If the headline aligns with one's belief, it is automatically shareable. Understanding what is making 'fake news' trend is key, but so is learning how to fact check and analyze the news one reads and watches.

NPR offers several tips on how individuals can fact check information:

- Note URLs. Domains with unusual urls like ".com.co" should raise suspicion and urge the reader to seek more information about the organization.
- Read the "About Us" section. The mission statement and leadership should be easily found here, and if the language seems dramatic, be skeptical.
- Note the quotes within the story. There should be many quotes in the article from experts in the subject matter. If studies are mentioned, look them up. Also, if an official or professional is quoted, look them up with a quick Google search to check their legitimacy.
- Read the comments. If many comments accuse the article of clickbait – using a headline designed to get a reader to click on the story, even though the article isn't really about what the headline says – it's probably a good sign that the article is not credible.
- Do a reverse image search. A picture should accurately illustrate what the story is about. 'Fake news' creators do not usually take their own photographs, but instead steal them from the Web. To conduct a reverse image search, right click on the image and search it on Google. If the photo appears in many stories of various topics, it is a good sign that the article could be fake.

Making a habit of fact checking articles that come across one's screen can help reduce the spread of 'fake news.' In this chapter students will learn tools and methods to assist with this so they can give context to the news, if they decide to share it on social media.

BACKGROUND

News is defined as a true report of recent events. Because false information on recent events isn't news, the term 'fake news' will have scare quotes around it in this chapter.

There isn't a clear definition of 'fake news' because until now there hasn't been a need to define the term. Since the phrase has started to trend, it's not surprising that it's being interpreted in various ways, and is thus misunderstood. Jay Seaton, publisher of the *Grand Junction Daily* in Colorado, defined 'fake news' in a way most journalists can agree with. It is, "fabricated falsehoods, presented as news," he said (Kues, 2017). The PennState University Library defined its creators as, "Sources that intentionally fabricate information, disseminate deceptive content, or grossly distort actual news reports" (Novotny, 2017). Many create 'fake news' because it is lucrative. Because the headlines and the content of the untrue articles are appealing to people, people click on them and thus 'fake news' publishers make money from the advertisements.

The term, though, is also being used to label news reports people — particularly politicians — do not approve of. Callum Borchers of *The Washington Post's*, "The Fix" column, says politicians have hijacked the term and altered the definition to mean, "reporting they don't like" (Borchers, 2017). It is also been used when journalists make a mistake in a story. An example of this was in January 2017 when a *Time Magazine* reporter inaccurately reported the day following the presidential inauguration that a bust of Martin Luther King Jr. had been removed from the Oval Office. The publication quickly corrected the mistake, and apologized, but the "fake news" tag lived on. The President and White House aides cited the mistake as an example of "deliberately false reporting," even after the correction.

Whatever the definition, 'fake news' is a real problem, as the "Pizzagate" story from December 2016 proved. "Pizzagate" was an untrue story that went viral about a pedophilia ring in Washington, D.C. involving people at the highest levels of the Democratic Party operating out of a Washington pizza restaurant. Edgar Maddison, upon learning about the false report, travelled from North Carolina to the restaurant with a gun and opened fire. He said he was there to self-investigate the claims and rescue child sex slaves. No one was hurt, but Maddison pleaded guilty to interstate transportation of a firearm and assault with a dangerous weapon and as of June 2017 was awaiting sentencing. Besides being sold on stories intentionally aimed at tricking them, part of the 'fake news' confusion also comes from consumers being unable to identify straight news from commentary, which is a problem that needs addressing. News is the reporting of something that includes facts and portrays the issues from a variety of sources. A column or broadcast commentary is one person's opinion on a news topic. Knowing the difference is key in understanding the media. Other key terms that need to be discussed are bias and objectivity. By being able to recognize partiality, people will be able to better interpret the media they are receiving.

All the above terms contribute to the growing distrust many Americans have about the news media. According to the Pew Research Center, only 18% of Americans trust national news and just 22% trust local news (Mitchell, Gottfried, Barthel, & Shearer, 2016). This shows skepticism in the media is at an extreme low. It is a problem that can be resolved; however, it will take effort by both parties — news consumers and news producers.

Before diving into the current 'fake news' trend it's important to look, again, at its history. Journalist and one of the U.S. Founding Fathers, Benjamin Franklin, was responsible for numerous 18th Century hoaxes. One noted example is the 1747 "Trial of Polly Baker." Printed in the *London General Advertiser* was the full speech said to have been given by Polly Baker, who after giving birth to her fifth child, had been charged with premarital sex. In response to her charge, the story went, she argued the law was unreasonable since men were not held to the same standards. One of the judges, moved by her speech, proposed to Baker the next day. The story and the speech were reprinted in several newspapers throughout Europe and America. However, the story was entirely false and 30 years after it was printed, Franklin admitted to the jest. Scholars believe he did this to bring attention to the law, which he believed to be unfair. This is not necessarily why people produce 'fake news' today. As explained earlier, today it's mostly produced to make money from online advertising. Franklin, though, also published hoaxes to make light of things Americans held dear in a non-malicious way. Some people still do this. Franklin once said, "So convenient a thing it is to be a reasonable creature, since it enables one to find or make a reason for everything one has a mind to do." In other words, people can find a way to justify, or believe, anything they want to. This helps explain why 'fake news' has always spread easily.

Edgar Allan Poe was another writer responsible for many pranks in his time. One of his most famous 'fake news' stories was "The Great Balloon Hoax" of 1844. The story ran in the "New York Sun" announcing that Monck Mason had become the first balloonist to fly across the Atlantic Ocean. Poe wrote that Mason had had intended to fly his balloon, named Victoria, from Europe to Paris but due to a propeller accident had been blown off course. Instead, 75 hours later, he landed near Charleston, South Carolina. The story was based on a real person, but was not true. On the same day the story ran, Poe announced the story was false. However, readers were so excited by the news they didn't listen to Poe's reveal and the paper sold out that day. Poe later wrote about the reaction to his joke saying, "I never witnessed more intense excitement to get possession of a newspaper."

Until now, newspapers have typically printed false stories on April Fool's Day. In 1977 *The Guardian,* a British newspaper, ran a 7-page April Fool's Day Special Report spread about a small republic located in the Indian Ocean called San Serriffe, which consisted of many semi-colon-shaped islands. The special report included articles and maps and even ads from companies who got on board with the joke, including Kodak who ran a competition for the best photos of San Serriffe, and Texaco who offered racing fans a free vacation there. Anyone reading the fine print, though, would have caught onto the joke, "Competition closes on March 31, 1977 and all entries postmarked after that date will be ineligible" But many missed it, and in response to the report, Guardian newsroom phones rang nonstop from readers seeking more information on the island. Since the spoof, the paper has printed a 10-page sequel and sold t-shirts and bumper stickers that read, "I've been to San Serriffe." Individuals have also run with the joke, creating games, poems and clubs. People believed this prank because the newspaper made it believable with maps, contests, advertisements, stories, and reports written in a fact-like manner.

In 2017, however, many publications chose to forfeit the April Fool's Day tradition and not publish any made-up stories. This decision was made because of the 'fake news' problem. As *The Toronto Star* stated in a column, media credibility is at stake now. "In this digital era when information spreads around the globe in seconds and lives on forever online, serious news organizations should not play around with far-fetched fake news just for laugh," it read (English, 2017).

There is an upside to 'fake news,' however. Right now, media outlets are fighting to maintain, or regain credibility. Getting the story right, seeking the truth and maintaining objectivity have always been staples in journalism. The 'fake news' trend has prompted news organizations to be more thorough and put more resources into their stories. News organizations are standing behind their product. In February 2017 *Wall Street Journal* Columnist Bret Stephens wrote in *Time Magazine*, "We each have our obligations to see what's in front of one's nose, whether we're reporters, columnists, or anything else. This is the essence of intellectual integrity" (Stephens, 2017). Reporters know they are under society's microscope and together are fighting to defend the journalism industry.

MAIN FOCUS

A 2016 survey by the Pew Research Center revealed that 23% of Americans have shared 'fake news' on social media (Mitchell, Gottfried, Barthel, & Shearer, 2016). This is problematic because social media users tend to believe what their friends post. A 2017 study by the Media Insight Project found that content shared on Facebook is trusted more by a news consumer if someone they trusted posted it, regardless of the publication the content came from. "When people see news from a person they trust, they are more likely to think it gets the facts right, contains diverse points of view, and is well reported than if the same article is shared by someone they are skeptical of," the researchers wrote. ('Who shared it?': How Americans decide what news to trust on social media," 2017). If a quarter of Americans have shared 'fake news,' and if those individuals are trusted by their peers, that means countless of other people have believed that misinformation to be true, and have likely shared it themselves.

This can be seen through the 2016 a survey conducted for *BuzzFeed News* by Ipsos Public Affairs, a strategic research company, which found that 'fake news' has fooled American adults about 75% of the time (Singer-Vine). According to *BuzzFeed*, "The results paint a picture of news consumers with little ability to evaluate the headlines that often fly toward them without context on social media platforms." Some of the top fake headlines respondents recalled seeing and believing during the U.S. Presidential Election were, "Pope Francis Shocks World, Endorses Donald Trump for President, Releases Statement," "Donald Trump Sent His Own Plane to Transport 200 Stranded Marines," and "FBI Agent Suspected in Hillary Email Leaks Found Dead in Apparent Murder-Suicide." Not only did people believe these headlines, they shared them on social media. On occasion the sharing of 'fake news' by social media users has been done intentionally to fuel conspiracy theories, as was seen in some instances during the 2016 U.S. Presidential Election, or to gain social media followers. After the 2017 Manchester Attack, where 22 people were killed, numerous Facebook and Twitter users posted fake images of missing people as a way to increase retweets and shares, the "Independent Reporter" reported. This is why it is important for journalists and consumers to fact check what they see on social media, whether that information is from an individual, an organization or a news publication. A Pew survey found that 14% of respondents acknowledge intentionally sharing 'fake news.' They said they did this to either to "call our" 'fake news' or because they found it entertaining. Other times 'fake news' has been spread because people simply buy into the false headlines, wanting them to be true. Journalist Craig Silverman, who has extensively studied media inaccuracies said 'fake news' is designed to engage and resonate with people. The 'fake news' website www.undergroundnewsreport.com was created by 28-year-old James McDaniel during the 2016 U.S. Presidential Election. He said he did this to see how ridiculous a story could be before Trump supporters identified it as false. "To my surprise, the Trump masses embraced my stories as fact, almost universally. It seemed there wasn't a story too wild or outrageous to be believed by this particular audience," he wrote on his own website. Within the first two weeks of his site's launch, it had already attracted 1 million views and his stories had spread across social media. As *Politifact* reported about 'fake news,' "Perhaps the most insidious component of these kinds of hoaxes is that quite often, they simply sound plausible, especially to people who want to believe them" (Gillin, 2017). Still other times 'fake news' has simply been confused with satire. In 2009 two international publications picked up an Onion story about Neal Armstrong admitting the moon landing was fake. This story, of course, was not real.

All of this — satire, mistakes in the media, misuses of the term 'fake news' — has contributed to the growing distrust in the news media, as mentioned earlier. A 2016 Gallup poll showed that only 32% of Americans trust the mass media to, "report the news fully, accurately and fairly" (Swift, 2016). As misinformation continues to stretch — particularly across social media platforms — the 'fake news' problem will keep escalating, as will distrust in the news media. This ultimately leads to a media illiterate society, which hurts the role journalism plays in American democracy. According to MediaGuide, "The most important function of journalism is to convey information. Conveying information is an important part of the democratic decision-making system, as it brings transparency into society and for its part makes sure that the made decisions go along with the people's sense of justice" (Knuuti, 2015). Thus, if 'fake news' is distorting people's view of what information is true and what isn't, society is unable to make educated democratic decisions, and government transparency becomes polluted. If people do not trust the news media, that also impacts democracy because it means people are not truly informed, since they are turning away from information sources.

One way the fake news problem can be slowed is by teaching news consumers the importance of slowing down and reading an article or watching a news story to the very end before sharing it or commenting on it. A study by the news site Upworthy.com found that most users share a story on Facebook or Twitter after only reading 25% of it (Jeffries, 2014). If an audience doesn't have the patience to finish a story, then they don't have the resoluteness to digest it and make sense of it, and they likely aren't taking the time to fact check the story, and thus do not know if what they are sharing is true or not.

The New Mexico State University Library recommends these five websites to fact check news articles:

- Politifact.com rates the accuracy of claims by elected officials and others who speak up in American politics.
- Factcheck.org aims to reduce the level of deception and confusion in U.S. politics.
- FAIR.org, which stands for Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting, is a media watch group that monitors censorship and media bias.
- Opensecrets.org monitors federal campaign contributions and lobbying data.
- Snopes.com examines urban legends, folklore, myths, rumors, and misinformation.

Audiences especially need to fact check what they are seeing on social media. Facebook, which has nearly 2 billion users, recently came under criticism for allowing massive amounts of 'fake news' on its site during the U.S. Presidential Election. For example, the false story mentioned earlier in this chapter about presidential candidate Hillary Clinton running a child sex ring out of a pizza parlor was perpetuated by 'fake news' sites, including YourNewsWire.com and tap-news.com. These sites turned the story into Facebook posts, earning about 100,000 interactions per post. The consequence was not only violence, but potentially impacted how some social media users voted during the U.S. Presidential Election. One of the top 'fake news' stories that circulated during the U.S. Presidential Election was about President Obama banning reciting the Pledge of Allegiance in schools. The false story garnered 2,177,000 shares, comments and reactions on Facebook.

Instances like this has led to Facebook monitoring 'fake news' posted to its platform. Now Facebook is filtering content posted by its users by adding a warning label on some articles that have no basis in fact. 'Fake news' content is flagged via an algorithm, though it can be flagged by users as well. Questionable posts are sent to fact-checking organizations that are part of Poynter's International Fact Checking Network. If a post is identified as false by the organizations, then a 'disputed' tag will be added to the article and it will get pushed down on the news feed and those choosing to share the post will be reminded of its disputed status. However, many argue that Facebook's efforts aren't working. "…When "fake news" stories do get branded as potentially false, the label often comes after the story has already gone viral and the damage has been done," *The Guardian* reported (Levin, 2017). Facebook promised to tackle fake news, but the evidence shows it is not working; following pressure from users, the social network introduced tools to stem the spread of false information, but the rollout has been rocky at best. The Guardian also reported that the filter is prompting people to share the tagged 'fake news' as a way to rebel against what they perceive to be censorship.

Facebook's decision has made headlines as 'fake news' is something many are paying close attention to. Media outlets have been, and will continue to report on the effects of the 'fake news' phenomenon because the trend is now big news. Nationwide surveys have been conducted on the topic. Headlines about 'fake news' have included stories about combating misinformation, pending lawsuits because of 'fake news' stories and Donald Trump's war on the media. In March, he called the United States media the "Enemy of the people." Additionally, Trump's attacks on the media and his frequent use of the 'fake news,' label often on Twitter, has brought the media — both real and fake — into the limelight. From his inauguration through mid-June Trump had tweeted more than 50 times about 'fake news,' with tweets like, "The Fake News media is officially out of control. They will do or say anything in order to get attention - never been a time like this!" and "FAKE NEWS media knowingly doesn't tell the truth. A great danger to our country. The failing @nytimes has become a joke. Likewise @CNN. Sad!"

Part of the media's goal in reporting on the 'fake news' trend is helping audiences distinguish what is true and what is not. "The Spokesman-Review," a daily newspaper in Spokane, Washington, created a "fake news" page on its website. Here reporters explain the difference between facts and beliefs and write about the difference between a news story, an editorial and a column. Additionally, organizations like the "Columbia Journalism Review," Media Matters and the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, as well as many other journalism associations, have published comprehensive statements about the importance of the First Amendment and the dangers of false news. The First Amendment guarantees the freedom of the press. Four groups signed a letter to President Donald Trump in February of 2017 outlining the principles of this freedom. "We urge you and your administration vigorously to protect and preserve the First Amendment rights of journalists and all citizens – rights that are basic to democracy and an informed society. We will also continue vigorously to defend these principles," the letter read (Mitchell, 2017).

Individuals have noticed, and although many still distrust the media, many are advocating for journalism and joining the fight against 'fake news' by standing up for the First Amendment and/or financially supporting the media organizations they believe in. TechCrunch.com reported that since the U.S. Presidential Election and the war on the media subscriptions at *The Wall Street Journal* spiked 300%, the *LA Times* subscriptions rose 61%and *Vanity Fair* picked up 13,000 new subscriptions in one day. Since the U.S. Presidential Election, news organizations have seen subscription growth as readers respond to Trump's threats against the independent press and First Amendment, reports the Nieman Journalism Lab, a website reporting on digital media innovation.

Major tech companies, including Facebook, Google (mentioned earlier) and the Wikipedia Founder have taken strides to minimize the spread of 'fake news,' since social media and the Internet have been key in allowing untrue headlines to go viral. Google recently added a 'fake news' label on its Google News site. This label identifies articles that include information fact checked by news publishers and fact-checking organizations and is intended to help readers make informed judgements about news stories. Wikipedia's Founder Jimmy Wales launched WikiTribune. The idea, according to NiemanLab, is "That the professional journalists will be paid to write 'global news stories,' while volunteer contributors will 'vet the facts, helps make sure the language is factual and neutral, and will to the maximum extent possible be transparent about the source of news posting full transcripts, video, and audio of interviews. In this way Wikitribune aims to combat the increasing proliferation of online fake news" (Nieman Journalism Lab: Wikipedia Founder Jimmy Wales Launches Wikitribune, A Large-Scale Attempt to Combat Fake News, 2017).

In addition to tech companies addressing the ‘fake news’ problems, news publications have been active in trying to educate their audiences about how the media industry operates and are working harder to prove themselves as credible companies. *The New York Times*, for instance, launched a marketing campaign promoting truth. During the Academy Awards the publication aired a commercial stating, “The truth is alternative facts are lies,” and “The truth is hard/the truth is hard to know/the truth is more important than ever.” The newspaper company reported that they expect their subscriptions to rise, in part because of the ad campaign. They called it a “Trump bump.” *The New Yorker* is also riding the “Trump Bump” wave. As of March 2017, the publication’s circulation is the highest it’s ever been at 1.1 million (print and digital combined).

Although it’s being reported on in the media and people seem to be aware of ‘fake news’ scholarly research is just now underway on the topic. This means there is an opportunity for students to explore and monitor this ‘fake news’ trend as its developing. Therefore, students, academics and researchers can learn how to help stop its spread. One way to do this is through Hoaxy. The website http://hoaxy.iuni.iu.edu was developed by researchers at Indiana University to identify ‘fake news’ stories online. The tool tracks how many times an untrue article has been shared, and who’s sharing it. The site creates visual illustrations showing how links to ‘fake news’ travel across social media. It also monitors websites that serve to fuel conspiracy theories and sites that twist real news stories into sensational, fake stories. Tracking ‘fake news’ is one way to find a solution to the trend. Filippo Menczer, a professor at the Indiana University School of Informatics and Computing, said in a Futurity.com interview about the project that, “If we want to stop the growing influence of fake news in our society, first we need to understand the mechanisms behind how it spreads,” which, he added, is why tools like Hoaxy are important (Indiana University Researchers Launch Tool to Understand Spread of Fake News, 2016).

SOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The solution to stopping the spread of ‘fake news’ lies in creating a media literate society who understands what ‘fake news’ is and isn’t and why it seems to so easily circulate. The recommendation is that students learn the fact checking and critical thinking skills necessary to analyze news that is published across today’s traditional, and particularly digital platforms. Critical thinking is the ability to create an objective analysis and evaluate a news issue in order to create an informed judgement about it. It is also important to understand the political controversies that have led to the rise in ‘fake news’ and what it could mean to America’s democracy, which is founded on the Freedom of the Press. ‘Fake news’ threatens the democratic process, as stated earlier, because it threatens an informed electorate. Stephan Lewandowsky, a cognitive scientist at the University of Bristol in the United Kingdom said it best in an interview with the BBC, “On page one of any political science textbook it will say that democracy relies on people being informed about the issues so they can have a debate and make a decision.” He added that the spread of false information means having a misinformed society, which would be – and is becoming – devastating to a government by the people (Gray, 2017).

Ridding the media landscape of ‘fake news’ entirely is not realistic. There is a demand for it. Columnist Tabatha Southey of *The Globe and Mail* Canadian newspaper said this is because in the “post-truth era” fact has become feeling and people have become indifferent to truth. “We do love our fairy tales. Fairy tales reflect and reinforce our prejudices, and they give us sweet dreams,” she wrote (Southey, 2016). People have also come to expect their news to be entertaining, thus one reason for the confusion about what is real and what isn't. Infotainment, which is defined as material meant to both inform and entertain, is at an all-time high with popular stars like Trevor Noah, Stephen Colbert and Jimmy Fallon. Jon Stewart, who was the host of the infotainment program, "The Daily Show" from 1999-2015, was named the most trusted newscaster in 2009. In an online poll, which was conducted by *Time Magazine*, young viewers said "The Daily Show" was one of their top sources of information. However, Stewart is not a journalist, and has never claimed to be. This is an example of why 'fake news' will continue to be a problem.

'Fake news' can be minimized when society regains a trust in the mainstream media and when news consumers are able to properly distinguish straight news from commentary, news from parody and recognize a mistake in a news report doesn't make it a false story. Then, society will have learned to distinguish 'fake news' from real news, much like how people today recognize tabloids as entertainment, not true news.

As 'fake news' continues to trend, responsible use of social media is another duty that falls on news consumers. Individuals need to begin vetting stories and giving them context before sharing them on social media. Many news consumers read headlines only, not the full story. A 2014 study from the Media Insights Project (Cillizza, 2014) proved this when it revealed that approximately 6 in 10 people acknowledged that they have done nothing more than read news headlines in the past week, meaning they have skimmed the headline, but not read the attached article. The study also showed that the more complex an issue, the less likely consumers were to spend time reading into it. Yet people do not hesitate to share an article, even if they only read the headline. As Forbes reported in 2016, "59% of all links shared on social networks aren't actually clicked on at all, implying the majority of article shares aren't based on actual reading" (DeMers, 2016). This was based on a study conducted by Columbia University and the French Institute. This impacts what trends on social media. "People are more willing to share an article than read it. This is typical of modern information consumption," said the study's co-author Arnaud Legout in a statement. "People form an opinion based on a summary, or a summary of summaries, without making the effort to go deeper." Consumers need to change this habit and begin reading articles, rather than just skimming, so they can give a frame of reference regarding what they share on social media. Giving context to news means thoroughly reading, watching or listening to stories, reflecting on them, then giving those headlines context before sharing them on social media. By doing so consumers are helping put credible news in front of those who may not have the skills to determine reliable journalism on their own, such as those who have lower levels of education.

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Much research still needs to be done on the topic of 'fake news.' First, since mistakes in journalism are often mislabeled as 'fake news,' the role of fact-checking needs to be examined so fewer errors are made and people will not have as much fuel to criticize journalists. With the increased demands on journalists to get the story out fast, and across multiple platforms, an efficient and fast system needs to be created. As fewer people subscribe to publications, fewer advertising dollars come in, which means publications aren't able to have large staffs like they once did. However, reporters are still expected to produce quality stories and meet social media demands, so it understandable that mistakes are made on occasion. Finding a more effective way to correct such mistakes, though, is important. Currently, media outlets run corrections immediately online, or in its next publication or segment. However, those corrections are often overlooked since people do not often revisit a story they've already watched or listened to, and because people tend not to read the newspapers from front to back, they tend to miss the corrections section.

Further, social factors that maintain and encourage a culture of truth need to be identified so people stop spreading 'fake news.' This is challenging because of social media, but technological interventions are already underway. More research needs to be done, though, to see if these interventions — namely on Facebook and Google — are working and are urging people seek and value truth over sensationalism.

Another thing that needs to be further examined by researchers is how 'fake news' impacts people's beliefs. Some studies show that people begin to understand those they interact with. Psychology Today reports that by engaging with people different than oneself, one begins to make inferences about them, and seeks to get to know them. This shows the importance of communicating across cultural divides. However, 'fake news' is an obstruction to this because it adds to the echo chamber problem society currently has. Echo chambers are filter bubbles created by the personalization algorithms owned by social media platforms. It is problematic because it causes people to have a narrow information base, which impacts social discourse. People with extreme views are receptive to evidence – true or not – that supports their views. "Fake news" plays on this. An intervention needs to be created to combat this issue, which is no easy task.

Already discussed in this chapter is how 'fake news' impacts the media. However, that is an issue that needs to be looked into further. 'Fake news' damages the media's credibility, and can even put reporters in danger. In May a Montana congressional candidate was charged with a misdemeanor for body slamming a reporter, in what many are saying is a wave of hostility toward journalists generated by Trump's war on the media. At least one Trump rally during the U.S. Presidential Election, a man was photographed in a shirt that read, "Rope. Tree. Journalist. Some Assembly Required." Other reports since the U.S. Presidential Election have included a reporter in Alaska being slapped, a West Virginia reporter being arrested after yelling questions at the U.S. Health Secretary and a Washington D.C. reporting being pinned against the wall by security and forced to leave the Federal Communications Commission headquarters for a line of questioning at a news conference. This is all, in part, fueled by the confusion surrounding 'fake news.'

CONCLUSION

Society has seen the impact 'fake news' has had, and continues to have on society. It has caused violence, conspiracy theories, media distrust and confusion about what is, and isn't true. And ultimately it threatens the role journalism plays in democracy.

Because of social media, misinformation is easily spread. Studies have shown that people share news content, or comment on stories, without reading them fully. If they are not reading or viewing stories, they are not analyzing and fact-checking them. Some media consumers believe stories because they align with their own beliefs, even if those stories are false. News consumers need to create new habits and be able to identify 'fake news' more easily. Journalists also need to regain the trust of their audiences by continuing to be fair and accurate in their reporting, and by collaborating with other publications that have the same mission. Since the rise of 'fake news,' this has already begun to happen. During the U.S.

Presidential Election, for example, “ProPublica” — a non profit news site — partnered with more than 1,000 reporters throughout the United States to write about and research voter fraud and long wait times.

This is a turning point in the country’s history, as are all momentous journalistic events. It is also a fragile time, and journalism and communication students can influence the future of the industry be learning how to recognize and dissect ‘fake news,’ as well as by understanding the events and attitudes that have led to it becoming a phenomenon. Students can also assist in slowing the spread of ‘fake news’ by fact-checking headlines the come across, and giving those articles context before passing them onto their peers.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are some of the consequences of ‘fake news’ going viral?
2. What steps can you take to prevent the spread of ‘fake news’?
3. Why do you believe so many people believe ‘fake news’ stories to be real?

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Fact Checking: The process of verifying facts.
Fake News: False information presented as real news.
Infotainment: News presented in way designed to entertain the audience.
Misinformation: False information, often presented intentionally.
Post Truth: A time when objective facts are less influential than one's beliefs and opinions.
Propaganda: Misinformation used to promote particular viewpoint or cause.
Satire: A way to make fun of people or issues, often through sarcasm and comedy.
Sensationalism: Presentation of news in a way that causes excitement to provoke public interest.
Yellow Journalism: Journalism based on sensationalism.

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Section 3

Media Ethics and Regulation

Chapter 12
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 not only made it easy for photo journalists to obtain images and to transmit them quickly to newsrooms and consumers across the globe, but they have also provided limitless opportunities for photo manipulation to take place, thus raising questions about the authenticity of those images. This has led to some scholars calling for the rethinking of media ethics to address these ethical dilemmas. This chapter, therefore, examines the codes of conduct for journalists in ten southern African countries to ascertain whether they have responded to this ethical dilemma brought in by the new digital technologies and if so, whether these responses give adequate guidance to journalists when called upon to make ethical decisions while processing photographs. The concepts of truth, reality and accuracy are also interrogated in the chapter. Findings revealed that most of the codes which do not make reference to photo manipulation are outdated and that those which do, are not comprehensive enough to give guidance to photo journalists.

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 brought with them limitless opportunities 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 has, in some cases, resulted in the distortion of news, promotion of propaganda and also in individuals or organisations being harmed (see

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Horner, 2015; Besark, 2006). The exponential increase in the number of photo manipulation scandals that continue to rock the world of photo journalism all over the world proves that this ethical dilemma is on the increase in the 21st century. 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). In recent times, 2015, the ethical dilemma of photo manipulation was underscored at the World Press Photo competition in which several images were disqualified and a major prize revoked because of excessive manipulation, staging and misleading captions (The *New York Times,* October, 16, 2015).

The increase in the number of scandals related to photo manipulation have prompted some scholars to call for the rethinking and the reinvention of media ethics, in order to address the ethical challenges brought by new media technologies (Horner, 2015; Bersak, 2006). The ease and the stealth with which photo journalists are manipulating photographs prompted Gladney and Ehrlich (1996, p. 506) to suggest that photo manipulation should be placed in the 21st century list of "ethical pitfalls". Thus, this chapter analyses the journalistic codes of conduct of ten southern African countries in the era of digital technologies to ascertain whether they have taken cognisance of this new ethical dilemma and if so, what stipulations they have put in place to address it.

In my choice of the codes of conduct, I am cognisant of the fact that some scholars do not believe in the efficacy of codes of conduct in dealing with ethical challenges in general, and photo manipulation in particular (see, Housley, 2002). Aiex and Gottlieb (1999), for example, argue that codes of conduct take away professional journalists' ability to make difficult decisions, and instead make them passively obey the guidelines without asking why they should do so. In this chapter, however, I argue that codes of conduct are fundamental in addressing this dilemma. 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. Horner (2015) describes them as norms and rules which seek to determine how media practitioners should execute their duties.

Evidence abounds in literature which shows that many organisations, both within and outside the media, consider codes of conduct a vital element in maintaining the integrity of their organisations. For example, 17 empirical studies reviewed by Loe and Ding (2000) showed a positive relationship between ethical codes and behaviour. Harrington's (1996) study also found that the availability of a code of conduct in an organisation improved the judgements and intentions of some employees. Gonzalez (n.d.) argues that the accelerated pace at which the 21st century world is changing because of technological developments and globalisation requires ethical principles that would ensure "proper functioning of the economic, political and social network and, therefore, for the well-being and development of the potential of every world citizen".

According to Wilkins and Brennen (2004), codes of conduct were originally adopted by the media industry to, among others, gain public trust after the First World War. Some scholars argue that they are vital for ensuring that journalists are held to a high standard in the execution of their duties (Steele, 2003). White (2001) adds that codes of conduct strengthen journalists when making ethical decisions against unethical pressures both from within and from without the organisation. Sturges (2009) also argues that codes of conduct enable the profession to tell its members what they should or should not do when faced with an ethical dilemma and at the same time demonstrate to the audience that the profession gives good guidance to its members. Cranberg (2003, p. 13), for example, posits that "An institution that makes everybody's business its business has to be mindful of the standards by which its business is conducted". Thus, codes of conduct are fundamental because they give the media industry the aura of professionalism, which, in turn, makes it more respectable and trustworthy in the eyes of the public (Blanchard, 1998).

The vitality of codes in addressing photo manipulation is underlined by Steele and Black's (1999) study which revealed that half of the 33 US codes of conduct they studied prohibited photo manipulation. Lowrey (2003), in a study of 225 newspapers also discovered that the majority had formal codes of conduct to deal with issues of digital alteration of photographs, once again revealing that media organisations believe that codes of conduct are vital to the operations of their organisations.

In 2003, a year popularly referred to as a "benchmark year" for codes of conduct, many media organisations revisited their codes of conduct following the Jayson Blair scandal (Steele, 2003, p. 8). Jayson Blair, a young national reporter for *The New York Times,* was dismissed for fabricating and plagiarising stories. Several other journalists have been dismissed from their jobs for violating the codes of conduct of their organisations (Housley, 2002). Seglin (2001) posits that newspapers which fire journalists who violate their codes have strong codes of conduct which are meant to guide journalists when making ethical decisions.

So important are codes of conduct in addressing this ethical dilemma posed by new digital technologies on photo journalism that big media organisations, such as The National Press Photographers Association (NPPA) and the *Washington Post*, have put in clauses in their codes of conduct to guide photo journalists on what is considered ethical and unethical in the processing and dissemination of photographs. The 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.

However, several scholars have made a case for the manipulation of photos provided the photographer is honest about it and informs the public of what has been done to the image (see Horner, 2015; *The New York Times,* October 16, 2015; Manning, 2005; Mullen, 1998). This argument resonates with that of the proponents of utilitarianism who argue that ethical decision making should be driven by the need to achieve greater good in society (Horner, 2015; Peck, 2013). Scholars who subscribe to utilitarianism, unlike deontologists, argue that decision makers should always take into account the consequences or outcomes of telling the truth (Peck, 2013). They argue that telling a lie or being conservative with the truth, if it results in good outcomes in society, is a positive ethical decision (Horner, 2015; Peck, 2013). This means that photo journalists will be within their rights to manipulate photographs if the aim is to achieve good outcomes. Codes of conduct of major news organisations such as the NPPA, the *Washington Post* and *The New York Times*, for example, stipulate that only traditional manipulation technics such as contrast adjustments and those aimed at improving clarity and accuracy can be used. They go on further to state that where manipulation of images is done, this should be made clear to the readers.

Thus, 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 then compared to the others. The following questions guided the analysis:

- How have the codes of conduct responded to the ethical dilemmas brought by new media technologies to the journalistic arena?
- Do the codes of conduct adequately address the ethical problems of photo manipulation?
- How do codes of conduct define truth and reality in photo journalism?

In the next section, I review relevant literature in order to locate this current study within the body of scholarship of ethics of photo manipulation in the era of digitisation. The concepts of truth and reality are also interrogated in this study to reveal the complexities involved in trying to define them in this era of digital technologies. A content analysis of the codes of conduct then follows, and the chapter ends with recommendations for future research and a conclusion.

BACKGROUND

It is important to note from the onset that the manipulation of images is not a new phenomenon; it is as old as photography itself (see Bersak, 2006). In the early years of photography, it was not uncommon 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).

In the early years of photography, media professionals were also not averse to the manipulation of photographs (see Bersak, 2006). Scholars argue that, 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 (see Bersak, 2006). 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).

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).

Thus, the way photo manipulation was perceived by media professionals in the early history of photo journalism might leave one wandering whether fundamental journalistic principles of truth telling and the credibility of the journalism profession were of no consequence to them. It is the contention of this chapter that this would be a misreading of the situation. It is clear from the accounts of the early history of photography that media professionals did not deliberately set out to deceive people about the images they published; photographs were merely used as illustrations of the events (see Kobré, 2004). It could be argued that, even though images were manipulated by media professionals, this did not violate the principle of truth telling because photo journalists were largely honest about the fact that the images had been altered. They did not attempt to pass on manipulated pictures as real. Thus, questions of deception did not arise because it was understood that the photographs were an illustration of the events and not a "real" depiction of them.

This differs from the way manipulation of photographs is done in the 21st century. New digital technologies have brought with them the ability to alter a photograph in such a way that no one can detect that it has been altered. This is what is causing concern to both professionals and the public (Horner, 2015; Fahmy, Fosdick, & Johnson, 2005; Harris, 1991; Lester, 1991). Byron Scott (cited in Harris, 1991, p. 165) states that:

Not until this decade have we had the ability to edit[a photograph] in a way that no one could tell that it had been edited. We've had an imperfect ability to lie with photographs for almost as long as we've had the ability to lie with words. But pictures have always had a credibility that words have not. With the new technology, the question is no longer what can we do, but what ought we to do?

The increased number of photo manipulation scandals involving photographs which have been seamlessly altered using new technologies and passed on to the reading public as the truth illustrates the threat that these technologies are posing to the fundamental principles of journalism. Truth has become a casualty of these new media technologies and, consequently, the credibility of the journalism profession. A study by Greer and Gosen (2002) revealed that, in the 1990s, there was a drastic reduction of the public's confidence in the media because of the increased levels of photo manipulation.

Issues of truth and journalistic credibility are fundamental principles on which the foundations of the profession stand (Horner, 2015; Harris, 1991). Ford (1998) also concurs that telling the truth is a fundamental principle of journalism (Ford, 1998). 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)

This insistence that journalists should tell the truth echoes the tenets of deontology propounded by scholars such as Immanuel Kant (see Horner, 2015; Peck, 2013). Deontologists 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. For deontologists, there is *absolutely* no room to manipulate photographs, as doing so is tantamount to tampering with the truth. 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). On the face of it, therefore, it could be argued that journalism as a profession subscribes to deontological values and norms since the fundamental principle of journalism is truth telling.

However, the ability of the photograph to capture reality has always been contested by constructivists who argue that the assumption that photographs can capture the truth is a fallacy. Constructivists argue that the photograph is a construct of the photographer from the time the picture is taken to the time it is processed and, thus, dismiss arguments that a photograph can capture reality (see Horner, 2015). 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". A seasoned photographer cited in a blog hosted by *The New York Times* (February 2, 2015) had this to say about photographs as being truthful:

What is truth? Photography certainly isn't. Photography is artifice. We can underexpose and overexpose the same image, neither version is 'true' or 'untrue' – it is just a different interpretation of the world in front of us.

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 (see Price, 2015; Strauss, 2003; Barthes, 1980). Barthes (1980, p. 6), for example, describes the photograph as "always invisible" and that "it is not it that we see", but an imitation of something that once existed. Price (2015, p. 93) also concurs that "we have always known that photographs are malleable, contrived and slippery".

However, despite this contestation, Price notes that people have always "been prepared to believe them to be evidential and more 'real' than other kinds of images" (Price, 2015, p. 93; see Horner, 2015; see also Harris, 1991). 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 advent of new media technologies and the ease with which photo journalists can now manipulate images has, however, changed people's perceptions of the veracity of photographs, thus threatening not only the major journalistic principle of truth telling, but the evidentiary authority which the photograph carries (Horner, 2015). It is, therefore, not surprising that the ability of these new technologies to manipulate an image in such a way that the change would be undetectable has eroded the trust the public had of the evidentiary status of the photograph (Horner, 2015; Greer & Gosen, 2002).

The situation is further complicated by the fact that digital cameras by their very nature make photo manipulation inevitable and unavoidable (Campbell, 2014). 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 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. This, therefore, raises questions about how 21st century journalists are expected to produce photographs and still remain ethical journalists who adhere to the principles of truth telling.

Campbell's (2014) argument resonates with that of constructivists. 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, has a bearing on the interpretation of truth by journalism professionals and calls for a redefinition of major concepts such as truth, reality and manipulation in the era of digital technologies. The next section describes the codes of conduct selected for the study and how they were selected.

SOUTHERN AFRICAN JOURNALISTIC CODES OF CONDUCT

Southern Africa, in this study, was used to refer to countries in the grouping called the Southern African Development Community (SADC). SADC is a regional block made up of 15 countries, namely Angola, Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. In spite of the fact that these countries have different political and media systems, SADC was chosen because the researcher is a resident of this region and also because this regional block of countries has signed several protocols which obligate member states to work together towards achieving common goals. For example, the countries have worked together to craft media policies for the sub-region as seen in the signing of the Windhoek Declaration and the media reform advocacy of national chapters of the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) (Chuma & Moyo, 2010), as well as the 2009 SADC agreement to ensure that the regional block worked together towards completing digital migration by 2013 (Berger, 2010). Only ten codes of conduct were chosen because they were easily available online. The other five which were not included in this study were either not available online or were written in languages that I could not speak or write. The choice of the ten codes of conduct from the same sub-region, however, enabled me to come up with a comprehensive picture of how individual countries in the region in general and the whole region in particular have responded to the threat of digital technologies in the processing of photographs.

It is critical to note that southern African countries, amongst them, have several journalistic codes of conduct, some operating at national level and others at organisational level. For purposes of this study, only codes of conduct which focus on journalistic practice at national level were considered for the study. However, some countries such as South Africa, had several such codes, for example, 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.

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 were not included in the study as focus of the study was on the print media. Codes from specific media organisations were also excluded from the study. The Media Council of Tanzania was unique in that, while Press Councils in the other nine countries used a single code to cover all groups of journalists, the Tanzanian Media Council developed a number of codes to cover different groups of journalists. For example, the Media Council developed separate codes of ethics for reporters, for media managers/editors, for Public Relations officers and Media Advertising agents, and for Press Photographers and Video Producers. For purposes of this study, the code of ethics for Press Photographers and Video Producers was chosen. Table 1 gives a summary of the Codes of Conduct per country, which were analysed in the study.

Content analysis was used to analyse the selected Codes of Conduct. How this was done is described in the next section of the chapter.

Table 1. Summary of codes of conduct analysed in this study

Country	Name of Code
Angola	Code of Ethics
Botswana	Code of Ethics of the Press Council of Botswana
DRC	Code of Conduct of the Congolese National Press Union
Malawi	Media Council of Malawi Code of Ethics and Professional conduct
Namibia	Code of Ethics for the Namibian Media
South Africa	Press Council Code of Ethics and Conduct for South African Print and Online Media
Swaziland	Code 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

CONTENT ANALYSIS OF THE CODES OF CONDUCT

Qualitative content analysis was used to analyse the codes of conduct to establish how they have responded to the ethical challenge of photo manipulation brought by new digital technologies. Hsieh and Shannon (2005, p. 1278) define qualitative content analysis as “a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns”. Patton (2002, p. 453) adds that it is “any qualitative data reduction and sense-making effort that takes a volume of qualitative material and attempts to identify core consistencies and meanings”. According to Wigston (2009, p. 4), qualitative content analysis differs from quantitative content analysis in that the former approach involves “no physical counting of data” but tends to be “more critical in nature and can be used when we need to penetrate the deeper layers of a message”, while the latter “involves some form of counting, and applies the scientific method rigorously”.

To critically evaluate the codes of conduct, I first sought to establish when the codes were adopted and whether this has any bearing on their response to photo manipulation. The analysis then searched for clauses within the codes which specifically addressed photographs in general and photo manipulation in particular. These were then subjected to an analysis to establish how the stipulations are worded and how comprehensive they are in giving guidance to photo journalists on how to deal with the ethical dilemma. Table 2 summarises the results of this analysis. The countries are listed in alphabetic order.

The findings show that all the codes of conduct were adopted in the 21st century though some are older than the others. The oldest were the codes of conduct from Angola, Botswana and the DRC, which were all adopted in 2004. The most up-to-date is the South African code of conduct which was revised in 2016. Zimbabwe’s code of conduct is also new because it was revised in 2015. The other codes are also fairly current, for example, Malawi and Namibia adopted theirs in 2009, while Tanzania and Zambia revised theirs in 2010.

As shown in Table 2, in general, the older codes of conduct from Angola, Botswana and the DRC do not make reference to photo manipulation. However, it could be argued that although Angola does not make specific reference to photo manipulation, this is implied in Section 9 which states that journalists must not falsify or alter situations. This assumes that the term “journalists” in the code refers to all cat-

Table 2. Summary of the findings

Country	Year Code Adopted	Findings
Angola	2004	Does not say anything about photo manipulation but gives a blanket statement which states that journalists must not falsify or alter situations
Botswana	2004	Nothing on photo manipulation. Only gives guidance on when and how pictures involving children should be taken, as well as that pictures for publication should not dehumanise people
DRC	2004	Nothing on photo manipulation. But makes reference to not altering documents, and emphasis is put on not manipulating the content of spoken and written texts
Malawi	2009	Stipulates that photographers must strive for accuracy and that pictures must relate to the story
Namibia	2009	Nothing on photo manipulation. Photos for publication should not depict brutality, sadism, violence and that photographers should not use devious means to obtain photographs, except in the public interest
South Africa	2016	Responds to manipulation as follows "Pictures and or Videos or …. Shall not misrepresent or mislead nor be manipulated".
Swaziland	2005	Photographs should give an accurate picture of an event; Photo journalists should not manipulate the image to imply that a person is HIV positive
Tanzania	2010	Responds to manipulation as follows: "Lenses, filters polarisers and tricks like angling, superimposition, editing, touch up, computer and mechanical effects should not be used to alter the reality of an image"
Zambia	2010	Responds to photo manipulation as follows: "Pictures shall not misrepresent or mislead nor be manipulated to do so". Only fair methods to be used to obtain photos. Pornography shall not be published
Zimbabwe	2015	Nothing on manipulation. Gives guidance on when, how and under what circumstances children should be photographed

egories of journalists. 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. 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 the 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…".

The absence of clauses to deal with photo manipulation in these codes of conduct raises questions about how a major 21st century ethical dilemma has been overlooked or ignored by these codes of conduct which are fundamental in guiding journalistic practice. One possible reason for this oversight in the codes is that most of these codes are outdated. They 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 absence of ethical guidelines on photo manipulation in most of these 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, while one might argue that the age of the code could be a factor in explaining the absence of clauses to deal with photo manipulation, the analysis surprisingly showed that even newly revised codes such as that of Namibia and Zimbabwe are silent on the subject of photo manipulation. As shown in Table 2, Namibia's code of conduct was adopted in 2009, while Zimbabwe's was revised as recently as 2015. Both Namibia and Zimbabwe only make reference to photography to describe when, how and under what conditions photographs should be taken. Section 11.1 of the Namibian code of conduct, for example, stipulates that journalists, photographers and camera persons must not obtain or seek information through misrepresentation or deception, and also that photographic or video material should be obtained with the consent of the owner. The Namibian code further 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. Zimbabwe also mentions photographs with reference to when, how and under what circumstances children should be photographed. Focus in the codes of both countries is more on how and under what circumstances one should obtain photographs and not on how these photographs, once obtained, should be processed and presented.

One could argue that both codes do cover photo journalism in their general stipulations. For example, the Namibian code of conduct states that "*Every* journalist shall strive to report news and events accurately, fairly and with balance" (emphasis mine). However, while it can be argued, academically, that the word "every" encompasses all kinds of journalists, including photo journalists, this statement does not show the urgency with which this increasingly threatening ethical dilemma should be treated. In the case of the Zimbabwe code of conduct, an opportunity was lost when the term "media practitioner" was defined at the beginning of the code of conduct. The code defines "media practitioner" as a reporter, editor, radio and television programmer and presenter employed in a media institution, a freelance reporter or columnist who is a stringer or writes for media institutions. Nowhere in this definition is a photographer mentioned. Including photo journalists in the definition would strengthen this definition and ensure that photo journalists are also embraced by the code's stipulations. Bolder and more prominent statements on photo manipulation are required to address this increasingly growing threat to the integrity of the journalism profession.

The findings in Table 2 also show that the codes of conduct from five countries, namely Malawi, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania and Zambia, have clauses which stipulate, though in different ways, that photo manipulationis unacceptable. The words used in the codes of South Africa, Tanzania and Zambia are more explicit and direct in their rejection of the practice of photo manipulation. The South African code of conduct, for example, states in Section 10.3 that "Pictures and/or videos or audio content shall not misrepresent or mislead nor be manipulated to do so". The Zambian code uses the same words when it states that pictures shall not misrepresent or mislead nor be manipulated to do so. The Tanzanian code's stipulations, though also rejecting photo manipulation, state this differently as follows: "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".

Even though the codes from Malawi and Swaziland do not use the words "altering" or "manipulation" with reference to photographs, they state that photographs should be presented accurately, implying that photographers should capture the event as is without manipulation. Malawi's code of conduct stipulates in Section 3.2 that photographers must strive for accuracy and that pictures must give an accurate picture of an event and not highlight a minor incident out of context. Swaziland's code of conduct also states that "photographs and telecasts should be given an accurate picture of an event not highlight an incident out of context" and that "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).

Though expressed in different ways, all five codes underscore the need to tell the truth or to be objective and accurate in capturing the image. 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).

While this is both desirable and expected because truth telling is a fundamental principle of the journalism profession, it is equally important to acknowledge that photographic truth is a complex notion. The Tanzanian code’s stipulation, for example, that the reality of an image should not be altered is problematic because the concept of reality is contested. Several scholars argue that photographs have no ability to capture reality (Horner, 2015; Price, 2015; Strauss, 2011; Harris, 1991; Barthes, 1980). Batchen (1994), for example, argues that photographers inevitably manipulate every photo they make, meaning that even those photographs which are believed to depict the truth are in actual fact products of manipulation. According to Mullen (1998), arguing that photographs depict the truth is not correct; instead “what they actually depict are slices of life selected and framed by the photographer”. Filo (cited in Manning, 2005) also argues that photographers are never objective because they choose what to photograph, the angle of the shot and also what to include or exclude in the frame. According to Filo, the photograph is a construct of the photographer, which is imbued with intent, bias, culture and the subjectivity of the photographer. Thus, when codes of conduct stipulate that manipulation of photographs is unethical and that photographers should be accurate in capturing the reality, one could argue that they are being simplistic about a much more complex process. The notions of photographic “reality”, “truth” and “accuracy” should be redefined taking into consideration that these concepts are products of culture and the history of a people (see Mullen, 1998).

An online survey carried out by the Oxford University’s Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism and the World Press of the 5158 entrants who participated in the World Press competition in 2015, also revealed the complex nature of the concept of “truth”. More than half of the 1549 photographers who participated in the survey said they sometimes staged photos, an unethical practice that is forbidden by all major wire services and newspapers in the USA (*The New York Times,* October 16, 2015). Some of the participants argued that staged photos can be real in the sense that the events actually happened (Lyon cited in *The New York Times*, October 16, 2015). Staging of photos takes place at the shooting stage and, according to Sim Chi Yin, a participant in the survey, this manipulation is difficultto detect or to prove. Others such as Liss (cited in *The New York Times,* October 16, 2015), are of the view that staged pictures can tell the truth better than an unstaged photograph. In his words, “I would respectfully submit that a directed picture can sometimes convey a greater truth about a subject than a candid picture”.

All this reveals that the notions of truth and reality differ from person to person.Thus, merely stating that photos should convey the truth begs the question: Which truth? According to Mullen (1998), these concepts are dependent on culture, beliefs, history, understanding and human nature, meaning that what might be true in one context might not be true in another. One is here reminded of Kasoma’s (1996) plea for Afriethics. While some of Kasoma’s arguments are problematic, the society-centred ethics, which he advocates for in ethical decision making is important as it takes into consideration the culture and the history of that society. According to Kasoma, the major criterion for disseminating information should be the good that information would bring to society in the first instance. This resonates with Merril’s (cited in Kasoma, 1996) submission that a media system should reflect the political philosophy in which it functions. It follows, therefore, that concepts of truth and reality should be defined from the perspective of that particular society and not from a Western perspective. It is critical, therefore, that drafters of codes of conduct should not appropriate definitions of truth and reality that are foreign to the audiences that they are serving.

A close analysis of all five codes which condemn photo manipulation reveals that they only promote deontological ethical ideals of telling the truth. This is commendable, but truth from whose perspective? There does not seem to be any room for utilitarian decision-making which would allow the photo journalist to manipulate a photograph for the greater good of the society, a central consideration in society centred ethics (see Kasoma, 1996). This is a major criticism that has been levelled against codes of conduct by some scholars who argue that they leave little or no room for grey areas (Steele, 2003). 'Adopt the ASNE code' (1993) states that ethical guidelines which leave little room for interpretation of the situation can do more harm than good.

This is a stance taken by some scholars such as Mullen (1998, p. 94) who argues that manipulation is often required to tell the truth. Manning (2005) also argues that some manipulation of photographs is necessary so as to improve the quality of the product. To that end, he argues that photo journalists should be given advice on what is acceptable manipulation. Swan (cited in Manning, 2005) considers acceptable manipulation to include "dodging, burning, color balancing, spotting and contrast adjustment to achieve accurate recording of an event or object". Some scholars argue that staged photographs, which are forbidden by many major media organisations, can tell the truth better than unstaged photographs (see *The New York Times,*October, 16, 2015). Horner (2015, p. 148-149) adds that manipulating an image can be appropriate if it is done for "benevolent motives".

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 truthful, 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,* September 27, 2012). The Press Club of South Africa took exception to the newspaper's removal of images of the two bodies of South African nationals from the frame; the original photograph from *Agence France Press* showed the 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 and the public, while *The Citizen* was quiet about its action. The latter's actions raise serious ethical questions about the veracity of photographs to convey the truth. *Die Beeld's* action of alerting the readers that the photograph had been manipulated to spare the grieving family's feelings opens up possibilities of how newspapers can present manipulated images, in the event that doing do is in the interest of the public. 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 the producer has told the truth. Sim Chi Yin (*The New York Times,* October 16, 2015), concurs that, as long as the viewer is not misled about the nature of the photograph, there is no problem. In her view, the key to addressing the ethical problem of photo manipulation is to be honest and transparent about how one made the image. This view resonates with the recommendations made by the 1996 five-member committee appointed by the New York University's programme on 'Copyright and the New Technologies' that media organisations should institute 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).

A study done by Boyle (1992) also reveals that some professional journalists are of the view that readers should be informed when images have been manipulated. However, as Black, Steele and Barney (1995) observed in their study, some media professionals are averse to the idea of informing the audience that a picture has been manipulated. A study by Fosdick and Fahmy (2003) also revealed that some magazine editors were not keen to inform the public. It is the contention of this paper, however, that lessons should be drawn from the openness of the newspaper organisations in the early years of photography which did not try to pass on photographs as nothing other than illustrations of the events. Because of their candidness, the reading public did not doubt their intentions, nor did they treat the images in the newspapers with suspicion. In fact, despite the obvious manipulation of images, the public in the early years of photograph placed a high value on the evidentiary authority of images.

Thus, this paper argues that southern African codes of conduct should make provision for photo manipulation not only to help the photo journalists to deal with some ethically difficult situations, but to also earn the public's trust. Passing a doctored photograph as the real thing is to falsify the picture or to tell a lie, and this, consequently, will erode the reading public's confidence in the journalism profession. As Manning (2005) observes, "credibility is the main asset of any news organisation. Once compromised, this can be difficult to maintain, and once lost it is impossible to restore". A study carried out by Huang (2001) revealed that the public expected the media to let them know if a picture had been altered and that the degree of trust amongst readers increased. Based on his findings that awareness played a significant part in gaining the reading public's trust, Huang recommended that the media should strongly consider informing readers that an image has been manipulated. Codes of conduct for the *Washington Post* and *The New York Times,* for example, have adopted this stance because they make it clear that, while they do not approve of photo manipulation, where it happens, it must be made clear to the reader through use of captions and credits (Horner, 2015).

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

One of the major limitations of this study is that it focused only on national codes of conduct of selected southern African countries, and, even then, only one code per country was studied. Codes of conduct from individual media organisations were not interrogated in this paper. In South Africa, for example, media organisations such as the *Mail & Guardian, Sowetan, The Star,* to mention but a few, have in-house codes of conduct which control the manner in which journalists in those organisations operate. A similar situation prevails in media organisations of other southern African countries whose national codes of conduct were examined in this paper. This means that one cannot make conclusive judgements about the state of photo journalism in southern African countries based only on the findings of this study. Thus, to get a more comprehensive picture of photo journalism ethics in the age of digital technologies, it is vital that future studies focus on codes of conduct of media organisations within the selected countries. Such a study would give a more realistic picture of the state of photo journalism in individual countries in the region.

The literature review revealed a dearth of studies on photo manipulation in southern Africa and, because of that, the prevalence of photo manipulation in the region, as well as the voices of southern

African photo journalists on the subject could not be ascertained. Most examples of photo manipulation in the era of digital technologies, in this study, are mostly from Western countries. There is, thus, a need to carry out research on how prevalent photo manipulation in the era of digital technologies is in southern Africa and also how photo journalists and the media organisations view the practice.

CONCLUSION

The chapter set out to examine the responses of codes of conduct of ten southern African countries to photo manipulation which has increased exponentially with the advent of new digital technologies. The chapter was guided by questions which sought to find out how the codes have responded to digital photo manipulation, whether their responses give adequate guidance to journalists when called upon to make ethical decisions while processing and disseminating photos, and what they perceive to be truth telling in photo journalism.

The findings show that most of the codes of conduct which did not have clauses to address this 21st century ethical dilemma were outdated and require revision. Codes from Angola, Botswana and the DRC were last revised in 2004, a time when digital technologies had not yet penetrated these countries in a significant way (see Esipisu & Kariithi, 2007). However, with the exponential rise in digital technologies in these countries (see Balancing Act Report, 2014), it is vital that the codes be revised to make them in line with the new developments in photo journalism and also to give photo journalists in those countries guidance on how to process and present images to the reading public.

However, it has to be noted that codes from countries such as Zimbabwe and Namibia, whose codes of conduct were revised as recent as 2015 and 2009 respectively, had no clauses which address the issue of photo manipulation. Further studies would need to be done to ascertain why such a major ethical problem is not given prominence in these codes of conduct.

Those codes of conduct which took into consideration the issue of photo manipulation, while they must be commended, did not go far enough to address this complex situation. More comprehensive guidelines on photo manipulation are required because it is a subject which has generated diverse views on what is acceptable and what is not (see *The New York Times*, October 16, 2015). Upholding the fundamental journalism principle of telling the truth is commendable because media organisations which do not adhere to the deontological principle of truth telling are in danger of losing their credibility and, once lost, it is not easy to regain it. However, literature also shows that there is a strong case to be made for utilitarian ethics in photo journalism, especially if the photo is manipulated for benevolent reasons (see Horner, 2015) and also provided the reading public is made aware of this manipulation. If the latter is done, then the principle of telling the truth would not have been violated and the media's credibility would not be under threat. It is when photographers try to pass on a doctored picture as real that deception sets in.

Besides, codes of conduct should also give guidelines to photo journalists on what truth, reality and accuracy entail in this era of digital technologies. This is in view of the fact that these are heavily contested terms which are open to a variety of interpretations. For example, some photographers and scholars argue that staged photos, which are forbidden by many media organisations, may be real, because the events actually happened, while others consider them false because the shooting of these pictures involved some manipulation (see *The New York Times,* October 16, 2015). Others, like the constructivists, argue that every photograph, whether staged or not, is a construct of the photographer and should, therefore, never be treated as real. There is also the argument that digital cameras, by their very nature, are manipulative devices. How then is a photographer expected to successfully navigate this minefield of diverse opinions in the absence of clear guidelines on how to process images? What is truth for one individual or group of people might not be so for another. Notions of truth and reality are not universal; they depend on culture, beliefs, history, understanding and human nature (see Mullen, 1998). This means that notions of truth and reality must be defined in the codes of conduct and not left wide open to a variety of interpretations. Thus codes of conduct should not just give photo journalists one line statements, such as those given by the codes of five countries which responded to the ethical dilemma of photo manipulation. Instead, they should be more comprehensive about what they consider to be manipulation, truth, reality and accuracy in this era of new technologies.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Camera: A device which is used to capture images.

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

Image: 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.

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

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Chapter 13
New Communication Technologies:
Women's Rights Violations, Limits on Freedom of Expression, and Alternative Ways to Promote Human Rights

Tamara Amoroso Gonçalves
Concordia University, Canada

Daniela Rosendo
Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, Brazil

ABSTRACT

New technologies are changing the way men and women live their lives. As a new communication technology, the Internet can be used to both harm and promote human rights. When it comes to gender relationships, social inequalities might be reflected online, regarding access and the ways technologies are used. Hate speech, porn revenge and other ways to offend women's rights online are discussed, leading to questions related to possible limitations on freedom of expression. This chapter examines legal solutions that have been proposed in Brazil regarding electronic devices and Internet regulation and considers how restrictions on freedom of expression can be addressed in a human rights perspective.

INTRODUCTION

The popularization of new technologies and communication possibilities since the late 1990s – the Internet, Web, email, and texting of course, but also now including Facebook, Twitter, and similar social media – has brought with it new challenges for society. Discussions on new rights emerged with the Internet and spread all over the world. Debates include concerns related to how these new technologies might harm fundamental rights such as privacy and intimacy. Customers are providing personal data while browsing websites, which is stored; personal videos and photos are shared inappropriately; people are sexting, posting revenge porn, and cyberbullying; and various communities promote hate expression

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or dangerous behaviours. Many questions arise, creating new legal disputes. Should these activities be limited? Can one of these activities be considered an offense to freedom of expression? If yes, what are the boundaries? Or should all content be allowed to be shared in social media, with no restrictions? How are women's rights preserved or violated in such environment? Are traditional gender inequalities reflected in the new virtual spaces? How do states deal with blurred boundaries between public and private space in virtual communities?

These are some of the challenging questions that this new era brings. International Human Rights Treaties have long defined freedom of expression as a universal human right, but not without exposing some limitations – the ones made remarkable after World War II. As such, limitations are often intended to restrict the dissipation of messages that promote war. Nowadays, however, equally harmful messages, not necessary related to war promotion, are shared in social media, combining hate speech, xenophobia, sexism, and racism – messages that can stimulate suicide or other dangerous behaviours. Simultaneously, International Human Rights Law constantly remarks on the special role that media play in our societies and how the media should encourage respect for Human Rights.

Media interfere in multiple ways in shaping human development, sometimes playing a larger role than school or family. Yet media in general and social media in particular do not always respect the provisions of International Human Rights Treaties in promoting rights, sometimes using freedom of expression as a justification for behaviours that can be considered offensive to Human Rights standards.

If debates on regulation for traditional media (TV, radio, etc.) are difficult to support, when it comes to the Internet, it seems to be even more difficult. In Latin-American countries, because of the historical background related to dictatorships, any kind of media regulation discussion conjures up the fear of censorship. In Brazil in particular, many constitutional provisions that establish regulation related to media were never really discussed by the Congress. Not accidental confusion among central concepts (such as media regulation, economic regulation of the media and even freedom of expression) takes over population's fears to come back to the dark times of dictatorship. The result is a constant denial regarding the discussion of these subjects. The fact that many congressmen own the right to explore TV channels in Brazil turns it in an unattractive subject. All these factors combined create an atmosphere of blocked debate. Considering this scenario it is surprisingly that some laws related to Internet regulation were recently passed.

When it comes to women's rights, inequalities perceived outside the Internet environment might be reflected online, bringing into consideration questions such as the following. How is social media promoting or harming their rights? Can traditional national law such as the criminal code apply in cases where social media sharing affects fundamental rights? Are new regulations necessary? Women's rights groups in Brazil have been pressuring the authorities to regulate media and enforce the laws that already exist in order to assure women's human rights, bringing again the debate about freedom of expression. Are these demands based on its reasonable and justified limitation?

These questions allow different approaches, and it is not possible to address all of them in this chapter. It is nonetheless important to stress that these issues usually appear in liberal democracies where freedom of expression has a central role. Considering this, it is essential to better understand the foundation of these rights and also whose freedom are we talking about. This chapter will try to take a closer look on the legal solutions that have been proposed in Brazil regarding electronic devices and Internet regulation. It also considers how eventual restrictions of freedom of expression can be addressed in a human rights perspective.

BRAZIL'S GENERAL CONTEXT: WOMEN, INTERNET AND NEW TECHNOLOGIES

Access to the Internet in Brazil is not universal and certainly is not available in every household. Around 35% of Brazil's population (65 million people) can access the Internet regularly. Gender inequalities, permeated by ethnical-racial, social, and age inequalities, might prevent a large percentage of the Brazilian population from accessing technological resources.

People spend around 25 hours a month online (Gonçalves, Leão & Lapa, 2009). Women's access to the Internet is very close to men's access, around 40% (APC, 2015, p.6), and is particularly low compared to other countries in the region. Uruguay reaches more than 50% and Colombia is under 50%, for example. Developing countries like Brazil tend to have around a 4% difference in time spent online between men and women (33% men and 29% women), which is very close to the global data (41% men and 37% women) (APC, 2015, p. 6). Brazil and other countries in the region (such as Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Uruguay, Costa Rica and Ecuador) have national policies that promote consistent access to Internet; nevertheless, no gender perspective is addressed in any of these countries.

According to the Annual Economic Report on Women Status (RASEAM, 2013), among people living in private houses with computers and Internet access (38% of all residences in Brazil), 52.5% are women in urban areas, and 50% are women in rural areas. It remains a challenge to promote universal Internet access as a fundamental right, with problems related to infrastructure, price of Internet services, and gender bias being main obstacles. Although Brazil has programs to promote women participation in hard sciences and recognizes that Internet access is a fundamental right and has public policies to stimulate its use, these public policies do not take into account a specific gender perspective (APC, 2015, p. 18).

Women's participation in the technology labour force remains around 30% (APC, 2015). Women working with TICs (Technology Information and Communication) also represent less than one third. In general, they develop activities related to gender roles traditionally attributed to women, which means, they are not engaged in core activities such as development of new technologies, software, engineering etc. (APC, 2015, p. 10).

To try to reverse this situation, Brazil has been promoting national programs and public policies to promote women and girls' active presence in technological areas. The program "Girls in Engineering and Computer Sciences" (in Portuguese: *Meninas e Jovens Fazendo Ciências Exatas, Engenharias e Computação*) supports women and girls that are interested in pursuing careers in these areas. In 2013, 325 proposals were selected and $5 million (R$ 11 million) invested in fellowships, all aimed at helping to prevent girls from droping out of school and to stimulate girl's interest in research and technology fields. Additionally, the Federal Government has been developing courses to facilitate access to the work force by providing technical knowledge through the PRONATEC program – National Program for Technical Studies and Work. This Program had 1,137,000 people registered in 2014, with women representing 68% (773,000) (APC, 2015, p. 18).

Although these programs can increase women's participation in technological fields, there is much to be done. For example, accurate data on how women and men access the Internet and explore TICs is not available, in particular how they use these technological supports in private life and for work purposes. It is uncertain if this data is even being collected in such a way as to allow historical analysis. Improving our understanding of the technological needs and uses for women could be very helpful when crafting public policies and for even developing new products and services.

It is also important to state that programs like PRONATEC mostly promote women's access to technological devices and applications in order to improve their small business or to better advertise products. The programs don't seek to explore and empower women digitally. Another important task is to keep track of where and how women are engaged in coordination and direction positions, to determine if women are part of decision-making processes. It is not just important to guarantee access to these non-traditional careers, but also to make sure women can fully develop their potential.

The Brazilian non-profit organization Safernet is concerned with human rights violation on the Internet. Since 2012, Safernet has recorded an increasing tendency in abusive sexting cases – situations where text messages are used to spread intimate and private content, exposing people in social media and other virtual groups (Whatsapp groups for example). There were 48 cases in 2012, 101 in 2013, and 224 in 2014 (Carpanez, 2015). The NGO mostly supports people that suffered with these online behaviours and promotes Internet safety and respect in online communications. While specialists are emphatic in saying that these viral online videos, posts and comments can really destroy other people lives, leading to suicide in many cases; restrictions to inappropriate behaviour online (and offline) tend to be seen by Brazilian society as an unsuitable restriction on freedom of expression.

While the subject raises intense public discussions, citizens and especially women are not well-protected when it comes to online safety, protection of intimacy, and privacy. Traditional women's rights violations are transported to the online environment without further punishment. Even if no accurate data concerning online violence is available, the data that does exist points to elevated rates of violence against women. Consistent information on the subject has been regularly collected and is being used to discuss and design public policies, which in general are focused on criminal policies to prevent violence against women than in discussing social bias. According to the recent research 2012 Violence Map (*Mapa da violência 2012*) (Waiselfisz, 2012), Brazil is one of the most dangerous places for women, holding the 7th position among countries with the highest rates of women murders: 4.4 murders for every 100,000 women. This study analysed data from 84 countries between 2006 and 2010. The same study states that during the last 30 years, 91,000 women were killed in Brazil, 43,500 just in the last decade. These rates represent an increase of 217.6% during the period.

Considering general data regarding violence against women, spanking and the abuse of physical strength are the more common ways in which women experience violence, as it is present in 56% of the cases; in 51.6% of the cases, a situation of violence was repeated. One in five women report that they had already suffered from a violent behaviour perpetrated by a male, known or unknown. Social perception about violence against women also does not match reality: although 91% of the Brazilian population considers that it is wrong to beat a women in any situation, research shows that women are spanked every two minutes in Brazil (Perseu Abramo Foundation).

Although the number of rapes had a slight decrease from 2012 to 2013 (2.44%), the numbers are still very high, not to mention the problem of under-reporting: in 2013, 4,871 cases were reported, making a general average of 13 rapes a day, or one every two hours. Women are also the main victims when considering other crimes: 63.5% in cases of house invasions, 56.8% document theft, 72.3% defamation, and 59.6% illegal constraint. Most of the time, crimes were committed within the house.

Brazil has a specific law to address violence against women, the "Maria da Penha Law" or Law 11.340/06. It focuses on criminal punishments to the problem, and its enforcement has been responsible for a slight decrease in reported cases of violence against women. However, its enforcement varies greatly and regional differences are noticeable. As stated, the law addresses the subject from a criminal perspective and includes just one general provision about media under article 8. It urges all media in a generic way to combat gender stereotypes and promote a non-violent culture that respects women and condemns violence against women. This provision is in accordance with international human rights treaties signed by Brazil, the Belém do Pará Convention, which address violence against women, and the UN Convention to eliminate all Forms of Discrimination against Women.

Although punishment of violence against women is very important, it might not be enough to prevent it. Prevention includes debating women's roles, gender bias and stereotypes in society more broadly. These discussions have not been present in the public agenda. The lack of action being promoted by the Brazilian state in this regard can actually undermine other efforts in punishing and suppressing violence against women.

Media – both through TV shows and advertising – constantly promotes symbolic violence and misogynous messages. Feminists groups try to contest this and take these situations to court, but the result is almost never satisfying. In complaints that reach Brazilian courts involving advertising, even if the consumer law explicitly forbids discriminatory advertising, a general argument stressing the need to protect freedom of speech is always evoked, and the enterprise remains unpunished. Meanwhile, the discussion on gender stereotypes is treated as "jokes," "sense of humour," or even "a compliment" or exaltation of women's beauty.

As a reflection of the Brazilian general context, women tend to be more vulnerable online, both because they are not familiar with technology nor empowered by TICs, and because the macho culture and social bias regarding gender stereotypes tend to be repeated in a virtual environment (CIPAF, 2011).

POLITICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL PERSPECTIVE: IS IT REASONABLE OR JUSTIFIABLE TO LIMIT FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION IN ORDER TO PROTECT WOMEN'S RIGHTS?

Freedom of expression is fundamental for democracy and may even be considered a necessary condition for preventing authoritarian governments and promoting personal and collective self-determination. In Latin America there is a specific context due to the military dictatorships that occurred some decades ago, which systematically violated, murdered, censored, and arbitrarily arrested journalists. This is why freedom of expression took a central place at the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IA-CHR) in its firsts decades. Nowadays other forms of violating are starting to happen, linked with media economic concentration, for example (ANTONIAZZI, 2011, p. 313-315).

Antoniazzi (2011, p. 318-319) states that democratic governments are made up of both procedural and substantial aspects. The procedural equals election and political participation, while substantial is linked to the human rights agenda, including a social dimension and a minimum standard of enforcement where freedom of expression should be widely protected. In the author's words, freedom of expression allows the democratic game to take place by developing public opinion as one of its supports. It can be considered a *sine qua non* condition for democratic institutions to influence society.

The Inter-American Human Rights System has regulatory provisions (such as the American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man, the American Convention on Human Rights, the Inter-American Democratic Charter and the Declaration of Freedom of Expression) and jurisprudence that create a block of conventionality, which means a reference for the guarantee of freedom of expression (ANTONIAZZI, 2011, p. 320-321). Article 13 of the American Convention on Human Rights, also known as the Pact of San Jose, Costa Rica, states:

Article 13. Freedom of Thought and Expression

1. *Everyone has the right to freedom of thought and expression. This right includes freedom to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing, in print, in the form of art, or through any other medium of one's choice.*
2. *The exercise of the right provided for in the foregoing paragraph shall not be subject to prior censorship but shall be subject to subsequent imposition of liability, which shall be expressly established by law to the extent necessary to ensure:*
   a. *respect for the rights or reputations of others; or*
   b. *the protection of national security, public order, or public health or morals.*
3. *The right of expression may not be restricted by indirect methods or means, such as the abuse of government or private controls over newsprint, radio broadcasting frequencies, or equipment used in the dissemination of information, or by any other means tending to impede the communication and circulation of ideas and opinions.*
4. *Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 2 above, public entertainments may be subject by law to prior censorship for the sole purpose of regulating access to them for the moral protection of childhood and adolescence.*
5. *Any propaganda for war and any advocacy of national, racial, or religious hatred that constitute incitements to lawless violence or to any other similar action against any person or group of persons on any grounds including those of race, color, religion, language, or national origin shall be considered as offenses punishable by law.*

According to Gonçalves (2013, p. 188-190), between 1970 and 2008, 65 cases alleging violation under article 13 of the Convention were admitted by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. Considering the distribution among the decades, the author reports that there were seven in the 1970s, six in the 1980s, 16 in the 1990s, and 36 in the 2000s. These cases were aggregated in a macro category that considers violations related to civil and property rights, analysing 233 cases admitted and decided by the Commission between 1970 and 2008. Regarding gender distribution, the victims are in general men: 70.8% (46 cases); while the women count for only four cases. Reported cases with victims from both sexes represents 20% (13 cases) and in two cases there was no clear information about the sex of the victim.

This data must be understood in its context. These are cases where the main argument presented by the petitioners is a violation under article 13. As for cases related to the dictatorship period, it is important to note that it was made up of a complex combination of human rights violations. As such, the same case could combine violation of freedom of expression, torture, extermination, denial to a fair trial and due process of law and many others. As for the gender differences, the extremely low incidence of cases involving women can be seen as reflecting the lack of access to justice and gender discrimination in local sphere.

When it comes to the restriction of freedom of expression, Antoniazzi (2011, p.326/335-336) explains that there is a legitimate and an illegitimate limitation. The censoring of content before publication is prohibited, but it is possible to charge responsibility for the abusive exercise of this right. For the purpose of this article, the problem is to understand what is an abusive exercise of expression. First of all, the jurisprudence of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights understands that freedom of expression it is not an absolute right, especially when it violates other rights of the Convention, raising an issue of weighing. The restriction is only permitted when it's necessary for a democratic society. As such, the legal reference for this limitation is mainly reputation, meaning the honour of people.

However, considering the problems of violation and attacking freedom of expression that may violate democracy, the jurisprudence of the Court established patterns for preventing any kind of censorship and limiting previous restrictions. Censoring contents previous to its publication is legitimate for the moral protection of childhood and adolescence (Article 13.4), but the rule is not preventing control, but responsibility for the abuser (ANTONIAZZI, 2011, p. 337-338).

Mill (2006) also emphasizes that there is a limit for the legitimate interference of public opinion and individual independence. Finding this limit is crucial in order to establish a good condition on human affairs. Therefore, Mill understands that the law and the opinion of others impose rules of conduct. The only reason for limiting the liberty of a member of the civilized community against his will is to avoid harm to others. Mill says that self-protection is the only reason why liberty of action may be limited. The individual is sovereign over his body and his mind, and his independency is absolute, by right. It is clear that the foundation of this right is linked to an expression of individuality that reflects Mill's liberal theory. Consequently, positive or negative actions may be required in order to not cause harm to other individuals. Positive actions demand caution and should be the exception, since the negative action is the rule. So, if harm is the limit, what happens when people exceed it?

Moreno (2013, p. 104) shows that there are different ways of controlling media (both TV schedule and publicity), such as self-control, inspection or censorship by the government, and a council with people from civil society. The problem is that civil society's claims usually are seen as censorship or an attack on freedom of expression by big media. This is the way Moreno (2013, p. 98) defends the establishment of guidelines and mechanisms of media social control, focusing on the council, which should has legitimate right of claiming.

Since Brazil is a democratic republic, the state has a central role in this aspect and should provide responses in order to avoid the violation of rights and provide appropriate answers when it occurs. Despite critics that may be directed to the criminal response, it is the method adopted by state. However, the law is beyond the criminal sphere and may regulate society also by other means, such as Internet use and safety.

BRAZIL'S LEGAL SCENARIO: HOW HAS THE BRAZILIAN CONGRESS FRAMED THESE QUESTIONS?

Like other countries in Latin America, Brazil shares a recent trauma related to the dictatorships that spread in the region from the 1960s to the 1980s. As a result, all initiatives to discuss public media regulation are performed in a specific context due to the censorship that violated many rights during those years, resulting in a stalled debate. In Brazil, by the end of this brutal period, the new Constitution established freedom of expression as a fundamental right, requiring further regulation by law. Although no fundamental rights are absolute, laws regulating freedom of speech and ensuring media economic regulation were never passed in Brazil. With media ownership being concentrated in few economic groups, democratic access to this public platform is not possible for the majority of the population.

Brazil faces problems related to media economic concentration, which affects diversity in representation and freedom of expression itself. Any debate intended to regulate these issues is targeted as censorship and discussion is blocked. Congressmen control many media enterprises, which does not help debates flourish; as such concentration can help them maintain their status as elected congressman and senators. A big step forward occurred in 2009 when the president at the time called a national conference to discuss media and social communication in Brazil[1]. The discussions were held all over the country and an incredible number of guidelines (around 6,000) were brought to Brasilia, the capital, to be further discussed (they were organized in 1500 proposals) and approved as a national guideline, with 672 proposals to improve social communication in Brazil. The feminist movement was represented in this national conference and some proposals were related to diversity and gender representation (and stereotyping) in the media. Although it was a very interesting process to promote and stimulate public discussion, virtually none of these guidelines ever became reality in Brazil, except for the Internet civil regulation.

If the scenario regarding general media regulation in Brazil counts with few advances, when it comes to the Internet a great deal has been done. Considering the legal background in Brazil, many different law proposals have been discussed in the Brazilian Congress regarding protection while using the Internet. Two were passed recently, one in 2012, which was more focused on criminal issues, and another one, a broader law regarding the Internet as a whole, was approved in 2014.

These laws contain general rules that impact all society directly and women's rights specifically. This paper takes a closer look at all these three normative references to better understand how debates related to Internet regulation are being shaped in Brazil and how they impact (or not) women's lives. These laws also cover three very important aspects: criminal, civil and consumer.

The Law n. 12.965/14, recently passed (2014) by Brazilian Congress, is an innovative and challenging regulation that aims to set the general principles and rules related to Internet use and safety in Brazil. We may consider it a complex and complete law, counting 32 articles that regulate different aspects related to Internet use. The second article establishes that Internet uses and regulations are based on (among others): the respect for freedom of expression, human rights, online citizenship, diversity, consumer protection, and the social role of Internet.

Article 3 also determines that Internet regulation must observe the following principles: freedom of expression; privacy protection; personal data protection; maintenance of net neutrality; net security and functionality (promoting good practices); responsibility of all its agents, according to law; preservation of the Internet's participatory nature; and freedom of economic activities developed through Internet. Finally, this article also determines that these expressed principles do not exclude any other right the State should observe as a consequence of ratifying other laws or international treaties. This is an exceptional overture to complement this law by other human rights principles and provisions established in human rights international treaties signed by Brazil.

Article 4 defines the law's objectives: universal accessibility to the Internet; universal access to information, knowledge and participation in cultural life and discussion of public interest subjects; innovation and the promotion of new technologies, assuring use and access; and promotion of open technological platforms that allow communications and data exchange.

Articles 7 and 8 define rights regarding the security and privacy of online environments. By stating that access to the Internet is essential to citizenship, it declares that Internet users are entitled to multiple rights, such as: inviolability of privacy and private life, with accordingly compensation in case of violation; inviolability of all online communications, except by judicial decision; non-interruption of Internet service, except by non-payment of the hired Internet services; maintenance of the quality of the hired connection; clear and complete information on contractual conditions, including privacy and how personal data is obtained and archived; accessibility (including for the disabled); and the application of all consumer laws in all consumer relationships established through the Internet.

It is clear by these first articles that the legislators were concerned with online privacy and non-disclosure of personal data. Freedom of expression is also seen as a main issue, as is the affirmation that consumer relationships through the Internet remain as consumer relationships, protected by consumer laws. This last point is an important aspect of the law, which promotes a connection with consumer regulations. In 2013, the federal government issued a decree aimed to protect consumer right's online (Decree n. 7.692/13) that was focused on three main aspects: sufficient information about the product or service being offered and about the provider; clear contractual conditions, easily accessible customer support, and easy ways to exercise the right to return products.

Still considering the 12.965/14 Law's framework, an entire section is dedicated to protecting intimacy and privacy online and also to assuring net neutrality. Regarding freedom of expression, Article 19 states that each individual is responsible for what he or she posts online, the provider remaining as a subsidiary liability. Internet providers could only have civil liability over online contents posted by other parties if a judicial decision to remove specific content is not respected. By these provisions, freedom of expression is assured, but also responsibility by human rights violations committed online is addressed and can be punished.

Net neutrality is a central theme for this law, specifications being dedicated in Article 9. It clearly states that those responsible for transmission must assure that all types of data information and content are treated equally, with no distinction allowed regarding content, origin or destiny, and service or application. Eventual discrimination of data trafficking must follow additional technical regulation, and it is justified only in order to ensure proper services delivery and for emergency reasons.

This law presents some of the government responsibilities, such as to implement public policies to promote digital inclusion, culture and citizenship, trying to reduce inequalities in the access of new technologies, and stimulating the production of national content and dissemination (articles 27 and 28). Also, public data must be diffused through the Internet by open programs. It also stresses the important role of the Internet in education and in promoting active social participation in public policies discussions.

In general, it is a very positive law, which focuses on the potential beneficial aspects of Internet, such as promoting education, reducing inequalities, active citizenship and so on. However it remains silent on any qualified definitions about hate speech or other ways to promote discriminatory behaviours online. It is very complete in preserving privacy and personal data, but it does not specify how users can be held responsible in case of discriminatory posts, video, and other contents.

Brazil's constitution forbids any kind of discrimination and assures equality to all citizens (addressing specifically that men and women are equal before the law) and this is re-enforced by all human rights treaties signed by Brazil (such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination). Racism is defined as a crime but there is no similar regulation regarding discrimination related to gender bias. Much has been discussed in the Congress in order to have a similar regulation to protect LGBT rights.

Although the racism law could be applied to crimes committed online, it is remarkable that it is not fully enforced, whether to regular crimes or virtual crimes. This can suggest that regulation is not the central issue; rather it is the social and cultural values that permit social discrimination to happen and remain unpunished.

The Law n. 12.737/12 adds new crimes to the criminal code, which dates from 1940. It is known as the "Carolina Dieckman law" because it was passed after a scandal involving a famous actress in Brazil. In May 2012, her e-mail was accessed illegally and personal and intimate pictures were downloaded. She was requested to pay R$ 10,000 for each picture (around $5,000). She refused to pay, and the pictures were released onto the Internet. This situation, the lack of a specific criminal provision to deal with the case, and the fact that it involved a celebrity, pushed the Congress to pass this law, although many other projects were being discussed at the time.

It is important to point out that this law does not regulate regular crimes committed through the Internet or by using technological devices, but creates a separate and autonomous crime that consists of invading a technological device in order to obtain, adulterate or destroy personal information and data. The sentence for this crime can vary from three months to a year of detention, including a fine. In general, this law does not allow for an increase of imprisonment. Under specific conditions, sentences can be increased, but this topic will not be discussed in this chapter, although this was one of its main criticisms.

A special court (JEC) is in charge of analysing and judging the crimes predicted in this law. The JEC[2] courts are ruled by law 9.099/95, which changed much of the criminal system. It was a law aimed to provide more clarity in judicial procedures that involve simple cases – with limited values in the civil sphere and with low imprisonment sentences in the criminal sphere. With a simple procedure, the cases submitted to JEC usually end with moderation procedures that set agreements between both parties.

In its criminal responsibility JEC can analyse cases that have a sentence of less than two years of detention of imprisonment, with or without a fine. It means that by assessing the digital crimes by the 9.099/95 Law, the punishment for them can be very difficult to apply, since these courts are not prepared to investigate and deal with complex cases involving new technologies. Also, by the low imprisonment sentence, it can be exchanged with a communitarian service or a deal can be made with the offended party. These were the biggest criticisms the law received, and the law was then reputed to be inefficient. In short, did we need to regulate this issue by criminal law? Perhaps civil compensation could be enough to deal with these situations? Even if the law is already in force, it seems that a civil law could do much better in this case, which shows how emergency legislation in criminal matters are not, usually, the best answer. Finally, proposing criminal measures and amplifying the criminal sphere, without a civil law framework to regulate other aspects of the Internet (such as liability, privacy and intimacy, net neutrality and others) does not accommodate all issues brought up by Internet development, leaving too many questions without answers or proper guidelines.

There is another criticism: whether the crimes committed by invading electronic devices are a major concern in today's consumer society. Certainly online and electronic security is an important issue and has a large impact on women, but hate speech diffused online and other practices such as porn revenge tend to be much more harmful. How do we deal with it in a complex context where any kind of regulation regarding freedom of expression is automatically assumed as censorship?

CONCLUSION

Regulation certainly has an important role in promoting and ensuring women's rights in virtual spaces and with the Internet in general, but it is important to note that mere regulation does not change social values or automatically reinforce human rights. As a Latin-American country, Brazil struggles to overcome traditional patriarchal structures and enforce human rights laws related to social justice. Much has been done on the legislative level but it has not always been accompanied by law enforcement and public policies.

Women's and feminist movements in Brazil haven't fully incorporated the Internet agenda[3]. Much has been discussed regarding women's representation on traditional media (especially on TV) and advertising, but little advancement is seen with new technologies. The feminists that discuss media issues in general tend to be more concerned and closely follow Internet regulations and new media and technologies debates. A national group, *Rede Mulher e Mídia* – Women's and media network –assembles many feminists and feminist's associations; their goal is to push this debate relating women and media further. They work to deconstruct women's objectifying images on the media and engage themselves in advocacy for public policies. They also have a seat in the National Women's Rights Counsel, a federal body composed by government and non-government representatives to shape public policies to improve gender equality and women's advancement in Brazilian society.

In the meantime, the potential in using new technologies to promote, identify violations, and repress them seems not fully implemented. Although the new law on the Internet expresses the need to promote digital inclusion (making a specific remark on disabled persons and accessibility), nothing is stressed to promote women's access to new technologies. Public policies regarding women's historical exclusion from technological domains are a very important start.

Another possible public policy centres on how data regarding violence against women is being received and processed. A phone number (180) is accessible for free in Brazil and in other countries that face a lot of women trafficking, which can be used to report women's rights violations and any kind of violence. But in times when the Internet is so present in everybody's life, it could be an important asset to count with online information and support too, which for the moment, it is non-existent. It is hard to find online information about where to look for help, for example. A smartphone application or website describing information on these supporting services would be more than welcomed, interactively integrating information on where to seek help.

A feminist group started an interactive map where women can report and get informed about dangerous places. It is called *Chega de Fiu-fiu* ("Stop sexual harassment on the streets") and allows women to share their stories. This website is promoted by a group called Think Olga, which has lots of interesting initiatives regarding women and medias (such as this interactive map, "interview a woman" project, blogs, and others). According to this research website, 48% of all sexual harassment in Brazil are verbal and 68% occur during the day. Tools like these could be incorporated and disseminated by women's groups and organizations. In this regard, it is important to improve these groups' knowledge about the Internet, new communication technologies, online safety, and others related subjects.

The Federal Government recently started a national campaign against hate speech and human rights violations online. The initiative aims to promote more security online, especially for children and teenagers, and it allow people to make online claims regarding any kind of violence committed in the Internet. The Humanizing the Internet – National Pact to Face Human Rights Violations perpetrated Online (*Humaniza Rede – Pacto Nacional de Enfrentamento às Violações de Direitos Humanos na Internet*) was launched in 2013 when a federal decree was passed (art. 5, Decree n. 8.162/2013). The Human Rights Secretary promotes it, together with the Secretary to Promote Racial Equality, the Secretary to Promote Women's Rights, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Communications, and the Ministry of Justice. The initiative encompasses three main areas: reporting violations, prevention, and security, with an emphasis on children and adolescents rights.

This new program offers a way for people to easily report human rights violations that occur online. The information is processed and data is sent to authorities and if it is the case, act against the offenders. So far, no data was available online about the violations investigations and procedures concluded. For all human rights violations that occur offline, the Federal Government also offers a phone number (Disk 100), free to call.

Another very important public policy that has not been fully discussed and implemented is media literacy. Although this was an explicit recommendation pointed out during the National Conference for the Rights of the Children and Adolescents in 2011, the Ministry of Education has no specific policies for developing media literacy in schools. New generations are being raised immersed in new technologies, and its uses are not always evident. Aggregating media literacy to national curricula could be an interesting way to prevent human rights violations online, contributing to a safer online environment. While this topic is not even in discussion yet, another one has been raising intense debates: the deconstruction of gender stereotypes.

Traditionally, all states in Brazil discuss and vote on their state plans regarding education. They must follow the national educational plan, implementing it locally. In 2015, however, conservative groups considered the word “gender” inacceptable and are mobilizing to exclude this word from the state’s plans. Conservatives mostly within religious communities believe that discussing gender roles can bring instability to the society and promote early sexual experiences and homosexual behaviour.

Following the tendency of recognizing the Internet as a human right, information society and technology cannot be seen as neutral in terms of equality; it should be an inclusive one. Men and women tend to use the Internet for different purposes: men usually use it for technological and creative activities, such as games, videos and movies; women use it for education and learning, social networks, and for health information. Of course, there are reasons why women face more obstacles to access TIC: less access to the wage labour market, low familiarization with the main languages used in Internet, especially English; and content not applicable to geographic and cultural contexts. In conclusion, gender equality must be a priority in the information society (CIPAF, 2012, p. 7/16-17).

Despite this problem of access, a lot of the violence perpetrated against women – harassment, bullying, censorship, sexting, and sexual exploitation – occurs on the Internet. That is why it is so important to assure the presence of women on the web, so they will be heard. The Plan on Equal Opportunities for Women in the Information Society (CIPAF, 2012, p. 28), written by women of different sectors of the Dominican Republic, states that feminists must work hard to pass laws and improve mechanisms that prevent and punish cybercrime. These differences state that TIC are repeating unequal social power. Patterns and gender roles that were established culturally are determining the way men and women are using these new technologies and forms of communication (CIPAF, 2011, p. 23). We must not lose sight of the fact that men usually dominate technology, which is highly influenced by a sexist education.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Cyber Bullying: Form of bullying practiced online. As its content is spread through Internet, consequences tend to be more dramatic in terms of one's reputation, privacy and identity.

Hate Speech: Consists in the diffusion of discriminatory messages against one particular group or community, stimulating its humiliation, stating they are not entitled of fundamental human rights and promoting its elimination or submission to unacceptable conditions (slavery etc.).

Internet Regulation: In order to maintain Internet as a free space - which includes net neutrality - and protect people's rights (intimacy, privacy, personal data), including protection against hate speech; Internet regulations have been discussed all around the world. They can regulate commercial aspects of Internet and enterprises obligations and liabilities in respecting users rights but also establish protections against possible human rights violations, such as porn revenge, cyber bullying and others. They can have a civil, commercial, consumer or criminal perspective.

Net Neutrality: It is the guarantee that no online content will be displayed preferentially for commercial reasons (because someone paid for it or by commercial arrangements between net provider and other enterprises). It is a way to maintain Internet a free space where everybody can have a voice.

New Communication Technologies: Internet and its popularization brought endless opportunities to promote communication, via applications, online platforms, instantaneous messages and others. It also made possible to find information more easily and fast. New communication technologies include all these new possibilities and others yet to be developed.

Porn Revenge: Act of release intimate videos online, in order to humiliate and expose one's privacy, intimacy and sexual behavior; as a revenge (because the other person ended the relationship, for example, or others). Affects women in particular in macho culture societies (as Brazil), where women's sexual behavior is used to judge one's qualifications.

Violence Against Women: Violence motivated merely because the victim is a woman. It is in general based on gender bias and stereotypes and can be symbolic, physical, psychological, patrimonial etc.

ENDNOTES

1. National Conferences are very common in Brazil. They are considered a way that civil society can participate in decision-making processes related to public policies in many core areas. The more traditional conference is the National Conference about Health (also one of the oldest); the Brazilian public health system was shaped from input presented in the earliest editions of this conference. The conferences are in general thematic (women, children, LGBT, young people, food and nutritional safety, etc.) and are called by the president. After the official launching of the conference, each state and municipality can call a local or regional conference. Elected delegates that will represent its municipality or region on the federal level collect all the input. The main proposals are discussed in a national conference, which will approve a national plan. These documents are supposed to guide the different Ministries in the adoption of new public policies.
2. JEC – Juizados especiais criminais, in Portuguese. In a translation: special criminal court.
3. That's a claim made by organizations and projects, such as GenderIT.org and ¡Dominemos la tecnología! They argue that feminists should attempt to address the violence perpetrated against women online, because they are as damaging as physical or psychological violence (DOMINEMOS LA TECNOLOGÍA).

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Chapter 14
Media Ethics and Elections Coverage in Nigeria:
Understanding the Context and Imperatives From a Gender Perspective

Abigail Ogwezzy-Ndisika
University of Lagos, Nigeria

Ismail Adegboyega Ibraheem
University of Lagos, Nigeria

Babatunde Adesina Faustino
University of Lagos, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

This paper examined media ethics in Nigerian using elections coverage as a lens. It focuses on the gender dimension, a fundamental factor in media and election debates; and brought to the fore the socio-political and economic factors affecting the ethical performance of journalists covering elections in Nigeria. It argues that journalist covering elections in Nigeria are operating in challenging socio-political and economic context, but are beginning to rise up to the occasion having improved on the coverage of women politicians. It concludes that despite the challenges, ethical reportage can promote gender balanced coverage of elections in Nigeria. It recommends that the media should provide platforms for engagements and give equal access to parties and candidates (both females and males); and also provide space in which freedom of expression can be exercised and alternative, dissenting, and minority voices heard.

INTRODUCTION

Elections in democratic settings affect everybody either directly or indirectly and the expectation is that whenever there is fair, balanced and inclusive participation of all people in the election of leaders without discrimination on the ground of sex or any other factor, the society will progress. As such, people should be empowered with valid information to participate in elections. Anything to the contrary, apart

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from acting outside the ambit of the law which could result in law suits, will destroy the credibility of journalists and media outfits; and portray them as unprofessional in covering elections and the processes.

As such, journalists owe their audiences moral responsibilities, which are ethical and referred to as soft laws, and now codified. The codified laws deal with the moral principles or norms for action. Ethics could therefore be termed as a normative, Meta and applied science of conduct. The normative aspect deals "with norms, standards and principles", the Meta deals with analysis of the ethical terms while the applied "deals with the application of the ethical standards and principles to the professional practices" (Daramola & Akinsuli, 2012, p. 2).

As a result of its concern with such concepts as virtue and vice, right and wrong, good and bad, responsible and irresponsible actions, media ethics may be viewed as a sub-sect of applied ethics specifically dealing with the ethical principles and standards of media, including broadcast media, film, theatre, the arts, print media and the Internet (Daramola & Akinsuli 2012; Adam 2009, p. 317; Elliott 2009, p. 30; Perebinossoff 2008). This perspective on ethics also encompasses other adjunct journalism professions such as public relations and advertising which play significant roles during electioneering campaigns. Tis may account for why Okunna (2003) argued that the issue of good and bad as well as fairness, balance and rights among others (especially if related to elections) are fundamental journalistic principles applicable in all regions of the world.

Therefore, Nigeria is not an exception, hence this paper examined Nigerian media ethics within context and in relation to elections coverage in Nigeria focusing on the gender dimension that is a fundamental factor in media and election debates. It drew from the Nigerian Press Council Code (2009), Nigeria Broadcasting Code (2012) and relevant sections of Electoral Act 2010 against the backdrop that journalists are the holders of public trust. It is hoped that the argument and submission of this paper would further challenge and stimulate stakeholders in the media, ethics, election and gender issues to provide and strengthen sustainable and gender sensitive elections coverage.

Journalism Code of Ethics vs. Journalists Rights, Privileges and Social Responsibility

The journalism code of ethics states in part: "Truth is the cornerstone of journalism and every journalist should strive diligently to ascertain the truth of every event. [Again, it states that] Journalism entails a high degree of public trust. To earn and maintain this trust, it is morally imperative for every journalist and every news medium to observe the highest professional and ethical standards. In the exercise of these duties, a journalist should always have a healthy regard for the public interest" (Nigerian Press Council. 2009: Para 1 and 2).

So, journalism ethics sets a higher standard. Hence, most ethical codes go beyond 'not breaking the law' to outline a social role for *public interest* (emphasis ours) journalism. In Europe, for instance, at least the law tends to police only the outer reaches of what is appropriate reporting.

In other words, journalists will not act ethically in the absence of effective professional self-regulation. Whilst these are not of course mutually exclusive, it is the last view that is closer to the truth. The question that will arise at this point is: what is effective self-regulation and why does it exist?

It may be argued that self-regulation is only effective when there is a clear collective and individual self interest in making it work. However, the collective interest for professional journalism is provided by the threat of state regulation. In the past 60 years in the UK, we have seen a repeated dance of threat and retreat between the state and self-regulation of the media: when Parliament expresses outrage, self-regulation tends to be tightened as it was after the death of Princess Diana for example, and as Lord Levenson recommend a Royal Charter on self-regulation of the press after phone tapping scandal, arguing that this would safeguard the freedom of the press and the future of local papers (Tambini, 2010). So, although, journalists enjoy privileges in the form of certain rights and freedoms, they are in denial if they do not accept that their rights and privileges are conditional on a set of expectations – an idea shared through society – of what constitutes responsible journalism because rights come with responsibilities.

However, journalists are deserving of a certain set of privileges in the light of the social benefit they provide, but only if they deliver that benefit. Therefore media are social institutions that must make moral contributions to the society. However, daily the content of media messages raises the issue of ethics to the front burner (Owens-Ibie, 2003). According to Akingbulu and Bussick (2010, p.76) “After ten years of observing government and other social institutions at work, if the world is to be saved from selfish self-destruction, it would be journalists, in all objectionable practices”. Again, Owens-Ibie (2003, p.393), stated that,

While the media in Nigeria are acknowledged as key actors in the struggle for Nigeria’s independence and the process of democratisation, critics have charged sections of the press with irresponsibility. These critics see the press as interpreting the freedom of the press along the lines of Verment Royster’s phrase – “the right to be irresponsible”

These arguments point to the fact that, although journalists are responsible professionals whose aims and ideals should coincide with the best interests of the society, but in today’s society this is not always the case, as certain media personnel and institutions have fashioned themselves to the order of the day and due to poverty, fear, intimidation and other factors that have made them unable to operate independently.

According to Ojo (2000) cited in Pate (2002), journalists have placed so much value on “money journalism”. A major reasons for this, is poor welfare package for journalists and delayed remuneration. This may explain why journalists want the news source to arrange for transportation and even give them “white envelopes” a new euphemism for brown envelopes, even when they know that it is unethical. So, where are the ethics of the profession?

Furthermore, the rise of adversary journalism in many developing countries; and public perception of journalists objectivity and impartiality, may equally contribute to the challenges in reporting elections ethically (Ojo, 2000 cited in Pate, 2002).

These may not be unconnected with the cleavages in the socio-political and cultural environment that sometimes reflect in media reports because ownership of the media organization and the background of a journalist, could also wield influence on the editorial content and affect public perception of journalists’ impartiality. So, as journalists, where is their social responsibility? In addition, the fear of being accused of sensationalism; pressure on journalists to beat deadlines; source controlled flow of information, inaccessibility of news sources (women politicians); apathy for reading and research (poor research skill) by journalist covering political issues; over dependence on the press releases, reports, etc. are also some of the challenges. In addition, some journalists have poor writing skills and do not even take detailed notes, so when their recorders fail them; the reports audiences are exposed to are sometimes poorly written and may be inaccurate. This may be a possible reason why journalists want the source to provide speeches and press releases most times.

So, why do journalists act ethically or unethically? In one view, journalism ethics comes down to individual conscience and integrity. This of course raises the problem of ‘human error’ given the fact that not everyone is a saint, which has resulted in some cases of ethical failure such as journalists taking bribe and using the media platform to protect the illegal practices of politicians (Tambini, 2010). The case of former Executive Director of *Punch* newspaper Azubuike Ishiekwene is a classical example. Mr Azubuike was accused of taking bribe and using the media platform to protect the illegal practices of politicians (Ayorinde, 2010). Hence, there is the need to accept the fact that there are various incentives at work, not all of which spur journalists to act within the rules particularly when political coverage and election is involved. Essentially, some journalists behave unethically in the course of their duties, others see it as a professional necessity to preserve the integrity of the profession and give every citizen opportunity, irrespective of gender or status to ventilate his or her political views.

Central to this, is the issue of ethics, is the issue of women politician exercising their rights to opinion, expression and information without discrimination during elections, which is germane to achieving equal opportunities to participation in public life (*The ACE Encyclopaedia: Media and Elections,* 2012, p.17). Thus, the professionals who operate within the confines of the specified ethical and acceptable framework, within the socio-political and economic context, should give women politicians the opportunity to voice the opinions and sell themselves during elections.

Media and Ethical Coverage of Elections: Insights From Media Codes of Ethics and Electoral Act 2010

The role of media particularly during elections is immense; and concerns about the role and responsibilities of media personnel particularly during elections have also become an increasingly important part of public debate, and has generated discussions on pressing ethical and moral questions for journalists and the media. It provides voters with unbiased information regarding political parties and their candidates so that the society would empower politicians out of informed choices (Bensa, 2009). As a matter of fact, mass media and its operators play a vital role in upholding transparency, democracy and freedom of expression, mainly because of their editorial independence from governmental or other bodies. So, every trained and professional journalist knows the basic concept of media messages, which demands that they be used to influence society positively; setting the agenda for the social, cultural, economic, *political* (emphasis ours) and technological development of a nation for public good. Hence, one of the social objectives of communication is to disseminate, impartially, news and opinions in a manner encouraging meaningful and articulate dialogue and discussion of issues of public interest, as well as to promote physical, mental and social well-being of the people. The issue of public interest for the purpose of this discourse is elections in Nigeria. As such to safeguard public interest during elections, journalists are expected to act ethically using the media codes of ethics and Electoral Act 2010 as lenses.

This is against the backdrop that a generic documentation of general ethical standards of journalistic conduct in Nigeria is contained in the Code of Ethics for Nigerian Journalists drawn up by the Nigerian Press Council. It emphasizes the importance of factual, accurate, balanced and fair reporting as well as promoting the universal principles of human rights, democracy, justice, equity, and peace.

According to the Code of Ethics for Nigerian Journalists, a journalist should neither solicit nor accept bribe, gratification or patronage to suppress or publish information; demand payment for the publication of news, which is inimical to the notion of news as a fair, accurate, unbiased and factual report of an event (Nigeria Press Council, 2009). Essentially, the Nigerian Press Council code of ethics for journalists examined basic notions such as truth, virtue, privacy, rights, offense, harm, and freedom. It looked at the questions of impartiality and objectivity, the ethics of journalism, the regulation of privacy and media intrusion and the justification for censorship. This is against the backdrop of the observed disregard for ethical standards by some sections of the press. Hence, the Nigerian Press Council in furtherance of its statutory functions to foster the achievement and maintenance of the highest professional standards in the press published the Code of Ethics for the Nigerian Journalists. Below are the highlights.

The highlights of the code include editorial independence that “the content of news should be the responsibility of a professional journalist”; accuracy and fairness, that the ultimate objective of good journalism and the basis of earning public trust and confidence is “factual, accurate, balanced and fair reporting”; privacy, avoid invading the privacy of individuals “unless it affects public interest”; privileged/non-disclosure by observing and not disclosing “the source of information obtained in confidence”; decency, good self-presentation in “a manner that conforms with public taste”, and “should refrain from using offensive, abusive or vulgar language”; discrimination, avoid making “pejorative reference to a person’s ethnic group, religion, sex, or to any physical or mental illness or handicap”; reward and gratification, “a journalist should neither solicit nor accept bribe, gratification or patronage to suppress or publish information”; violence, “a journalist should not present or report acts of violence, armed robberies, terrorist activities or vulgar display of wealth in a manner that glorifies such acts in the eyes of the public”; children and minors, “a journalist should not identify, either by name or picture, or interview children under the age of 16 who are involved in cases concerning sexual offences, crimes and rituals or witchcraft either as victims, witnesses or defendants“; access to information, “should strive to employ open and honest means in the gathering of information”. However, “exceptional methods may be employed only when the public interest is at stake”; public interest, “should strive to enhance national unity and public good”; social responsibility, “promote universal principles of human rights, *democracy* (emphasis ours), justice, *equity* (emphasis ours), peace and international understanding”; plagiarism, “should not copy, wholesale or in part, other people’s work without attribution and/or consent”; copyright, “acknowledge reproduced work”; and press freedom and responsibility, “should strive at all times to enhance press freedom and responsibility” (Nigerian Press Council, 2009).

Similarly, the Nigeria Broadcasting Code (2012) provides extensive guidelines for political coverage by broadcasting stations and contains a range of sanctions, which may be imposed on a station for any breach of the guidelines contained in it. These include the revocation of its license if it commits a serious breach of either the technical or non-technical aspects of the Code, reprimand or warning, light or heavy fine, reduction of broadcast hours or suspension of license, depending on the gravity of the offence. Section 5.4.0 of the National Broadcasting Code, regulates the coverage of electioneering campaigns. Section 5.4.6 which states that “In adherence to the principle of pluralism of ideas and opinions, equal opportunity and air time shall be provided to all political parties or views, with particular regard to amount of time and belt during electioneering campaign period.”

Also Section 5.4.12 provides that “in the interest of fairness and balance and to prevent the monetization of political broadcasts, any form of commercialization of political news or coverage is prohibited.” Further, Section 5.4.15 stipulates “it shall be the duty of broadcast stations to highlight the activities of government. But it shall not be reduced to glamorizing government functionaries or resort to praise singing or denial of access to those with contrary views or political leaning.” While Section 5.4.19, directs that “a station shall set up a committee to examine all complaints and appeals from political parties and the general public on political broadcasting during electioneering campaigns, and make appropriate decisions, including the granting of a right of reply.” (Nigeria Broadcasting Code, 2012)

The Code further provides that the committee's proceedings shall be forwarded to the Director-General of the NBC within 24 hours. Section 8.7.2 provides that a station is free to sell airtime for the purpose of political campaigns provided that all messages are in the form of spot announcements or jingles not exceeding 60 seconds and that no station can be involved in the production of such announcements or jingles; no voices of members of staff of any station are used in political jingles; and all jingles conform to the standards of truth, decency, good taste and morality (Nigeria Broadcasting Code, 2012). These provisions operate alongside internationally agreed standards and norms for election reporting as well as various journalists' codes of ethics.

On the other hand, the relevant provisions of the 2010 Electoral Act governing the use and conduct of the media during electioneering campaigns are contained in the Section 100 of 2010 Electoral Act signed (as amended). The section provides as follows: State apparatus including the media shall not be employed to the advantage or disadvantage of any political party or candidate at any election; Media time shall be allocated equally among the political parties at similar hours of the day; At any public electronic media, equal airtime shall be allotted to all political parties or candidate during prime times at similar hours each day, subject to the payment of appropriate fees; and At any public print media, equal coverage and conspicuity shall be allotted to all political parties" (Electoral Act 2010: 63).

The various documents reviewed above simply state that an essential ingredient of the democratic process is that all the contending parties and candidates in an election should be able to communicate their points of view fairly and equitably to the electorate so that the people can make informed choices during the elections. This requires that besides the ruling political party or candidates who have the advantage of incumbency, parties and candidates in opposition should have access to the mass media.

However, it should be noted that the large number of political parties and candidates especially women in the various elections, pose logistic challenge to the media of how to fairly allocate time "equally among the political parties at similar hours of the day" for each of them to explain their programmes and policies to the electorate. Notwithstanding, it is difficult to excuse the lopsidedness of media coverage of the campaigns and elections. In the campaigns for the presidential elections, in particular, the then President Olusegun Obasanjo and his ruling Democratic Party (PDP) dominated the media throughout the period of the campaigns and 2003 elections. The trend was maintained in the subsequent elections in 2007 and 2011 that produced late Umaru Musa Yar'adua and incumbent President Goodluck Jonathan respectively. The imbalance is more glaring in the state governments' media. There was a huge imbalance between the coverage received by the ruling parties in states and other political parties and candidates both in terms of the amount of the coverage and the quality of coverage. As Nigeria prepares for 2015, it seems there is a shift with even with Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) having a programme segment known as "Political Talk" where various candidates from parties other than the ruling party can present themselves and their parties to the audience. So, the media is becoming politically pluralistic.

Despite these, some sections of the press have been accused of unethical practices. Looking at the professional codes and the provisions of the 2010 Electoral Act, it is very clear that the laws have given all participants irrespective of their party affiliation and gender equal right of sell themselves through the media to the electorates.

Ethics and Editorial Content: How Engendered During Elections?

Generally in politics, women are very invisible particularly in the editorial content of the media during elections. Women are unseen, unheard and unread. Ogwezzy-Ndisika, (2011) stated that it is simply not what the media say, or how they say it that creates stereotypical perceptions of women. Equally important is what they do not say and there are indications that women have been excluded or silenced in many media forms. Globally, empirical data from the Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) in 2010 showed women invisibility in news. The report submitted that there is "an increase of 6 percentage points in women's presence as subjects in the news" adding that "at the current rate of change, it will take more than 40 years to reach parity" (GMMP 2010: V). This data was generated from all regions of the world and in all media categories, particularly on broadcast television and radio. Entirely, the data exposed the fact that women are grossly under represented and occupy less central roles than men in the editorial content.

Out of the political stories, which of course election is involved, women's presence "increased from 14% to 19% during the period while in stories on the economy there was no change, remaining at 20%. Just like the 2000 study in 70 countries (including Nigeria), which assessed the situation five years on and at the start of the 21st century. It revealed that women accounts for 41% of the presenters and reporters of the world's news and they featured more in stories on arts and entertainment (35%) or celebrity news (26%), the 2010 report showed that "only 24% of the people heard or read about in print, radio and television news are female .In contrast, 76% - more than 3 out of 4 – of the people in the news are male." Though there is improvement in the last nineteen years (1995-2014) "when only 17% of the people in the news were women", but there is slow progress on women's presence in the news media particularly in relation to election in the developing nations like Nigeria where news remains predominantly a male affair.

The report further showed that 95 per cent of stories from Nigeria do not highlight issues concerning inequality in any forms, despite the fact that it is ethical for media to ensure that equality in its reports, and 96% of the stories reinforced stereotypes against women. To show the level of imbalance as an ethical issue, the centrality of female in all news stories is 11% and only 3% showed women as focal point in politics. Part of the reasons why females have been invisible in almost all aspects of media contents that transcends to covering election, are the socio-political and economic context where the media operate. For instance, an observation of the media in Nigeria showed that men owned more than ninety per cent of the media, and only *This Day* newspaper and *Punch* have female editors that can take reportorial decisions. Majority of the political reporters are male, in fact, the GMMP (2010) reports showed that 80% of reporters in Nigeria are males. Thus, women are systematically excluded from reporting hardcore issues such as elections.

Although Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung (2008, p.33) stated that "women candidates and aspirants received less coverage than men while more negative stories on women were featured, some women politicians featured only as 'wife of…"; but Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung (2011, p.26), asserted that "there is an increasing awareness in the Nigerian media on the need to give women a voice. Women are increasingly being sought for interviews, and the number of specialized programmes and reports that depict women in a negative way are steadily decreasing." However, in a monitoring activity of media coverage of electoral issues in the 2011 general elections which involved the gathering, documentation and analysis of data from the contents of print and broadcast media (newspapers, radio and television) during March, April and May 2011 across the six geopolitical zones in Nigeria, the Institute for Media and Society (2011, p.1) found that "female politicians were far behind their male counterparts in media coverage, across all the three media genres. For example, newspapers devoted to women politicians just 5.73 per cent of the total space used in publishing reports on male politicians.' Furthermore, the results also show that:

In all aspects of media reporting of the [2011] elections, female politicians were seriously relegated to the background by the newspapers as well as the radio and television stations. The number of published relevant items or aired relevant items with female politicians as subjects or sources (was) very low when compared with male politicians. The media also gave so little space and time (duration) to female politicians to the extent that in no month did the female politicians get as much as 10% of what was given to male politicians.

The above also corroborates the finding of a study conducted by Media Rights Agenda on 2007 general elections in Nigeria, which “showed women as sources in only 5 to 10% of the cases on State owned broadcast media during the 2007 elections” (Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung, 2008, p.33).

This has effects as there are at least two ways in which ‘absences’ in media content affect people’s understanding of the world, and women’s place in it particularly in election cases. Ogwezzy-Ndisika (2011, p.55) quoting Gallagher (1981, p.72) stated that perhaps the most important image is, in fact, a ‘non-image’: it is the absence of women in the media output which becomes the most striking, once it has been highlighted”. The Report on the Fourth World Conference on Women captured this view. It stated that although the media have been recognized as a useful instrument in advancing the status of women and fostering equality between men and women, “print and electronic media in most countries do not provide a balanced picture of women’s diverse lives and contributions to society in changing world” (A/CONF. 177/20 chap. 1. J, Para: 236). Women have been under-represented, excluded or silenced in many media forms. This might account for why some feminists accuse the media of failing to provide accurate and gender balanced coverage and reports when it continues to exclude half of the world’s population as news subjects.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The issue of media ethics has been on from the 20th century. In the book, *Four Theories of the Press* by Wilbur Schramm, Fred Siebert, and Theodore Peterson written in 1963, the trio presented four different theories popularly referred to as press theories. Although, the four theories explain the operations of the press, one of them is very relevant to the issue being examined i.e. the social responsibility theory. It has its roots in mid-twentieth century society and revolves around ethics in the media, but has always existed as an ideal.

According to Folarin (1998, p.28), the theory postulated the specific functions of the media to include serving “... the political system by making information, discussion and consideration of public affairs generally accessible; to inform the public to enable it to take self-determined action [and] to serve the economic system; for instance by bringing together buyers and sellers through the medium of advertising”. This view was vividly recaptured by McQuail (2013), Baran and Davis (2012) as well as Aneato, Onabajo and `Osifeson (2008). For instance, McQuail (2013, p. 45) argued that media irrespective of its owners has an ethical obligation to society without any discrimination on the basis of *sex* (emphasis ours) orientation and they should discharge their duties in a truthful, fair and objective manner in order to make it relevant to all members of the wider society.

This theory brings to the fore that the media should be responsible in the performance of its functions: provision of information, discussion and debate on political issues, enlightening the public for self-government, safeguarding the rights of individuals by acting as watchdog to the government, servicing the political system through advertisement of candidates and parties, providing entertainment and maintaining its own self sufficiency, and be free from the pressures of special interests. Using this theory as a framework for discussing the code of media ethics for the purpose of the media coverage of elections in Nigeria from a gender lens, this paper opines that the media code of ethics which among others, states that the media must be fair, unbiased, and accurate, complete factual and professional in their reporting is the tandem with social responsibility media theory, hence the theory formed the framework for analysis

Socio-Political and Economic Context of Media Coverage of Elections: A Gender Perspective

Historically drawing from the media gate keeping theory, some factors that affect media output are timing, ownership patterns, management policy, size of media, audience needs and preferences, editor's perception of and views of contemporary reality, legal considerations, *professional ethics* (emphasis ours), ideological perspectives and political orientations. Others are the influence of advertisers, appraisal of offering by competition, availability of photographs or film footage (Folarin, 1998). Only the factors relevant to this paper shall be discussed.

Ownership of the press is diverse. The early newspapers were mainly privately owned, however, government knowing the power of the press, went into establishing newspapers and gained the upper hand in ownership. While examining the Nigerian media, Olurode (2007, p.6) asserted "the ownership base of newspaper was once skewed in favour of government but since 1978 when the federal government took over the ownership of the *Daily Times* of Nigeria, and the mess that it made of it, newspaper ownership is today concentrated in private hands." Earlier, Aina (2002, p.192) stated that studies by Oso (1998) indicated political party, government and foreign ownerships but the pattern gradually expanded to incorporate overseas commercial and overseas/political party. As the industry and the country progress, the ownership of print industry now has turned into the hands of private-individuals who have either political influence, economic sway or both with some little state-government ownership that is gradually dying.

On the broadcast media, the ownership, prior to the deregulation and commercialisation policy of 1992, was solely under the control of federal and state governments. However, the deregulation policy which is part of the overall economic Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) has given private individuals who are mainly males with just a few females the opportunity to open private media stations. Though citizens are given that freedom, but Section 39 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria empowers only the President to give the licence of broadcast media station through the National Broadcast Commission. So far, all the major broadcast media stations in the country are owned and controlled by men.

According to Olurode, (2007) at the beginning, the privately owned press has been on the side of the people. However, lately some newspapers, even the privately owned "have been labelled as pro-government and others as anti-government and yet others as balanced. So, whether private or public, media outfits may be described as "one world…many voices" instead of "many voices…one world".

In essence, ownership of media organisation affects access and usage; and whose voice would be heard during elections. This is part of what Uche (1989) looked at while studying the media during 1979 and 1983 general elections drawing from the *National Concord* and the *Tribune;* where he examined issues such as ownership and other forms of control, whether political, legal or economic, which may not confer power in a straight forward or predictable way to who has access to the media and media output.

Publicly owned media carry news favourable to the government. They avoid criticism of government actions, and suppress news that would reveal government secrets. The privately owned media tend to be freer and do more investigative reporting of government activities. Uche (1989, p.99) buttressed this position when he stated that "*Morning Post* [the federal government's own paper that was defunct in early 1973] always praised the government even when such praises were inappropriate." He further stated that "when the Nigerian devastating crises of the late 1960's occurred, all the national [ethnic] press instantly took sides with their regional governments." Currently, the story is not too different.

Again, privately owned newspapers reportage of the government of the day may be a function of the ideological perspective and political orientation of the newspaper, which in most cases may have to do with the political affiliation of the owner as in the case of the defunct *National Concord* whose owner, late Chief Moshood Abiola was a card carrying member of the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) during the second republic. During that period in Nigeria's political history, Chief Abiola set up the defunct *National Concord* on 1 March 1980 and the paper was reporting in favour of the government of President Shehu Shagari, who ascended power on the platform of NPN, until things fell apart between Chief Abiola and NPN in 1983 (Uche, 1989). A look at what *The Nation* did in favour of Senator Ahmed Tinubu, the civilian governor of Lagos state between May 1999 and May 2007; and is doing for the defunct Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN) now All Progressives Congress (APC) and their party candidates for 2015 general elections reveal the same pattern. So, looking at ideological perspective and political orientation of a newspaper in election coverage, Folarin (1998) citing Gerbner (1961), stated that ideological and political choices are recognised as inherent not just in party-partisanship but in the total operation of "news values' and of standards of reporting. It determines what and what not to make public; in what proportion, and with what emphasis. Uche (1989, p.102) stated that during the second republic, "every political pressure group established its newspaper as medium of putting its message across the political spectrum and seeking entry and recognition into the political decision-making process." Buttressing his assertion, Uche (1989, p.103) stated that the [defunct] *national Concord* "came to existence in order to protect the economic, religious and most especially, the political interests of the then ruling National Party of Nigeria (NPN) as well as *disseminate the ideals of the party, NPN* (emphasis ours) in a most convincing manner. Its founding followed the controversy, antagonism and bitterness the 1979 general elections had generated. Thus, ownership of a media outfit may determine who has access to use this power – the media. Indeed the media business in Nigeria is dominated by males. So, they can get their views heard and strategically box out females' voices during elections. This may also lead to gender gap in media coverage of elections. This inequality and unethical media related issues exist in Nigerian According to Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung (2008, p.33) reporting on 2007 general elections in Nigeria, stated that "women candidates and aspirants received less coverage than men while more negative stories on women were featured, as some women politicians featured only as 'wife of…" . However, Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung (2011, p.26) asserted that "there is an increasing awareness in the Nigerian media on the need to give women a voice; and women are increasingly being sought for interviews, and the number of specialized programmes and reports that depict women in a negative way are steadily decreasing." This is in tandem with the findings of GMMP 2005 and 2010. In 2005 GMMP report, women were 21% of news subjects and in 2010, 24% i.e. there is an increase, though not significant (Global Media Monitoring Project, 2010). This improvement though little, shows that the media is waking up to its social responsibility of bringing candidates and parties; and electorate in contact, as such servicing the political system to become gender friendly.

However, Ogwezzy-Ndisika (2011, p.59) argued that: "Although the media promote female actresses, musicians, beauty queens and society ladies; yet they pay little or no attention to the plight of women in the political arena." Thus they are not given fair media access as candidates as well as fair media access after winning election. She further noted that frontline female politicians such as Binta Garba, Gbemisola Saraki, Temi Harriman, Jumoke Okoya-Thomas, Lola Abiola, Sharon Daboh, Ruth Jummai Ango, Abike Dabiri have all been subtly or directly blackmailed and ridiculed by the Nigerian mass media, on account of their failed marriages, while their notable contributions to elections were deliberately ignored and denied access to the media platform.

Another important factor that is part of the general socio-political economy of the media industry, which affects the ethical operation of the media during elections and indeed many issues in Nigeria is religious affinity of owners and of course ethnic and regional lineages. Generally, Nigerians have such biases and most, if not all media owners relatively try to champion and protect a course which can hardly be divorced from religion and region; despite the fact that the broadcast and print ethical codes frown at such issues. According to Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung (2011, p.27), "ethnicity and religion remain highly sensitive and divisive issues in Nigeria, and this is often reflected in the media" particularly during elections. Some religious doctrines and ethnic practices do not allow women to actively participate in governance, though the Constitution allows that and various professional ethics demand the media to give fair reportage of men and women, but some media practitioners violate the ethics of the profession on the basis of religion and ethnicity.

Again editor's perception of reality is another factor that could affect media output. "Editors sometimes have or are expected to have a better grasp of a given social situation and to decide how best to report it…" (Folarin, 1998, p. 91). So, some editors hide under the guise of preserving our democracy, and do not investigate the actions of the ruling party, but publish same for the electorate. Also, editor's idiosyncrasies could affect the editorial contents of a medium.

From a contemporary political and economic perspectives, the global economic meltdown has increased the crave for profit by media barons who own media out fits; the commercialisation of news (paid per views) and influence of political big wigs have increasingly brought the issue of media ethics to the fore. According to Coleman (2009: Para. 1) "The need for media ethics rises as news reporting becomes driven more and more by the free market rather than the truth".

Again, people are exposed to television news, radio broadcasting, newspaper articles, and now digital media as well. These developments in the media arena are not without consequences. Looking at Africa, the new media of Africa are torn between two alternatives, neither of which is very attractive because the kind of freedom that is allowed for the press under the Nigerian Constitution leads to numerous problems. Nigeria's mass media have in one way moved in the direction of limited commercialism on the one hand and intense political competition on the other as a result of owners' political ideology and or affiliation. Other governments have taken an entirely different approach. They see a necessity to control their news media, restrict commercialization, limit political competition, and suppress or discourage the expression of political opinions that are at variance with those of the ruling group or party, which is gate keeping without consideration for public interest.

According to Coleman (2009: Para. 2), "As forms of communication evolve, avenues of news reporting increase, and the scope of media influence expands, media ethics becomes an increasingly important issue in modern society. For instance it has resulted in both illegality and unethical practices, which is a breach of "soft laws". A recent case in Britain exemplifies this assertion. On the 9th of September 2010, Tom Watson MP to the UK Parliament said:

Here we sit in Parliament, the central institution of our sacred democracy, between us some of the most powerful people of the land, and we are scared. They, the barons of the media (…) are the biggest beasts in the modern jungle. They have no predators, they are untouchable, they laugh at the law, they sneer at parliament, they have the power to hurt us and they do so with gusto and precision." (Tambini, 2010, Para.4)

In this case, hacking into private voicemail is only one extreme form of ethical problem for journalists. For ethical codes do more than reflect and codify what is illegal. They establish a higher standard of responsible journalism. The phone hacking scandal was a breach of the law, and also of self-regulatory codes. Whether such practices have been curtailed by the legal and self-regulatory fallout remains to be seen. What is clear however, is that large sections of the press are guilty of this practice.

Owens-Ibie (2003, p. 389) further argued that the development of technology and logistics which characterised the evolution of modern journalistic practice simultaneously enhanced information flow; and the frontiers of information became increasingly unbounded, which "threw up the challenges not only in the management of the resultant deluge of information, it also spawned a closer scrutiny of the operational environment of the mass media and the working condition of journalists" particularly with regard to poor salary structure and irregular payment of salary. According to the findings of Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung (2011, p.5):

Working conditions for journalists in both state and privately-owned media organisations are simply deplorable. Not only are salaries very low, but they are also paid intermittently with a cross section of the private media journalists being owed arrears of up to ten months.

Thus, this unfriendly condition of service makes them susceptible to corruption and violation of ethical standards of the profession especially during electoral processes (Sunday & Tommy 2011, p. 83), as journalists will tend to get a means through which they can augment the little they get from politicians who dominate the political environment.

Furthermore, the influence of advertisers also affect media output. The privately owned media depends so much on revenue from adverts. According to Sunday and Tommy (2011, p. 65) there are issues of fakery (publishing false stories) and wrap around (where the entire front and back pages of newspapers are covered with political adverts particularly during elections). The adverts are usually very expensive which most female politicians cannot afford. In fact, a look at the industry during the previous elections, the intricacies and financial implications involved in making "payment of appropriate fees" in radio, television and print media, the female candidates were pushed to a disadvantage position and there was no adequate measures by any government agency to punish any media house for such systematic and unethical violation of codes during elections in Nigeria. Hence, there is the tendency to demur to the feelings of the advertisers, especially the big ones (Folarin, 1998). This may account for why the People's Democratic Party (PDP) has been receiving a lot of coverage, especially in the government own media. "He who pays the piper dictates the tune". Recently, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) of Nigeria raised twenty one billion naira for 2015 elections campaign. The question is: which political party has the financial muscle to match PDP's advertising spend in Nigeria?

Other challenges to operating ethically and professionally include weak human resource capacity in various media houses leading to the lack of professionalism. In fact, while graduates from certain institutions which lack well trained staff and accreditation suddenly emerge as editors in private media houses, some radio stations also engage people with no training whatsoever as presenters. These heighten unethical practices that denied many people access to the media. Also, the weak governance structures of media houses amongst others are major challenges.

Again, certain actions of government are negating positive developments within the political process; and have dampening effects on the spirit and drive of journalists who would otherwise pride themselves in reporting factual information, especially the release of election results. Furthermore, inadequate understanding of the electoral process, including the rules governing each stage of the electoral process are serious unethical practices. Another issue that the media concentrate on while dealing with women during elections; is the ability of many female politicians during election at various times has been an object of ridicule in the Nigerian media, either by way of questioning their capacity to deliver in the positions they hold in government, or by way of inconsequential investigation into their private and social lives.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The above drew attention to the socio-political and economic factors affecting the ethical performance of journalists covering elections in Nigeria; and argued that journalist covering elections in Nigeria are operating in a very challenging socio-political and economic context, but are beginning to rise up to the occasion having improved in the coverage of women politicians, as such living up to its social responsibility. Therefore, this paper concludes that the media is the guardian of the public sphere; and that despite the challenges, ethical reportage can promote gender balanced coverage of elections in Nigeria.

It recommends that the media should provide platforms for engagements and give equal access to parties and candidates (both females and males); and also provide space in which freedom of expression can be exercised and alternative, dissenting, and minority voices heard. Also,, given the complex operating media environment where extraordinary ethnic and religious diversity prevail, journalist should be sensitive to the sensibilities of their audiences because any slight error might destroy what they do not intend to harm politically; and as much as possible ensure that the content of what they publish or broadcast is not influenced by the political parties or any vested source. To achieve this, Nigerian journalist should hold tenaciously to the ethics of their profession which among other codes, underscores the need for accuracy, fairness, respect for the privacy of others, decency, avoidance of rewards and gratification as well as protect the right of all Nigeria citizens. Instead of promoting vested interests or hidden agenda, they should simply uphold the tenets of journalism in their reports for them to be counted as champions of democracy in the quest for improved women participation in elections. They should not favour some parties or male candidates; and deny the females/opposition parties media access to explain themselves. They must provide a level playing field for candidates in an election by ensuring fairness and balance to the extent that no candidate is disadvantaged or given unfair advantage over the others. Furthermore, the media policy and regulation should be examined from different perspectives – policy, ownership, regulation and others. In the area of policy, there should be establishment of independent and autonomous regulatory mechanisms devoid of political interference supported with parliamentary appropriated funding; transparent decision making processes for licensing, renewal of licenses, and frequency allocation; available judicial review in cases where applications for licenses are rejected or revoked; and representative and independent governing bodies for the regulatory mechanisms with open and transparent appointment processes and security of tenure for the members. Finally, on journalists can address the challenge of poor and delayed remuneration through the Nigerian Guild of Editors (NGE), Newspapers Proprietors Association of Nigeria (NPAN), Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ and House committee on information.

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Chapter 15
Media Regulation and Freedom of Expression in Black Africa: A Comparative Study of Nigeria and Cameroon

Floribert Patrick C. Endong
University of Calabar, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

Since the 1990s, Black African states have been subjected to endogenous and exogenous political pressures which have compelled them to variously adopt a number of pro-democracy reforms. Though lauded in a number of quarters, these sweeping political reforms have merely been on paper. This is so as, cardinal democracy indexes such as freedom of expression, press freedom, freedom of thought and political pluralism among others, have remained more a myth than a reality in these countries. Using a comparative analysis of the political situation in Cameroon and Nigeria, this chapter argues that press freedom and liberal democracy are still mere ideals, not yet backed by evidential political will in both countries. The same multifaceted abuses of the press still prevail in the two states. This chapter however, underscores the vibrancy and political maturity of the Nigerian press which differentiate it from its counterparts in other African countries, notably in Cameroon.

INTRODUCTION

The 1990s are generally recognised as a turning point in Black African nations' rise and match towards democratisation, economic liberalisation and civil rights promulgation. The decade actually witnessed a serious wind of socio-political and economic revolutions, manifested by the adoption of sweeping political reforms and economic adjustments in almost all Black African countries. From Senegal to Djibouti, and from Kenya through Bissau Guinea to Mozambique, each sub-Sahara African country officially professed its dis-enchantment with the awful idioms of military rule, obnoxious legislations, one-party system and other forms of authoritarianism; through prompt adoption of legislations which, to a relatively moderate degree of pertinence, was friendly to multi-party elections, freedom of expression, freedom

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of association and freedom of the press (democracy and political plurality). This "sudden" tendency by Black African nations to reverse themselves on their models of political and economic administration was however, not by chance. The aftermath of the Cold War had brought up a number of realities which subtly made them (African countries) to have no other options than conceding to this wind of change: the Structural Adjustment Plan (SAP) – developed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to economically "rescue" Third Worlds – coupled with some other factors became avenues through which external political pressure from First World countries was systematically mounted on Black African countries to embrace democratisation. This external pressure was complemented by internal agitations staged by critical university students, pertinacious human right activists, prominent political and pressure groups and other socio-political watchdogs, in the name of advocacy for political pluralism. This complex mix of pressure sources made Black African rulers to come to the realization that they could no longer hold power by sheer force of arms and authoritarian tools. They saw themselves compelled in some sense, to key into the US-led West advocacy, momentum and razzmatazz for democracy.

The socio-political reforms engendered in the 90s continue to be biding precedents for African rulers, more than a quarter century after their occurrence. In other words, almost all present African rulers and political ideologues recognize – at least officially – that political pluralism is not just an ideal but an imperative for the effective development of the continent in all sectors. Kumar cited by Amlon (2016, p. 41) captures this axiom when he concedes that; "there has not been a substantial famine in a country with a democratic form of government and a relatively free press". Even Black African rulers who still manifest relative degree of authoritarian/totalitarian affiliation in their methods of administration always claim to be democratically inclined. Such rulers non-hesitantly claim to be strong advocates of political pluralism and some other ideals such as freedom of thought, freedom of expression and of the press (Bongyu, 2008; Ngomba, 2010; Oladipupo, 2011; Omotola, 2009, 2010; Soola, 2009; Voice of America, 2016). In tandem with this, you will hardly find an African ruler who will not laud multi-party elections, freedom of expression, freedom of association, freedom of thought and all the other integral components and indexes of democracy. It is therefore, not surprising that even the worst dictators among Black African leaders have, with much trepidation, ratified international conventions and treaties conceived to consolidate democracy and civil/people's rights in the world or in Africa. Some of these international/continental conventions and treaties include (i) The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights; (ii) International and Civil and Political Rights, (iii) The Windhoek Declaration on Promoting an Independent and Pluralistic African Press; (iv) The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights; (v) Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression in Africa; (vi)African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance and (vii) the African Charter on Broadcasting among others.

Additionally, most African nations boast of having constitutions that support multi-party elections, freedom of expression, of thought, of association and of religion among other civil rights. However, can we, in view of the democratic indices exposed above, say without fear of contradiction that African states are effectively democratic? Can we confidently affirm that the famous political reforms engendered in the 1990s have phenomenally yielded a dramatic political development and enhanced the social and economic life of the average man in the Black Continent? Can we say there is actually freedom of expression, freedom of thought and freedom of the press; as well as solid mechanisms to ensure free and fair elections in (all) African countries?

It is clear that answering these questions will need a robust and broad methodological design, which obviously falls outside the preview of this paper. However, this author will restrict himself to the media as indicator of the degree of freedom of expression and as an adjunct to democracy and good governance in two Black African nations, namely, Nigeria and Cameroon. This is in tune with a number of maxims coined by most political critics and which stipulate that, the media are not only indispensable actors in a country's move or transition from authoritarian to democratic regime; but they constitute a perfect mirror of the society in which they operate. Based on this premise, it is generally accepted that the media represent reliable barometers that could reveal the "democratic body temperature" of their host country (Akinterinwa 1999; Buchet & Kariithi, 2003; Curran, 2013; Ekpu 1999; Idowu, 1999; Nata, 2016; Omotola 2009, 2010). The media therefore constitute one of the lenses through which one can check the extent to which a country is democratically healthy and inclined towards good governance, as beautifully put by Ocitti (1999: 6),

The media mirrors the level of democratic maturity in a country, and is in turn affected by the maturity of that democracy. The media epitomise what has often been described as the un-fettered freedom of expression of ideas and opinions in a society. In other words, it acts as the thermometer of measuring the democratic body temperature of a country or society.

In the light of the above-mentioned axioms, it is even enthused that the higher the degree of press freedom in a country, the better the democracy enjoyed by the citizens of that country (Aminu, Malgwi, Kagu & Danjuma, 2011; BBC World Trust, 2010; Freedom House, 2012, 2015; Limpitlaw, 2011). Considering all these premises and many other empirical understandings, this chapter seeks to examine how constitutional provisions and media regulatory instruments affect freedom of expression and political reporting in Nigeria and Cameroon, adopting a comparative analytical methodology. The chapter is divided into four main sections. The first section provides a theoretical framework constituted of four models of theorizing government-media relationship. These theories include the authoritarian theory, social responsibility theory, the pluralist theory and the democratic participant theory. The second section of the book chapter focuses on media regulation and freedom of expression and of the press. The third section takes a look at media regulation and freedom of expression in Black Africa in general while the last section provides a comparative analysis of freedom of expression in Nigeria and Cameroon.

CONCEPTUAL DEFINITIONS

- **Democracy:** Democracy is generally viewed as a system of government involving the freedom of masses (the population) in diverse sectors of political life as well as equality among citizens, justice in the people-government relation and the effective participation of the masses in choosing those who are to govern. A generic and popular definition of the concept states that it is a form of government, for the people and by the people.
- **Media Censorship:** Censorship is a process through which media content is tailored by the state or media organs. It involves the blocking, regulation and manipulation of all or selected part of media contents. Media censorship by the state most often involves regulation of information through a process of control and selection of what is to be published. This selection is according to some (very often) explicit and pro-government criteria and values. The obvious implication of this censorship process is the withholding of important information from the general public.

- **Media Regulation:** this involves that passing of laws (bills) and the use of extra-judicial tools to control the media in a given country. There exist two types of media regulations: self-regulation and regulation.
- **Political Pluralism:** A system which enables diversity of political voices and multi-party elections.
- **Press Freedom:** Press freedom is envisaged as the latitude given to the press to publish without prior restraint, intimidation, blackmail, threat and molestation among others. Measuring press freedom often entails a consideration of a mix of indexes within the legal, political and economic categories. These include issues like laws and regulations that can influence press' operations within a country, government use of such laws and regulation to restrict media functioning; editorial pressure from government, (self) censorship, access to information (sources), presence/absence of intimidation or violence against journalist; structure, transparency and concentration of media ownership and subsidies or bribery that could affect media production of functioning among others.
- **Regulation:** This is done by the government. It entails the imposition of laws/bills through a body (regulatory authorities) accredited by the state.
- **Self-Regulation:** A system of media regulation driven by the press itself. Operating through internal police and codes of ethics, self-regulation is perceived as a better media regulatory option, one which enables a freer press.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

As earlier mentioned, this paper is anchored on four theories namely, the authoritarian theory, the social responsibility theory, the democratic participant theory and the pluralist theory. This section provides a description of these theories, highlight specific keystones (of these theories) that will be considered in the context to this study.

The Authoritarian Theory

The authoritarian theory has, in history, been experimented by autocratic governments in countries such as Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy. It shares much in common with the communist theory as it considers the media to be working instruments of propaganda and vectors of public enlightenment on government schemes. According to the authoritarian theory, the press is government's agent and is therefore, under moral and political obligation to exclusively propagate government ideas and templates of national development. The press can only publish when licensed to work in that capacity and should totally shy away from anti-government criticism. The media should, equally avoid echoing adversary political views (from political opponents). This indicates that under the authoritarian theory, the press is seriously censored. Government also designs clear, as well as obtuse mechanisms and strictures to control the press, particularly through licenses. Through such, Government quantitatively and qualitatively controls the press available for the citizens.

The Social Responsibility Theory

The social responsibility theory on the other hand is, diametrically opposed to the authoritative and communist theories. It states that the media are socially responsible for the news they generate. They are expected to observe impartiality and balanced reporting as well as fairness in their presentation of facts. Facts must be thoroughly cross- checked prior to presentation. Under the social responsibility theory, the media are allowed to criticise Government, however, in a convincing and constructive manner. The theory advocates freedom of the press to publish, provided such a right is not used to unduly antagonise opponents and tarnish their image. Where such an excess is observed, the government has the prerogative to intervene to maintain order and sanction defaulters. This sanction may take various forms namely, ban, closure, imposition of taxes and tariff as well as licensing among others.

The Democratic Participant Theory

The democratic participant theory emanates from western liberal ideologies. It is rooted in the need to ensure public interest in all media operations. In line with this, the media should exist and operate for the interest of the general audience. The theory also insists on the need for press ownership to be organised in a democratic manner; meaning that, all the citizens in a given country, irrespective of their political affiliations, should be accorded free entry and free participation in the media. All restrictions to access and ownership of means to disseminate information should be removed while the media should exist for all. All societal denominations should thus, be given unconditional access to the media, irrespective of ownership structure. In the same vein, media structure should permit the generation of popular and pluralistic opinions through interactive and mass participatory journalistic approaches.

The Pluralistic Theory

The pluralistic theory on its part, argues that the media have a moderator and mediator role to play in any given polity. They have, in effect, to mediate between a variety and divergence of interests existing in the society. This media prerogative emanates from the observation that the various social forces existing in a country have their respective interests which need to be articulated and fairly defended through the fertile platforms offered by the media. According to the pluralistic theory, the media are equally vested with the functions of a watchdog, a controller of state justice and one of the driving spirits of the execution of governmental programmes, specifically meant to serve the general interests of the populace.

MEDIA REGULATION AND FREEDOM OF THE PRESS/EXPRESSION

Though there is no fundamental law in the world which installs the mass media in a constitutional order, after the Executive, the Legislative and the Judiciary, the media are popularly considered the "Fourth Power" or the "Fourth Estate" as Scottish philosopher Era Carlyle would have put it. This analogy sufficiently indicates that the media theoretically constitute a "giant" power block with influence which may be wider, dramatic and even dangerous, if not properly regulated and/or controlled. As noted by Adoun (2016), absolute power of the media is highly detrimental to democracy and good governance (p. 14).

The perverse and quasi-chaotic nature of the libertarian model of press operation is perfectly edifying and it is also a strong evidence pointing to the need to properly regulate the press. As we all know, the libertarian theory proffers the concept of "boundless" and unguided liberty (of the press); which is often abused by the media through "undue and selective criticisms of perceived enemies" (Nworgu 2011, p. 93). Against this backdrop, perfect libertarianism (boundless and unguided freedom of the press) is, susceptible to breed media libertinage as well as an irresponsible media reportage. This notwithstanding, the media are to enjoy a modicum of freedom (to express diverse and contradictory political ideas; constructively criticise government when need be and fully play their watchdog role, among others). This is more than essential for healthy democracy and good governance to be established – or for them to be possible – in a society.

One major problem faced by most countries has therefore, been to ponder on, and design reliable mechanisms to regulate the media; while still guaranteeing a wide range of human rights and liberties such as freedom of thought, freedom of expression and freedom of the press among others. A related difficulty has been to properly define the ideal of freedom of expression. As can easily be discerned, the concept of freedom of expression is complex and multi-dimensional. As clearly underlined by Buchet and Kariithi (2003), freedom of expression should not be simplistically defined as the freedom of media men, media owners and editors alone to report and comment. Rather, the phenomenon should be viewed as engulfing a range of marginal tenets such as the public's right to know and to take part in the free flow of information among other keystones. It is visibly for this reason that the *Freedom of the Press* index described by Karlekar and Dunham (2011) takes into consideration three broad categories of indices. These include:(i) the legal environment in which the media operate; (ii) the political influences on media reporting and media practitioners' access to information and (iii) economic pressures on content and the dissemination of news – to measure freedom of expression and of the press in countries of the world.

The solution to all the above mentioned problems and dilemmas – those pertaining to thoroughly regulate the media and ensure at the same time, a high degree of freedom of the press – has been the creation of regulatory authorities (independent administrative authorities or constitutional institutions) as well as self-regulatory organs to ensure sanity in media operations. This has been in line with over three maxims, the first of which is the belief that, restraining the media through a serious regulatory system is beneficial first and foremost to the press. As Bouchet and Kariithi (2003: 19) observe,

The independence of the media from state control or government interference is intrinsic in a democratic society that values freedom of expression. This is not to say that the media should not be regulated. As well as for the protection of the rights of individuals, a regulatory framework is needed to ensure that the rights of the media are also shielded ... [It is] even more necessary [to have] a strong regulatory regime that protects the independence of the private and state-owned media.

The second maxim which universally guides press censorship is the belief that media regulation is pertinent so long as it is fair and driven by a body which is totally independent from government. Therefore, media regulatory authorities should be protected by strong guarantees of independence. Such guarantees should not just be in stature but equally in practice. This is so cardinal, given the fact that, in some countries, the independence of regulatory bodies has been evidently legislated but the prevailing political culture has wanted that the law be "profaned" and political influence be the principal – if not the exclusive – determinant of media regulation methodologies or designs (Buchet and Kariithi 1998; Endong, 2012; Occiti 3). In view of all these critical observations, self-regulation is duly considered the best opportunity or option to reduce government control of the media and ensure a pertinent regulation of the media. As Buchet and Kariithi (2003:21) put it:

Self-regulation works best where the media themselves take the lead in setting it up, where they feel it is needed and are prepared to work genuinely to improve things, where the ethical guidelines drawn correctly balance media freedom with responsibility and where standards are applied consistently. Above all, what is determinant in the success of self-regulation is the presence of a real consensus among the media about the need for an ethical code of conduct and its contents.

The specific models of media regulation adopted by world governments have, of course, varied from one country to another, depending on the level of democratic culture in each jurisdiction and other key factors such as constitutional, legal, procedural and cultural differences. Western countries (particularly the USA, Canada and Western European countries) have, according to various global observatories, adopted exemplary systems of media regulation, creating a more or less favourable climate for media to function and for freedom of expression to reign in their respective territories. Though it may be risky to enthuse that, they represent a perfect heaven for the free practice of the media profession (given the fact some of them still witness serious incidences of ruthless suppression of information by the government [Nworgu and Amandi 2011, p. 43]), these countries remain sorts of "models" when it comes to media regulation and press freedom. In its 2012 *Freedom of the Press* report, Freedom House lauds the efforts of these Western countries towards press freedom as it purports that:

Western Europe has consistently boasted the highest level of press freedom worldwide. In 2010, 23 countries (92 percent) were rated Free and 2 (8 percent) were rated Partly Free. In terms of population, 72 percent of the region's residents enjoyed a Free press, while 28 percent lived in Partly Free media environments. The regional average score was largely stable in 2011, with no major change noted. (Freedom House 2011, p. 11)

Meanwhile, in many Third World countries, media regulation has popularly been considered a vicious ploy by the government or pro-government agencies to subtly bash, gag or muzzle the press. This is due to the fact that media regulation has most often been a pretext used by governments and politicians in these Third World countries (particularly Black African states) to control the press, thereby placing a number of barriers against freedom of expression, freedom of thought and political pluralism. What has often been sticking in these countries is the fact that, governments have over the years, joined the (planetary) bandwagon of supporting press freedom and political pluralism only on paper, through the passing of bills and the creation of regulatory organs which deceptively appear to be media friendly and calibrated to ensure a high degree of freedom of the press. In practice however, unofficial, extrajudicial and underground systems have been maintained in such countries to gag, seriously muzzle and brutalise the press. Some of these clandestine regulatory methods have been intimidation, (death) threats, (barbaric) violence and assassination of anti-government journalists among other well-coordinated and vicious ploys. With particular reference to Africa, Occiti (1999) notes that, socio-political reforms manifested by media friendly constitutions and the passing of liberalisation ordinances in many Africa nations have not actually been synonymous with effective freedom of the press. Rather, these reforms have often represented "formalisms of procedural democracy" which conceal a much more profound and vicious pattern of declining press freedom (Occiti 1999, p. 2). In effect, "despite the rhetoric concerning freedom under these reforms, the position, role and impact of the media are still critically constrained by an underlying current of state-erected impediments" (Occiti 1999, p. 6). In some countries, there has even been a paradoxical promulgation of bills that are clearly inimical to initial constitutional provisions that are in support of press freedom, freedom of expression and freedom of thought (Buchet & Karrithi 2003; Freedom House 2011, 2015). It is in view of this complex and paradoxical situation that, in measuring press freedom within world jurisdictions, most global observatories consider both legal and extra-legal media regulatory systems by governments. An egregious example is Freedom House (an international media and politics observatory) which hinges on indices falling within three broad categories including legal, political and economic. These parameters for determining/measuring press freedom can be explained thus:

1. Under the legal category, the index assesses the laws and regulations that are susceptible to influence media content as well as the degree to which these instruments are deployed to curtail media's ability to fairly function.
2. The political category on the other hand engulfs diverse issues such as governmental pressure on the media, reporters' ability to cover news as well as extrajudicial intimidation by threat, or by violence against journalists.
3. The economic category encompasses issues pertaining to structure, transparency and concentration of media ownership, impact of bribery, subsidies and advertisement on media content as well as cost of production and distribution. (Freedom House, 2011)

MEDIA REGULATION AND FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION/ PRESS IN NIGERIA AND CAMEROON

To perfectly set the stage for a comparative analysis of media regulation and press freedom in today's Nigeria and Cameroon, it will be expedient to briefly explore the history/evolution of media censorship (media regulation) in the two countries, from the pre-independence period till date. Based on this imperative, this section will first present an overview of media regulation in the two countries that will enable the author to later delve into a comparative analysis of press freedom in the two countries.

Brief History of Media Censorship/Regulation in Nigeria

Media regulation or censorship is, of course, not a new governmental tradition in the Nigerian polity. The practice dates back to the pre-independence period with the series of bills and other draconian tools/techniques deployed by the British colonial administration to cow and (attempt to) intimidate the early press; especially the "over-zealous" and ambitious strands of the media that circumstantially opted to test its nerves through an anti-colonial tone/rhetoric. The British colonial administration's fervidness in severely censoring any anti-colonial media voice could be seen in the highly repressive measures it took against of the first Nigerian newspaper *Iwe Irohim*, as far back as 1866, for being very antagonistic to it (the British colonial government). The British colonial administration summarily repatriated the newspaper's owner Henry Townsend (a British missionary from the Anglican Church), leaving the paper "fatherless" till its final closure in 1867. In effect *Iwe Irohim* manifested an uncompromising anti slave trade advocacy as well as a strong militancy for good living conditions for the Egba people. This editorial orientation made the paper to incur the wrath of the British colonial administration, and others of its kind were to receive similar punishments.

From this period, the British colonial administration introduced a plethora of bills aimed at controlling the press. In 1903, it instituted a set of "publishers' obligation" which made it mandatory for a copy of each newspaper's publication to be submitted to the authorities. This was followed by the promulgation of an anti-sedition decree in 1909, which threatened to repress any speech or writing susceptible to breed anti-colonial feelings with a one-year imprisonment term. In 1917, another drastic law was introduced: Lord Federick Lugard the then Governor of the Nigerian protectorate introduced censorship during the state of emergency. The passing of all these laws was strongly criticized by the local press, particularly the newspapers that were affected by them. It was, in the light of these press laws, enthused by some Nigerian critics that the elusive nature of bills such as those on sedition create conditions favourable for the colonial administration to view sedition even in the least mass gathering (Idowu 1999; Maringues, 2001). The above mentioned bills were complemented by more subtle tactics consisting in economically controlling newspapers that were potentially anti-government and appointing resourceful journalists to serve as their editors. A case in point is *The Nigerian Daily Times* which, created in 1929 was economically controlled by the British colonial administration. Despite their obnoxious nature, the prevailing press laws proved inapt to "tame" the nationalist press (notably Azikwe's *West African Pilot*) during the 50s. Quoting *Financial Times*' correspondent Paul Adams, Maringues (2001) noted that, the British colonial administration somehow jettisoned the idea of a rigid and draconian press censorship system during this period because it had begun to attune itself to the reality of African independence. As Maringgues further explained, the British saw the Nigerian nationalist press as a "stabilization factor" in the country. Indeed, the press allowed radicals to voice their impatience loudly in Lagos and in Ibadan.

Media regulation and censorship were more visible in the government-media relation after independence as a broad avalanche of bills and extra-legal tactics meant to cow the press actually punctuated the mandate of the successive governments which rule the country. The most prominent of these bills include the Official Secret Act and the Newspaper Act (of the First Republic), the Newspaper Circulation Act No. 2 (promulgated during the Ironsi government), the Armed Forces and Police (Special Duties) Decree (passed during the Gowon regime), The Public Officers (Protection Against False Accusation) Act Cap 11 and the Nigerian Press Council Act Cap 31 (promulgated during the Murtala Mohammed regime), Decree No. 4 (of the Buhari-Idiagbon regime), the Media Council Decree and Decrees 43 and 48 (of the Babangida's regime), and a fleet of other bills which, in their majority, were very punitive and meant to keep the press in perpetual subservience.

It is important to mention here that, while some of these laws were clearly obnoxious, others surprisingly sought to be corrective of their draconian predecessors. The Armed Forces and Police (Special Duties) Decree of 1967 for instance vested immense powers in the hands of the army and the police to brutalize the press and cow anti-government media voices at will. The decree stipulated that:

If an inspector-general of police or as the case may be, the Chief of Staff of the armed forces is satisfied that any person is or has recently been concerned in acts prejudicial to public order or in the preparation or instigation of such acts, and by that reason thereof it is necessary to exercise control over him, he may by order in writing direct that the person be detained in a civil prison or at a police station, and it shall be the duty of the superintendent or other person in charge of any civil prison or the police officer in charge of any police station [...] to keep that person in custody until the order is revoked. (cited in Ekpu 1999, p. 58)

Army and police officers hinged on these draconian judicial tools to threaten, molest and even physically eliminate media voices that dared censure the military government of the time. A case in point is Inspector-General of Police, Kam Salem open threat against the press in a speech made in 1974. In his address, Salem threatened by saying that: "the Federal Military Government might be compelled to take drastic and unpleasant measures to curb the excesses of the press and some cranks who profess to be journalists [sic] the government would no longer tolerate press indiscipline and calculated attempts to undermine government's authority" (cited in Ekpu 1999, p. 59). This speech followed a number of controversies that tested the nerves of the Gowon regime. Some of these controversies included cases of corruption involving a number of military governors and the controversial 1974 census which was criticised by the Nigerian political class, particularly Obafemi Awolowo who dubbed it "a barren exercise".

Contrary to obnoxious bills such as the Public Officers Protection From False Accusation Act, the Criminal Defamation Laws, Seditious Publication Laws, and the State Security and Detention of Persons; Decree 2 among others, the Circulation of Newspaper Act No.2 of 1966, promulgated by the Ironsi government was, to an extent, favourable to press freedom as it removed restrictions imposed on the press by regional or local authorities. This bill corrected some of the restrictive and repressive provisions of its predecessors namely the Official Secret Act (of 1962) and the Newspaper Act of 1964.

Some of the bills passed during the successive military regimes the country witnessed, were amended and made more punitive. An egregious example is the 1992 Nigerian Press Council (NPC) which, through a 1999 amendment, was made to contain provisions that prescribed fines and possible jail sentences for noncompliant journalists. The law provoked agitations and a serious advocacy against it from media activists and owners of media outlets. These media forces challenged the constitutionality of this bill and by 2010, through the ruling of a federal high court, the NPC was emptied of the bulk of its power. In 1999 Nigeria returned to civilian rule, adopting a new Constitution. However, observers note that it was modelled after its predecessor, the 1979 Constitution; and thus, did not guarantee sufficient protection for the journalist. One of such observers is the New York based Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) which identified a total of 20 anti-media bills in the Nigerian Constitution. One of such was the NPC which was repealed in 2010. In 2011, the Nigerian government introduced the Freedom of Information Act which Freedom House hailed, considering it as an indicator of the country's political will for freedom of expression and press freedom.

Brief History of Media Regulation in Cameroon

The history and evolution of press censorship or media regulation in Cameroon cannot be dissociated from the country's political history. Such history and evolution are inextricably linked to the development by the Cameroon state of a bijural system which permitted the enforcement/cohabitation of two different legal systems inherited from France and Britain (the two former colonial masters of the country). The bijural system thus instituted the common law in Anglophone Cameroon and Civil law in Francophone Cameroon (Artile 19, (1997; Ewumbue-Monono, 1992; Nkemagnang, 2008; Nyamnjoh, Wete & Fochingong, 2000; Tanjong, Cheo & Eselem 2003). A well-structured discussion of the evolution of press censorship will take into consideration three principal periods of Cameroon history: before independence (1960), Ahidjo's regime (1960 – 1982) and Biya's regime (1982 till date). This is in line with the axiom that the framework within which communication takes place is ultimately determined by the political, economic and social struggles which have shaped the prevailing social consensus in a given society (Nworgu 2011, p. 91). *Grosso modo*, it is observed that before the return of democracy in the country in the 90s, the successive Cameroon governments maintained a firm control of the media through the instrumentality of two of its Ministries namely the Ministry of Information and Culture as well as the Ministry of Territorial Administration. As observed by Nyamjoh, Wete and Fochingong (2000), the successive Cameroonian governments "acted as though nation-building and development were only attainable through strong central intervention, believing that the best way the media could contribute to the process was through a faithful interpretation and dissemination of government and party policies" (p. 48).

Immediately after independence (during Ahidjo's regime), Cameroon adopted a federal model of territorial administration which made its pressmen operate under different media laws. These laws were those inherited from the two colonial masters who administered the country as mandated territory of the UN. In Anglophone Cameroon, the press laws in force comprised the Licensing Act of 1662 and the Nigerian Newspaper Ordinance N⁰ 10, of 1903 which was greatly modelled after the Sierra Leonean Press Law of 1857. These laws subsequently underwent several amendments: by the Newspaper Ordinance No. 40 of 1917, the Newspaper Ordinance No. 26, 1941 and the Eastern Nigerian Law of 1955. According to Ewumbue-Monono (1992), "by the time the Nigerian Newspaper Ordinance was enacted, Southern Cameroon was operating as an autonomous region but it was only after unification in 1961 that the West Cameroon Newspaper Ordinance was passed to govern the establishment of newspapers" (p. 21).

A similar situation prevailed in Francophone (French speaking) Cameroon. Before independence, the principal law in force was the French law on press freedom of July 29, 1881 which was introduced in the mandated territory in 1923 and amended in 1936. This dispensation prevailed till the territory attained a self-governing status. On May 27, 1959, the French Cameroon Assembly adopted the 1881 law as Law No. 55-35. This was the instrument that regulated the press in Francophone Cameroon until 1966.

After the unification of the two territorial entities that make up today's Cameroon, some aspects of the French Cameroon Law were extended in Anglophone Cameroon. An egregious example is the practice of vetting and censorship. This engendered wide spread protest by Anglophone pressmen who decried outright the unconstitutional nature of the act. This rejection embarrassed the federal authority who rapidly sought an adaptation of the law into the 1966 press law which hoped to provide a harmonized press law for all pressmen in the country. It is under these tense circumstances that the 1966 Press Law was incepted in the country. Since its passing, it has been amended five times notably by Decree No. 69/LF/13 of November 1969; Decree No. 73/6 of December 1973; Decree No. 76/27 of December 14, 1976; Decree No. 80/18 of July 14, 1980 and Decree No. 81/244 of June 22, 1981. It has been argued that the law really reflected the then authoritarian government's mania to silence the press, ensuring the cooperation of the media in the affirmation of government ideology and agenda. The laws and subsequent amendment were clearly repressive in nature as well as protective of the then authoritarian government. This was evident in the heavy fine and imprisonment sentences for any violation of any of the provisions; that is, against any form of media censuring of the government. As insightfully commented by Nkemayang (2008), 1966 Press Laws and its edits of 1981 did not only aim at gagging the press but equally sought to protect those at the centre-stage of power. Through a rigid censorship mechanism which integrated the harassment, (death) threat, (summary) arrest, torture and physical elimination of journalists, media contents were tailored to suit the whims and caprices of those parading the marble corridors of power. In the same vein, Ewumbue – Monono (1992) opines that the major feature of the 1966 Press Law and its subsequent amendments was its inherent elaborate machinery of control involving administrative, financial, and territorial surveillance. Furthermore, this system of control was based on a "preventive press" ideology where ownership of a press organ was scrutinized and emphasis was laid on pre-publication control by the administrative authorities. Less regard was given to judicial control of the press in matters of libel and defamation.

Before its repeal on December 19, 1990, the 1966 law demonstrated the authoritarian attitude of Ahidjo's government towards the media. It epitomized the repressive and dictatorial philosophy adopted by politicians after independence. In an appraisal of Ahidjo's regime with regard to press freedom in Cameroon, Nkemayang (2008) contends that: "Cameroon has before the early 90's witnessed an unprecedented history of abuse regulation of information flow to the public, through abominable media law expounded by the authoritarian regime of erstwhile President Ahmadou Ahidjo, who ruled the nation with iron-fist for 22 years" (p. 3). Having repealed the 1966 Law, and its subsequent amendments (notably, the 1987 Law), Biya's government introduced Law No. 90/052 related to the freedom of mass communications. This law has been hailed as a landmark in some quarters and greeted with cautious optimism in others.

In the early part of Biya's regime, the situation of the press did not change. This could partly be attributed to the continuing enforcement of the law of 1966. Though his laudable doctrine of "rigor and moralization" sounded in political quarters as the infallible harbinger of radical political and social mutations, the situation of the press did not change immediately as dictatorship continued to be in force. President Biya's definition of the role of the media was therefore similar to his predecessor's, particularly during the first years of his rise to power. Nyamnjoh, Wete and Fochingong (2000) concede that:

When President Biya came to power in 1982, he defined the role of the media in the process of national development to be that "of animation, of orientation and of control", [...] a definition echoed and substantiated by subsequent declarations, but one in which the media must take the cue from the government or party. Despite claims to being more democratic, his view was identical to Ahidjo's, who in 1969 invited the media to animate the Cameroonian masses by explaining the government's policies with the aim of winning their active participation in the task of national development. (p. 48)

The situation however, changed in the year 1990 due to the wind of political change across the continent.. This period witnessed tremendous political pressure from outside the country. This pressure caused changes in the Cameroon. There was, as a result, an increasing clamour for democracy and liberalisation of the political system in the country. This clamour was manifested through a series of events including fervent demands for the release of political activists like Yondo Black, Ndjekam Tchameni, and others; pro-democracy demonstrations such as the one in Bamenda on May 26 1990, the institutionalization of multi-party politics in the country among others. It is under these circumstances and in reaction to the mounting political pressures in and out of the territory that the 1990 Press Law was passed.

The 1990 law was highly acclaimed especially in the first years that followed its promulgation. The law marked the birth of a new era in the Country and equally epitomised the innovativeness of the Biya regime. The laws theoretically unchained the Cameroonian press and made things easier for the Journalists as it institutionalised press freedom. Ewumbwe-Monono (1992) posits that, the newly promulgated press Laws brought about a good number of changes among which was the affirmation of the right to publish by simplifying and eliminating the constraining financial requirement for setting up a press organ. Nevertheless, the laws were not without short comings to many observers. Elumbwe-Monono criticizes the text on the basis that it has a defective structure as it embraces many issues at the same time; it has a restrictive classification of means of mass communication in print (newspapers, periodicals, magazines, pamphlets, books and bill posting); it is based on the erroneous assumption that the judiciary in Cameroon is independent; it does not clearly address the issue of the responsibility for libel and that it falls short of its objective of creating a competitive political system based on fair media exposure.

It has also been pointed out that some vital issues were left silent by the 1990 laws. Though it stipulates that audio visual communication is liberalized, it does not provide conditions for setting up private audio visual communication outfits. This defect was later addressed by a ministerial decree from the Prime minister promulgated ten years later (in 2000). This virtual lacuna made the Cameroonian State to extend its monopoly on radio and television broadcast for 10 more years. The retardation of the effective liberalization of the airwaves has thus been interpreted by a good number of media observers as Government's reluctance to truly promote freedom of the press in the country. One of the multiple evidence advanced by most critics is that though the two main media regulatory texts in Cameroon seem to advocate freedom of expression, Government continues to trample on the rights of the press in various ways. Soboth (2008) for instance posits that, the existence of media freedom laws in Cameroon is not just significant in itself, but needs being lauded. However, the overriding reality is that government's control of the media sector and its abuse of constitutional law remains more than glaring.

COMPARING FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION IN NIGERIA AND CAMEROON

Our concern in this section will be to answer such questions as how are constitutional provisions and media regulatory instruments affecting freedom of expression and political reporting in the two countries, using a comparative analytical methodology? Also, which of the two countries (arguably,) has the freer press? Our comparison framework will include both statutory constraints/texts and practices. It will be organized in terms of similarities and differences in indices pertaining to freedom of the press in the two countries.

Similarities

One of the striking similarities in the impact of media regulation and freedom of expression in the two countries is the existence of constitutional provisions and a number of bills which (on paper) guarantee a degree of press freedom, freedom of expression and freedom of thought. In its Chapter 11 (Section 22), pertaining to the Fundamental Objectives and Directives, Principles of State Policy, the 1999 Nigerian Constitution clearly guarantees the freedom of the press, stipulating that: "The press, radio, television and other agencies of the mass media shall all times be free to uphold the fundamental objectives contained in this Chapter and uphold the responsibility and accountability of the government to the people". The provision categorises the objectives as being political, economic, social, and educational. The Nigerian Constitution further guarantees freedom of expression in Section 39(1-3) of its Chapter IV titled "Fundamental Rights". There, it states that:

1. Every person shall be entitled to freedom of expression, including freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impact ideas and information without interference;
2. Without prejudice to the generality of sub-section (1) of this section, every person shall be entitled to own, establish and operate media for the dissemination of information, ideas and opinions. Provided that no person, other than the government of the federation or of a state or any other

person or body authorized by the president on the fulfilment of conditions laid down by an act of the national assembly, shall own, establish or operate a television or wireless broadcasting station for any purpose whatsoever.

Similarly to its Nigerian version, the Cameroonian Constitution contains provisions showing a degree of press freedom and some other civil liberties. The preamble of the country's 1992 constitution includes freedom of expression and of the press to the list of basic freedoms and liberties it guarantees, stating that: "The freedom of communication, of expression, of the press, of assembly, of association, and of trade unionism, as well as the right to strike shall be guaranteed under conditions fixed by the law". As can be observed, the constitutional provision is not as elaborate as its Nigerian version. Apart from this statement in the preamble, there is no specific constitutional provision with regard to press freedom. It may however, be observed that this vagueness is corrected by law No.90/52 of December 1990, as amended by Law No.96/04 of January 4 1996, pertaining to the freedom of mass communication. The law – which constitutes the most substantive piece of legislation regulating media operation in Cameroon – stipulates in its Section 6 that: "Person shall be free to engage in the publication of press organs". Similarly, Section 36 of the document adds that: "subject to the regulations governing private radio, person shall be free to engage in audio-visual communication". In the same vein, Section 39 stipulates that: "One or more public sector establishments or state corporations set up and organised by decree may be charged with the operation of public sector audio-visual communication".

The two countries have equally passed a number of (more or less pro-democratic) bills notably, the 2011 Nigerian Freedom of Information Act (for Nigeria) and the Cameroonian Liberty Laws [1990] and Decree 2000/158 of April 3, 2000, (on the conditions and modalities of the allocation and use of licenses). These bills – though mainly in theory – facilitate the establishment of private (and anti-government) media houses; balance to an extent, access of politicians to the media and equally relax a number of constraints to access to and circulation of information in the two respective countries among others..

Despite all these indices which are apparently favourable to freedom of expression, sufficient press freedom and liberal democracy are still a myth in both countries, and this constitutes the second similarity between the two nations. In effect, the same typologies of extra-judicial methods deployed by the state to tailor media contents and tele-guide media operations in favour of the government of the day, are observed in both countries. This can be illustrated with many examples presented in the following lines.

"The awful idioms of journalists being threatened (to death), harassed, summarily imprisoned, tortured and physically eliminated among others constitute quotidian traditions (if not forms of normalcy for the high government officials) observable in the two countries. Sharing corollaries, Freedom House (2015) considers Nigeria one of the most dangerous places for the practice of journalism, due to the recrudescence of violent and mortal assaults on political journalists in the course of discharging their watchdog duties. The media observatory initiative reviews several of such cases that occurred ahead and during the recent 2015 general elections in the country and underscores the fact that Nigeria is ranked 12th on CPJ's annual Global Impunity Index, which measures countries on the base of the number of unsolved journalist murders per capita over the preceding decade. To these mortal attacks against journalists, one may add the various forms of harassment, intimidations and politically motivated arrests, incarcerations and tortures which men of the press and media outlets suffer from high governmental officials, for their anti-government or critical reportages. A Kafkaesque example is the Nigerian Broadcasting Commission's imposition of a partial shot-down sanction on Freedom Radio in 2006 for the alleged immaturity of its reporters to professionally handle a number of his political programmes (Media Right Agenda 2015, para 4). The Kano-based broadcaster saw four of its trenchant political programmes (including "Special programme"; "Kowa ya tuna bara"; "Kowane Gauta"; and "Kowane Tsuntsu") banned on allegations that they constituted a potential threat to the peace and unity of the country. Though the sanctions were dropped following the station's complaint, NBC's action unarguably epitomized political intimidation and a warning to other stations that would dream of testing the nerves of government. This is given the fact that, Freedom Radio is owned by Alhaji Bashir Dalhatu, a member of the newly formed opposition political party, the Advanced Congress of Democrats (ACD). As the Chairman of the station's Board of Directors, Mouktar Mohammed puts it, "NBC's action was a governmental ploy to deliberately "attempt to deprive the country of a free and independent source of information under a supposedly democratic country" (cited in Media Right Agenda, para 8). The NBC similarly suspended the broadcast of a popular radio show on Splash FM in June 2015. This was following the broadcast of a promotional clip in which federal lawmakers were referred to as criminals (Freedom House, 2015). Still in a bid to cow the anti-government media, the NBC issued a directive in 2014 stipulating that broadcasters should submit a written notice 48 hours prior to the broadcast of any political programme. The commission justified its directives with the imperative to check "inciting, provocative and highly divisive comments" (cited in Freedom House, 2015, p. 6). Such actions are, of course, often "double-minded" as it is always unclear, what the commission means by "inciting, provocative and highly divisive comments". The reality is that, often time, such rhetoric of rigour, prudence and discipline is used to randomly bash or gag any anti-government voice.

A similar climate reigns in Cameroon with the constant persecutions and arbitrary prosecutions of journalists and media houses. In 2008, a major broadcast station, Equinox TV, was proscribed or closed after the telecast of a political slot in which a number of political analysts out-rightly condemned President Biya's plan to amend the Constitution and subtly enable his eligibility for upcoming elections. The Government justified its draconian action with the fact that the TV station had no license to operate. However, it has remained blatantly clear that the action was more politically motivated than determined by regulatory protocols. The proof is that, before the anti-government programming, it apparently did not occur to the government that the broadcast station was clandestine. Similarly, in April 2010, the publication manager of *Cameroun Express* (a weekly) Bibi Ngota died at the Yaounde maximum prison of Kondegui where some of his colleagues and himself were on remand for two months in a case, they were investigating, of corruption implicating the office of the Secretary General at the Presidency. Ngota died after a protracted sickness in prison and his demand to be transferred to a hospital to receive proper medical attention was denied (Tanjong, 2012).

Another similarity between Nigeria and Cameroon with respect to freedom of expression is the fact that, the bodies charged with the responsibility of regulating the media and ensure the success of national communication policies are all funded by the government. They function according to the maxim which states that "he who pays the piper determines the tune". This is to say these media regulatory institutions are not independent from government's control and thus tend to serve as their joker in the pack when dilemmatic political situations occur. The Nigerian Broadcasting Commission (NBC) has its members appointed by government. It functions based on government funding and in many respects, it is calibrated to function as a governmental arsenal to suppress anti-government voices within the media. Recently Freedom House (2015) described NBC's philosophy of issuance of licenses to desirous media houses as very opaque and politically biased. Viewing that its partisan interests might be jeopardised, the Government has long resisted the emerger of NBC with the National Communication Commission in charge of telecommunications regulations. The same situation is observed in Cameroon as the National

Communication Council (NCC), which is merely an advisory body, works under the authority of the Prime Minister (head of government) who has the final word in matters of licensing and withdrawing licenses from media outlets. The NCC is simply a *helper* and *mass boy* of the government. It works in consultation with the Ministry of Communication and both are accountable to the Prime Minister. The NBC and its Cameroonian counterpart, the NCC, fall short of international standards notably, the Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression in Africa. In its Clause VII, this Declaration states that:

1. Any public authority that exercises authority in the areas of broadcast or telecommunications regulation should be independent and adequately protected against interference, particularly of a political or economic nature.
2. The appointment process of members of a regulatory body should be open and transparent, involve the participation of civil society, and shall not be controlled by any particular political power.
3. Any public authority that exercises powers in the areas of broadcast or telecommunications should be formally accountable to the public through a multi-party body.

Access to information emanating from government officials is still hampered in diverse and complex ways. The end result is that access to public information is, in practice, not perfectly guaranteed in the two countries. In Nigeria, the Freedom of Information Act clearly provides for the release of information and records by government agencies, and the making of these records available to the media. These measures were taken to guarantee the general citizens' access to public information. However, some states have stubbornly rejected these provisions, arguing that this federal legislation is not applicable to their states (Afolayan, 2015; Freedom House, 2015). With this, citizen's access to public information is not recognised in some states of the Nigerian Federation. A slightly similar situation prevails in Cameroon where, Section 41(1-2) of Decree No. 2000/287 of October 12 on general rules and regulations of public service seriously prohibits government officials from releasing any document for whatever purpose. The document stipulates that:

All civil servants shall be bound to observe professional discretion in respect of all facts, information or documents of which they have knowledge in the performance or in the course of the performance of their duties. Apart from the cases expressly provided for by the regulations in force, a civil servant may not be released from his/her obligation except by an express decision from the authority under whom (s)he works.

[…] Any unlawful possession or removal of service papers or documents shall be strictly forbidden. The same shall apply to the disclosure or copying thereof, except for service reasons and in the manner prescribed by regulations in force.

As one of the similarities between Nigeria and Cameroon on the issue of freedom of expression, it is important not to forget the fact that oppositional/adversarial reportage is hardly tolerated in government owned media outlets. Thus, the government owned radio and television station as well as newspapers quasi exclusively serve as government's public relations tool and political weapons, particularly during election periods. This composes and subtly programme journalists within these media houses to mostly be government's *mass boys* and to care more about avoiding to bite the hand that feeds them than professing full commitment to balanced and fair political reportage. In Nigeria, the Nigerian Television

Authority (NTA), the Voice of Nigeria (VON) and the various State owned broadcast stations, represent the mouthpiece of government. As Okei-Odumakin (2013) succinctly enthuses, they are in the pocket of the government and so, have become politicians' (government officials') media. A similar situation is observed in Cameroon with the Cameroon Radio and Television (CRTV) which has designed internal mechanisms to sift and prevent anti-government reportage from its journalists. Journalists who are critical of the government have had no other option than resigning or be recalcitrant. Being recalcitrant has caused them to run the risk of being subjected to serious disciplinary actions. A case in point has been Charles Ndichia (present editor-in-chief of *The Post* newspaper) who resigned and left the corporation in 1990 when a ban on critical reporting was instituted. Another case is Tewih Lambiv, one time anchorman of *Cameroon Calling* (a popular programme over CRTV) who was suspended from his job for having strongly censured irregularities in the computerization of the electoral system in 2007 (Tanjong, 20112, p. 51). It goes without saying that the blatant intolerance of adversarial journalism in government owned media houses is a gross violation of the freedom of expression and a lack of political will and maturity on the part of governments to embrace democracy. As Buchet and Kariithi (2003) insightfully contend, "a clear violation of democratic principles would occur wherever a government uses the resources of the state to control or interfere with the state-owned media in an attempt to promote its own partisan interest. This makes even more necessary, a strong regulatory regime that protects the independence of the private and state-owned media" (p. 19).

Dissimilarities

Media laws (particularly in the domain of audio-visual communications) are more enabling in Nigeria than in Cameroon. This is evidenced by the fact that, despite the fact that, multifaceted techniques are employed by government to gag and tele-guide the Nigerian media, the NBC has established more or less clearer criteria and procedures for the issuance of licenses to broadcasters, and has shown greater political will to permit a degree of plurality of political voices, compared to its Cameroonian counterpart. This has enabled a plethora of private and politically non-innocuous broadcast outfits to the government to obtain licenses and be legally protected while doing their watchdog business. The NBC has issued licenses to over 128 radio stations, 48 TV stations, 34 wireless cable (MMDS) operators, 5 direct to home (DTH) satellite television platforms based in the country (Covington, 2016; Ogunpitan, 2014). This is diametrically different from the situation in Cameroon where the Government has developed a rigid and subtle administrative culture of not granting licenses to broadcast media – in total marginalisation of its own media laws. Such an undemocratic culture has equally favoured a situation wherein broadcast stations operate under what is referred to as, "administrative tolerance". Varenik and Pavli (2008) define this demagogical neologism of "administrative tolerance" as a political lexical innovation, connoting an unlawful provisional authorisations regime, which aims at obliging the Cameroonian broadcast stations to operate at the whims, caprices and mercy of the Executive. The "administrative tolerance" regime is causing most Cameroonian broadcast stations to operate outside the law and can be closed at government's will, whenever their reportage is extremely critical of the Government. This can be vividly illustrated by the closure in 2008 of Equinox TV, its sister Radio Equinox as well as a handful of other audio-visual media outlets (including Yaounde based Magi FM 94), for covering hot debates on the controversial constitutional amendments proposed by President Biya to drop limits on presidential terms and of course make conditions favourable for his candidature in upcoming elections.

The prompt and *mano militari* closure of these broadcast stations clearly gave a glimpse of what the Government means by administrative tolerance.

So far, the Cameroonian government has licensed only two television stations, one radio station and one cable distributor based in the country (Mussa, 2015; Tanjong, 2012). The Cameroonian Government has made its system of licensing broadcasters to be a veritable labyrinth and long opaque tunnel for media operators. The system is actually a tool the government uses to deal with opposition voices. In total disregard to its own laws, it has embraced the objectionable paradigm of granting provisional authorisation or allocating frequencies to broadcasters that it deems, susceptible to politically dance to its tune. This can be illustrated by the way the Douala-based Catholic broadcast station, Radio Veritas obtained its license in 2003. In effect the radio got licensed only when Biya's Government got alibi that Cardinal Christian Tumi of Douala, a staunch critic of the government, had no intentions of running against President Biya in the upcoming elections. The Catholic Church had earlier (in 2001) applied for a license which, as is generally the case in the process of applying for the document, was replied by an incomprehensible silence from the Government. In keeping with the law, the church interpreted the silence as a go ahead and started broadcast but was banned and had its equipment confiscated by the Ministry of Communication. This "aggressive" governmental action followed speculations that Cardinal Tumi might contest upcoming elections against President Biya. It is only when Tumi publicly declared that he had no intention of running the elections that Radio Veritas was "awarded" its license (Tanjon 2012; Varenik & Pavli 2008). A similar experience was the share of Douala based Freedom FM which was refused license and was aggressively incapacitated from going on air, chiefly because of the political affiliation of its founder, Puis Njawe, an outspoken critic of the Biya Government.

Another difference between Cameroon and Nigeria in terms of press freedom lies in the fact that, there is a more stringent mechanism to prevent government officials from revealing information to the general public in Cameroon. In this regard, Section 41(1-2) of Decree No. 2000/287 of October 12 on general rules and regulations of public service (cited above), which seriously prohibits government officials from releasing any document for whatever purpose, can be contrasted to the 2011 Freedom of Information (FOI) Act in force in Nigeria. The two bills are diametrically opposed. While Decree No. 2000/287 contradicts the civility of guaranteeing access by journalists to public information, FOI Act does the contrary.

Another difference between the two countries is the fact that the Nigerian press seems to have greater socio-political maturity than its Cameroonian counterpart. Authors such as Idowu (1999) have celebrated the Nigerian press as the freest in Africa; which, by implication suggests that the Nigerian media is freer than that of Cameroon. However, as discussed earlier, the same typologies of abuses of the press are observed in both countries. One will need more robust and broad methodologies to quantify these abuses and have a clear picture of the situation, to be able to empirically determine which of the two is freer than the other. The least one can say at this juncture is that, the tempestuous atmosphere in which the Nigerian press has been compelled to evolve from independence till date has made it to ferment its maturity and be a force to reckon with in the Nigerian political ecology. The multiple military regimes and the divergent political philosophies of the successive governments (military and civil) have actually matured the Nigerian press, making it more vibrant than its Cameroonian counterpart. The Cameroonian press has not had such a tumultuous political experience. Only two governments have ruled the country since independence (Ahidjo's regime and Biya's government). As such, the press has not had an experience as rich and turbulent as the Nigerian press. This does not however, totally vilify the Cameroonian press.

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that Nigeria and Cameroon are still on the path to fair democratization (liberal democracy), given the fact that freedom of expression in the two countries has not attained an optimum magnitude, comparable to that observed in advanced democracies – which whether we like it or not, are still global models. The type of "freedom of expression" observed in the two countries is only compatible with the model of "procedural", "ambiguous", "denatured", "aborted" or "big-time" democracy therein adopted. Call it "African democracy". Freedom of the press is still largely a civility recognised exclusively on paper and weakly professed in international public relation campaigns by the two states. In practice, various forms of authoritarianism have been entrenched in undemocratic cultures, and various clandestine ways of gagging and brutalising the press. The same kinds of abuses of the press are registered in the two countries. These include (death) threats, arbitrary incarcerations, arrests, torture, and even physical elimination. In addition to these, governments in both countries have designed economic tools such as subsidies to private media outlets, opaque and politically biased licensing systems and the like, to manipulate the press and use them as hunting dogs (instead of watchdogs), against their political adversaries. In the light of this blatant body of evidences, it can be argued that, in the two countries, the government persists in seeing the press as potential threats and wild beasts to tame or be guarded against (to kill).

It must however, be recognized that some efforts have been made by specific governments – particularly as from the 1990s – to ameliorate their human right records and therefore, observe a degree of freedom of expression and of the press in the two countries. It has been observed that with the return from military to civilian administration in 1999, Nigerian government's abuses of the press drastically reduced. Compared to their military counterparts, Nigeria's civilian rulers seem to have been more sensitive to the respect of human rights. This does not however cancel the fact that multifaceted violations of freedom of expression and the press continue to be clearly visible in the country. In the same vein, abuses against the Cameroonian press remarkably diminished during the latter part of the Biya's regime. Most media critics and press men recognize that the "relative freedom of the press" has enabled even *sensationalists* (journalists exaggeratedly haunted by the spirit of freedom) to practice a kind of journalism that has been close to libelous reportage, without being jailed. Some have even developed the culture of directly attacking the President's personality, without concrete proofs of their claims. Such a libertinage could never have been tolerated during Ajidho's regime. Despite slight improvements in the two countries, media systems, the state-media relation in Cameroon and Nigeria continues to be tense and the governments seem to have vowed to have the press in their pockets or get rid of it at all cost (particularly when it politically does not dance to its tune).

However, the press seems more vibrant in Nigeria. This is attributed to the kind of tempestuous socio-political climate in which it has been compelled to evolve. The various political movements and momentums instilled by the multiple military and civil governments that have ruled the country, have enabled the Nigerian press to grow to a level of maturity which may explain its higher vibrancy compared to the press in Cameroon and in some other Black African countries. Some observers even view it as the freest in Africa. However, this discourse prefers to limitedly celebrate its obvious vibrancy.

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Chapter 16
Citizen Journalism on Facebook and the Challenges of Media Regulation in Zimbabwe:
Baba Jukwa

Collen Sabao
Stellenbosch University, South Africa & Midlands State University, Zimbabwe

Vimbai Rejoice Chingwaramusee
Midlands State University, Zimbabwe

ABSTRACT

The chapter discusses the rise of citizen journalism, examining the manners in which such form of journalistic practice impacts media regulatory frameworks and journalistic ethics in Zimbabwe, specifically looking at the Baba Jukwa Facebook wall. It discusses the nature of reporting in citizen journalism and the challenges these pose on media regulating laws and journalistic ethics. Over the last decade, social networking websites and other social forums have exploded in popularity in the whole world, Zimbabwe included. These social networking sites have become quite central as alternative news media, breaking stories before the mainstream official media does. The impact that such social networks have on contemporary society as public spheres - platforms for group social interactions and news outlets should not be undermined because of how they allow people to interact freely and to (re)construct their desired realities in the face of the gag of stringent media laws.

THE DIGITAL AGE AND THE RISE OF CITIZEN JOURNALISM

The chapter examines the manners in which citizen journalism impacts media regulatory frameworks in Zimbabwe, specifically looking at the Baba Jukwa wall as a case study. Through the analysis of the news ‘breaking’ and news ‘reporting’ culture on Facebook among Zimbabwean users, the chapter examines the language as well as images used in citizen journalism and the challenges these pose on media regulating laws and journalistic ethics. Over the last decade, social networking websites such as

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Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, Belbo and other social forums such as the mobile phone based chat services like Whatsapp have exploded in popularity in the whole world, Zimbabwe included. The phenomenon of citizen journalism is not restricted to the internet alone as well as to the independent 'broadcast' of news via the internet. As Goode (2009) explains, 'citizen journalism is generally associated with the internet and yet does not begin and end online or even with digital-interactive media. Broadcast news, for example, sometimes feeds off and incorporates elements of citizen journalism: examples include eyewitness footage from cell phones, reporting of stories originally broken by citizen journalism initiatives on the web, or even guest reporter slots in which citizens front and participate in packaging an item for a television or radio newscast.' These social networking sites have also become quite central as alternative news media, breaking stories before the mainstream official media does. The impact that such social networks have on contemporary society as platforms for group social interactions and news outlets should not be undermined.

Social networking sites have become widespread and grown in popularity because they allow people to interact freely and to (re)construct and reveal their desired realities by proving an alternative space for the dissemination of 'news' in the face of the gag of stringent media laws and regulatory frameworks. For example, Subrahmanyam et al (2008) estimate that sites such as MySpace and Facebook have over 100 million users between them, many of them adolescents and emerging adults. The proposed study seeks to examine the constructions of alternative media on the social networking websites using a case study of Zimbabwe. The advent of web based networking sites however has meant that the questions of professional and ethical journalistic practices have to be (re)confronted and (re)interrogated. Of particular interest in proposed chapter is how this alternative digital public sphere has offered Zimbabweans 'an avenue to discuss a taboo subject in Zimbabwe without fear or being reprimanded by the secretive and authoritarian state. The 'taboo' in this context refers to issues that the state does not want discussed in public like the president's health, genocide, ZANU-PF factionalism or succession debate and state sponsored corruption just to mention but a few. The state has tabooed the genocide debates within Zimbabwe for national cohesion and ZANU-PF's political expediency. Most precisely, the article explores how the internet has challenged the elitist dominated domestic public sphere into a sphere where ordinary citizens interact among themselves and those in power' (Mpofu, nd). Such are the issues the Baba Jukwa wall largely reported on. Whereas the Baba Jukwa wall offered an alternative source of news, in many instances offering narratives parallel to official government controlled reports and making it possible for the proliferation of counter-hegemonic voices, the chapter seeks to explore how such uncontrolled and 'free' news outlets represent media regulatory challenges in Zimbabwe.

Observing that citizen journalists are people that are not trained professional newspersons, and usually present 'news' as the see them through the use of gadgets such as mobile phones and the internet with complete disregard of journalistic ethics and laws, the study here examines how the proliferation of such 'newspersons' present challenges for media regulation in Zimbabwe. Ruellan (2007: 2) for instance, observes in this regard that, '[s]ince 2005, the Internet has given rise to several novel initiatives concerning journalism designated by the generic term "citizen journalism". Underlying a set of heterogeneous systems, a unique principle can be observed: web users, who are not professional journalists, contribute directly to the production of the daily news. These practices raise a series of questions, one of which is the link, in the media and journalism, between professional and amateur practices.' For example there have been instances of nude pictures being posted on the internet as part of 'breaking news' by citizen journalists, who clearly lack a code and journalistic ethics. With regards to the ethical problems of citizen journalism, Carpenter (2007:532) argues that there has been animosity 'between those who consider themselves online citizen journalists and those who work as journalists for traditional news organizations. Citizen journalists are criticized for their propensity to feature entertainment articles with little background research, rather than informing the public on matters that benefit them as citizens. Many citizen journalists have not been trained to subscribe to the same standards (e.g., objectivity, thoroughness, fairness, accuracy) as journalists working for news organizations.' Until recently, the working routines and values of journalistic culture had remained highly stable for almost a century (Tuchman 2002; Schudson 2005), even after being declared in crisis (Dahlgren 1996; Blumler and Gurevitch 1996).

Traditionally, journalism has been attached to the institution of the media, based on the production of news by dedicated paid labour, the journalists. The term 'gatekeeper', used to describe a main task of journalists, indicates their claim to be the ones who decide what the public needs to know, as well as when and how such information should be provided. The gatekeeper role is maintained and enforced by professional routines and conventions that are said to guarantee the quality and neutrality of institutional journalism (Shoemaker 1991; Reese and Ballinger 2001). The impact of the Internet and other new information- and communication technologies on the profession of journalism should not be underestimated. The Internet is changing the profession of journalism in at least three ways: it has the potential to make the journalist as an intermediary force in democracy superfluous (Bardoel, 1996); it offers the media professional a vast array of resources and sheer endless technological possibilities to work with (Quinn, 1998; Pavlik, 1999); and it creates its own type of journalism on the Net: so-called *digital* or rather: *online* journalism (Singer, 1998; Deuze, 1999). The motivation to undertake such a study comes from observing the communicative potential of social networking sites to influence both change and development in society. We observe that these sites have the power to unite people with shared opinions and at times even diverse one to come together and discuss issues pertaining to their lives.

The choice of research is also motivated by the observation that social networking sites have by and large become a replacement of traditional news reporting channels. The chapter seeks to explore the manners in which the internet has become an alternative platform for Facebook users (and Zimbabweans to be precise) to exercise their right to freedom of expression given the historically recorded repressive media regulatory conditions in the country. Theoretically the chapter utilises the Digital Alternative Media Theory as well as Habermas' ambit of the public sphere. The proposed chapter explores, using the Baba Jukwa Facebook page, how the internet (and Facebook to be precise) has grown as a form of alternative media, reporting on and challenging the tabooed topics and issues in Zimbabwe. The chapter seeks to demonstrate that the proliferation of citizen journalism aided by the internet has made it possible for counter-hegemonic voices (Mitra, 2001) 'to upset the elite and politically dominated public spheres. The internet is credited for simultaneously enabling the user to exercise the right to freedom of expression through receiving and disseminating information, ideas and opinions visually or phonetically to large audiences at the lowest possible cost. Also, this evolution of technology has caused global dramatic changes in the field of journalism.'

The new information and communication technologies of the digital age are continuing to affect all spheres of life in late modern society but still there is ambiguity as to the extent to which they are enhancing democracy (Anderson and Cornfield 2003). Blumer and Gurevitch (2000), note that the traditional systems of political communication in western democracies are being destabilized by changes in late modern society. Banda (2011) considers the new information and communication technologies revolution as a stepping stone to improving democratic and developmental institutions on the African continent.

This research examines how the new information and communication technologies in Zimbabwe have changed the political communication in the country. Many scholars look at how the new information and communication technologies have paved way for freedom of speech amongst citizens yet they fail to look at the ills of the so called freedom of speech. This research examines the chaos, inefficiency and unpredictability caused by the new information and communication technologies which has given a platform to untrained citizens to be journalists. This scenario presents challenges in media regulation because citizen 'journalists' are unregistered and cannot be monitored or controlled since they largely use nom de plumes. It becomes difficult to make them accountable for the stories, half-truths they 'report' as well for all violations of journalistic ethics.

The Baba Jukwa Phenomenon in Zimbabwe Politics and Media

Baba Jukwa, (Shona, loosely translated to 'Father of Jukwa') was a 'vigilante' Zimbabwean figure on the internet based social networking site, Facebook, who became popular for exposing corruption, plots and 'murders' in Zimbabwean politics, especially in the ZANU-PF political party, sometimes before they even occurred as well as other tabooed subjects. The case of Baba Jukwa can be imagined as the biggest case of citizen journalism in Zimbabwean history. Emerging just before the 2013 harmonised presidential and parliamentary elections, the Baba Jukwa Facebook wall was immensely popular amongst Zimbabweans seeking alternative news that counteracted the official narrative controlled by the ZANU Pf party due to its handle on the control of the flow of information in the country. Baba Jukwa was imagined as a 'mole' within ZANU-PF who was privy to, and published very classified and sensitive political material on his public page on Facebook. Presenting himself as a disenfranchised ZANU PF big wig, evinced a proclivity to reveal ZANU PF's well kept secrets and in the process work in unison with other progressive political actors to not only challenge but also topple the political party's 'despotic' hegemony. Several current and expelled ZANU-PF bigwigs have been speculated on to have been Baba Jukwa. 'The case of Baba Jukwa, a faceless Facebook character who emerged in March 2013, claiming to be a disaffected ZANU PF insider with "top", secrets about the internal workings of the party is very interesting in as far as it exposes how citizen journalism can cause despondency within the camp of those considered powerful' (Mujere & Mwatwara, 2015: 223). Many have speculated that Baba Jukwa, the faceless and shadowy character who exposed controversial issues and stories about high ranking ZANU PF and government officials by giving exposes of state violence, corruption and assassination plots, election rigging plots, could not have been one person but instead a group of individuals coordinating the writing of the leaks. His rise to fame can be largely credited on his 'valour' to speak about tabooed subjects in Zimbabwean politics such as factional wars within ZANU PF, the President's health the succession issue within ZANU PF as well as ZANU-PF plots to rig the 2013 harmonised Presidential and Parliamentary elections. The ZANU-PF leadership eventually embarked on a 'manhunt' to unmask Baba Jukwa, with the president himself allegedly offering a reward of US$300 000 to anyone who could identify him. The popularity of this figure can be attributed to the search for alternative media in the context of a country with stringent media regulatory laws. The proliferation of such news outlets like Baba Jukwa speaks volumes about the media environment in the country in which they occur. The case of Baba Jukwa thus 'epitomises the efficacy of citizen journalism' (Mujere & Mwatwara, 2015: 223).

Media(ted) News in Zimbabwe and the Rise of Alternative Digital Media

The popularity of use of social media as a form of citizen journalism in Zimbabwe, as is the case with many other nations, can largely be attributed to the need to counterbalance 'regulated' information flow controlled by a dominating non-democratic hegemony. In other words, such popularity arises from the need to challenge 'the elitist dominated domestic public sphere into a sphere where ordinary citizens interact among themselves and those in power.' (Mpofu, nd: 1). Up until around 2013, when the government seemed to ease up, the media regulatory framework in Zimbabwe has been regarded as one of the most draconian in the world, comparatively. Zimbabwean political evolutions from the year 2000, in which the then ruling political party, the Zimbabwe African National Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF), led by incumbent president Robert Gabriel Mugabe faced the strongest possible opposition ever to its traditionally 'one party state' hegemony from the Morgan Tsvangirai led Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) culminated in a serious gag on the media. Regarded as the fourth pillar of states, the power of the media in influencing public opinion, and by extension, political and social change must never be undermined. The high proliferation of a diversity of free speech and opinions is anathema to the sustenance of despotic political hegemonies. In the face of serious opposition, ZANU-PF realised that the control of the media was key to its continued survival. Stringent media regulating statutes such as the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA) and the Public Order and Security Act (POSA) we promulgated. Such laws, together with previously existing laws such as the Official Secrets Act (OSA) and the Broadcasting Services Act (BSA) made it nearly impossible for the freedom of expression to thrive. Unrestricted by the gags of such constraints imposed by such media laws, as well as the use of a nom de plume which did not require registration with the powers that be, Baba Jukwa provided a counter narrative to the ZANU PF government propaganda. In essence, the popularity and success of Baba Jukwa was chiefly due to the fact that it was nearly impossible during this period to register new newspapers and radio stations as the then ZANU-PF led government was bent on maintaining its grip on power by regulating the flow of information. In the face of this, there was a high rise in the births of web based 'newspapers' as a form of alternative digital media in Zimbabwe. Web based news publications such as www.newzimbabwe.com, www.myzimbabwe.com, www.zimonline.com and www.thezimbabwean.com among others represent such. Many Zimbabwean began looking up to these for more diverse reportage of news from and in Zimbabwe. The embracing of these digital web based alternative forms of news can be credited as having played a critical part in Zimbabweans' embrace of the 'new' trend of citizen or participatory journalism. Mujere and Mwatwara (2015: 216) opine in this regard that, '…Zimbabweans have reacted to the narrowing of the democratic space by resorting to subterranean methods. Thus…a narrow media in Zimbabwe incubated the rise of citizen journalism'.

It became more clear that the majority if Zimbabwean began to use the internet not only as consumers but rather as 'prosumers' of information. 'Their status as 'prosumers' gives them freedom, power and a voice to speak up to authority and generate content. The internet offers an alternative digital public sphere where ordinary citizens meet and discuss issues they would not ordinarily discuss in government controlled public spheres because regimes of control have made discussions of these taboo topics impossible. In addition, the fact that public media stifle vibrant debate that speaks against state programmes, means people will forever be in the dark. To circumvent this, the internet, as a forum for power, voice and self-expression, has made it possible for debate and tensions between the elite and ordinary people to be experienced in a typical Habermasian public sphere fashion online' (Mpofu, nd: 7).

So restricted was the free flow of information in Zimbabwe that several subjects, such as the President's health, ZANU-PF party politics and political processes such as corruption as well as the presidential succession and national political process such as elections were taboo to report on freely and 'objectively'. Instead, they could only be 'properly' reported on by the state controlled media (both broadcast and print). Because of the need for counter narratives from those of the 'despotic' ZANU PF government, there was need to (re)formulate new ways of dispersing information to the general public. 'A broad range of activities by the populace under the banner citizen journalism has also been deployed to counter the state metanarrative and of course in some cases to affirm it. Thus citizen journalism has played an important role in shaping political attitudes, altering the boundaries of political interaction and bringing into existence new methods and channels for resistance since the build up to the 2008 elections and 2013 elections' (Mujere & Mwatwara, 2015: 216).

Citizen Journalism as Alternative Media and Public Sphere

Citizen journalism has for some time been a very difficult phenomenon to define and ascribe parameters to. In other words, the definition of citizen journalism does not have completely settled boundaries (Lasica, 2003). Bowman & Willis (2003: 9) believe citizen journalism to be 'the act of a citizen, or group of citizens, playing an active role in the process of collecting, reporting, analysing and disseminating news and information. Citizen journalism refers to the concept of an active audience in a new dispensation in which journalism has evolved significantly to cater to an audience equipped with the ability to not only consume but also produce media content. Citizen journalism appears thus, to be about 'a set of practices that are embedded with the everyday lives of citizens' (Atton 2002:267). Citizen journalism seems to capture something of a countervailing ethos of ordinary person`s capacity to bear witness especially during a social or a political crisis (Allan 2009:18). Citizen journalism is redefining the whole essence of journalism. Technological innovation has indeed enhanced the work of citizen journalists the world over though contrary to popular belief the concept is not entirely new (Mutsvairo, 2012). Citizen journalism can largely be viewed as an outgrowth of the internet and new media, which have given the readers opportunities to contribute to news production, not as just readers but also producers. Social and technological forces are pushing the field of journalism to evolve, and as it moves forward, a re-evaluation of what journalism should look like is occurring (Gillmor, 2004; Merritt & McCombs, 2004).

Citizen journalism empowers the audience in such a way that they are no longer mere receivers but participants as they are platforms to debate issues released by the citizen journalist. Moyo (2011) notes that in Zimbabwe citizens are no longer helplessly bombarded with messages by mass media but instead are also actively producing news and initiating news flows among themselves (Moyo, 2011:10). The approach of professional journalism adopted on the coverage ensures the representation is clinical in its narration of the facts while simultaneously conveying both manifest and latent meanings that largely falls within the mainstream global framing (Chuma, 2005). Before the emergence of new media technologies so called deviants or dissidents had their grievances aired by foreign media organisations such as BBC; CNN; VOA (Chuma, 2005:3). 'The intent of this participation is to provide independent, reliable, accurate, wide-ranging and relevant information that a democracy requires'. Largely viewed as an outgrowth of the internet and new media, citizen journalism is argued to have provided the readership prospects of contributing to news production, not as just readers but also producers.' The concept itself has been defined in many ways and within different parameters. Goode (2009) opines that 'Citizen[ship] journalism' refers to a range of web-based practices whereby 'ordinary' users engage in journalistic practices. Citizen journalism includes practices such as current affairs-based blogging, photo and video sharing, and posting eyewitness commentary on current events. Sometimes the term is used quite broadly to include activities such as re-posting, linking, 'tagging' (labeling with keywords), rating, modifying or commenting upon news materials posted by other users or by professional news outlets, whereby citizens participate in the news process without necessarily acting as 'content creators'. Commenting on the advent of citizen journalism, Papacharissi (2009: i) opines that 'journalism is in the middle of sweeping changes in its relationships with the communities it serves, and the audiences for news and public affairs it seeks to address. Changes in technology have blurred the lines between professionals and citizens, partisan and objective bystanders, particularly in the emerging public zones of the blogosphere.'

According to Domingo et al (2008) "Participatory journalism seems to add another dimension that questions previous boundaries—and definitions—of professional journalism'. The borderline that separates professional journalists and their audience seems to be blurring (Bruns 2005; Jenkins 2006). Citizen journalism as referred to as 'Network journalism' 'might well change the relation between the journalists and their public in a fundamental way that affects the profession as a whole; its major characteristics as we have pointed out before seem to reflect clearly a shifting balance of power between information suppliers and users' (Bardoel et al). 'Journalism is carried out in specific institutional circumstances, within concrete organisational settings and under particular technological conditions. The advent of cyberspace will inevitably impact on the factors which shape how journalism gets done - and may well even colour how we define what journalism is' (Dahlgren, 1996: 60). Ruellan (2007: 3) observes 'that the expression 'citizen journalism' is problematic. It assigns too great a responsibility for certain media or individuals to bear and why them, and not others? Sometimes the term participatory journalism is used. This is a more neutral, operational expression. While it is less emotionally charged, it also reduces the phenomenon: users simply contribute to media output dominated by professional journalists, whereas certain sites … are completely managed by associate web users.'

The public choice of the digital media arises from the need by the populace to seek alternative truths from those relayed by the dominant elites. Burton (1990) contends that, the fact that news organizations set up an agenda of topics as well as ideological positions for reading them from that form, 'opposes the idea that news is somehow a collection of truthful events and facts from 'out there.' This view is also expressed by Fairclough (1995) who argues that media texts do not merely 'mirror realities' as is sometimes naively assumed, but 'they constitute versions of reality in ways which depend on the social positions, interests and objectives of those who produce them'. This shows the link between media representation and ideology. According to Baran (1998), '[n]ewspapers tell readers what is significant and meaningful through their placement of stories in and on their pages.' Hall cited in Griffin (1991) notes, in line with this observation, that the primary function of discourse is to make meaning and that meaning in influenced by the intentions of the person(s) who generate(s) it.

Hall, cited in Griffin (1991), contends that 'it is folly to divorce communication from the cultural context in which it is found and ignoring the realities of unequal power distribution in society'. Gramsci's concept of 'hegemony' expresses the link between the cultural aspects of social life and ideology. According to Fairclough (1995) 'hegemony' is a term used by Gramsci and others for describing power and struggles over power. He further maintains that 'hegemony' emphasizes forms of power which depend upon consent rather than coercion and is sustained ideologically. Burton (1990):261) argues in this context that, the media have the effect of 'endorsing the dominant ideology, the dominant view of power, relationships between groups in society, the dominant view of how thing are run.' Burton (1990) argues that the media is an important part of hegemony. He also maintains that media professionalism is tied up with the values that inform the organization such that in this sense professionalism becomes ideological. Fairclough's (1995) sentiments suggest that, hegemony is sustained in the common sense assumptions of everyday life. Burton (1990) reinforces this view by suggesting that, 'what hegemony does is to naturalise ideology itself, and all the values and beliefs built into ideology.'

The effect of the naturalisation of the dominant ideology is that it becomes invisible. This explains why people tend to believe what they hear from the media without questioning it. The media has the muscle to change the perception of the public on different issues. 'The media affect our beliefs, attitudes, values and behaviour directly or indirectly' (Burton 1990). Habermas' concept of 'the public sphere', while largely biased towards notions of democracy, is also fundamental in shedding light on this power of the media. What Habermas terms 'the bourgeois public sphere' consists of social spaces where individuals gather to discuss their common public affairs and to organize against arbitrary and oppressive forms of social and public power. The essential principle of the public sphere was open discussion by members of the public in order to reach a consensus on issues affecting them for the public good.

This 'public sphere' is contemporarily represented by the media since they remain the major arena facilitating maximum public participation and debates over key issues affecting the public. The media provide(s) evidence of political events, issues and activities, thereby enabling us to understand the operation of politics in our society and to work more constructively in that political process (Burton, 1990). The implications of this are that the media promote(s) participatory democracy. This view of the role of the media is consistent with what, according to White (1997) is the claim made by journalist themselves that the news report is 'an objective, neutral and impersonal mode of meaning making'. Burton (1990) opines, however, that the evidence given by the media on political events gives us the illusion of participating in the political process, but actually merely endorsing the authority of those who continue to run over our lives unquestioned. He goes on to argue that the media are capable of mobilising public opinion by raising issues that the public may not have thought of and they can also suggest a way of looking at those issues. As such, the media are capable of shaping public opinion about political events and issues. The goal of citizen journalism in this context is to challenge such hegemonic forms of media use by dominant classes.

The public sphere is understood as a assemblage of communicative spaces in society that authorize the circulation of information ; ideas ; debates ideally in an unfettered manner and also the formation of political will (Dahlgren 2005:148). The public space created by the internet offers an interactive media which serves to aid communicative links between citizens and the power holders of society (Dahlgren 2005:148). Habermas who coined the term public sphere defined it as an interactive space. Habermas`s imagination of the public sphere was very discriminatory since it excluded women; poor men and children. According to Habermas, the public sphere only accommodated elite men`s views. This research, however, utilising the works of Habermas and other scholars who have written about the public sphere, demonstrates how the internet has created a public sphere. The public sphere consists of three dimensions: structures; representation and interaction (Dahlgren 1995). The structural dimension directs our attention to classic democratic issues such as freedom of speech; access and the dynamic of inclusion and or exclusion (Dahlgren 2005). The structural dimension points to society`s political institutions which serve as a sort of "political ecology" for the media and set boundaries for the scenery of the information and forms of expression that circulate (Dahlgren 2005:149).

A society where democratic tendencies are weak does not give rise to healthy institutional structures for the public sphere which in turn means that the representational dimension will be inadequate (Dahlgren 2005:149). Therefore, in such a scenario the internet comes up to pave a way for citizen journalism which is more participatory and independent. The citizen participation is ignorant to media laws and ethics and there is no need for 'journalists' to have academic qualifications in journalism. This research examines the role of the citizen journalist in the 'new public sphere' and how the citizen journalism is a 'voice' and public sphere for the oppressed and repressed. Habermas and Dewey (1954) argue that a 'public' should be conceptualised as something other than just a media audience. Habermas and Dewey argue that publics exist in discursive interactional processes in the public sphere. The advent of the internet has taken a major historical step by ensuring that the public sphere goes online thus the public sphere becomes more accentuated (Lewis 2001).

The public sphere is a vital part of social organisation and it can be understood as a precondition for structuring society (Saxer, 2005: 24). This research argues that the Baba Jumwa Facebook wall made possible by the internet became a public sphere in Zimbabwe which gave and continues to a 'voice' to the citizens and allows for the proliferation of free and unrestricted speech. It has to be noted that as a public sphere, Baba Jukwa and others exponentially grew to be of central importance to the Zimbabwean citizenry as an alternative source of news. The Baba Jukwa wall, as public sphere became 'an open forum for communication' (Neidhardt, 1994: 7). The public sphere has a system of communication where issues and opinions are being gathered, processed and then passed on (Neidhardt, 1994:8). Habermas notes that the discursive model of public sphere sees a purpose of public sphere in rational decision making through public debate and learning processes which structure the basis for communication processes and rational decision making. Popular sovereignty is ensured by, public opinion which is the output of the public sphere (Habermas 1992:209).

The arena model identifies different arenas of public sphere which are formed by issues and opinions, observers and persons involved such as speakers, intermediaries and recipients actively participate in diverse arenas and levels of public sphere (Donges 2001:108). Theories on democracy view the public sphere as a precondition for providing information and therefore as a precondition to enable formulation of will (Dahl 2000:37). I will use the democracy views of the public sphere to see how the internet plays a role in liberating the voices of the subaltern on the blogosphere. This research incorporates the representative liberal and participatory liberal theory of the public sphere as ideal models were by the representative model tends to exhibit a strong emphasis on the elite (Rucht, 2002:295).

Zimbabwe's Media[ted] News, Media Laws, and the Digital Alternative Media

The media regulatory laws in Zimbabwe have made it nearly impossible to 'realistically' practice as a journalist, as long as one was not sympathetic to the ZANU-PF 'national' cause. For over a decade now, a period spanning from the heavily disputed 2000 harmonised plebiscite in which ZANU-PF faced the hugest opposition ever in the history of the Zimbabwean nation state, the Zimbabwean media platform has been largely characterised by severely stringent media regulatory laws that made it nearly impossible for other players outside government controlled media to effectively and realistically participate. Realising the 'damage' that the power of the privately owned press such as *The Daily News* and *The Daily Mirror* had inflicted on its 'one party' political hegemony, the ZANU-PF led government embarked on an exercise to tighten media regulatory laws on Zimbabwe, in the process nipping off all the chances of private players coming into the play. Led by then Minister of Information and Publicity, Professor Jonathan Moyo, the ZANU-PF government promulgated into law some of the most draconian laws in the country, laws that equalled a serious gag on the freedom of expression and the free flow of information through conducive operating environment for the media. The passing of AIPPA and POSA witnessed severe restrictions on the operations of the privately owned media. The laws made it a near impossibility to register their publications as well as journalists. Moyo (2006: 81) commenting on this condition an show it help birth the rise of reliance on digital alternative media in Zimbabwe opines that,

Restricted democratic space has spawned a multiplicity of alternative public spheres that enable groups and individuals to continue to participate and engage in the wider debate on the mutating crisis gripping the country since the turn of the century…the diaspora are creatively exploiting new media to resist state propaganda churned out through the mainstream media.

Zimbabwe`s political arena has been a site of contestation with citizens having little or no freedom of speech due to fear of repression from the Central Intelligence Organisation; Police and the army. For example many citizens fear expressing their views because they fear the wrath of the Central Intelligence Organisation which is believed to have silenced political activists suspected of being anti the establishment and have schemed against people who were against the Mugabe led regime. Likewise the mass media is also controlled by the draconian laws such as AIPPA and BSA thus they cannot air their views freely. In this case the internet has plays a pivotal role in exposing the evils of the government, with citizens playing the role of the journalist. The internet has become a space for the citizens to air their views. Zimbabwe has seen the emergence of many political commentators using pseudonyms for example Mai Jukwa and Baba Jukwa on Facebook. Social media is a virtual public sphere created by alternative media. It can also be conceived of as a counter hegemonic tool which seeks to challenge or question political and cultural control of the masses by the elite but also demystify the ruling elite`s social engineering that is usually projected as natural and common sense by the mainstream media.

In an environment that does not promote media plurality and the proliferation of free speech and critical thinking such as the Zimbabwean environment of recent years, Mpofu (nd) envisions the internet and by extension citizen journalism as some extension of Habermas' public sphere. Habermas (1989: 73-74) defines such a public sphere as,

[A] realm of our social life in which something approaching public opinion can be formed. Access is guaranteed to all citizens… with the guarantee of freedom of assembly and association and the freedom to express and publish their opinions—about matters of general interest.

The policing of the media in Zimbabwe through all repressive means including the Central Intelligence Organisation (CIO), the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) and often times the military itself has resulted in a high proliferation of online news media aided by the internet. An important observation is that from the nascence of alternative digital media practices in Zimbabwe, most journalists on these web based news media have been able to communicate and report on issues and matters they would not normally do in Zimbabwean media houses. Also, we notice that most of them were journalists based in the country and reporting in most instances under *nom de plumes* who saw the internet as a means to report on these issues freely and without fear. In other words, in the Zimbabwean context,

The internet is credited for simultaneously enabling the user to exercise the right to freedom of expression through receiving and disseminating information, ideas and opinions visually or phonetically to large audiences at the lowest possible cost. Also, this evolution of technology has caused global dramatic changes in the field of journalism. Of particular interest…is how this alternative digital public sphere *offers Zimbabweans an avenue to discuss a taboo subject in Zimbabwe without fear or being reprimanded by the secretive and authoritarian state. The 'taboo' in this context refers to issues that the state does not want discussed in public like the president's health, genocide, Zanu-Pf factionalism or succession debate and state sponsored corruption… (Mpofu, nd: 1)*

It is within this context that we observe that the power of social media as citizen journalism cannot be underestimated. The contributions that bloggers and social media actors such as Baba Jukwa have made as an alternative form of news must never be overlooked. New media technologies, in this digital age, and in Zimbabwe in particular, have influenced political changes. The new media technologies have influenced social and political change in Zimbabwe by the use of social media platforms. Social media in its various forms has drawn international attention to Zimbabwe during the most intense period of the Zimbabwe crisis up to 2008 (Mhiripiri and Mutsvairo, 2013). Mhiripiri and Mutsvairo (2013) argue that social media activism in Zimbabwe can also be credited for contributing to the formation of the 2009 – 2013 political dispensation of a Government of National Unity (GNU) between ZANU PF and the two factions of the opposition political party, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC). The increased use of the new communication technologies has helped to publicize extra-legal activities and human rights abuses often blamed on Robert Mugabe, ZANU-PF, affiliated militia groups and the security forces which led to diplomatic intervention (Mhiripiri and Mutsvairo, 2013).

Within the Zimbabwean context, citizen journalism especially in social media, the likes of Baba Jukwa, has become alternate space and practice were the civic virtues and freedoms of ordinary people in authoritarian regimes find expression (Moyo, 2014). Citizen journalism practices imply a paradigm shift from citizen as just political membership based on a codification of rights and responsibilities to citizen as discursive, deliberative, dialogic and transformative space and identity (Moyo, 2014). Citizen Journalism recasts citizen as a practice of freedom and a medium of communication that allows ordinary people to tell their stories (Moyo, 2014). According to Mutsvairo (2012), conventional media in Zimbabwe is still sceptical about the prospects of embedding the works of the citizen journalists into mainstream packages. Mutsvairo, notes that in as much as they operate on their own, citizen journalists have thrived further underscoring the perceived democratic value of citizen journalism. Mutsvairo, notes that the emergence of new media technologies has led to participatory journalism.

Baba Jukwa, Journalistic Ethics, and the Implications of Media Regulation in Zimbabwe

Observing the contributions that Baba Jukwa as citizen journalism has made towards the realisation of the freedom of expression ideal in 'democracies', it is imperative that one assess the ethical issues and regulatory problems such forms of 'journalism' present. Citizen journalists, the infamous Baba Jukwa included, have been and will continue to be criticised for lacking transparency especially by choosing to remain anonymous when they publish or broadcast their work (Mutsvairo, 2012). Citizen journalists often do not have by lines and therefore they are criticised for lack of credibility as it becomes difficult for anyone to be made accountable for any forms of ethical violations such as the 'reporting' of 'half-truths', biases and a refrains from one of journalism's canons of 'objectivity'. One must not deny the need for a proper regulation of the flow of information, the need for accountability and transparency. However, as Mutsvairo (2012) argues, Zimbabwean mass media has often been associated with no by lines as journalists fear victimisation. Bowman and Willis (2003:7) coined the term participatory journalism as an act of citizens playing a pivotal role in the process of collecting; reporting; analysing and disseminating news.

While indeed '…it is impossible to ignore the dominance of an emerging new form of journalism characterized by rapid reporting, interminable interactivity and ubiquitous multimedia content sharing and customization. Indeed, digital technologies have had a profound effect on the way news content is perceived, produced, shared and analysed…Produced in a matter of seconds, news can be shared instantly across the world, with the supremacy of citizen-inspired content becoming an overriding feature of contemporary news production' (Mutsvairo, 2015: 1), it would be folly to ignore the regulatory imperative. Gerry L. Dickert, editor of the *Silsbee Bee*, quoted in Lewis, Kaufhold & Lasorsa (2010: 8) and commenting on citizen journalism as a phenomenon opined that the newspaper's editors and reporters 'have to control the content…. We have a good idea of what's newsworthy based on our experience…. When you have people who are not professional journalists they don't have a grasp of the ethics involved…. You risk diluting the news to hearsay and gossip…. If you (a journalist) and I do a story, we talk to at least three sources. When we print something, we know it's as close to the truth as possible (but) when you have a citizen who has a gripe about the police department, that's going to be as much opinion as fact. It affects the credibility of your organization.'

Of course one needs to also acknowledge the reasons for the need for secrecy and anonymity in citizen made necessary by the conditions that propagate its rise. Because citizen journalism in the Zimbabwean context arose from the need to provide counter narratives to the propagandistic nature of the state controlled media, and the need for anonymity arising from the desire to protect themselves from repressive state apparatus one could understand them. An example would be how the ZANU PF government so much desired to identify the individual behind the Baba Jukwa wall. The Robert Gabriel Mugabe led government went as far as offering a US$300 000.00 reward to anyone able to expose Baba Jukwa. This then signals how much of the 'truth' Baba Jukwa was revealing and how far the ZANU PF government would go to 'hide' such 'truths'. It also gives one an idea of how powerful citizen journalism really is and how justified citizen journalists are in remaining anonymous.

However, be that as it may, one cannot overlook the ethical and legal violations that citizen journalists make. Much of the ethical violations are largely of 'objectivity'. Most of what constitutes citizen journalism is largely opinionated. While commonly referred to as citizen 'journalists', it not clear whether such people are indeed journalists. Due to the opinionated nature of content produced by citizens (Nah and Chung, 2009), citizen journalism cannot be considered "journalism". Keen (2007) opines that citizen and professional journalists cannot work hand in hand because the former does not leverage ethical issues such as neutrality and objectivity, which form the foundation of the latter's reporting. Since they do not adhere to accuracy, independence or autonomy, fairness, transparency, professional responsibility and objectivity (Kovach and Rosenstiel, 2001), citizen journalists cannot be classified as "journalists" (Mutsvairo, 2015: 3). Citing Carr *et al*. (2014), Mutsvairo (2015: 4) argues that citizen journalism while certainly having its own problems, it evidently provides a powerful opposing narrative to traditional journalism. New research has also shown that, with professional journalism fast losing its credibility, citizen journalism has gained momentum

Brown (2005) draws a clear distinction between citizen and professional journalists, suggesting that while trained journalists are obliged to respect some journalistic principles such as accuracy and fact-checking, citizen journalists do not have specific ethical standards guiding their conduct. With this distinction in mind, one can appreciate why citizen journalism has been subjected to intense scrutiny over ethical concerns. (Mutsvairo, 2015: 4). A key characteristic of citizen journalism, depending on geographical location, could, as already confirmed by Brown (2005), be the absence of journalistic ethics. That means, for instance, that news can be instantaneously produced and distributed, with no facts checked or verified. While some bloggers may willingly verify some of the news they publish, fact-checking is not a prerequisite for entering the largely self-regulating blogging world. The problem is, when facts are not properly and carefully checked, empowering readers with truthful and accurate information becomes an impracticable task. 'Participatory media production in general and the notion of user-generated news in particular present philosophical and technical challenges to the professional logic of journalism. This is especially true as reporters and editors take on and operate within their role as gatekeepers for public knowledge' (Lewis, Kaufhold & Lasorsa, 2010: 5-6). Davis McAuley, editor of the *Bastrop Advertiser*, quoted in Lewis, Kaufhold & Lasorsa (2010: 8), provides a good concluding remark to citizen journalism and the need for regulation when he said of citizen journalism, 'It does not make any sense. News is meant to be reported professionally, not through some random citizen…. Journalism is a profession and it cannot be done by anyone.' While offering a very pertinent service as alternative media and a public sphere, the regulation of information flow is pivotal to the sustenance of journalistic ethics. It is quite unfortunate that such a control mechanism in Zimbabwe through the security forces and with regards to Baba Jukwa seems to be driven more by political will and not ethical considerations. Just a discord between the need for professional journalistic conduct and political will continue to haunt and torment professional journalistic practices in Zimbabwe.

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Chapter 17
Deferring Citizens' "Right to Know" in an Information Age:
The Information Deficit in Namibia

William Edward Heuva
North West University – Mafikeng, South Africa

ABSTRACT

Namibia is one of the emerging democracies that have not yet enacted the Access to Information legislation. While the country has guaranteed freedom of expression and media in its constitution, it has not provided for Access to Information as a constitutional right. This chapter seeks to examine Namibia's reluctance to adopt an Access to Information legislation. It interrogates views that locate the omission of this fundamental human right in the country's constitutional (legal) and policy frameworks. It underscores the failure by Namibia to reverse the information black-out suffered under the Apartheid dispensation. The chapter starts with a theoretical/philosophical rationale for the right to know to elicit an understanding of this discourse and its relevance to emerging democracies, such as Namibia. It then examines attempts by state and civil society to introduce the legislation in the country. Predicted on praxis, the chapter in conclusion provides some suggestions that may help resolving the impasse in adopting the Access to Information legislation in the county.

It is our considered view that the Freedom of Information Act will not only buttress the Bill of Rights but will critically enhance good governance, as it will bring the actions by both public and private bodies under closer scrutiny. This, we believe, can only enhance the quality of our democracy. Democracy by its nature is an open process driven by its citizens. And an informed citizenry will make for better interlocutors. It is for these reasons that we view Freedom of Information Act not as a stick to beat the Government with but as a centre piece in the armoury of an accountable government. (Tsudao Gurirab, 2012)

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INTRODUCTION

African governments have enacted two pieces of legislation during the last few years: one authorising them to intercept their citizens' communication 'lawfully' and the other seeking to empowercitizens with the righttoaccess information held by public and private bodies. Namibia ranksamong the noticeable few that have delayed adoptingan Access to Information (Freedom of Information Act) law, while it is one of the early states to legislate a legal instrument that seeks to 'lawfully' intercept citizen's information (Heuva, 2012).

Interestingly, Namibia which ranked among the first African nations to convert to 'neo-liberalism'at its independence from South Africa in 1990had been reluctant to embraceone of the core tenets of liberalism, notably the principle of the right to information forits citizens.The country adopted a liberal constitution, hailed as one of the best in Africa at the time of its adoption. The constitution embraces most of the basic human rights and freedoms. As a result, Namibia was seen in the 1990s as a beacon of hope among the post new dispensation African countries due to its liberal constitution. In 1991 shortly after Namibia's independence, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) opted to hold its conference on the promotion of a free, independent and pluralistic media in Africa, in Windhoek, the country's capital city. The subsequent Windhoek Declaration culminated in the inauguration of the World Press Freedom Day (3 May) by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly.

Furthermore, the country enjoys an impeccable human rights record, and its media ranks among the most free in Africa and the world.Economically, Namibiahasalso been doing relatively well. The country has been rated as one of the best performing economies in Africaby major global economic institutions, including the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in recent years. The country's former president, Hifikepunye Pohamba, (2005-2015) received the 2015Mo Ibrahim Award in good governance in Africa.But despite all these accolades the country had been reluctant, for the past quarter of a century since its independence from Apartheid colonialism, to adopt a legislation that allows citizens access to information.

The foot-dragging has meant that the state became less open in its operations, earning it the title of one of the "most secretive states" in southern Africa (Media Institute of Southern Africa [MISA], 2010, p.53). Initsrecent reports on the level of openness and secretiveness of governments and public institutions insouthern Africa, MISA notes on Namibia that "secrecy still remains entrenched in Namibia's government and public institutions" (Media Institute of Southern Africa [MISA], 2010). The 2010 MISA study, which was a follow up to the one done the previous years, revisited the openness of the Namibian government and its institutions. It targeted nine public institutions and measured their openness against international best practice and the right to information principles (Media Institute of Southern Africa [MISA], 2010). While acknowledging 'progress' made in terms of openness compared to the previous year (2009) the report notes that Namibia still has a long way to go before achieving openness and transparency in its government and institutions. The MISA report adds:

The current landscape for requesting public information feels like the futile attempt of shooting in the dark with near none chances of hitting the target. Without procedures of how the public can access information, silence is the tool being used to deny the public information as most written requests are literally ignored and go unanswered despite having officials designated to handle public information requests. (Media Institute of Southern Africa [MISA], 2010 p.10)

It is generally acknowledged that the citizens' needto access information is based on the principle of the 'right to know', which is further based on the right of direct access to public information, including direct access to state information. This 'right to access information' is not limited to the media (practitioners), but it is a right of the broader society (Sénécal, 1995, p.12). While the concept freedom of expression traditionally focuses strongly on the media practitioners and professionals, the 'right to information', in contrast, favours the interests of the receivers of information. The result is that this right (to information) demands "a legal framework other than that being built around the principles of the freedom of expression" (Sénécal, 1995, p.14).

The principle of the right to know compels democratic governments to provide information on request by the public (citizens). Governments possess vast amounts of information, which they gather as well as generate. Furthermore, governments exercise control over this information in terms of state secrets, national interests and certain privileges. In addition, governments use various measures to control this information, including:

... losing, hiding, or destroying information, foot-dragging in response to requests for information, and evasiveness in answering questions, on occasion government officials have resorted to lying. The flow of information is also not only controlled by such withholding techniques, but by ... 'leaks' and 'background reports'. (Sénécal, 1995, p.113)

The notion of the 'right to know' and the 'free-flow of information' are premised on the strong links that connect communication to democracy (O'Neil, 1998, p.1). For a society to function effectively its citizens have to be enlightened in order to become knowledgeable about crucial issues affecting them and their society. Thus information must flow relatively freely.However, at the bottom of all this, is the need for citizens to have a right to information, which is a basic human right, as we shall see below.

This chapter seeks to document the right of access to information discourse in Namibia. It examines attempts and shortcomings with regard to the adoption of the right of access to information. More particularly the chapter interrogates the government long delay in the implementation of the access to information law, and the reasons for the delay. It also examines the factors that compelled the government to ultimately decide to introduce the draft freedom of information legislation. The chapter further discusses efforts as well as the shortcomings of civil society in its campaign to promote the adoption of the right to information law in the country. It starts with a theoretical/philosophical rationale for the right to access information to elicit an understanding of this discourse and its relevance to emerging democracies, such as Namibia. Finally the chapter highlights important features of the proposed freedom of information Bill and the draft revised information policy of the country, which the government released for public input almost 17 years later after Cabinet took a decision to enact the right to know legislation.

Theoretical Understanding of the 'Right to Know'

Proponents of the right to information (RTI) discourse have maintained that this freedom (of information) is a basic human right (Mendel, 2008).Human rights are the rights that people have because they are human beings. They are the "norms that help to protect all people everywhere from severe political, legal and social abuses" (Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, 2005, p.14). There are core concepts, everywhere, which define the idea of human rights, notably:

Human rights are the rights that one has simply because one is human. They are universal and equal. Human rights are inalienable. They may be suspended, rightly or wrongly, at various places and times, but the idea of inherent rights cannot be taken away. One can no more lose these rights than one can stop being a human being. (US Government, n.d.)

Rights are "entitlements (not) to perform certain actions, or (not) to be in certain states; or entitlements that others (not) perform certain actions or (not) certain states". Most rights "entitle" their holders to freedom in some sense" (Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, 2005, p.21). Holders of the rights are free in one or more ways. There are "active incidents", which entitle right holders the *freedom to* act in certain ways; and the "passive incidents", which protect holders of the right the *freedom from* undesirable actions or states" (Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, 2005, p14, emphasis in original).

The idea of human rights is drawn from works of early philosophers among them Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) and John Locke (1632 – 1704). Other important sources of human rights are Bills of Rights such as the *Magna Carta* (1215), the *English Bill of Rights* (1689), the *French Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen* (1789), the *Jefferson's Declaration of Independence* (1776) and the *Bill of Rights of the United States* (1791) (Ivester, 1977). In recent times human rights are inscribed in international (and regional protocols), including, Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; Article (2) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; Article 9 (2) of the African Charter on Human an Peoples' Rights; Article 13 (1) of the American Convention on Human Rights and Article 10 (1) of the European Convention on Human Rights.

John Locke (1632–1704) and Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) arecredited for having contributed to the concept of human rights. Their work informed the American and French political documents (Bills of Rights). John Locke's understanding of human beings'as "natural rights" (rights of life and liberty and estate) in a "pre-political state of nature" made an immense contribution to the liberal political philosophy, in terms of the conception of individual rights and limited government (Forde, n.d.). This (liberal) tradition is founded on individual rights, private property and the limited government. John Locke has argued that people form societies, while societies set up governments that are responsible for protecting peoples' "natural rights". The government, according to him, must be seen as a "social contract" between the rulers and the citizens. The citizens are only obliged to show allegiance to the government if it protects their rights. Thus, the government can only be legitimate if it honours and protects the citizens' rights. Moreover, these rights may even have precedence over the interests of the government (see Sabine and Thorson, 1973, pp.478-499; Forde, n.d.).

Furthermore, David Michel Ivester (1977) tells us that the liberal democratic (political) systemis predictedon a self-governing people and not on two (separate) groups: the rulers and the ruled, like in an authoritarian system. People assume the authority to exercise control while at the same time they are subject to control. In such a situation the government is established and maintained by consent of the people, while it has independent powers to compel the people to obey the laws (Ivester, 1977). In reference to the American political system, he (Ivester, 1977) notes that this is a "two-fold system, which "... firstly the government must be designed as a self-regulating system; second, the people, apart from the government, must exercise their inalienable power to oversee and discipline the government". Thus, this system is based on the concept of a "balance of power", which does not entrust "absolute power to no one". In addition, the people in this system are sovereign, and exercise their inherent power to make and unmake governments". Thus, people delegate some powers to government, while reserving all remaining rights and powers. This explains the liberal concept of a 'limited government' (Ivester, 1977).

In this political arrangement the people retain the right to know what the government is doing with the (limited) powers allocated to it by the citizens. The right to know is very critical for citizens because knowing governmental affairs provides an enormous potential for "counteracting the power" that the government enjoys as a result of its possession and control of information (Ivester, 1977, pp.112-114). The word 'to know' is very critical in this regard. To know, means to be "cognizant of, to be acquainted with, or to have a concept of in the mind" (Webster's Third International Dictionary 1252, P. Gove Ed. 1971 as cited in Ivester, 1977, pp.109-110). David Michel Ivester notes that the concepts of freedom of speech, freedom of information, the right to receive information, the right to gather information, and the right of access to government information "are all related to, and part of, the right to know, but it is the desired end 'to know' that is important". For him:

Only with knowledge can the people truly have a will to which the government can be accountable. The right to know, like all enduring constitutional principles, cannot be defined as if it were only a word in a dictionary. It must be allowed to grow and evolve with the circumstances. Perhaps at one time the right to receive information from an unrestrained was adequate; in a more complex society the right to know may impose upon government an affirmative duty actively to inform the public in the absence of prior requests for information. (Ivester, 1977, p.110)

In addition, David M. Ivester (1977) proposes three "political foundations" on which the concept 'right to know' can be explained. The first, relates to governance in democratic states. He argues that democratic governance demands leaders to be responsible and responsive to the will of the people. However, for the will of the people to have "validity" and for them to function as a "rationale electorate' they need to have "adequate knowledge of what their government is doing". Thus, without such knowledge the citizen cannot participate effectively in governmental processes or hold their government accountable for its actions (pp.115-116).

The second foundation relates to the nature and structure of self-governing systems. David Mitchel Ivester maintains that sovereign people have an inherent right to know what their government is doing. This right to know "is implicit in the inalienable power of the people to make and unmake governments. Drawing from John Locke's insights, he maintains that this right is never forfeited to the government, but remainsone of the "constitutionally protected un-enumerated rights retained by the people" (p.117).

The third draws from theories of popular sovereignty and government by impact. In terms of this idea the concept of the right to know is recognised as a corollary to the government's limited power to withhold information sovereignly and it would be irrational for the government to deny citizens information without which power may be abused (p. 118).

In democracies, the free flow of information is critical, since citizens must have access to information to make informed decisions, while those who make decisions (policies and laws) must also have access to information upon which to base their decisions (p. 109). Finally, David Mitchell Ivester reminds us that the right to know encompasses the right to receive information from "willing sources, to gather information from willing or neutral sources and to acquire information from a perhaps unwilling governmental source". Despite this, he emphasises that the 'right to know' is not absolute, as it is sometimes limited by the need to further compelling national interest (Ivester, 1977).

Having established the theoretical/philosophical rationale for the right to information, in the section below we will examine the emerging 'paradigm shift' in the discourse of the right to know.

Shifting Focus: From Human Rights to Economic/Commercial Rights

There is an apparent shift being experienced around the focus on the right to information discourse. Increasingly, the focus of this discourse is predicted on the need to combat corruption in public life and slightly away from issues of governance and democratic participation of citizens in their governments. This is despite the fact that the right to information initially emerged as a liberal policy based on liberal political ideals. More concern is being placed on 'corruption' in the public and private lives in the commercial arena and relatively less attention is paid on non-commercial imperatives in the political and social lives of the people. It is because of this shift that the attention of many African states is currently on the establishment of 'anti-corruption' bodies and less on thecreation of the human rights commissionsand other similar institutions to promote citizens' right-to-know. Little isdone to advance and consolidate citizens' participation in the democratic life of their nations. To this effect, African governments have been eager to establish the so-called anti-corruption commissions that are set to stem the tide of corruption while relegatinghuman rights issues to the back door.

Powerful donor agencies, countries and international and regional financial institutions have promoted the adoption of anti-corruption regime (measures) on poor and vulnerable developing nations. Multilateral agreements and conventions have also played a role in the adoption of the anti-corruption instruments. In terms of Africa, the following agreements have been crucial to many African states: Article 9 of the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption and Article 10 (a) of the United Nations Convention against Corruption. Namibia is a signatory to both these agreements that oblige a country to adopt access legislation as a tool to fight corruption (Mohan, 2012).

Interestingly, the Pan African Conference on Access to Information (PACAI) Declaration signed in Cape Town in September 2011 supports the idea of Access to Information as a tool to fight corruption. Article 11 of this Declaration's "Application of Principles" states:

By contributing to openness and accountability, Access to Information can be a useful tool in anti-corruption efforts. Besides ensuring that Access to Information legislation is effectively implemented, governments have a duty to guarantee a broader legal and international framework conducive to preventing and combating corruption. (cited in Mohan, 2012, p.9)

In the midst of this development the dominant discourse around this shift has tended to maintain that the move has broadened the focus of Access to Information beyond narrow political issues to touch on economic and social questions. African nations seem to have been converted to this new gospel. For instance, there is said to have been "growing consensus in a number of African countries" that Access to Information is critical to stem corruption (Mohan, 2012 p.9). There might be a grain of truth in this as the majority of countries that have adopted Access to Information legislation during the last two decades were those that experienced waves of corruption (Roberts 2010 as cited in Mohan2012). Karen Mohan (2012, p.11) in this regard argues:

It is clear that Access to Information not only affects the right to freedom of expression, but also affects Namibia's economic growth, its promotion of democratic principles, the socio-economic rights of the citizens, as well as the fight against corruption amongst many others.

The commercial imperative in this development is advanced by the anti-corruption group among them, Transparency International. Foreign investors, international financial institutions and donor communities have been the prime proponents of the anti-corruption agenda. Shekhar Singh (n.d.), for instance, maintains that multilateral donor agencies have been credited with pursuing governments, more especially in the developing world, to set up transparency regimes. This was given as a condition attached to the sanctions of loans and aid. Thus, only those nations with transparent governance can be recipient of donor funding and loans from Western financial institutions. It is because of the insistence of funding organisations on transparency that this concept became the dominant one at the turn of this century. To this effect, the concept "transparency" was named the "word of the year" by the Webster's Dictionary in 2003 (Singh, n.d.).

Despite the popularity of the anti-corruption discourse, we are reminded that the right to information is much broader than anti-corruption issues. For instance, the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI) on the right to information maintains that the "key tool for the public at large is to participate directly in the democratic processes of their government and hold public bodies and their functionaries accountable to their actions" (CHRI, 2007, p.2).

An examination of the right of access to information in Namibia cannot be attempted without examining the country's policy and legal frameworks. The section below therefore seeks to locate the discussion on the freedom of information legislation within the policy and legal architecture of the country.

Namibia Information Policy Provision

The origin of Namibia's liberal constitution must be traced back to the 'negotiated political settlement' (Bauer, 2001) that ushered in the independence of the country. This process was sealed as a 'package' containing 'constitutional principles', which set the contours within which the country's constitution would be drafted and within which the country's major institutions would be established or be transformed (Saunders, 2001). These guidelines informed the constitution of the country and subsequently major economic and public policies, including the country's information policies. The constitutional principles were proposed by the Five Western members (USA, UK, Canada, Germany and France) of the UN Security Council that since 1978 assumed the responsibility to solve the protracted question of Namibia's independence. The guidelines recommended the adoption of a liberal political system, based on multiparty democracy, adherence to the rule of law, the separation of powers among the legislature, executive and judiciary, the adoption of the *Bill of Fundamental Rights*, the adoption of a free market economy and the protection of private property.

The most important of these constitutional provisions relevant to this chapter is the *Bill of Rights* covered in Article 21 of the Constitution that conforms to the liberal tradition. The *Bill of Rights* guarantees fundamental freedoms of which Sub-Article (1) (a) provides for freedom of speech and expression, including freedom of the press and other media (Republic of Namibia, 1990, p.13). Recognising that freedom of expression or freedom of media is not absolute, the *Bill of Rights* provides parameters within which these freedoms should be exercised. Set out in Sub-Article (2), these parameters comprise issues necessary in a democratic society. For instance, interests of the sovereignty and integrity of Namibia, national security, public order, decency or morality, or in relation to contempt of court, defamation or incitement of an offence" (Republic of Namibia, 1990, p.14).

Namibia's first information policy, adopted in 1991, draws from these liberal notions in its attempts to lay down the basic principles and norms of the entire information/communication sector. It defines the freedoms, roles and functions of this sector, by clarifying critical questions of freedom of expression, press freedom, access to information, free-flow of information, media ownership and control, infrastructure expansion, among others (Heuva, 2010). In addition, this policy acknowledges key elements of freedom of expression including the right to access information, especially information on public affairs. However, two shortcomings must be noted here. Firstly, the policy was not backed by legal instruments to facilitate its implementation, and thereby rendered it toothless. Secondly, and most importantly, the definition of Access to Information in this policy points to information that the government wants the citizens to know and not necessarily information that the citizens want (Heuva, 2010, pp.74-77).

The country's first information policy was revised in 2007 for the first time. The revised policy provides renewed commitment to the freedom of information and goes a step further in calling for the constitutional right to information (MISA, 2010; Mohan, 2012). However, the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI) in its comments on this policy maintains that the revised policy, like its predecessor, still places emphasis on the "dissemination of information that the government believes the people should know" (CHRI, 2007, p.3). In addition, the CHRI argues that the revised policy is more of a media policy and proposes that an "additional policy document be drafted that would address the right to information as a separate issue in its own right. It suggests that it sets out clearly identified roles, strategies and timelines for the drafting and implementation of the Freedom of Information or Right to Information Bill" (CHRI, 2007, p.2).

The CHRI further notes that while the revised policy makes reference to "proactive disclosure" it does not make this aspect its critical feature. It maintains that the notion of proactive disclosure is more than what governments decide to make available to the citizen, as it entails the provision of "specific categories of information public institutions must make known to the people without waiting for it being asked for" (CHRI, 2007).

In this regard, the CHRI recommends that concepts of "access to information" or "freedom of information", in the revised policy, be replaced with the "right to information". This would arguably "ensure that implementing bodies are clear that access to information is not a discretionary gift granted to the people by a benevolent government, but rather it is an internationally mandated obligation on the Government, which must implement the corresponding right" (CHRI, 2007, p.4).

The CHRI further advises government that the right to know legislation should be informed by principles that go beyond issues of combating corruption. It urges the government to consult a wide range of civil society organisations (including media, human rights formations) in the process of drafting the right to information legislation. In fact, the CHRI calls for a 'participatory law-making process, which would allow the emerging legislation to be "owned" by both the government and the public/citizens' (CHRI, 2007, p.5).

The government did not only take nine years before reacting on these recommendations, but when it eventually responded or acted on them, it did so selectively. It ignored some while accepting others. Nevertheless, the government produced a draft right to know legislation and then released this for consultation with 'stakeholders'. There was no consultation process prior to the drafting of the legislation, while the post-drafting consultation process was confined to a small group of 'stakeholders'. Some critics argued that the consultation process should have started earlier and that it should had been open to the general public and not only the so-called 'stakeholders' (see The Namibian, 2016, p.11).When this author requested a copy of the draft legislation during the week of the 'consultations' with 'stakeholders', he was told by a Director in the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology (the sponsor of the legislation), that he would be provided with the copy of the draft legislation *only* after the workshop at which the consultation took place. However, this author has not received the copy of this legislation by the time he finished drafting this chapter (31 July 2016).

Having examined Namibia's policy and regulatory (legal) framework in which attempts at the right to information were made, we now proceed to review the statues of information in colonial Namibia, which the new policies and legislation sought to change.

A Legacy of Colonial 'Information Black-Out'

The Apartheid state was secretive and did not entertain the notion of the right to know. Instead information flow was restricted and controlled. The state ensured that a host of legal instruments inhibited freedom of expression and the free flow of information. These laws imposed severe restrictions directly on the gathering, production and dissemination of information (Louw, 1993), and indirectly through self-censorship on the part of the media organisations (Oosthuizen, 1989, p.45). In this context the Namibian media during the colonial time, operated within a legal environment deliberately aimed at curtailing and controlling freedom of expression and free access to gathering and dissemination of information (Mulongeni, 1998 cited in Heuva, 2010, p.78). The initial information policy sought to redress this situation. As indicated above, this policy embraced the notion of free-flow of information to eliminate the 'information blackout' created by the Apartheid government's restrictions imposed on the gathering, production and dissemination of information. Despite this noble objective the policy did very little to address this situation in concrete terms, as indicated above.

It is instructive to note some of the Apartheid's legal instruments that adversely affected the access to and free flow of information in both South Africa and Namibia. Sections 3, 4, and 5 (2) of the Protection of Information Act, 1982 (Act 84 of 1982), for example, restricted media practitioners from gathering and disseminating information freely by prohibiting the dissemination of what was regarded as classified information related to security matters and thus restricting access to crucial information by citizens (Stuart 1990, 150). The Defence Act of 1957 (Act 44 of 1957), the Police Act of 1958 (Act 7 of 1958), the Prison Act of 1959 (Act 8 of 1959), and the Internal Security Act of 1982 (Act 74 of 1982) also prevented the media to report freely on matters relating to the coercive 'state apparatuses' – the army, police and prisons, without obtaining prior permission to do so from these coercive state apparatuses first (Herbstein, 1985 cited in Heuva, 2010, p.78).

In addition, the Defence and the Protection of Information Acts controlled the free flow of information between the 'war zone' and the outside world (Herbstein 1985 cited in Heuva, 1993, p.96). As a result the northern part of Namibia, dubbed the "operational area", where Swapo waged "low intensity" guerrilla warfare, became a no-go area for media practitioners during the years (between 1966 and 1989) of the armed liberation struggle for freedom. Any information obtained in northern Namibia had to be cleared with the defence and other security apparatuses before it could be disseminated (Heuva, 2010, pp.77-78).

As noted, censorship was another impediment to the realisation of the twin issues of access to and free-flow of information. The Publications Act, 1974 (Act 42 of 1974) for instance forced the media into self-censorship. Specifically, Section 47 (2) of this Act prohibited the publication of material that was deemed to be either indecent or obscene or offensive or harmful to public morals; or blasphemous or offensive to religious convictions and feelings (ibid.).

The legislation also prohibited the publication of materials that would bring a section of South Africans (and South West Africans) into ridicule or contempt; harmful to race relations and prejudicial to safety of the state. Given the above-mentioned strict criteria, a number of media organisations in both colonial Namibia and in Apartheid South Africa, resorted to self-censorship (ibid.).

The restrictive environment sketched above made it difficult, if not impossible, for the free flow of information and for access to public information. With the media gagged and the state operating in secrecy, there were no spaces open that could flourish as vital and critical platforms for freedom of expression. The result was a denial of citizens' basic right to access information and thereby, undermining any possibility for a democratic culture to take root in colonial Namibia.

While the post-independence government initially sought to change this restrictive media environment it was caught in some contradictions related to the realisation of the ideals of the 'right to know' and the 'free flow of information'. These contradictions include among others: the failure by the new government to adopt the right to information instruments and also the failure to speedily repeal and/or amend all apartheid laws as well as the government's tendency to adopt similar restrictive laws. While the failure to adopt the right to access information legal framework will be outlined later (below) in the chapter I would like to highlight a few pieces of legislation that are still on the Namibian statutes that are seen by civil society organisations to have continued pre-empting the free-flow of information and preventing the adoption of the right to information law.

The United Nations Security Council Resolution 435 that ushered independence to the country made provision for the repeal of discriminatory and repressive Apartheid laws. Other similar laws were left to be repealed by the new government. However, Article 140, Paragraph (1) of the Namibian Constitution insists that "all laws which were in force immediately before the date of independence shall remain in force until repealed or amended by an Act of Parliament or until they are declared unconstitutional by a competent court" (Republic of Namibia 1990, 79). However, despite this constitutional provision a host of Apartheid laws have remained on the statues for a number of years after independence. Among the remnants of the colonial period that have had direct impact on the discourses of the 'right to know' and 'free-flow of information' was the Protection of Information Act, 1982 (Act 84 of 1982). Section 4 of the Act prohibits public servants from disclosing government-related information. The objective of the Section is to safeguard national security by protecting state secrets. However, civil society activists have argued that Section 4 impedes access to information as it provides "excessive wide-ranging limits on access to official information" (Kandjii, 2004, p.57).

Another Apartheid legislation that continues constraining the free flow of information in post-colonial Namibia is the Criminal Procedure Act, 1977 (Act 51 of 1977). Although some of the provisions of this Act were amended by the Criminal Procedure Amendment Act, 2003 (Act 24 of 2003), Section 205 was not amended. This Section gives powers to judges and magistrates to compel any person (including journalists) to reveal sources of their information, at the request of the public prosecutors. It could thus undermine the journalistic practice of maintaining the confidentiality of sources and have a negative impact on the right to access information (Heuva, 2010, pp.80-82).

As hinted earlier, some post-independence laws adopted by the new government had inclinations of curtailing freedom of expression as well. Of particular importance to the right to access information is the Defence Act of 2002 (Act 1 of 2002), which is generally modelled on the Apartheid Defence Act of 1957(Act 44 of 1957). Section 46 (1) of the 2002 Act creates punishable offences for the disturbance, interruption, contempt, ridicule and disrepute of military courts, while Section 54 (1) prohibits any person from publishing or broadcasting any information seen to endanger national security or the safety of defence force members. Sub-paragraph (3) of this Section makes it an offence to disclose any secret or confidential information relating to the defence force (ibid.).

Also, attempts were made in 1996 and 1997 by Namibian lawmakers to curb freedom of expression by proposing restrictive provisions into the draft Powers, Privileges and Immunities Bill (1996/1997) (Staby, 1997). These provisions not only sought to compel citizens, including journalists, to reveal sources of their information to parliamentary standing committees, but also to prohibit journalists from interviewing parliamentarians on matters that still needed to be tabled in Parliament. However, lawmakers were forced to withdraw these provisions from the Bill because of pressure from civil society organisations (*The Namibian*, 22 September 1997, p.3).

In addition to the laws just mentioned, Karen Mohan (2012, p.7) provides a list of other restrictive legal instruments in Namibia that in her opinion interfere with both the freedom of expression and the right to information. These are laws that need to be repealed or amended to pave the way for the enactment of the freedom of information legislation:

1. Namibian Broadcasting Act 1991 (Sections 4(2) and 5 interfere with broadcasting independence).
2. Public Service Act 1997 (Article 25) prohibits civil servants from releasing information without prior permission).
3. Namibia Central Intelligence Service Act (overboard limitations).
4. Namibia Film Commission Act 2010 (secrecy provisions).
5. Defence Act 2002 (Article 54 stretches limitations far beyond the boundaries of permissible restrictions on Access to Information with regards to state security).
6. Communications Act (Part 6 provides for interception and monitoring of citizens 'private' communication).
7. Research, Science and Technology Act of 2004 (requires any individual or group intending conducting research to seek permission from the government-appointed National Commission of Research, Science and Technology, and thus stifles freedom of expression and access to information).

As can be seen from this discussion, the Namibian government has not successfully addressed impediments to the free-flow and access to information in the post-independence era. While it has tried to abolish restrictive legislation to ensure free flow of information, it has at the same time relied on some old laws as indicated above. However, and as we shall see below, the government in June 2016 produced a draft access to information document (Bill) to the surprise of many and invited 'stakeholders' for consultations on this document. Before addressing aspects of this draft legislation and the dynamics that forced its introduction, let us first examine earlier attempts and shortcomings experienced with attempts to introduce an access to information legislation in the country.

Namibia's Attempts at the Right to Information

Namibia's first attempts at Access to Information legislation happened in 1998, about eight years after the independence of the country and relatively earlier than the subsequent flood of attempts by African states experienced at the start of the new millennium on the African continent. But despite this relatively early attempt (by African standards) it was only about 18 years later that the government produced a draft access to information legislation and a draft revised information policy for discussion with stakeholders. Many African governments that started the process much later than Namibia already adopted their freedom of information legislation by the time Namibia produced its first draft legislation. These nations include among others South Africa (2000), Angola (2002), Zimbabwe (2002), Uganda (2005), Ethiopia (2008), Liberia (2010), Guinea-Conakry (2010), Tunisia (2011), Niger (2011), Nigeria (2011) and Rwanda (2013) to mentioned but a few (IDRC Communications, 2012, p.2).

In 1998 the government hosted a consultative conference with stakeholders where it announced the decision to adopt a freedom of information legislation. A year later (in 1999) Cabinet at its 4th ordinary session in March 1999 decided that the Freedom of Information Act should be passed and constitutional amendments be made to facilitate this process (Republic of Namibia, 1999). Following from this decision the Office of the Prime Minister together with other government offices and ministries including the Office of the Attorney General and the MICT, initiated exploratory work with regard to the drafting of the Freedom of Information Bill (Elliott, 2008). It took another four years before government could comment again on its initiative. This happened in August 2012 at a conference organised by a local pressure group, Action Coalition Group (ACTION), consisting of media advocacy and civil society organisations united in their attempts to force the government to adopt the freedom of information legislation.

By the end of 2015 the country obtained a mere one point rating by the MISA for its lack of progress in implementing the Pan African Conference on Access to Information (PACAI) resolution calling for the enactment of the freedom of information legislation across Africa (MISA, 2015). This is not an indication that the country has been slow in the process of implementing the legislation, but an indication that the country has not even started the process. However, despite the reluctance in implementing its own Cabinet decision of 1999, the Namibian government is on record to have acceded (and or ratified) numerous conventions that contain provisions of right to access information. Thus, the country had been therefore under obligation to ensure compliance with them. Four of these conventions are instructive here:

1. Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) of which Article 19 states:

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers. (as cited in Louw, 2004, p.6)

2. International Convent of Human and Peoples' Rights (ICCPR), Article 19 (2), reads:

Everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression, this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of his choice. (Louw, 2004, p.8)

3. African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights of which Articles 9 (2) provides that:

… every individual shall have the right to express and disseminate his opinions within the law. (Louw, 2004, p.9)

4. The Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression in Africa provides Access to Information in Article IV, which states:

… public bodies hold information not for themselves but as custodians of the public good and everyone has a right to access information, subject only to clearly defined rules established by law. (African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, 2002, p.2)

The Declaration further provides principles in terms of which the right toaccess information would be guaranteed in law.

This is a contradiction the state has faced and it can be ascribed to a lack of political will of those holding political office. In the section below we will examine another contradiction experienced in terms of the direction adopted to address the question of the right to access information.

Anti-Corruption Agenda

The quest for access to information can be understood from two interlocking directions: as a good governance tool and an important anti-corruption tool. Due to a number of factors (some discussed in this chapter) the government's focus on the right to information shifted from good governance and human rights, to one of pre-occupation with the rooting out of corruption – a concern with material issues. What is interesting and sometimes ignored by critics of the Namibian government is the fact that at its 1998 consultative meeting the government spelt out clearly the two directions it intends to undertake with regard to the right to information, notably: one of an anti-corruption legislation and the other the Freedom of Information legislation (Elliott, 2008). However, while the government presented both directions, it could only move on one – the anti-corruption route. Thus, the anti-corruption initiative took more precedence compared to the human right perspective in this respect. The state managed to set and control the policy agenda, including the practical implementation of it. It shifted the focus of policy to the anti-corruption rationale and civil society was not bold enough to advance human right imperatives of the right to access information.

The declaration by Namibia's post-independence second president, Hifikepunye Pohamba, to root out corruption in public and private sectors, after taking office on the 21st March 2005, gave more impetus to the anti-corruption drive. The government enacted the Anti-Corruption Act in 2005 and subsequently appointed the Director and the Deputy Director to head the Anti-Corruption Commission. Nevertheless, the institution of the Anti-Corruption Commission rekindled hopes for the adoption of the freedom of information legislation as after its inauguration the Commission immediately became vocal on the adoption of a legislation that would protect whistle-blowers. While the media waited for the legislation with abated breaths, this did not happen.

It can be seen that it was an easier option for the government to enact an anti-corruption legislation and establish the Anti-Corruption Commission. Being so, one is tempted to ask why not the enactment of the Access to Information Act and the establishment of an Access to Information Commission or Commissioner? Why would a government opt for an anti-corruption direction and ignore an equally important aspect such as human rights? It is not difficult to establish why the government opted for the anti-corruption route. A casual glance reveals that African governments find it easier to rush to economic issues than political ones. Economic issues such as corruption do not only scare investors, but prevent governments from accessing loans, grants and other financial and economic resources from the powerful Western nations and institutions. But African governments survive on politics, even if they have bad human rights records, as some African governments can testify.

Namibia's concentration on anti-corruption issues while snubbing human rights must be seen in this broader context. Despite the African state's preoccupation with anti-corruption ('economic') issues to the detriment of human rights ('political') issues, the emerging perspectives are geared towards the balancing of these two imperatives. Below efforts by civil society on promoting the right to information in Namibia are examined.

Attempts by the Civil Society

The civil society in general was passive with its activities confined to media events, such as press statements and media conferences at which mere calls were made for the introduction of the Access to Information legislation. While some civil society organisations participated in earlier 'consultations' with government on freedom of information, these 'consultations' were dominated by the state and thus the direction moved towards concerns of anti-corruption and the protection of whistleblowers. There was no concerted effort by civil society organisations to rally the citizens around the issue of right to information. While the media was the most active part of civil society organisations campaigning for the right to access information, its concerns were more informed by the desire to have the right of whistleblowers recognised and legislated (protected) by the state, for obvious reasons for the media.

It was only after the Pan African Conference on Access to Information (PACAI) conference in Cape Town in September 2011 that some Namibian civil society organisations set up an umbrella body called ACTION (Access to Information Namibia) and kick-started an 18-month campaign for the introduction of the freedom of information legislation. This move came as a result of the PACAI conference recommendation to set up pressure groups in each country and to campaign for the introduction of the freedom of information legislation. But in Namibia this campaign remained confined to the media and failed to make any impact on the broader society, the beneficiary of the right to information.

The campaign also started almost after a full year following the Cape Town conference. Its launch was an occasion characterised by hosting prominent South African media and human rights personalities, who were invited to present their views of the issues related to media and human rights in Namibia. There were no concrete activities aimed at mobilising the broader society. Thus, very few ordinary people were involved in these media events and conferences where foreign 'experts' were invited to talk on experiences in their respective countries.

Finally it must be re-emphasised that civil society organisations in general have not been effective in mobilising the citizens to rally behind the right to information. The fact that this issue has not reached the national agenda is testimony to this, and this can only blamed on civil society. It is perhaps not wrong to argue that many civil society groupings had very little impact on the question of the right to information. Freedom of information is an issue that has enormous impact on the entire society. It is a societal or national issue and should not be confined to small groups of people whom some members may not be well informed about the impact of such issues on the broader society.

Failure to take the right to information to a national level has resulted in the undermining of this issue by the state. It has created a loophole exploited by the state in undermining both the issues and those behind it. The state could not have ignored this issue for long had the people (the citizens) mobilised themselves and unitedly supported the idea. The state dismissed this question as an issue promoted by 'foreign interests', while moving to implement the anti-corruption one, which is equally promoted by foreign governments and financial institutions.

Shortcomings of Both State and Civil Society

To understand the shortcomings, the reader is invited to look at observations made by two prominent agents of the Namibian civil society. One is a renowned academic and public intellectual, Prof André du Pisani, and the second is an esteemed independent but liberal research entity, the Institute of Public Policy Research (IPPR). Du Pisani (2007, p.10) has on a number of occasions lamented the Namibian civil society's "failure to turn freedom of expression and access to information issues into national issues". The IPPR in its 2014 report on investment has blamed the government for a lack of political will to "achieve certain goals". It argues that the failure of the government to implement adopted policies, is its "perennial problem" (2014, p.7). These two issues are, in our opinion, at the core of the delay in the adoption of the Access to Information legislation, and not the lack of constitutional or legislative measures as was popularly claimed. Thus, the delay and failure to implement the Access to Information legislation must be ascribed to both the state's lack of political will on the one hand, and the civil society inactiveness and failure to place the right to access to information on the national agenda, on the other hand.

Popular perceptions have it that the lack of Access to Information law in Namibia should be attributed to the lack of a constitutional provision for access to information. For instance, Karen Mohan (2012) in her study on the need for an Access to Information law in Namibia, commissioned by the IPPR, under its Anti-Corruption Programme in 2012, concludes that the failure for adoption of Access to Information was due to the lack of constitutional provision. While claiming that there were a number of factors limiting the adoption of such legislation in Namibia, she only identifies one – "current legislative framework". This, she argues was not "conducive to facilitating the right of citizens to access information by virtue of the fact that there is currently no Access to Information law in place in the country". She goes on to explain that while the constitution of the country guarantees "freedom of expression", it does not provide for the right to access information (ibid. p.1).

This explanation does not help us much. Laws are made by people, and that is why parliamentarians are elected. Perhaps we need to explore further why those elected are not doing what they have been elected to do. This may bring us closer to the reason why amendments have not yet been made to facilitate the enactment of the Access to Information legislation. The attitude of those elected and appointed to ensure the implementation of government policies and the enactment of laws need to be examined, if we need to understand why government has not implemented some of its human rights related policies, including its 1999 decision to enact the freedom of information legislation. However, the political leaders have been on record for denying accusations of lack of commitment to implement this long-delayed decision.

It is perhaps suitable to examine the views of a senior government official, who at one time was entrusted with the portfolio of the Minister of Information and Communications Technology. As a person entrusted with the functions of producing and disseminating government information, and also government's chief spokesperson, the MICT minister was at that time the right person to express government views on the enactment of the freedom of information legislation. In response to an accusation that government was dragging its feet on the implementation of Access to Information legislation, former minister, Joél Kaapanda, in a statement, read on his behalf by the chief administrator of his ministry, at the opening of the conference launching the ACTION campaign, dismissed these accusations. In response Kaapanda is quoted as having said:

Access to Information goes hand in hand with some major administrative arrangements, which must facilitate legislative access. Having an Act on Access to Information is not enough to ensure public access to information... Proper filing and retrieval systems have to be in place to ensure that requested information can be found and availed. In order to facilitate legislation on Access to Information, the Office of the Prime Minister has embarked on an electronic documentation and records management system in all ministries, government-owned offices and state-owned institutions... This project is at an advanced stage, and several government-owned institutions are already using the system to ensure better information and management retrieval...However, until such a time that the Namibian Government is convinced that the accompanying administrative processes are in place, it will not just jump into legislating Access to Information, just for the sake of having a legislation on its books. (New Era, 2012, p.3)

The comments of the minister are focused on what is called the supply side of the freedom of information legislation. Reading through Joél Kaapanda's comments one sees a similarity in arguments raised in debates in the House of Commons (United Kingdom) at the same time, on the reform of Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Members of the House of Commons lamented that debates on the reform of FOIA were focusing on the "demand side of the FOIA", while neglecting the "supply side issues". Among the Conservative benches were demands for a more focus on matters of record management and the archiving of information rather than on questions of demand for information. Kaapanda advanced the same rationale as the Conservative members of the UK House of Commons in his speech.

It is perhaps interesting to note that the same Kaapanda in 2009 rushed the adoption of the Communications Act (2009) that contains a clause which authorises the interception of citizen's private communication by the state and its agencies through parliament, despite civil society's objections and a National Council Standing Committee having taken in further comments from the public including media institutions. This law was further passed without having 'administrative arrangements' and 'facilities' in place. It came into force without even the 'interception centres' in place, not to speak of regulations that had not been finalised even a couple of years after its adoption. If the government was serious with the adoption of the Freedom of Information legislation, it could have followed the same procedures as it did with the adoption of the Communications Act (2009), by adopting the legislation first and then working on the structures and agencies (institutions) needed by the Act. Or did the former minister not want to repeat that same disastrous experience?

As indicated, the delay in implementing the Access to Information legislation in Namibia is primarily due to a lack of political will from the side of government and the failure of civil society to register the issue on a national agenda and to mobilise society around it. The delay was not about the lack of information on what to do or how to go about doing it. There had been numerous sources available on how to draft the Access to Information legislation. There were even model legislations. Namibia did not need to re-invent the wheel as the cliché goes. The following sources had been available and could have been consulted in when drafting such legislation:

The Public's Right To Know: Principles on Freedom of Information Legislation" (or ARTICLE 19 Principles) published by ARTICLE 19 in 1999. Also "A Model Freedom of Information Law" published by ARTICLE 19 in 2001. In addition there are the "UN Standards", which detail the standards to which freedom of information legislation should conform, and which is contained in the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Opinion and Expression's Annual Report of 2000 (see Mendel, 2008). In "Freedom of Information: A Comparative Legal Survey". Others include the 2002 Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe (COE Recommendations). These recommendations according to Toby Mendel are critical since they contain a list of "legitimate aims which might justify exceptions to the right of access" (Mendel, 2008). Others include the Commonwealth Principles adopted by the Commonwealth Law Ministers in 1999 and the Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression in African, adopted in 2002 (Mendel, 2008).

Eventual 'Adoption' of the Right to Know Legislation

A combination of factors have fast-tracked the finalisation of the right to know legislation in Namibia. Most importantly, the appointment of Namibia to the Chair of the General Council of UNESCO during 2015/ 2016 period and the ministerial targets and deadlines of the Namibia's Harambee Prosperity Plan have played a critical role in the production and release of the draft right to know legislation in Namibia.

The appointment of Namibia to the chair of UNESCO's highest decision making body at the start of the country's fourth administration headed by President Hage Geingob has hasten the adoption of the right to information legislation. The country was placed in a dilemma. Chairing a decision making organ of an organisation that is in charge of the global communication and information sector, and which is at the same time the driving force behind critical human rights including the right of access to information, Namibia had no choice but to embrace and implement all UNESCO's programmes and projects. Occupying such a crucial position (temporary though) Namibia had to be "exemplary in leading the global crusade for an informed citizenry, which should enjoy access to information" according to the country's deputy minister of Information and Communication Technology (Simataaas cited in Tjihenuna, 2016:1). Thus, Namibia was under the obligation to embrace and also lead by example in living-out UNESCO agreements and programmes. To many right to know activists, the nomination of Namibia to the chair of UNESCO's General Council was a blessing in disguise.

Another contributing factor to the hasty adoption of the freedom of information draft legislation has been the Harambee Prosperity Plan (HPP) of the Hage Geingob Administration (see Tjihenuna, 2016). The HPP has been described as an "ambitious plan" that seeks to achieve specific objectives (targets) over a set period (*The Southern Times*, 2016, 1). It is built on five pillars of (i) effective governance and service delivery(ii) economic advancement (iii) social progression (iv)infrastructure development, and (v) international relations and cooperation (Republic of Namibia, 2016: .i) The Plan places access to information at the centre of the delivery of public services. The latter together accountability and transparency are prominent features of this Plan. However, the Plan placed more emphasis on aspects of corruption and the prevention thereof in the public and private lives. It does not directly address issues of citizen's democratic participation in their government. The Plan's "Access to Public Information" strategy is explained as:

To ensure that our citizens have access to relevant Government information, the MICT will develop a Plan for aligning the functions of the Public Relations and Liaison Officers to their core functions of information dissemination before end of June2016. In addition, permissible access to information by the public must also be included in the Plan. (Republic of Namibia, 2016c, p18)

However, an important aspect of the Plan that might have contributed to the release of the right to know legislation is in terms of implementation of government decisions. Under the Plan governments ministries are allocated targets and deadlines for reaching these targets. The urgency to meet some of its targets has forced the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology to finalise the access to information legislation and the review of the information policy. This is the context in which the MICT had rushed the draft freedom of information legislation and the revised information policy. The rush to release these documents has resulted in the lack of proper public consultation prior to the drafting of these documents as well as the poor preparation and presentation of the documents.

Features of the Draft Revised Information Policy and the Right to Know Bill

Both the draft revised information policy and the draft freedom of information legislation touch on crucial aspects of information that are relevant to the freedom of information discourse. Briefly the revised information policy that was released for public consultation in June 2016 acknowledges citizens' right to information and subscribes to the principle of maximum disclosure (Republic of Namibia, 2016a, p.7). The policy fills important gabs that were not included in the first post-independence policy or the 2007 revised policy. The revised policy, while not neglecting the traditional information sector, it also places emphasis on what it calls the "rapid development and convergence of technologies" in the contemporary information and communication sector (Republic of Namibia, 2016a, p.6).

Most importantly the 2016 revised policy covers all aspects of the information and communication technologies and the so-called new media. Drawing from the Ministry's (of Information and Communication Technology) mission statement, the revised policy notes that while Namibia's first Information Policy (1991) defined the role and place of the information sector in the country,

... the emergence of new ways of communication as well as the developments in the Information and Communication Technologies demands new ways of thinking and realignment to new modes of delivering information. This necessitate the revision of the Information Policy (1991) in order to fill-up gaps for new technologies in the process of addressing the information demands in this modern contemporary society. (Republic of Namibia, 2016a, p.4)

Section of 7.4 (Access to Information) of the revised Information Policy addresses the question of right to information of the citizens, and it is therefore very important to this chapter. This section links access to information to the consolidation of democracy and to the stimulation of development in the country. It notes that access to information "allows citizens to gain knowledge and to make informed decisions about participating in the governmental and governmental processes in the country" (Republic of Namibia, 2016a, p.10).

Recalling the 1999 Cabinet decision that first recognises the people's right to information, the revised policy proposes strategies to implement this decision. Some of the proposed policy strategies are to:

1. Draft an access to information legislation,
2. Provide mechanism for the disclosure of information, and the monitoring of freedom of information to ensure that the public is granted access to information as required,
3. Amend Constitution of the country to safeguard access to information
4. Revise of existing laws that militate against access to information and the free press,
5. Draw up an Action Plan to implement the Information Policy with technical assistance from UNESCOs *Information for All* programme (Republic of Namibia, 2016a, pp.10-11).

The draft freedom of information legislation (Bill) on the other hand provides Namibian citizens and permanent residents the right of access to "any record under the control of a government institution or any private body that may assist in the exercise or protection of any right" (Republic of Namibia, 2016b, p.3). The Bill further provides for the responsibilities of both the government and private institutions in terms of the provision of information. It also obliges the Minister of Information to proactive compile on annual basis a list of organisations and type of information they produce/contain. The Bill also provides for various types of requests, issues of access to information and records and exemptions to access. On the institutional framework, the Bill provides for the Office of the Information Commissioner, under Sections 54 to 58, who will be responsible for all aspects of access to information. The Commissioner will be appointed by the President of the country on the recommendation of a Parliamentary standing committee (Republic of Namibia, 2016b, p.35).

As just indicated the Bill introduces an Act that will provides "for the members of the public to access information under the control of public/government authorities or any private body that may assist in the exercise or protection of any right" (Republic of Namibia, 2016b, p.2). As such it does provide of broader legal issues and institutional framework of the legislation. It does not provide much more than that. What are crucial in any piece of legislation are the regulations. The latter places flesh to the bare legal bones. Unless, the regulations are completed and released for public attention, we will not be able to establish effectiveness of the right to know legislation in Namibia. Thus, it is still early to make a fair judgement onthis piece of legislation at this point in time. More public scrutiny and critical research are needed to analyse and critique both documents.

CONCLUSION AND THE WAY FORWARD

The chapter has argued that the long delay before the adoption of the right to know information can be ascribed to the lack of political will by the government and the failure of civil society to seize the policy vacuum created by the state and thereby mobilise society behind the right to know as a basic human right. The government preferred the combat of corruption in public life while downplaying a critical human right, the right to know, which is important for the consolidation of democracy in an emerging young nation, such as Namibia. While the civil society organisations was aware of the nature and scope of the problem, notably the lack of political will by the state to make the necessary constitutional amendment that would pave the way for the enactment of the right to know law, they did not much to pressurise the government into action.

Being a human right issue the right to know needed to be placed on the national agenda. It should have been elevated to a national debate in which every section of society: workers, students, youths, religious and political groupings and everybody could participate. In this way the demand would have become a national one, broadened beyond the narrow confines of media right groupings. The more the issue could have been discussed and debated the more people would have been enlisted for the demand of right to know. Generally, it is at this point that a national issue reaches the level of "political agenda" (see Bardoel and Van Cuilenburg 2009, p.105). Unfortunately, the Namibian right to know policy debate (discourse) did not follow this rationale. After years of delays and lapses from the state and civil society, the government parachuted draft legislation, forced by a combination of dynamics.

However, the release of the draft revised Information Policy and Right to Know Bill does not mean the end of the campaign for freedom of access to information. Citizens still need to be informed and educated on their right to know and how to ago about obtaining information they need in terms of the proposed legislation. In the meantime, these preliminary documents need proper scrutiny, consultation and consensus from all sectors of society and not only from the so-called 'stakeholders'. Both documents highlight issues society need to debate and agree upon. They need not be rushed through because government ministries and departments want to meet deadlines in terms of the HPP. Skimming through these documents shows that there are still more work to be done. Moreover, there is still the important function of constructing the necessary regulations to ensure the practical implementation of both the revised policy and the Bill. It is hoped that citizens would be consulted during the process of drafting the regulations, and not only 'consulted' on the already drafted rules.

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Section 4

Media Literacy

Chapter 18
Digital Competence:
A Net of Literacies

Edith Avni
Toward Digital Ethics Initiative, Israel

Abraham Rotem
Toward Digital Ethics Initiative, Israel

ABSTRACT

This chapter presents a proposal for a conceptual framework of digital competence, which is a civil right and need and is vital for appropriate, intelligent study and functioning in the real world, through means that technology and the internet offer the citizen. Digital competence in the 2010s is a multifaceted complex of a net of literacies that have been updated, reformulated and transformed under the influence of technology. The framework of the digital competency includes eight fields of digital literacies. At the top of the net is digital ethics literacy, outlines the moral core for proper use of technology; at the base are technological literacy and digital reading and writing literacy, comprising the foundation and interface for all the digital literacies, and in between are the digital literacies in these fields: information literacy, digital visual literacy, new media literacy, communication and collaboration literacy and social media literacy. These interconnected literacies compose a synergetic complex of the digital competence framework.

INTRODUCTION

Digital competence (hereafter Dcom) is a right and necessity of humans and citizens, which is fundamental for proper, intelligent functioning in the real world in the 2010s with technological means.

ICT, which has become an almost inseparable part of every aspect of our lives, has vastly changed the ways we communicate, use language, information and knowledge, think and solve problems, work, consume, and relate to culture and leisure. As a result, the knowledge and skills required by every citizen, student and graduate of the education system for coping with daily needs, functioning optimally in society and the labor market, and surviving in the competitive world, have changed. Dcom also comprises a key

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to suitable scholastic skills in the K-12 educational system as well as a basis for acquiring an education and for continual learning and developing throughout life.

Dcom is a complex, multifaceted capability of a complex of traditional, familiar literacies that technology has tinted with digital features, reshaping the current character of literacies and adding new skills that were nonexistent in the pre-digital age. These digital literacies include knowledge, performance skills and high-level thinking skills, viewpoints, and values, for which the common denominator is intelligent, efficient application by digital means and on the internet, in accordance with the needs of the student and citizen in the 2010s.

Dcom refers to almost every aspect of modern human functioning, the intrapersonal aspects alongside the interpersonal ones (Pellegrino & Hilton, 2012). In each of the literacies, functioning moves along a continuum of personal and collective-social context, in which one can discern the rising trend of shared-social use on the timeline. The abilities emphasizing more personal functioning are primarily the technological literacies: digital reading and writing, information and visual literacies. The abilities emphasizing more shared-social functioning are the communication and collaboration, new media, and social media literacies.

The importance of digital competence to digital citizenry as an answer to society's contemporary needs, the business world, and the educational realm, raises the need for modernized conceptualization of its framework. Over the years, corresponding to the incorporation of ICT and socialization in routine life, a variety of digital abilities have been characterized and conceptualized that have focused primarily on technological starting-off points; while the essence of abilities required by the student and citizen are based on traditional literacies that have been refashioned in the technological context. Limitations of these former conceptualizations include focusing on narrower aspects rather than the broad, comprehensive complex of required skills, as well as focusing on technology itself without sufficiently dealing with appropriate, astute implementation for the benefit of humanity and society. Because of the rapid development of technological means, these limitations have led to considerable difficulty in updating required skills in accordance with lifestyle in the digital age.

The conceptual framework proposed here has been constructed with the understanding that digital competence and scholastic qualifications have become integrated, interwoven, imminent essences. In effect, there is *no meaning or relevance today* to learning skills that stand alone outside the context of technology. For the past decade many countries have seen the necessity of giving priority to providing their young learners and older citizens with a digital competence. Initiatives for encouraging digital literacy have been increasing, among them government bodies in the United States (National Telecommunications and Information Administration, 2014) and education committee (The European Commission, 2014), Measuring Digital Skills across the EU (2014) and located at aspects of schools, education systems, and teaching associated (Fraillon, 2014). One such outstanding project is Education 2020 (Cross, Hamilton, Plested, & Rez, 2013), an initiative for young learners, which has been adopted by many countries in the belief that educational systems should not only accept necessary changes but should lead as an ecological and synergetic system, in conjunction with communities and study networks.

The goal of constructing a conceptual framework of updated, digital competence for the 2010s is to analyze and present the essence, terms and content of the abilities needed for complex, multifaceted literacy functioning in the digital age. Such a defined, comprehensive framework will aid in raising public and educational awareness of the topic. We can achieve this by using clear anchors, a common, agreed-upon language and better understanding of the fundamental principles to serve the public and educational discourse with all the relevant factors and components of knowledge literacy, which comprise a basis for setting out a policy for acquisition and implementation of the digital literacies and their integration in educational work.

Construction of an updated Dcom framework necessitates both a critical attitude and intellectual humility with regard to its components and content, owing to awareness of the uncertainty of innovation, change, and dynamic development of the insights involved therein. We must admit that we do not yet actually know how a young person, born into and growing up in the digital age, experiences reality, both cognitively and emotionally, whether by use of devices attached to his/her body or through the digital glass, as a metaphor for the digital landscape. Nor do we know how an older person or "digital immigrant" (Prensky, 2001), in the digital environment and without human support, will experience transparency, accessibility, loss of privacy, instant communication, use of web applications and software, deciphering of digital messaging and so on. Thus, we must be open to reception of new knowledge and skills and abandonment of less relevant or important ones for today's world.

Acquiring digital competence is a dynamic, developing process lasting a lifetime. The challenge of implementing it for both students and older citizens offers developing, spiraling learning by classification of the target communities into levels and emphasis on what is relevant for them. In the educational system, the definition of a conceptual framework offers merging of the dimensions of digital literacy with innovative pedagogy and technological learning environments as is appropriate for the scholastic range and characteristics of disciplines. Dcom, in the same way that it is implemented in the daily routine of life, is integrated into a synergetic system that makes significant, authentic, scholastic progress possible for all learners. This is done in up-to-date study tracks conducted in a variety of ways throughout the day, wherever the student is to be found, as part of managing his/her life in the digital age.

BACKGROUND: FROM LITERACY TO DIGITAL COMPETENCE

The abilities required for optimal functioning of the individual in society change and evolve, according to the period and culture in which he/she lives. The concept of literacy has changed and developed over the years, and today, in the 2010s, it refers to the complex, multi-dimensional facets of competence required for a lifestyle incorporating digital means.

In order to clarify the framework of digital competences, we will distinguish among these concepts: literacy, digital literacy, and digital competence.

Literacy

In times past, the concept of literacy related to the ability required of a person to receive, decipher, create, and disseminate messages of various types, as was customary in the culture and period in which he or she lived. From this traditional perception of literacy, as the command of basic skills like reading and writing, the concept of literacy has broadened and now refers to an "[…] expanding set of knowledge, skills and strategies that individuals build on through life in various contexts, through interaction with their peers and the wider community" (OECD, 2013, p. 9).

In a wider meaning, "The term literacy implies a universal need, a condition that must be met to enable full and equitable economic and social participation. We view literacy as a tool that may be applied to simple or more complicated contexts […]. In its broadest sense, literacy is a dynamic tool that allows individuals to continuously learn and grow." (National Research Council, 1999, p.16).

Digital Literacy

Integration of ICT in daily life has led to the transformation of the concept from "literacy" to "digital literacy". Earlier, narrower definitions of digital literacy stressed the technological aspects, such as: Computer Information Literacy – CIL (Fraillon & Ainley, 2013), Information and Communication Literacy – ICT (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2014a), as well as other concepts such as cyber literacy, electronic literacy, new online social literacy, internet literacy, technological literacy, and mobile literacy (Lee, Lau, Carbo, & Gendina, 2013). Having digital literacy requires more than just the ability to use software or to operate a digital device; it includes a large variety of complex skills such as cognitive, motoric, sociological, and emotional skills that users must master in order to use digital environments effectively (Eshet, 2012). A more comprehensive definition is found in reference to "New Media" literacy (Ito, Horst, Bittanti, Boyd, Herr-Stephenson, Lang et al., 2008; Manovich, 2001) in the sense of access from every digital device, at any time and place, to any platform of content and information, and interactive and creative participation in information in cyberspace.

Today, digital literacy (2014) comprises a broader perception of capabilities required by the digital citizen or student, in a reality in which technology shapes conduct in the life of the individual and society. The distinctions among the various fields of digital literacy have become vague because of the fact that many aspects of digital functioning interface on the screen. The literacies form a net and are no longer separate, but are components of an umbrella of interconnected and overlapping literacies that, together, comprise a freestanding field (UNESCO, 2013). Digital literacy is no longer seen as a technology-focused literacy; rather, technology constitutes a common denominator for a broad net of multifaceted, pluralistic, interconnected, contextual, and dynamic abilities that create a new synergy among themselves (Lee et al., 2013).

Comprehensive description of digital literacy is also offered by Hall, Atkins, & Fraser (2014): "Digital Literacy refers to the skills, attitudes, and knowledge required by educators to support learning in a digitally rich world. To be digitally literate, educators must be able to use technology to enhance and transform classroom practices, and to enrich their own professional development and identity. The digitally literate educator will be able to think critically about why, how, and when technology supplements learning and teaching". While the digital student copes with such an explosion of "information" as data and facts in the public domain, the main issue is constructing the "knowledge," which refers to what we know, how we personally understand it, and how we can apply it.

Digital Competence

Dcom expands the concept of digital literacy into a multidimensional framework of capabilities, which comprises a comprehensive, integrated approach to the essence of the citizens' and students' characters in the 21st century and defines the conditions for his or her optimal functioning in society and culture.

The use of terminology of "competence" is far more extensive than the skills and strategies entailed in a specific literacy. Competence expresses the digital citizen's ability to successfully meet crucial requirements of life in the 21st century in a personal, proactive manner. These complex challenges and tasks, in their ever-changing contexts, require one to recruit and design cognitive and psychological resources (OECD 2002, 2005). The cardinal place of technology in these aspects requires formation of an up-to-date framework in which technology is interwoven in all the components of the net of literacies.

Dcom is defined by The European Parliament and The Council of the EU (2006) as one of the eight crucial qualifications for learning throughout life and participating in the information society. The wide-ranging nature of Dcom described in the document involves "The confident and critical use of Information Society Technology (IST) for work, leisure and communication. It is underpinned by basic skills in ICT: the use of computers to retrieve, access, store, produce, present, and exchange information, and to communicate and participate in collaborative networks via the Internet."

In the report "Digital Competence in Practice: An Analysis of Frameworks," Ferarri (2012) expands on the content of Dcom: "Digital Competence is the set of knowledge, skills, and attitudes (thus including abilities, strategies, values, and awareness) that are required when using ICT and digital media to perform tasks; solve problems; communicate; manage information; collaborate; create and share content; and build knowledge effectively, efficiently, appropriately, critically, creatively, autonomously, flexibly, ethically, reflectively for work, leisure, participation, learning, socializing, consuming, and empowerment."

Dcom should thus be viewed as a whole complex of abilities that are part of the skills of the 21st century, as a key to the skills required by every graduate of the educational system and every digital citizen. Ferrari (2013) states in "A Framework for Developing and Understanding Digital Competence in Europe:"

"Digital Competence can be broadly defined as the confident, critical, and creative use of ICT to achieve goals related to work, employability, learning, leisure, inclusion, and/or participation in society. Digital competence is a transversal key competence, which, as such, enables us to acquire other key competencies (e.g., language, mathematics, learning to learn, cultural awareness). It is related to many of the 21st Century skills, which should be acquired by all citizens, to ensure their active participation in society and the economy."

In Ferarri's report, a framework is proposed of Dcom that refers to the following fields: information, communication and collaboration, content and creation, security, and problem solving. This last includes identifying digital needs and resources, reaching intelligent decisions about adapting tools to a goal or need, and finding solutions by digital means through creative use of technology, such as solving technical problems.

The importance of Dcom is not merely in its capabilities for multi-faceted literacy functioning appropriate for the society and culture in real life, but also for nurturing and training active, critical, young learners who, as they mature, will be aware of the power of this competence and will see it as an important means of expression and empowerment, acquisition of knowledge, development, and consolidation of personal and social-cultural identity, finding suitable employment opportunities and advancement in life.

The proposed framework of Dcom comprises a net of literacies based on updating the literacies valid for every period and context, with the addition of the technological layer, which affects their shaping such as digital literacies, and expands the range of abilities with new capabilities derived from the use of technology.

Ethics as the Core of Digital Competence

Dcom is not only an ability, but also comprises a modern-world view and civil awareness; therefore, at the core of the net of literacies lie the ethics of the digital citizen.

The change generated by ICT is not only a technological revolution, but also a social and ethical change that far exceeds one new technology or another (Bynum & Rogerson, 2004). Digital culture is global; its community is composed of digital citizens; it is fashioned as a complex tapestry of technology, its producers and users, its methods of use, and its social context.

The concept "digital citizen" is a modernized adaptation of the classical concept of "citizen" in the reality of the digital age. "A digital citizen refers to a person utilizing information technology in order to engage in society, politics, and government participation." (Mossberger, Tolbert & McNeal, 2011). Proper citizenship in the society of information and integration in the social communications culture, in which online presence has become an indivisible part of life, dictates ethics as a common denominator that lies at the base of the competences required in order to function in the digital age. Ribble (2014), in his proposal for an outline of the competences required of the digital citizen, emphasized the ethics of REP (Respect, Educate, and Protect) as the core of values and as a starting-off point for the digital citizen.

Dcom is manifested through ethical functioning, both personal and social, of the digital citizen. Included among the *personal* aspects of the ethical use of technology are the values of rectitude, equity, responsibility, credibility, protection of intellectual property, and privacy policy. The *interpersonal* aspects relate to respect for others, sharing, tolerance, and protection of rights such as freedom of expression, as well as values of global ethics such as social responsibility and social conduct that contributes to shared communities. These interpersonal core values are also the moral base for functioning in the global, pluralistic world, in which there are encounters that cross various social and cultural borders, requiring inclusiveness, openness to listening, and tolerance of a variety of opinions and voices. The importance of ethics increases with the expansion of collaborative communities, which break down traditional boundaries and norms, and with the increase in the perception of global sharing and the wisdom of the crowd as a social value and economic asset. Dcom, in this sense, is not a goal in itself but is rather a means of nurturing active citizenship.

Ethics in Dcom is inevitable, because of the adult citizen and the young student coping with a variety of ethical issues arising from the use of technology, which require ethical knowledge and the ability to make moral judgments. On the digital plane in which activity is interactive, public, shared, and social, there are many dilemmas such as property rights and copyrights as opposed to sharing and freedom of information, and freedom of expression as opposed to protection of privacy. The need to strengthen the crucial role of digital ethics also arises from occurrences of negative phenomena entailing exploitation of opportunities that technology presents, among them cybercrime and cyberbullying; these must be eradicated in order to protect the society functioning according to the rules and norms of conduct for the benefit of its citizens (Avni, 2012; Avni & Rotem 2009, 2010; Rotem & Avni 2008, 2010, 2011, 2012).

An ethical-educational perception views ethical literacy as a starting-off point for digital competence and as a transformative means with potential for effecting positive social change and advancing a free, egalitarian, just society. In the net of literacies of the framework of digital competence proposed here, ethical literacy constitutes "super-literacy," which is both situated above the net of literacies and is interwoven among its components.

Dcom can be defined as: *A human and civil need and right, vital for the intelligent, appropriate functioning of the personal, social, and professional aspects in the lives of all the citizens in society in the real world, by means offered in the current era by modern technology.*

CONCEPTUALIZATION OF DIGITAL COMPETENCE IN THE NET OF LITERACIES

General Description

Conceptualization of digital competence currently required for the student and graduate of the educational system is vital for building a basis of knowledge for educational-public discourse, for defining updated goals of education and study, and for characterizing ways of implementing them. In accordance with the above survey and reasoning, a conceptual framework of digital competence is proposed here, in which technology gives modern meaning to the net of literacies needed by the digital citizen and student in the 2010s.

The digital competency framework proposed in this article encompasses eight realms of digital literacies, organized according to the following structure (Fig. 1):

1. *Literacy of digital ethics*, positioned at the top of digital competence and enveloping the net of digital literacies, in which ethics comprises the crucial component of perceptions, viewpoints, and values, essential for suitable application of technology by humans in every dimension of digital competence.
2. *Technological literacy and digital reading and writing literacy*, comprising a functional basis and interface for all the digital literacies included in digital competency.
3. **Fields of Digital Literacies**: Information literacy, visual literacy, new media literacy, communication and collaboration literacy, and social media literacy.

Premises for selecting areas of digital literacy:

1. Inclusion of a complex of abilities needed by the digital citizen and student, required for optimal, suitable functioning in life in the age of ICT.
2. Modernization and adaption of the classical, familiar, pedagogically proven literacies of former times, for relevant needs and emphases of modern digital literacy.
3. Addition of new aspects of knowledge, skills, and values arising from the new technological means and use.

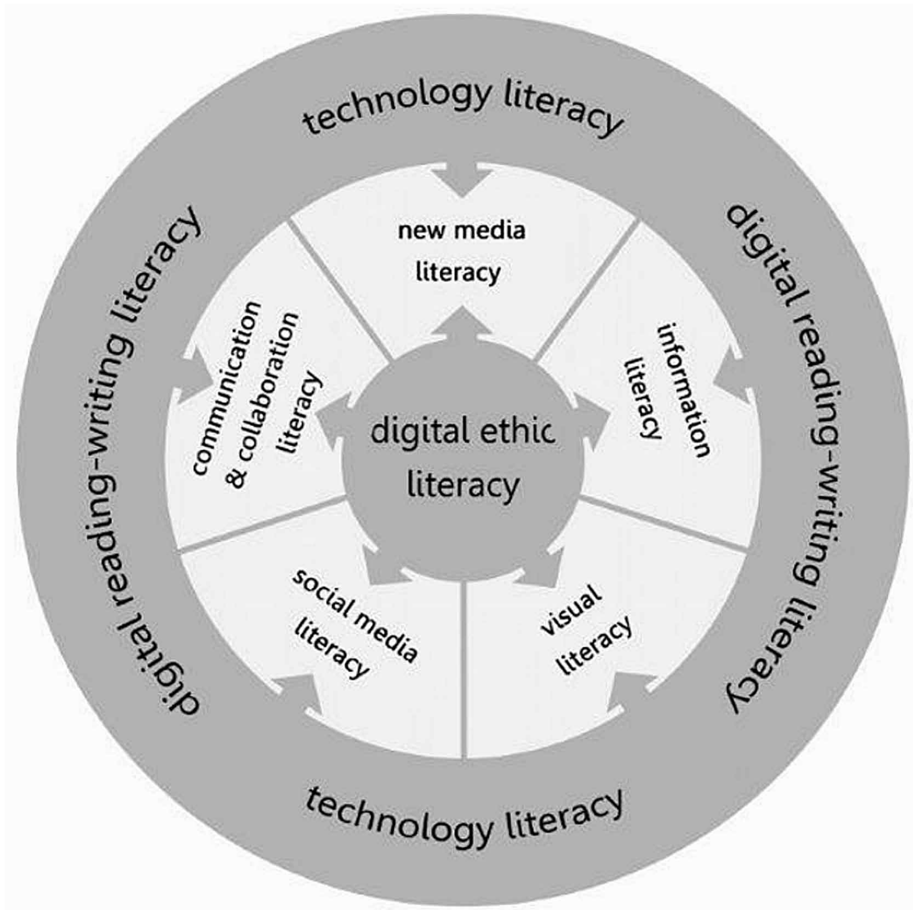
Digital Ethics Literacy

The literacy of digital ethics is the moral-behavioral base of technological use, and is integrated as an immanent part of each one of the other digital literacies.

Digital Ethics Literacy: Background

Digital ethics is a new field derived from an overall view of ethics as an essence and a moral foundation of human society since time began. Characteristics such as accessibility, transparency, interactivity, publicity, and sharing raise new, ethical issues. Principles like freedom of information, freedom of expression, perception of privacy, property, and so forth have become part of the digital citizen's routine in daily life. Digital ethics relates to ethical, responsible, cautious behavior in the digital plane, based

Figure 1. Framework of digital competence in the 2010s



on knowledge of the law, moral values, observation of the rules, awareness of dangers on the internet, and protection rights.

Alongside the benefits that digital means bring the citizen, they also cast him or her into a whirlwind of uncertainty and confusion, set traps in his or her path and expose him or her to injury. Society has not yet found effective ways to deal with these ethical challenges, which cast in doubt the perception of civil and public rights. Thus, it is important to raise awareness of the proper use of technology and to avoid dangers by developing the ability to guard against other people's malicious intentions that might damage a person's body, dignity, reputation, or property.

The foundation of literacy of digital ethics is *ethical literacy*. Ethical literacy is the personal ability of the individual to operate in the routine of his or her life with a conscious, moral standpoint, and to reach ethical decisions made in consideration of his or her obligations both to society and to himself or herself (Avni & Rotem, 2011).

The literacy of digital ethics is the interface between digital literacy and ethical literacy. It includes a complex of abilities for use and exploitation of digital means for the benefit of the individual, while relating morally to a variety of ethical aspects and issues. It is based on acquired knowledge that refers to protection of human dignity in every context on the background of characteristics of the digital age.

Among the central issues are: the right to privacy, the right to a person's control over information about himself or herself, his or her decisions, and his or her personal space vis-á-vis freedom of information and freedom of expression (Birenhak, 2010); protection of intellectual property with respect to the principle of the public's right to derive pleasure from works that are part of its heritage and cultural world. The citizen possessing literacy of digital ethics can reach ethical decisions on the basis of moral judgment and critical thinking, through deliberation on a variety of possible options in a given context; his or her ethical behavior is manifested in digital stages.

A citizen's digital competence, therefore, must include the main components of digital ethics. In British Colombia's Digital Literacy Framework report of the American Library Association (2013) the components of the literacy of digital ethics are detailed, providing a full picture: internet safety, privacy and security, digital relationships and communication, cyberbullying, digital footprint and reputation, creative credit and copyright, legal and ethical aspects, and understanding and awareness of the role of ICT in society.

Digital Ethics Literacy: Definition

The ability of a person to operate in a proper, ethical manner though digital means and on the internet, through morally dealing with ethical aspects and issues entailed in the use of technology, and the ability to protect him/herself and other internet users from traps and improper use (Avni & Rotem, 2011).

Abilities Included in Digital Ethics Literacy

- **Awareness**: The ability to comprehend human, social, and cultural issues concerned with use of technology for better or worse, and acquaintance with principles of legal and ethical behavior within the digital environment.
- **Online Presence:** Management of digital presence and fingerprints the user leaves, coming from awareness of his or her true, personal identity and consideration regarding the way to represent himself or herself online. This includes understanding of the importance of a personal label and the ability to have online influence.
- **Technological Means:** Proper, personal use of technological means, apparatuses, programs, applications, and the internet, while guarding the principles of the dignity of the individual and his or her property. For this purpose, technical tools and methods are necessary for securing information on one's personal computer and in the virtual, public space.
- **Intellectual Property:** Comprehension of the value of guarding one's intellectual property and copyright. Knowledge of laws and rules for protecting copyrights on the web, regulations for use and permission for use of materials belonging to others on the web.
- **Privacy:** Understanding the principle of the right to privacy and of the person's right to control over his or her personal information, personal space with regard to the right to freedom of expression. Making decisions regarding sharing of personal information, understanding the privacy of another when publishing information about him or her on the web, avoiding exposure of personal information of people that one does not know, activating mechanisms for guarding privacy and securing information, familiarity with mechanisms, and rules for securing information.
- **Connections:** Developing sensitivity to methods of interpersonal communication on the web. Having the ability to distinguish between a positive connection or relationship and an inappropri-

ate one on the web. Recognition of the internet as a global space; consciousness of respect for different cultures and inclusion of the other.

- **Harm:** Awareness of cyberbullying and causes of its increase and severity, such as anonymity and mass distribution. Avoidance of deliberate, malicious injury caused by elements such as incitement, racism and distribution of hateful messages; opposition to distribution of injurious information, either personal or public.
- **Protection:** Familiarity with methods of production against harm on the internet. Ability to identify and know how to defend oneself against dangerous or injurious situations on the web, including: impersonation, identity theft, bulling, incitement, phishing, addiction, unpleasant or threatening situations; avoidance of discourse with and conveying personal details to unknown people; recognizing insecure environments, using help channels and mechanisms for personal and technical reporting when discerning injury, threat, or danger.
- **Collaboration:** Understanding the value of sharing, being part of an online community and contributing to collective wisdom, regarding the potential risks of sharing information.

Technological Literacy

Technological Literacy: Background

Technological literacy is an updated extension of computer skills required for intelligent operation of computer technology, information, and communication for personal use and for full participation in the global, digital society. This ability constitutes a crucial foundation for wise application of the other digital literacies included in Dcom. Technological literacy includes use of technological aids – tools, services, applications, and communication – for personal, academic, professional, and social needs. These updated, technological competences are vital in order to link the personal world of every citizen and student – which is implemented today through a personal computer or other device – to social conduct and to a variety of aspects of the reality of online life. It is highly important for the digital citizen to be able to manage him or herself through use of technology for personal needs, for professional development and acquiring an education, and for his or her overall social needs.

Technological literacy is based on three principles (Media Smarts, 2010):

1. **Use:** Necessary knowledge and skills for using a variety of digital applications and the ability to constantly adapt to relevant, new, frequently updated technological tools and to learn to use them by making them compatible with the user's needs in his or her work environment.
2. **Critical Understanding:** Comprehension of the effective, proper use of digital means, among them digital media and information, by acquaintance with the consequences of use of technology on perceptions, beliefs, and emotions of a person on the environment and on the personal health of the user, and taking actions leading to minimization of problems arising from them.
3. **Production:** The knowledge and ability to produce content and communicate via digital technology as an active consumer and producer in digital society.

Technological Literacy: Definition

The attitude and ability to properly and effectively use digital technology in daily use as needed. Technological literacy includes: accessibility to technological means; selection of means in accordance with needs; technological operation by acquaintance with the basic principles of actions and functions; ability to constantly learn and adapt to new means by adjusting to changing needs; intelligent, proper use including development of awareness of the consequences of use of technology on the environment and on health, and acquaintance with methods and tools to minimize their potential harm.

Abilities Included in Technological Literacy

- **Accessibility:** Access to computer hardware and personal digital devices; knowing how to use resources such as programs and wideband services.
- **Acquaintance and Use:** Familiarity with the principles of current, common human-computer interfacing. Knowledge and skills of the use and operation of devices, applications, programs, tools, services, browsers, means of communication by smartphones and internet and auxiliary applications; differentiating between hardware and software. Management of applications, operational set-ups and systems, installing programs, program updates, means of protection of hardware and software, restoration and backup.
- **Management and Ensuring Security of Personal Information:** Management of personal information, files, data, and personal online space using technological means and services that are compatible with the user's needs and his or her work environment. Intelligent, secure storage of digital information, enabling easy, accessible retrieval. Conducting backup in cloud computing and personal devices. Awareness of security, management of passwords and permission to access, including restoring access permission. Use of devices preventing illegal entry into one's computer and eliminating viruses.
- **Digital Communication:** Acquaintance with and use of means of communication in various media, including tools and services for storage and collaboration.
- **Cloud Computing:** Use of clouds of services, apps, tools, and information on the web, without dependence on personal digital devices.
- **Personalizing and Interfacing:** Operating a personally adapted technological infrastructure for personal needs. Producing interfaces and synchronization of information among personal, digital means, computer, tablet, smartphone, etc.
- **Navigation:** Intelligent, critical navigation among the multitudes of tasks and variety of digital tools.
- **Production:** Processing, creating and producing information products, wisely choosing the appropriate digital means.
- **Health and Ergonomics:**
    - **Minimizing Electromagnetic Radiation:** Consciousness of the consequences of use of technology on the environment and one's personal health, identification of possible risks and dangers, and taking steps to minimize them, with emphasis on usage habits that minimize harm caused by cordless electromagnetic radiation and by the electric network (ELF).

  - **Suitability of Furniture and Lighting Fixtures:** Making furniture and lighting suitable to the work environment according to conventional recommendations for ways to minimize physical damage, such as placement of the computer, height, distance, support, etc.
  - **Physical Awareness:** Taking care to position one's hands correctly, avoidance of unnatural posture and lack of physical exercise for extended periods of time.
  - **Avoidance of Visual Overload:** Awareness of the danger of damage to eyesight caused by prolonged focusing on the computer screen; importance of frequent blinking and resting one's eyes.
- **Ethics:** Awareness of the implications of the use of technology on personal and social, ethical issues, with emphasis in the field of civil rights and protection.

Digital Reading and Writing Literacy

Digital Reading and Writing Literacy: Background

In times past, the concept of "literacy" was a synonym for the basic meaning of reading and writing; at a later stage, it also included understanding and deciphering of written messages in local, cultural contexts. As a central condition for optimal learning and functioning as a citizen in modern society, even before the age of digital technology, the concept was found in every educational aspect and discourse dealing with civil welfare (Street, 1984).

Digital means have expanded the traditional concept of literacy as relating to a printed or handwritten text; it now relates to dynamic, multimedia, digital texts, by means of which humans absorb knowledge, produce, share, and communicate (Rotem & Peled, 2008). As opposed to the written or printed text, the digital text appears on a screen, organized units of text that are connected by links branching out to one another and to and from other resources of information and digital media. Digital text is interactive and allows for constant editing and updating; it is publicized in a variety of digital environments, among them e-mail, text messages, websites, discussion groups, social networks, smartphones and digital books.

Digital reading and writing literacy, as a foundation stone for the digital competence of every digital student and citizen, requires activation of different abilities and skills than those needed for traditional reading and writing, and includes collective, design and ergonomic challenges that are unique to the digital text. The reader is active and forms the experience of interactive reading by reasonable selection of the method for navigating a text and by use of a variety of digital aids such as dictionaries, search functions within the text and information resources. Gathering information from the digital text requires scanning of large quantities of material and instantaneous evaluation of its credibility. Thus, critical thinking has become an important component of reading literacy. Because the distinction between the receiver and the producer in digital text is often unclear, it frequently happens that the reader also becomes a writer. During the digital writing process, familiarity with a variety of tools and applications is required, including use of the keyboard and means of writing, processing, editing, and producing a text in various forms, applications, and formats (OECD, 2013). Digital reading and writing are also a process entailed in human connection and in social and cultural discourse that takes place in an increasing diversity of social platforms, on which there are exchanges of interpersonal or public messages. Social interaction requires dealing with legal and ethical aspects, including protection of privacy and freedom of expression.

The importance of this literacy is described by The European Commission (2001) as being the "key to all areas of education and beyond, facilitating participation in the wider context of lifelong learning and contributing to individuals' social integration and personal development." Reading and writing literacy is vital as a foundation for studying and learning in the framework of the educational system; it comprises a crucial condition for successful functioning in most fields in life.

Digital Reading and Writing Literacy: Definition

The ability required to read, decipher, write, and produce interactive, linked, multimedia, digital text effectively, characterized by a variety of representations and designs, including decentralization and sharing.

Abilities Included in Digital Reading and Writing Literacy

- **Characterization of Text:** Familiarity with the attributes of both traditional and digital texts; recognizing the contexts in which it is appropriate to use the different types and levels of text.
- **Accessibility:** Accessibility to create text on different platforms such as a computer screen, smartphone display, tablet, website, application, message board, social network, digital book.
- **Navigation:** Navigating among units of linked, digital texts that branch out through the information-rich space; using discretion regarding the proper track for reading purposes and critical consideration of suitability to the readers' needs.
- **Analysis, Deciphering and Comprehension:** Ability to extract information from a text and research a text by using designated means and applications.
- **Writing and Editing:** Acquaintance with means of digital writing in the required language, among them using the keyboard, touch and sound activation, copying and editing text, adding objects, creating links, updating, and proofreading.
- **Documentation and Management:** Documenting and managing digital text by means of storing, saving, securing, keeping records of different versions, restoring, following up on changes, comparing.
- **Creation and Production:** Creating a linked digital text, interactive, and multimedia.
- **Design:** Designing a digital text appropriate for the writing goals, target community and platform, using a variety of editing and designing methods.
- **Textual Representation:** Selection of different modes of presenting the text and converting it to the various forms appropriate for the goals for presenting information, the target community, and the tools available to the presenter.
- **Production and Publication:** Producing and publicizing by various means and digital environments, in accordance with the writing goals, the recipients, and different publication platforms.
- **Ergonomics and Accessibility:** Dealing with the ergonomic aspects of use and study of the text, including provision of special needs accessibility.
- **Collaboration:** Familiarity with characteristics of shared writing and awareness of the implications of involvement in writing and editing in a decentralized, shared environment, dealing with norms and conventions in writing on the web.
- **Ethics:** Awareness and comprehension of the legal and ethical aspects relating to writing and publicizing on personal and social platforms, such as protection of privacy, freedom of expression, and fair use of network sources.

Information Literacy

Information Literacy: Background

Information, a key resource to people, society, and the economy, has become accessible to all through the internet. The citizen has become not only a consumer but also a producer and distributor of information. The shared spaces allow information sharing and constructing collective knowledge. Coping with information is a vital asset for the personal advancement of every citizen, for development of social and cultural resources and for professional and economic achievement. Compared to traditional processes of accumulation of edited, arranged, controlled knowledge, in the current environment containing a wealth of information, one requires a complex, astute ability to use the huge quantities of knowledge, far greater than those available in the previous generation, in a proper, critical, efficient manner, in order to derive benefit, reach decisions or solve problems.

A decade ago, UNESCO, in its Alexandria Proclamation (2005), proclaimed that information literacy is a vital precondition for efficient participation in the information society and is one of the basic human rights and a means to reduce inequality among people. The organization defined information literacy as a key to enabling effective access to production and transmission of content and to its use for economic, educational, and medical development as well as all other aspects of modern society (Horton, 2013). In the "Nine components of digital citizenship" (Ribble, 2014), aspects of information literacy are emphasized in the following fields: digital commerce, digital communication, and digital access.

The roots of information literacy are found in the previous era of computer technology (Zurkowski, 1974). Reference is made to an assortment of skills required for efficient use of information from different sources: to identify, locate, retrieve, store, organize, edit, analyze, process, distribute, and publicize information, in accordance with the purposes of the use of information.

The customary, widely quoted definition of information literacy is that of the American Library Association – ALA (1989): "the ability to recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information".

Information literacy constitutes an approach that strives to develop an autonomous learner who is self-directed in his or her studies, who knows how to construct knowledge for him/herself, to think critically and to solve problems. It occupies a central place in the definitions of "21st century skills" (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2014b) and in the framework of digital competence (Ferrari, 2013). Different versions of standards and characteristics have been developed for it, based on the principles set by the American Library Association – ALA (2014): Know, Access, Evaluate, Use and Ethical/Legal.

Information literacy is a basic academic ability. People who are information literate are those who have learned how to learn. Learning in an information-rich, technological environment forms the set of critical skills for optimal learning and the dimensions of information literacy necessary to cope with the new characteristics of information.

Information Literacy: Definition

The ability to recognize when information is needed and to effectively locate, evaluate, and use the needed information

Abilities Included in Information Literacy

- **Accessibility to Information:** The ability to obtain and consume digital information and participate in its transmission on the internet.
- **Identification and Definition of Need:** Defining the question/problem/issue and focusing on it by surveying the information.
- **Presentation of Information:** Acquaintance with various formats for presenting information, in accordance with the need (e.g., textual, visual, vocal, audio-visual, artistic, scientific information) and manner of usage.
- **Sources of Information:** Familiarity with a variety of information resources, among them different types of information and different repositories of information sources; distinguishing among them according to their features, purposes, and target audiences.
- **Search Methods:** Familiarity with and selection of methods and means to find and retrieve information according to the information required and the character of the sources:
    - Identification of key features and formats for the purpose of focusing and filtering the process of finding information.
    - Familiarity with the mechanisms for finding information such as navigation bars, hyperlinks, site guides, internal search engines.
    - Filtering out and focusing on desired information via search engines by defining relevant terms and operators.
    - Help from human services and/or digital agents to find information.
    - Gathering data with digital tools for preliminary inquiry, data collection, and building databases.
- **Evaluation of Information:** Critically evaluating the quality of the information, its relevance, credibility and scope, according to the purpose and goal, and by means of comparison and cross-checking with additional sources.
- **Information Management:** Managing personal and shared information by designated tools and methods.
- **Processing and Analyzing of Information:** Use of methods and means for comparing, merging, processing, editing, and analyzing information in order to reach conclusions, make decisions, find solutions, and produce a suitable product of information.
- **Creation of a Product:** Consolidating, constructing, and presenting an edited, designed product of information in accordance with the goal, character of information, target community, circumstances, and platform for presentation, through operation of suitable digital means.
- **Presentation and Publication of Information:** Presenting the product of information clearly and in a style suitable for and supportive of the target community; publicizing it via digital means suitable to the purpose, characteristics of the information, target community, circumstances, and tools available to the user, by implementing effective presentation skills and methods to activate the target community.

- **Distribution of Information:** Distributing digital information to the intended target communities and relevant platforms by using distribution means and advertising strategies, branding, image, market analysis, and market promotion.
- **Ethics:** Awareness, comprehension and relating to responsibility to follow laws and rules of ethics regarding accessibility to and use of information, such as intellectual property, copyrights, fair use of open or free sources, freedom of expression, privacy, and information security.

Digital Visual Literacy

Digital Visual Literacy: Background

Since the dawn of human society, visual representations have served as a means for transmitting information, messages, and meanings. Digital means have expanded the possibilities of traditional, written texts into updated language and culture, including a dynamic, representative variety of data, information, and messages. *Infographics*, as a general title for visual representation and illustration of information, was largely in the possession of advertising people and graphic artists and was intended primarily for conveying commercial themes. With the rising use of digital, visual media, it has become accessible to all. Visual culture, which enables anyone to produce a digital, visual text with its diversity of representations and platforms, has become common property (Morgan & Van Dam, 2008). Visual images in the digital environment play a major part in a variety of personal, professional, and social fields. Daily experiences, occasions, and events are conveyed by many media via digital photos, graphics, and video clips. Advertisements, games, computer applications, smartphones, user interfaces, operational instructions for electronic and other devices, digital content, and computerized media environments are currently presented through visual images. The availability of powerful design tools enables every individual to easily create designed graphic information in a variety of ways and means of expression. Visual representations have the power to convey ethical, humane, and social messages, and to express ideas, feelings, values, and worldviews.

The growing use of visual components in digital text has increased the need of the student and citizen to develop his or her visual literacy that will enable him or her to consume, comprehend, and use digital, visual images for thought, study, expression, creation, and production. The language of visual images requires the ability to decipher, understand, and derive meaning from visual messages as well as the ability to create and produce them. This ability deals not only with identification of visual components but also with comprehension of the context in which they appear, awareness of the viewpoint and specific intentions of the creator, identification of the target community, and comprehension of the possible effects of the images upon it. In addition, visual literacy relates to the skills of critical viewing and consumption of visual messages, avoiding being deceived or led astray by manipulations. Visual literacy of the digital citizen is manifested primarily in digital commerce and digital communication (Ribble, 2014). For the student, visual literacy constitutes an important element in learning and an effective way of handling styles of presentation and internalization of information, which increase understanding and motivation to learn.

Digital Visual Literacy: Definition

The ability to read, understand and analyze critically and to derive meaning from messages expressed in digital, visual texts; to communicate and convey visual messages efficiently; to produce expressions of visual messages by judging and selecting the way to represent them.

Abilities Included in Digital Visual Literacy

- **Deciphering of a Multidimensional, Visual Text:** Deciphering different types of digital, visual texts including three-dimensional, static, and dynamic text. The ability to analyze and understand visual, multimedia information by integrating its details into a meaningful, interpretational piece of work. The ability to read visual, user interfaces, and understand visual instructions.
- **Critical, Visual Reading:** Critical reading, evaluation, and interpretation of meanings and messages of visual texts through awareness of the ease of manipulation in processing, editing, and publishing visual information.
- **Production of a Visual Text:** Creating, processing, and designing a text by means of visual representations, among them graphics, photography, graphic organizers and tools of production, and editing, by correspondence of the digital, visual text's configuration to the context, goals, intended recipients, and publicizing platforms.
- **Conversion and Correspondence of Information Representations:** Converting information, data, ideas, and messages into visual expression by means of digital tools.
- **Ethics:** Awareness of ethical, legal, social and economic issues included in the very meaning of creation, its copyrights and the use of visual images.

Communication and Collaboration Literacy

Communication and Collaboration Literacy: Background

Communication literacy is the ability to use a variety of means of communication intelligently according to need. Educational discourse about communication literacy is relatively new. Beginning in the 1970s, a link has been made between communication and literacy, the intention of which is the ability to communicate in the context of reading and writing. Communication literacy in the digital age is based on integration between information and communication technology and ways of communicating between people (Approaches to Information and Communication Literacy, 2007). In the online space, there is widespread communication going on between the personal and the social, on a variety of platforms and through diverse means. Each channel of discourse has its own unique features, intended goals, diverse target communities, and rules for appropriate discussion. Digital means offer a new, interactive dynamic between creators of knowledge and messages and their consumers, and enable new channels of active expression, exchange of information and ideas, learning, and personal development through social involvement.

The integration of technology in daily life has greatly increased the need to instill communication literacy, the ability to decipher and produce messages conveyed though digital channels, in every student and citizen. Components of basic communication skills include verbal, aural, and visual communications; nonverbal communication including ways of expression such as gestures; textual communication including various genres in the writing places on the web, and visual communications including a variety of visual representations (Communication Skills, 2014). At the basic level of literacy, this refers to the ability to decipher, produce, and convey messages via communications means. At the advanced level, this refers to comprehension of the place and contribution of communication in processes of creating meanings and in designing reality, as a platform for activity using digital communication services. The European Parliament and The Council of the EU (2006) has adopted this ability as the first of eight basic skills required by every individual for personal development, self-fulfillment, active civil participation, social belonging, and employment.

Digital communication constitutes a basic condition and foundation for sharing within personal, professional, and social contexts. One of the main challenges is to train the citizen and student living in the global environment to effectively communicate and share knowledge and ideas, to learn from colleagues and experts, to produce collaborate outcomes through teamwork with nearby or distant partners, and to actively participate in collaborative communities that cross borders and cultures. A person who is literate in communications and collaboration, who knows how to use, and is capable of using, tools and services of a variety of digital communications for his or her various needs, is conscious of the rights of those photographed and of the responsibility for their appropriate, secure use.

Communication and Collaboration Literacy: Definition

The ability to communicate in a variety of means of digital communication and to conduct efficient interaction that crosses boundaries and frameworks – whether interpersonal or collective, private or public, synchronous or asynchronous – by adapting the discourse to the characteristics of means of communication. The ability to share information and messages, using collaboration digital tools for personal and social needs, and to participate in online communities and networks, with ethical awareness of global citizenry.

Abilities Included in Communication and Collaboration Literacy

- **Characterization of Means of Communication:** Recognition of the attributes of the various means of communication, understanding of contexts and how it is fitting to use each of them according to need, goal, and target community. Evaluation of the efficiency of means of communication and awareness of their influence.
- **Accessibility and Operation:** Accessibility to diverse means of communications and ability to handle them.
- **Transmission of Messages:** Effective expression of ideas, opinions, and messages using a variety of forms and contexts by digital means of communication.
- **Collaboration:** Cooperation, exchange of information and efficient, respectful teamwork that appreciates each individual's contribution to the team, using digital means of communications and collaboration.
- **Dynamic Communications – Cloud Services:** Use of cloud computing and dynamic, mobile communications to derive meaning from messages and to publicize and share information.

- **Global Citizenship:** Use of means of digital communications to expand the network of acquaintances and connections crossing geographical boundaries; development of global consciousness and the practical meanings derived from them.
- **Ethics:** Protection of rights and appropriate rules of behavior such as property, privacy and freedom of expression, by awareness of the personal and social implications of behavioral norms in communications and in crossing borders.

New Media Literacy

New Media Literacy: Background

Media literacy in the 2010s has undergone significant changes, principally consolidating most means of media on a digital platform on the screen. This is the new media, in which a variety of media channels and different types of information, sharing, and social services are displayed together. The new media in the digital arena constitutes the "*Where*" (Peña-López, 2009) – publicized platform of the interpersonal, private, and public flow of information, messages, and communication. The new media is described by Jenkins (2006) as "media ecology". Ito et al (2008) explain the uniqueness of the term: "We have used the term *new media* rather than terms such as *digital media* or *interactive media* because the moniker of 'the new' seemed appropriately situational, relational, and protean, and not tied to a specific media platform".

The new media offers and creates interactive, multi-sensorial activation by means of a powerful integration of words, graphics, and sounds. In this respect, Ito et al (2008) claim that young people develop, through personal experimentation, a wide variety of new forms of literacy, among them personal adaptation of the media for their own needs: selection of definitions, consumption of video clips, creation of new genres of presentation, remix editing, hybridizing, computer video games, sharing of information and knowledge, and even taking on traditional roles of adults, such as public and political involvement and social criticism.

Traditional media literacy has focused on the critical, efficient consumption of information and messages on the various communication channels, through awareness of the effect of structuring and forming messages on the perception of reality. Because there is interaction in the new media with a large community whose members have changed from being media consumers to being producers of content and active partners in media, literacy has expanded to active consumption and production of content and messages by involvement of the individual in the interactive, social, online medium. Self-expression, conveying of messages in a variety of platforms, and construction of collective meaning, are important aspects for the digital citizen in a democratic society, which offer ethical, social consciousness, and responsibility for content and the ways it is distributed.

Gaming as an Updated Component of New Media

Expansion of new media literacy to a diversity of forms and modes of use has elicited new abilities, which until now have not been part of the educational-public discourse concerned with literacy competence required of the citizen and student. One of the abilities that has had an increasing place in our daily life is the digital game (Zimmerman, 2009), which offers personal enjoyment or social entertainment through gaming communications crossing borders of both place and partners. Furthermore, digital gaming is currently used for teaching and learning through experiences, challenges, and motivation and as a model for action in the real world. Gaming abilities involve complex aspects of reading and writing, advanced thought, problem solving, creativity, deciphering of various kinds of visual messages, psychological aspects of competition, and cooperation in social-ecological relationships of human interaction.

New Media Literacy: Definition

The ability to consume messages from a variety of digital media channels in a personally adapted and critical manner, to demonstrate involvement in interactive social media, and to produce and publicize communicative messages that have collective significance in social and cultural contexts.

Abilities Included in New Media Literacy

- **Characterization of Media Means:** Recognition of the attributes of new media channels consolidated on the screen or digital platform; acquaintance with modes of presenting, disseminating and publicizing information; evaluation of the effectiveness of media methods, and awareness of their influence on the user.
- **Active Viewing:** Critical consumption of messages and derivation of information and meaning from them by active viewing, research and synthesis, entailing comprehension of the goal sought in publicizing the messages and the effect of their form on the perception of reality.
- **Navigating, Managing and Updating:** Handling attentiveness among many simultaneously appearing media channels, applying discretion in choosing how to navigate among them. Acquaintance with tools and methods to receive constant communications information via manual and automatic update tools.
- **Processing, Editing and Producing:** Familiarity with tools and skills for use of media files, downloading, editing, processing, and production of media, and publicizing messages on a variety of digital media platforms.
- **Gaming:** Personal and social gaming by use of digital processes.
- **Updating and Involvement:** Constant but controlled updating of what is going on in the social and cultural media environment; involvement in interactive media for personal empowerment and social contribution.
- **Ethics:** Awareness of the variety of options for expression and use of various media and their implications, taking legal and ethical responsibility with regard to accessibility and use of media.

Social Media Literacy

Social Media Literacy: Background

The increased conduct through online social media offers empowering of personal, educational, professional and social processes that are vital for every citizen and learner who participates in a collaborative community. Social media are a complex of internet services enabling multidirectional communication in shared social places by sharing a variety of contents, including text, photographs, video, music, and internet sites. Among the online media places are social networks, apps (online applications) for sharing photos, videos and music, online discussion boards, Wiki, Twitter, blogs, and a variety of collaborative games.

The use of social media in effect expands existing social reality to a rich, diverse expanse of human information and communication in a shared, digital environment; thus, involved, meaningful activity in relevant social services is currently available to everyone. Goodman (2014), for example, points out the vital importance of the abilities needed by every digital citizen in the social media context – among them, the use of media for commercial needs, understanding and coping with propagandist media, being conscious of the effect of censorship and media ownership on information published in the social media, and identification of stereotypes in communications.

Social media literacy involves the ability to make intelligent choices of relevant places for collaborating and managing online presence through awareness of how to design a personal profile and its consequences for social interaction. This literacy includes intrapersonal, interpersonal, and social skills. Among the personal skills are self-orientation, time management, definition of limits, emotional management, self-expression, expressing opinions, designing messages, reflection and evaluating messages, creativity, reputation management, and aggression. The interpersonal and social skills include attentiveness, sensitivity, tolerance, sharing, communication, community management, discourse management, exchange of opinions, dealing with dilemmas, coping with criticism, giving and receiving feedback, social and sometimes commercial publicity, through ethical awareness that is personal, social, and global. Competence of the digital citizen, as a person who is literate in social media in the digital world, is manifested in consciousness of the right to free access to the web, to digital commerce, and to relevant laws and rules – among them, personal security mechanisms and prevention of injury (Ribble, 2014).

Social Media Literacy: Definition

A complex of qualifications that enable interconnectedness and interaction among people via communication and sharing of information. These competences allow one to communicate in a suitable manner, to be involved, to cooperate and participate actively, to give and take, in the social environment of communication and sharing of content. A person who is literate in social media forms his or her personality, worldview, and manner of social conduct, among other ways through tools for collaborating and managing information found on the web.

Abilities Included in Social Media Literacy

- **Characterization of the Social Media Environment:** Recognition of types of online social media places in order to make a wise selection: essence, platform, recipients, structure, types of pages, interfaces, conditions for use, manner of conduct.
- **Operation:** Registration, constructing a profile, definition of privacy, friends, interest groups, levels of collaboration, monitoring notices, posting and uploading information to various media.
- **Online Presence:** Construction of a personal identity, designing a profile, management of a reputation, participation in and management of a presence by awareness of consequences of digital fingerprints left by the user on the web.
- **Communication and Interaction:** Definition of circles of communication, management of notices, and responses by choosing suitable communication channels (wall, chat), wording appropriate for the community, and the characteristics of the social media.

- **Timing:** Setting of timing of updates. Intelligent, critical expression by understanding the proper timing and frequency of promulgation of messages.
- **Interfaces:** The ability to interface social media with mobile devices such as smartphones or personal tablets.
- **Intelligent, Critical Use:** Understanding modes of transmission in social media, circumstances of success in communication, and distribution of messages through analysis of data and statistics. Critical evaluation of relevance and reliability of information and messages conveyed via the social network and its implications for the user and the information he or she shares. Awareness of the immediate, public, shared, social platform used by many who are interactive partners, and its implications on motivation for writing.
- **Ethics:** Awareness of legal and ethics aspects on the social network: copyrights, fair and decent protection of privacy, limits of freedom of expression, understanding the significance of distribution of injurious messages and information and avoidance of such actions. Awareness of defense mechanisms such as identification of impersonators and acquaintance with mechanisms for reporting injury.

Solution and Recommendations

The proposed framework of Dcom offers ways to deal with the vital need to define and describe distinct conceptualization, broad awareness and clear guidance in feasible ways, in order to be able to implement them and instill them in citizens and students, This need includes supply, the current lack of efficient methods of control, and evaluation. Presently, the main challenge is to progress from terminology to action, in order to instill all aspects of Dcom in the population – not as something that is nice to have but as a competence that is vital and essential to have.

Over the years, Dcom has been a hazy, protean term bearing various names and referring to different things. Along with this, there has been a widespread, mistaken assumption regarding the "illusion of knowing" that must be uprooted: in fact, young people born into the technological age are not necessarily digitally literate simply as a result of it. They do not necessarily construct knowledge as a result of using digital literacy. Gathered data from almost 60,000 Grade 8 students in more than 3,300 schools from 21 countries or education systems within countries - suggest that the knowledge, skills, and understandings described in the CIL scale (Computer Information Literacy), can and should be taught. Regardless of whether or not we consider young people to be digital natives, we would be naive to expect them to develop CIL in the absence of coherent learning programs (Fraillon, 2014).

Command of digital skills achieved through daily activity with computerized systems is far from constituting broad Dcom. Dcom is a complex, multifaceted field, part of personal development and empowerment. The process of acquiring it, both as a means and as a goal, does not happen circumstantially but rather requires deliberate, explicit study and experience. Therefore, both the social system and the educational system have the obligation to provide it.

Formal policies and messages presenting Dcom as a goal of highest importance raise the awareness and crucial nature of the subject, but are not a substitute for immanent integration in the routine of training and learning. A program of action that includes a variety of methods of implementation as an answer to the various target communities, as well as the allocation of appropriate funding and other resources, must be put together and integrated into the daily routine.

Instilling Dcom in citizens and students should be conducted through a variety of channels and paths of action, via synergy among partners connected with the various aspects of digital culture, such as government offices, economic bodies, organizations,, and educational systems. Suitable opportunities for training and experimenting in digital literacy must be developed and offered alongside deliberate, methodological study. For this purpose, it is important to supply access to available, professional mediation, relevant teaching materials, guidance, and exercises to the target communities. It is very important to demonstrate and present these materials in digital texts that will provide authentic experience in the reality of a lifestyle interwoven with technology.

In the educational system and in training Dcom should be implemented according to a number of principles:

- **The Principle of Integration:** Integrating the digital literacies in teaching programs by correlating fields of literacies to characteristics of the disciplines. According to this principle, the teacher is responsible for integrating aspects of Dcom into his or her work as well as demonstrating literacy work in his or her teaching and modeling literacy in his or her personal and professional conduct.
- **The Principle of Technological Focusing:** Instilling basic aspects of digital literacy, with the emphasis on technological literacy, as a field that stands on its own; alongside an updated definition of literacies, with the emphasis on digital reading and writing, and teaching it as an integral part of language and linguistic studies.
- **The Principle of Variation:** There must be variation in the aspects of digital literacies learned in each grade at school. In academic programming, which of the aspects are taught in each grade level must be decided. Some of the activities should be focused and short-term, in accordance with their circumstances, and some of them are to be long-term and include complex, multifaceted processes and products.
- **The Principle of Spiraling:** Dealing with Dcom is not a one-time activity, but rather recurring during the different stages of study over the school years in the form of a spiral, with, expansion, and depth.
- **The Principle of Achievement:** Student achievement in the field of Dcom should be measured through a system of appraisal and evaluation.
- **The Principle of Modeling:** Dcom should become an immanent part of all academic conduct, including through indirect demonstration, routine conduct by the administrative and teaching staff and their requirements from the students, through integration of connected vessels and modern, technological methods, and means of teaching and learning.
- **The Principle of Authorization:** In order to emphasize the importance of Dcom in the academic, and employment world and to ensure sufficient competence for proper functioning by the public at large and by students, it is recommended to define a precondition to be required for authorization – a kind of license that is compulsory for completion of every training course, degree, etc., and that attests to the Dcom of the citizen or student.

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Dcom is a complex, dynamic, developing field that offers many channels of research focusing on the effect of technological services, means, and tools on the behavior and conduct of the citizen and student. It is important to treat the framework of Dcom as a broad, open, dynamic expanse requiring constant updating, but at the same time include a clear, defined content of knowledge, skills, and abilities to wisely and properly use each aspect of Dcom. It is imperative to be open to research, to learn the new, developing language of young people born into the digital age, and at the same time, to research the effect on migrants – older citizens who must learn how to integrate technical processes into their personal and professional lives. Research on the methods of technology use in daily occurrences, on the essential knowledge required, the skills and viewpoints involved in ICT, and the ethical issues entailed in use of technology, will enhance the conceptual framework and instillment of Dcom.

In the educational field, it is recommended to research the ways the relevant educators and organizations deal with imbuing and nurturing Dcom, learning from successes and expanding support mechanisms, mediation, and teaching materials accordingly. It is important to formulate ways to evaluate the different dimensions of digital literacy, and to construct assessment rubrics for evaluation of the model.

It would be interesting to examine the effectiveness of instilling Dcom by comparing the various ways of teaching, such as, for example, teaching Dcom as a separate, distinct, focused field as opposed to integrating it in the disciplines of the an academic program.

CONCLUSION

This chapter deals with a proposal for a conceptual framework of Dcom, which constitutes a human and civil need and right that is essential in order to wisely and properly function in the world in the 2010s through means offered by technology. Digital citizens and students today need complex, multifaceted qualifications, which until now have not yet been defined in a clear framework, have not been part of public and educational policy and civil consciousness, and are not instilled in a distinct, concrete manner in the public composed of citizens and students. The very fact of defining the essence and content of this competence is likely to contribute to the understanding of the essence of intelligent, proper functioning with literacy in the complex of possibilities offered by technology in the digital age.

In this chapter, a new view is presented of the literacies entailed in use of technology, as a synergetic complex. Dcom as presented here constitutes a *net of literacies* that do not focus on technology but on the forming and changing caused by the very presence of technology; on the knowledge, performance skills, thinking skills, viewpoints, and morals involved in conduct in a digital environment, which is the environment in which we now live and work. In this updated net, technology tints the familiar, traditional literacies in digital hues, that can be found in technological, digital reading and writing, information, visual, new media, communication and collaboration and social media, forming the updated character of literacies and the wise, efficient functioning with them. Alongside the conventional literacies, new abilities are integrated, which are derived from technological attributes that were non-existent before the digital age.

The net of literacies proposed here is based on the existing concepts of types of competences and literacies; it attempts, as far as possible, to provide content, interpretation, and updating to these concepts, and in this way to rely on the proven pedagogical principles that have been sufficient for every time and context, and to add to them a level of characteristics of new abilities that are relevant for current use of technology.

The structure of the proposed net consists of three layers:

1. **Digital Ethics Literacy:** Stands at the top of the net of literacies in which ethics constitutes a vital component of perceptions, viewpoints, and morals that are essential for proper application of technology by humans in every dimension of digital literacy
2. **Technological Literacy and Digital Reading and Writing Literacy:** Constitute a basic foundation and functional interface for all the digital literacies and which are anchored as an inseparable part of them
3. **Dimensions of Digital Literacies:** In accordance with main fields that information and communication technology touches. These dimensions range from the connection with the personal use of technology to the interpersonal, social collaborative connection: literacy of information, digital visual literacy, literacy of new media, literacy of communication and collaboration, and literacy of social media

The importance of consolidating a framework of Dcom lies in the proposal of clear anchors that enable formulation of a common, agreed-upon language to serve the public and educational discourse, including all the relevant authorities, to serve as a foundation of knowledge for creation of a unified policy on the subject and to constitute a sturdy, accepted basis for instilment and evaluation of a complex of updated knowledge, competences and skills regarding the literacies required by citizens and students in the 2010s.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Communication and Collaboration Literacy: The ability to communicate in a variety means of digital communication and to interact effectively, crossing interpersonal and collective, private and public borders and frameworks, synchronous and asynchronous, fitting the discourse to the characteristics of the means of communication. The ability to share information and messages by collaborative digital tools for personal and social purposes and to participate in communities and online networks through ethical awareness and global citizenship.

Digital Competence: A civil right and need, vital for appropriate, intelligent study and functioning for the personal, social and professional aspects of all citizens in a society in the real world, through means that modern technology offers the citizen.

Digital Ethics Literacy: The ability of a person to operate in a proper, ethical manner though digital means and on the internet, through morally dealing with ethical aspects and issues entailed in the use of technology, and the ability to protect him or herself and other internet users from traps and improper use.

Digital Reading and Writing Literacy: The ability required to read, decipher, write and produce interactive, linked, multimedia, digital text effectively, characterized by a variety of representations and designs including decentralization and collaboration.

Digital Visual Literacy: The ability to critically read, understand and analyze and to produce meaning from information and messages presented in visual, digital texts, to communicate and transmit visual messages effectively, to create and produce presentations expressing visual messages, by consideration and selection of how to present them.

Information Literacy: The ability to recognize when information is needed and to effectively locate, evaluate and use the needed information.

New Media Literacy: The ability to critically and suitably consume messages in a variety of digital media channels, to be involved in interactive social media, to produce and publicize communicative, public messages bearing collective meaning in social and cultural contexts.

Social Media Literacy: A complex of qualifications that enable interconnectedness and interaction among people via communication and sharing of information. These competences allow one to communicate in a suitable manner, to be involved, to cooperate and participate actively, to give and take, in the social environment of communication and sharing of content. A person who is literate in social media forms his/her personality, worldview and manner of social conduct, among other ways through tools for collaborating and managing information found on the web.

Technological Literacy: The attitude and ability to properly and effectively use digital technology in daily use as needed. Technological literacy includes: accessibility to technological means; selection of means in accordance with needs; technological operation by acquaintance with the basic principles of actions and functions; ability to constantly learn and adapt to new means by adjusting to changing needs; intelligent, proper use including development of awareness of the consequences of use of technology on the environment and on health and acquaintance with methods and tools to minimize their potential harm.

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Chapter 19
Critical Media Literacy as Transformative Pedagogy

Steven Funk
University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), USA

Douglas Kellner
University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), USA

Jeff Share
University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), USA

ABSTRACT

This chapter provides a theoretical framework of critical media literacy (CML) pedagogy and examples of practical implementation in K-12 and teacher education. It begins with a brief discussion of literature indicating the need for educators to use a critical approach to media. The historical trajectory of CML and key concepts are then reviewed. Following this, the myths of "neutrality" and "normalcy" in education and media are challenged. The chapter takes a critical look at information and communication technologies and popular culture, reviewing how they often reinforce and occasionally challenge dominant ideologies. Next, this critical perspective is used to explore how CML interrogates the ways media tend to position viewers, users, and audiences to read and negotiate meanings about race, class, gender, and the multiple identity markers that privilege dominant groups. The subjective and ubiquitous nature of media is highlighted to underscore the transformative potential of CML to use media tools for promoting critical thinking and social justice in the classroom.

INTRODUCTION

As new technologies open opportunities for collaboration and media production that is cheaper, easier and more accessible than ever, and as the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) spread across the country, now is the time for educators to explore the transformative potential of critical media literacy (CML). Current pressures for standardization, privatization, and high-stakes testing are driving public education to focus more on global competition rather than on democratic ideals. In this chapter, we propose that

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CML pedagogy is an important strategy for educators to use to strengthen civic engagement and reassert the promise of democracy with an informed and empowered citizenry. Moreover, a CML pedagogy is vital to include in teacher education programs so that pre-service teachers are better prepared to guide their students in critical inquiry *with* and *about* information communication technologies (ICTs) and popular culture.

As Paulo Freire (2010), Howard Zinn (2005), and many others assert, recognizing the political nature of education and literacy is essential for transformative teaching and democracy. CML is a pedagogy that guides teachers and students to think critically about the world around them; it empowers them to act as responsible citizens with the skills and social consciousness to challenge injustice. The development of CML highlights core concepts from cultural studies, critical theory, and new digital literacies (boyd, 2014; Ferguson, 2004; Hall, 1998; Kellner, 1995; Masterman, 2001; Morrell, 2012). CML provides a framework that encourages people to read information critically in multiple formats, to create alternative representations that question hierarchies of power, social norms and injustices, and to become agents of change.

Technology's exponential growth, as well as the convergence of media corporations and new media platforms, are changing society and students to be more mediated and networked than ever (Jenkins, 2006; McChesney, 2000; Prensky, 2010). Facebook, created in 2004, already reports one fifth of the world's population as active users, 829 million of whom use it daily (Facebook, 2014). Millions of American youth walk into their classrooms with pocket-sized devices that provide immediate access to information and entertainment as well as the potential to create and disseminate multimedia messages that can travel the world in seconds. In 2011, Pew researchers reported that 77% of U.S. teens had a cellular device (Lenhart, Madden, Smith, Purcell, Zickhur, & Rainie, 2011). A Northwestern study conducted the same year found that 8-18 year-olds in the U.S. spent well over ten hours a day exposed to various forms of media, such as music, computers, video games, television, film, and print (Rideout, Lauricella, & Wartella, 2011). In 2015, another Pew research study found that 92% of American 13-17 year-olds go online daily, "including 24% who say they go online 'almost constantly'" (Lenhart, 2015). Clearly, these data reflect the need for educators to address the changing relationship between youth and digital media.

CML offers students and educators an opportunity to embrace these changes in society and technology not as threats to education, but rather to rethink teaching and learning as political acts of consciousness raising and empowerment. While the CCSS has its wealth of problems (Brady, 2012; Karp, 2014), it can also be a tool to support educators in moving toward a more critical approach to incorporating literacy across all subjects and encouraging students to participate in their learning *with* and *about* digital tools. The attention of the CCSS to media and technology is movement in the right direction (Moore & Bonilla, 2014); however, *more* use of media and technology does not necessarily beget better learning or critical engagement. Media and technology are not neutral tools. Rather, they are themselves embedded within socio-political contexts, as Stoddard (2014) explains:

Too often, the connection of servers and millions of miles of fiber-optic cables that are the hardware and guts of the Internet are viewed as neutral and free of control. This assumption of neutrality overlooks the many people and software (created by people) that are central to the creation, translation, and routing of information along these fibers or eventually through the air on satellite, Wi-Fi, or cellular networks. (p. 1)

The ubiquity of technology and media demands an educational approach that not only incorporates information communication technology in the learning process, but also teaches how to critically analyze the information, representations, and media. Furthermore, when analysis is taught with production, students learn the skills to express themselves in multiple modalities, gain experience using various technology, and benefit from sharing their work with audiences beyond the classroom. CML is a transformative pedagogy with a theoretical base and practical teaching methodology to empower students to examine their world and challenge the dominant myths that seem "normal" or "natural."

SOCIOLOGICAL AND CONTEXTUAL MODELS OF LITERACY

Traditional ideas of literacy that focus on a standard national language and phonetic decoding are no longer sufficient in an age of countless communication systems and increasing linguistic and cultural diversity (New London Group, 1996). The traditional model of reading and writing rests upon a positivist psychological model that frames literacy as discrete cognitive skills that attempt to discover a fixed external reality. This paradigm needs to evolve to a deeper sociological understanding of literacy as a social practice with multiple perspectives "tied up in the politics and power relations of everyday life in literate cultures" (Luke & Freebody, 1997, p. 185). Lewis and Jhally (1998) express their concern "that media education in the United States will flounder if it cannot locate media texts in a broad set of social realities" (p. 3). They argue that when media literacy focuses on the text at the expense of the context, it ignores important questions of ideology, power, political economy, production, and reception. Lewis and Jhally do not suggest replacing a text-centered approach with a contextual approach, but like Luke and Freebody (1997), they call for including a sociological perspective with the psychological and cognitive ideas that are most common in literacy education. This type of reading and writing beyond the text is also a key component of their *Four Resources Model* (Luke & Freebody, 1999). Emerging from their work in Australia, the Four Resources Model lists four competencies that are necessary for being literate in a multimodal world: breaking the code of texts, participating in the meanings of text, using texts functionally, and critically analyzing and transforming the texts (Luke & Freebody, 1999). As Vasquez (2003) explains:

Luke and Freebody assert that reading should be seen as a nonneutral form of cultural practice, one that positions readers in advantageous and disadvantageous ways. They argue that readers need to be able to interrogate the assumptions and ideologies that are embedded in a text as well as the assumptions that they, as sociocultural beings, bring to the text. This leads to asking questions such as, Whose voice is heard? Who is silenced? Whose reality is presented? Whose reality is ignored? Who is advantaged? Who is disadvantaged? These sorts of questions open spaces for analyzing the discourses or ways of being that maintain certain social practices over others. (p. 15)

Utilizing the *Four Resources Model* as a lens to analyze technology in the CCSS, Pandya and Aukerman (2014) illuminate the lack of critical competencies in the language of the new standards. They describe critical competencies relating to technology as: "The ability to critique and analyze texts, and to redesign new print and digital texts (sometimes as part of that critique); the knowledge that texts are never neutral but always embody particular points of view" (Pandya & Aukerman, 2014, p. 429). Pandya and Aukerman (2014) caution that if teachers do not provide specific attention "to building children's *critical competencies,* we suspect that both children and teachers will remain focused on interpreting, creating, and sharing (digital) texts at the expense of analyzing and critiquing the power relations that underlie and are formed by texts" (p. 432). Students today need the skills and disposition to engage with messages in multiple ways, especially if they are to play a role in shaping democracy. This sociological understanding of literacy can be linked to a transformative pedagogy and media education that critiques the dominant ideologies of gender, race, and class through a contextual approach. It addresses the ideological frameworks and how they operate in the cultural milieu that collectively shapes and is shaped by media and the people who engage with them. This paradigm shift away from a positivist perspective of knowledge transmission toward a more critical sociological stance requires pedagogy that explores the complex relationships among audiences, information, entertainment, power, and ideology.

MEDIA, POWER, AND IDEOLOGY

Amid the struggles for bourgeois democracy in Europe during the 1848 revolutions, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels (1978) developed a critical approach to ideology. According to Marx and Engels, ideologies arise from "dominant material relations expressed as ideas; hence of the relations which make the one class the ruling one, therefore, the ideas of its dominance" (Durham & Kellner, 2005, p. 44). For Marx, the emerging dominant class was the bourgeoisie and its dominant ideas legitimated a capitalist market system with its ideas of free self-regulating markets, competition, and individualism, ideas that remain dominant in capitalist societies today.

Ideologies have social dimensions and are not simply individual perspectives that compete on a level playing field (Ferguson, 2004; Orlowski, 2006; Kelly & Brandes, 2001). Durham and Kellner (2005) explain that studying ideology encourages "readers to perceive that all cultural texts have distinct biases, interests, and embedded values, reproducing the point of view of their producers and often the values of the dominant social groups" (p. xiv). By examining their ideological assumptions, students can learn to question what they consider "normal" or "common sense." "Common sense" is only so because ideas and texts have been produced and disseminated through a dominant frame of thought expressed in powerful master-narratives, often conveyed through media, schools, government, religion, and families.

Building upon Marx, from the 1930s through the 1960s, researchers at the Frankfurt Institute for Social Research (The Frankfurt School, i.e. Adorno, Benjamin, Habermas, Horkheimer, and Marcuse) saw the rise of popular culture through media as a process involving ideological message transmission vis-à-vis the culture industries, whereby film, radio, newspapers, and other organs of communication and culture transmit the dominant ideas of their society. They used critical social theory to analyze how popular culture and the new tools of communication technology perpetuated ideology and social control. The Frankfurt group emigrated to New York in 1934 as refugees from fascism in Germany, where they experienced how the Nazis used film, radio, and other media to transmit their totalitarian ideology (Kellner, 1989; 1995). Additionally, the German theorists studied Soviet Communism, examining how the Soviet state used the media to transmit dominant communist ideologies. While in the United States, they concluded that U.S. popular culture and media transmitted dominant American and capitalist ideologies.

Frankfurt school theorists assumed that the audience is passive in its reception of media messages - a view that was challenged by a group of scholars in Birmingham, England, who advanced a more complex understanding of the active role audiences play in negotiating meanings. This group at the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at the University of Birmingham (The Birmingham School created in 1964, i.e. Williams, Hoggart, and Hall), began to emphasize the role of the audience as active, rather than passive, in media reception (or consumption). Moreover, as women and scholars of color, including McRobbie and Gilroy, joined the group in the 1980s, they urged that the concept of ideology be expanded to include representations of gender, race, and sexuality because media representations included sexist, racist and heterosexist (homophobic) images and narratives that reproduce ideologies of patriarchal, racist, and heterosexist domination (Kellner 1995; 2010). The Birmingham scholars also recognized that individuals experience and interpret media from their own class, gender, racial, and other positions, and can potentially resist and oppose classist, sexist, and racist ideologies. While the image of the media audience as consumer became pervasive following the rise of audience theory studies, scholars have since heavily criticized the field for discounting the heterogeneous ways in which viewers/listeners/users read, consume, or integrate media meaning into their lives (Buckingham, 1993; 1996; Gauntlett & Hill, 1999).

Understanding the role of context is an essential part of reading and writing the world and the word. When a text (whether it involves printed words, an image, video, song, or t-shirt) is taken out of context, re-presented and/or remixed, understandings of its message will vary because of the different contexts that readers bring with them, their prior knowledge, beliefs and experiences. Moreover, the contexts of how the message is constructed, the politics of representation (the subjectivities of the people constructing the message, the biases of those sharing the information), the qualities of the medium through which the information is distributed, and the codes and conventions of the text likewise have influence. Context is highly important and always influences messages, regardless of whether listeners/reader/viewers are aware of it. No message can be neutral and no technology can represent information without in some way affecting the message (McLuhan, 2003). Therefore, students must be skilled in questioning the construction and context of a text. This is the same challenge for determining the bias of news reports and the accuracy of Internet postings. This task can be difficult when information is taken out of context, as is often the case in mediated and networked publics where information is often shared, sampled, and "mashed up." boyd (2014) emphasizes that in networked publics, contexts are collapsed, thereby separating necessary details and merging disconnected information, causing meaning making (comprehension) to become more complicated. When a message is taken out of context, as is often the case with social media, one's ability to communicate is challenged.

THE DYNAMICS OF DIGITAL AND NETWORKED MEDIA

Twenty-first century literacy skills require new understandings of literacy because people are participating in *multiliteracies* (New London Group, 1996), reading and writing photographs, music, movies, advertising, social media, popular culture, as well as printed books and magazines. With the popularity of cell phones and new mobile devices, youth are communicating and socializing daily in numerous ways such as: blogging, instant messaging, photographing, pinning, tagging, texting, tweeting, podcasting, and videoing. To many teachers, digital writing may seem the same as writing with pencil and paper because it uses many of the same elements of print literacy and it is easy to turn a hand written essay into a digital text; however, when writing becomes digital important dimensions change.

Digital texts gain new potential to be *multimodal* (combining different formats), *hyperlinked* (connecting with other media and building new relationships), and *interactive* (allowing for sharing, remixing and participation) (Beach, 2009). Once a text is digital, it can also reach different types of audiences or publics. boyd (2007) points out that when a text moves from unmediated publics to mediated publics and networked publics, there are "fundamental architectural differences that affect social interaction"

(p. 8). She explains, "The potential audience is affected by the properties of the mediating technologies, namely persistence, replicability, and invisible audiences. Networked publics add an additional feature – searchability – while magnifying all of the other properties" (boyd, 2007, pp. 8-9). A handwritten note is usually ephemeral, whereas digital communication leaves footprints that can endure long after fulfilling its intended purpose. This means "those using social media are often 'on the record' to an unprecedented degree" (boyd, 2014, p. 11), whether they realize it or not. In fact, most networked technology is designed to make information public by default, so anyone wanting to limit access usually has to take extra measures to do so. While messages gain visibility, their audiences often become less visible to their creators.

Digital texts, posts, feeds, and communicative acts (Habermas, 1984) are becoming central to the life of youth and those increasingly immersed in digital culture and social media. The difference between networked and non-networked communication is an important distinction that educators and students need to consider, because *audience, purpose, technology,* and *context* influence all communication. The larger audience garnered by these media can be useful for sharing information widely, connecting people, and networking groups on a local or global scale. However, networked media can create complications when messages are shaped for one particular audience, without an awareness of the networks of unintended audiences that can also access them. Social media are challenging old ideas of audience, media, and relationships between senders and receivers. For instance, Marwick and boyd (2010) found that many Twitter users Tweet for self-expression without considering the audiences who might receive their messages. In fact, for some Twitter users, "consciously speaking to an audience is perceived as inauthentic," (Marwick & boyd, 2010, p. 6).

Along with these challenges, opportunities are arising for re-envisioning the potential dynamism of this media landscape. Carrington (2005) reports that the emergence of new media texts "situate contemporary children in global flows of consumption, identity, and information in ways unheard of in earlier generations" (p. 22). A half century ago, Raymond Williams wrote that the effects of television are less about discrete items and more about a *flow* of programming running day and night. According to O'Connor (2006), a critical point of Williams' analysis is the notion that the flow of television is constructed to position viewers for advertising. Today, with the continual stream of information, entertainment, and social interactivity converging on the Internet and through social media, this flow has risen to an unprecedented level.

Offering a comparative framework for analyzing the interconnectivity and relationships among media, Elleström (2010) describes the convergence of different media. According to Elleström (2010), each medium possesses distinct and intersecting modalities: material (physical properties); sensorial (senses); spatiotemporal (space and time); and semiotic (meaning-making). In *Promotion in an Era of Convergence*, Powell (2013) uses this comparative framework to explain how new media, often surrounded by advertisements, are utilized to drive consumerism. Interactive new media not only send a message to a receiver, but they also facilitate reception and transmission. "As a result, consumers are no longer marketed 'at' but rather engaged in a conversation to nurture a personalized relationship with a brand" (Powell, 2013). Through disseminating information and catalyzing participation, new media can also deeply embed their advertisements and biases within their messages and modalities, all while appearing to be "neutral" conveyors of information. According to Jenkins and Deuze (2008), "we are living at a moment of profound and prolonged media transition: the old scripts by which media industries operated or consumers absorbed media content are being rewritten" (p. 5). Some suggest that this period of revision brings with it the opportunity for a major redistribution of power and knowledge (Jenkins &

Deuze, 2008; Powell, 2013). "If the new and emerging paradigms emphasize the relationship between knowledge and power, we need to take more seriously the power we exert – or could exert – as knowledge workers in an emerging creative economy" (Jenkins & Deuze, 2008, p. 12).

This evolving media landscape is blooming with opportunity for students to create and contribute to a variegated reality. Rather than evaluating information in search of a single "truth," students should be learning to search for different perspectives and evidence to triangulate findings and evaluate information from multiple sources. Oreskes and Conway (2010) assert that students need to be skeptical of everything, even science, which is often considered objective. "History shows us clearly that science does not provide certainty. It does not provide proof. It only provides the consensus of experts, based on the organized accumulation and scrutiny of evidence" (Oreskes & Conway, 2010, p. 268).

CML offers students a framework to hone their inquiry skills by guiding them to question the interconnections of power and culture as they learn with and about media, technology, and the nexus between culture and society. CML provides a lens and process for analyzing and creating meanings through which any content can be taught. Morrell (2012) describes this perspective as one that "enlightens students to the potential that they have, as media producers, to shape the world they live in, to help turn it into the world they imagine" (p. 302). Although CML is rooted in a rich history of cultural studies, CML pedagogy is not a practice to be siloed within the domain of one academic discipline. CML belongs in every classroom from preschool to university; it invites educators to teach with democratic pedagogy through an inquiry process that questions "common sense" assumptions as students read and write the word and the world (Freire & Macedo, 1987; Vasquez, 2014).

CRITICAL MEDIA LITERACY QUESTIONS AND CONCEPTS

The following six questions and concepts are based on the work of many media educators that the Center for Media Literacy summarized into five concepts and questions. With the goal of aligning these ideas from cultural studies with critical pedagogy, we have adapted those five concepts into the following six. These CML questions and explanations are intended to guide educators and students down a critical path of inquiry to interrogate any text, medium, and context that surrounds it.

1. Who are all the possible people who made choices that helped create this text?
   Social Constructivism: All information is co-constructed by individuals and/or groups of people who make choices within social contexts.
2. How was this text constructed and delivered/accessed?
   Languages / Semiotics: Each medium has its own language with specific grammar and semantics.
3. How could this text be understood differently?
   Audience / Positionality: Individuals and groups understand media messages similarly and/or differently depending on multiple contextual factors.
4. What values, points of view, and ideologies are represented or missing from this text or influenced by the medium?
   Politics of Representation: Media messages and the medium through which they travel always have a bias and support and/or challenge dominant hierarchies of power, privilege, and pleasure.
5. Why was this text created and/or shared?

Production / Institutions: all media texts have a purpose (often commercial or governmental) that is shaped by the creators and/or systems within which they operate.

6. Whom does this text advantage and/or disadvantage?

Social Justice: Media culture is a terrain of struggle that perpetuates or challenges positive and/or negative ideas about people, groups, and issues; it is never neutral.

THE EVOLUTION OF CRITICAL MEDIA EDUCATION

In the following sections, we delineate the evolution of critical media education and then engage central themes involved in CML and transformative pedagogy. While media education has evolved from many disciplines, an important arena of theoretical work for CML comes from the multidisciplinary field of cultural studies. This is a field of critical inquiry comprised of the work of researchers from The Frankfurt School, Birmingham School, feminism, queer theory, critical race theory, critical indigenous theory, and others working to examine the impact of the culture industries. These scholars have expanded the concept of ideology to include gender, race, sexuality, and other forces of identity and oppression in addition to class, while proposing a sophisticated understanding of the audience as active makers of meaning. Applying concepts of semiotics, feminism, multiculturalism, postmodernism, a dialectical understanding of political economy, textual analysis and audience theory, CML has evolved into a practice of analyzing media and popular culture as dynamic discourses that reproduce dominant ideologies as well as entertain, educate, and offer possibilities for counter-hegemonic alternatives (Kellner, 1995).

In the 1980s, cultural studies research began to enter the educational arena. After the publication of Masterman's *Teaching the Media* (1985), many educators around the world embraced media education more as a framework of *conceptual understandings* (Buckingham, 2003) rather than a specific body of knowledge or set of skills. While many media literacy organizations have their own list of essential ideas, they tend to coincide with at least five basic elements: 1. recognition of the construction of media and communication as a social process as opposed to accepting texts as isolated neutral or transparent conveyors of information; 2. textual analysis of the languages, genres, codes, and conventions of the text; 3. exploration of the role audiences play in negotiating meanings; 4. problematization of the process of representation to uncover and engage issues of ideology, power, and pleasure; 5. examination of the production and institutions that motivate and structure the media industries as corporate profit-seeking businesses (Kellner & Share, 2007).

Unfortunately, much of the current literature on media education in the U.S. tends to marginalize CML as an outlier or label it as protectionist (Hobbs, 2013; Grieco, 2012), without recognizing that the core concepts of media literacy evolved from critical traditions and frameworks. Masterman's (1985) foundational text devotes an entire chapter to ideology and stresses the importance of media education to question hegemony and dominant myths. Masterman (1985) writes, "What must be kept absolutely clear, however, is the fact that the objectives of media education are demystificatory and critical" (p. 9). Perhaps one reason for the marginalization of CML is its focus on criticality.

The term "critical" is sometimes conflated with a negative judgment or an accusatory perspective. Hooks (2010) explains, "There is a useful distinction to be made between critique that seeks to expand consciousness and harsh criticism that attacks or trashes" (p. 137). CML defines "critical" as an aspect of a dialectical, sociocultural, and analytical process. Campbell, Jensen, Gomery, Fabos, and Frechette (2013) assert, "Rather than cynically dismissing entire media styles and practices, the critical approach attempts to understand the institutional and interpretive processes through which media are made, distributed, and interpreted" (p. 8). This attempt at understanding invokes critical thinking that is more than just a cognitive idea; it is also a sociocultural understanding that seeks to develop in students a social consciousness as well as a working knowledge of how media operate. This notion of criticality is intended to develop the Freirian (2010/1970) idea of "conscientização" (critical consciousness), a humanist liberatory understanding of living in solidarity with the world. Students are encouraged to question hegemony and social injustices in ways that can challenge problematic dominant narratives with their own counter-narratives as a form of praxis (reflection and action). As CML plays a vital role in addressing issues of social justice, it offers critical competencies for unveiling the social construction of normality.

As highlighted by Masterman in 1985, media can develop an ideological perspective through which their "facts" (and fiction) seem "normal." "The media . . . carry out what is perhaps their most important ideological role through a process which is generally regarded as being ideologically innocent, the process of reporting 'the facts'" (Masterman, 1985, p. 129). Masterman (1985) suggests that educators should not only foster students' critical thinking skills to expose underlying media messages, but that they should also facilitate the conversations that question ideological frames, or what makes information seem "normal."

THE MYTHS OF NEUTRALITY AND OBJECTIVITY

Challenging the ideological constructions of normality and neutrality is a key concept for CML and is often excluded or overlooked in much American education (Apple, 2004; Giroux, 1997; Kincheloe, 2007). CML pedagogy embraces education as a political act and connects education with democracy and social justice. Lewis and Jhally (1998) assert, "Media literacy should be about helping people to become sophisticated citizens rather than sophisticated consumers" (p. 1). Freire and Macedo (1987) explain:

The myth of the neutrality of education -- which leads to the negation of the political nature of the educational process, regarding it only as a task we do in the service of humanity in the abstract sense -- is the point of departure for our understanding of the fundamental differences between a naive practice, an astute practice, and a truly critical practice. (p. 38)

Ignoring the political nature of education only supports the status quo and conserves dominant power structures and systems of oppression. Giroux (1997) writes, "The notion that theory, facts, and inquiry can be objectively determined and used falls prey to a set of values that are both conservative and mystifying in their political orientation" (p. 11). Through disrupting unexamined beliefs about what is normal or natural, students unveil ideologies and hegemonic structures that are all too often invisible (Hall, 2012; Kumashiro, 2000; Vasquez, 2014).

What many take for granted as "normal" today was and is created within formal hegemonic systems of power as well as within informal commonplace ideological positions. The word "normal" is a problematic term that implies a dominant standard in contrast to something "abnormal" or "unnatural." In psychology, "normal" intelligence is given an IQ range of 90 - 110. In medicine, a "normal" human body temperature is considered 98.6 degrees Fahrenheit. The word "normal" is a misnomer for what is common or typical in a given society. What an individual or a society deems "normal" is always a contextually-based decision and not universal or inherently obvious to everyone at all times. This social construction, however, is not usually considered when most people use the term "normal." While there are beneficial uses of normative standards, and some disciplines and activities depend on utilizing these standards, the assumption that what is considered to be "normal" is neutral and apolitical must be challenged. This is most obvious in the fields of medicine and psychology, wherein the antonym of "normal" is "abnormal" and therefore warrants medical intervention, as homosexuality once did.

Hall, Critcher, Jefferson, Clarke, and Roberts (1978) detail how the dichotomy of "normal" and "abnormal" was initially instituted to criminalize those who displayed non-conformist behavior. "The construction of consent and the winning of legitimacy are, of course, the normal and natural mechanisms of the liberal and post-liberal capitalist state; and its institutions are peculiarly well adapted to the construction of consent by these means" (Hall et al., 1978, p. 319). What is presumed "normal" is simultaneously legitimized (or legalized). The concept of a "normal" way of being, looking, and thinking presumes a correctness about it; what is not "normal," is often othered, exoticized, deemed illegitimate and/or potentially criminal, depending upon its level of aberrance.

The construct of *normalcy* is neither innocent nor harmless - it often contributes to many layers of injustice hidden under a metaphorical baseline to which most people become accustomed. When what is assumed to be "normal" veils non-dominant perspectives, it hides or denies injustice. The normalizing of patriarchy assumes male entitlement at the expense of female opportunities and equal rights. The normalizing of heterosexual relationships entitles heterosexual partners to rights and privileges denied to non-heterosexual couples. While these injustices are often more visible and palpable to people in subordinate positions (such as women, sexual minorities, and people of color), it is typically the overt acts of violence or egregious levels of injustice that enter the public discourse and are reported in mainstream media. This is apparent in news reporting that overlooks or downplays crimes *against* people of color while sensationalizing violent crimes committed *by* people of color. When daily news reports normalize the idea that African Americans are mostly the perpetrators of violent crime and not the victims, many Whites are more likely to internalize fears of African Americans instead of developing empathy for the actual victims. In *Violence*, Zizek (2008) contends that media sensationalism constructs a sense of normalcy that demands a critical examination.

Under the sea of sensationalized violence flows an undercurrent of objective, systemic, and anonymous violence (Zizek, 2008). According to Zizek, the very notion of objectivity rests atop this taken-for-granted systemic and anonymous violence. Systemic discrimination against women, people of color, low-income earners, religious minorities, and LGBTQIA (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and asexual) individuals is less visible today, but still continues to influence society and reproduce inequalities. While gender equality has increased since women got the right to vote, still, fewer than one fourth of all political offices and titles are held by women (Rutgers, 2014). Hyperbolizing this dearth of female political representations, current televised programs and films cast less than one percent of politicians' roles as women (Smith, Choueiti, Scofield, & Pieper, 2013, p. 7).

Similarly, discrimination against people of color in the U.S. is also accompanied by underrepresentation and misrepresentations of them in media. While the statistics of incarceration and school suspension among Blacks could be used to highlight the shameful state of race relations in America today, they are instead often exploited by media to attract audiences and increase profit. When compared to Whites, Blacks are six times more likely to be incarcerated during their lifetimes (NAACP, 2014). Furthermore, "Black students represent 18% of preschool enrollment but 42% of students suspended once, and 48% of the students suspended more than once" (United States Department of Education, 2014). Compounding these problematic statistics is the rate at which Blacks are portrayed as criminals on televised news

-- twice as often as Whites, who continue to outnumber Blacks in prison (Chiricos & Eschholz, 2002). Media representations are never neutral; they often amplify disparities to sensationalize facts and gain broader audiences (Duncan, 2012; Iyengar & Kinder, 1987; Krosnick & Kinder, 1990).

Gender-creative individuals likewise face harsh realities, and even harsher media representations. In the U.S., most portrayals of transgender people in news, film, and television vilify, mock, or dismiss them and the significant social issues they face (Jobe, 2013). The reported suicide attempt rate among transgender individuals is 41%, while the rate for the population as a whole is 1.6% (Grant, Mottet, Tanis, Harrison, Hermet, & Kiesling, 2011).

These statistics and media portrayals are neither coincidences nor evidence of the inferiority of women, the licentiousness of Blacks, and the mental illness of gender-creative individuals. Instead, they reveal systemic injustices: a media-saturated society that regularly repeats these hegemonic representations will be more likely to think of politicians as male, Blacks as criminals, and transgender individuals as freaks. All of these representations begin to establish a baseline of what a culture considers "normal." Establishing this baseline of normalcy, media (whether purposefully or inadvertently) accustom their viewers/readers/listeners to see White, heterosexual males as the model of normalcy and the rightful possessors of power, yet rarely name or identify them as beneficiaries of privilege. Johnson (2006) points out that "privileged groups are also usually taken as the standard of comparison that represents the best society has to offer" (p. 95). Johnson explains, that these "privileged groups are assumed to represent society as a whole, 'American' is culturally defined as white, in spite of the diversity of the population. This is evident in a statement like 'Americans must learn to be more tolerant of other races'" (p. 96).

CML interrogates the myth of objectivity by examining the systems (e.g. canons, ideologies, organizations, philosophies, structures, and laws) that are often presumed to be neutral because of a deeply buried history of power and dominance which goes unmarked and unmentioned. According to Zizek (2008), everything that is taken for granted (or called "neutral") contains within it a type of violence embedded within the very language of a culture. Assumed linguistic constructions such as English words such as "mankind" or "guys," that generalize women and men with one label connoting just men, demonstrate how subtle this injustice can be. More importantly, these minute, yet significant acts of violence, as demonstrated by the literature on microaggressions, can aggregate to consequential, even seemingly insurmountable, levels of injustice (Brennan & Naidoo, 2008; Juarez, Smith, & Hayes, 2008; Sue, 2010). By using CML concepts and questions, students learn to scrutinize the systems and processes that make media representations and networked communicative acts appear "normal" or "natural."

CML pedagogy is rooted in the premise that no text or medium can be free of bias or completely neutral because communication is a subjective and social process. Even the mathematical algorithms that drive search engines are not neutral (boyd, 2014). Media messages and the mediums they travel through are created and emerge from a cultural milieu that may advertise itself as "neutral" (or objective) when in actuality it consistently privileges dominant groups. Privileged perspectives may include ableist, capitalist, cisgender (those living in accordance with their gender assignment from birth), property-owning, Protestant, and the list continues depending on whose perspective is dominant enough "to disappear from view into the taken-for-granted 'naturalised' world of common sense" (Hall, 2003, p. 90). Although wealthy white males still receive unearned privileges at the expense of women, people of color, and the indigent, this country, founded on the belief that only land-owning white males could vote, has changed considerably since its founding.

Today's educators and students live in a space less defined by binaries and absolutes, and more receptive to adaptation, diversity, and innovation. Studies in feminism, LGBTQIA issues, human rights, and globalization have helped make the 21st century student more aware of the complexity of identities and issues. Along with this openness to diversity has arisen an "epidemic of tolerance" (Irvine, 2000, p. 42), a cultural relativist sentiment, which risks weakening students' capacity for developing critical judgment skills (Tasioulas, 1998) and promotes an apolitical perspective that declares every viewpoint equal and every message, no matter how racist, sexist, classist or hateful, deserving of "free expression." Much like the concept of normalcy, relativism is not a harmless personal point of view. Many adopt this perspective erroneously, assuming that ethical absolutism is only for religious conservatives and intolerant people (Irvine, 2000). A relativist perspective can effectively absolve one from feeling personal responsibility to take action to fight injustice and when adopted to the extreme, it can obstruct critical thinking skills. While CML encourages tolerance of difference, it does not subscribe to the relativistic notion that all ideas are equal and every perspective is valid. Instead, CML takes a strong critical stance against racism, sexism, heterosexism, and other forms of discrimination that are often reinforced by mainstream media.

As new media enable people to engage increasingly in processes of participating and constructing realities, so too can systemic injustices that have routinely passed as "normal," or largely ignored in the name of "tolerance," be exposed. Media production is an important part of CML because often students are unaware of privileged and disadvantaged perspectives until they create narratives, art, and digital media that affirm their own unique perspectives. The process of enabling students to construct digital media and give a voice and/or visual representation to their experiences that challenge what is often considered "normal" can be educational and empowering.

LEARNING CML THROUGH MEDIA PRODUCTION

Learning CML through production emboldens students to learn the codes of representation of their social world through producing media texts (Kellner & Share, 2007; Share, 2015). Whether students create visual art or increase their computational literacy by developing their own video games, they empower themselves when they actively create new media. There is much pedagogical potential for students when they are involved in creating media that can push back and challenge dominant myths and stereotypes. As with print literacy, one learns to read by writing and to write by reading. Even though early media education recognized the value of student-produced media, U.S. media education has "not necessarily advocated a critical stance toward media production" (Morrell et al., 2013, p. 4). Founder and executive director of the Educational Video Center in New York, Steven Goodman (2003) argues that one of the best strategies for "teaching critical literacy is for students to create their own media" (p. 6). Goodman (2010) explains that the process of creating documentaries holds many promising practices, such as,

…ensuring that all students contribute to discussions and decision making; use the community as a source of knowledge and information; connect personal experiences to social concerns; use multiple modes of literacy in their daily work; develop critical questions to guide their inquiry; revise their work and reflect on their learning; and use their video to inspire community dialogue and action. (p. 52)

The process of creating media has numerous pedagogical benefits. First, actively creating media, as opposed to merely reading and discussing it, is better constructivist pedagogy. Students learn best by doing and engaging their creative potential to construct meaning while also analyzing and critically reflecting on the messages they read and create (Dewey, 1963; Piaget, 1974; Vygotsky, 1978). Second, creating alternative media is empowering because it provides students a path for taking action about the problems they see and encounter in the world around them. Students need to know how to use new tools to engage politically in their world in ways to reach countless numbers of people, much as they do socially on their own with gaming, texting, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc. Web 2.0 is about sharing and social media provide the platforms and the potential to do just that (Prensky, 2010). According to the editors at Rethinking Schools:

If we ask the children to critique the world but then fail to encourage them to act, our classrooms can degenerate into factories of cynicism. While it's not a teacher's role to direct students to particular organizations, it is a teacher's role to suggest that ideas need to be acted upon and to offer students opportunities to do just that. (Bigelow, Christensen, Karp, Miner, & Peterson, 1994, p. 5)

Prensky (2010) asserts that real learning "involves students immediately using what they learn to do something and/or change something in the world. It is crucial that students be made aware that using what they learn to effect positive change in the world, large or small, is one of their important roles in school" (p. 20). He explains that digital technology provides useful tools to do this:

Even elementary school students can change the world through online writing, supporting and publicizing online causes, making informational and public service videos and machinima, and creating original campaigns of their own design. Anything students create that 'goes viral' on the Web reaches millions of people, and students should be continually striving to make this happen, with output that both does good and supports their learning. (Prensky, 2010, p. 66)

This type of social justice education using real-world digital projects is vital because the world is not "flat" (with a level playing field) as Friedman (2005) claims; there are still tremendous problems of inequality and injustice. However, new technologies are reshaping our environment and social relations, providing more opportunities for students to create media that can challenge problems, promote social justice, and enhance academics.

CML pedagogy encourages students to identify injustice, to analyze its roots and the ways in which it propagates, and to take action to challenge the problem. Students can learn, by engaging with the six CML questions and concepts, about any media message; however, by engaging with media as producers, students not only learn essential digital literacies, but they also gain a sense of agency and empowerment to foster social justice. Like any good project-based learning, the *process* of creating a product is usually where most learning occurs. Teachers should be cautious not to fall into the common trap of over-valuing the final product at the expense of the creation process. CML emphasizes the application of critical thinking inquiry skills as well as media production that can be used to address genuine concerns.

INTERSECTIONALITY, IDENTITY, AND THE POLITICS OF REPRESENTATION

CML deploys a variety of theories and perspectives to engage a full range of the politics of representation in which media texts present constructs of class, race, gender, sexuality, and other constituents of identity in ways that promote oppression and perpetuate classism, racism, sexism, heterosexism and other forms of discrimination. The concept of *theory* derives from the Greek word *theoria* and denotes *a way of seeing* phenomena in the world. Each theory has its focuses and blind spots, so that a Marxist theory will focus on class, capitalism, economic themes, and ideology critique, while a Weberian analysis focuses on state, bureaucracy, and more political-institutional issues and processes. Feminist theory will focus intensely on gender and gender relations, critiquing sexist and patriarchal representations and narratives. Critical race theory engages constructions of race and ethnicity and critiques racism and racial stereotypes, while seeking representations that break with conventional limited and biased representations. Queer theories take on issues of sexuality, critiquing homophobia and seeking more positive and diverse images of sexuality. All of these theories thus have strong focuses and emphases, but also blind spots. Taken together, these theories and others constitute a powerful repertoire to engage the politics of representation as a contested terrain.

The concept of *intersectionality* articulated by Crenshaw (1991) calls for the importance of mapping the intersections of oppression and domination across the lines of race, gender, sexuality, class, and other forms of oppression. The concept suggests that forms of oppression intersect and work together, and cultural theorists have used intersectionality to explore how cultural representations interact to provide racist, sexist, classist, and other forms of representation that promote oppression. A critical cultural studies, however, is also concerned with delineating representations and cinematic texts that counter forms of oppression and that depict struggle and emancipation in the contested terrain of contemporary media culture.

This approach also utilizes critical theories of the contemporary era that emerged during periods of social struggle over the past decades. Theories in this conception are ways of seeing that can engage the constellation of representations in a text concerning different identity markers and other dimensions of the *politics of representation*, which describes how media texts represent different social groups and dimensions of social existence. Theories can also provide *modes of interpretation* that can delineate the meanings, politics, and effects of texts in specific socio-historical contexts.

CRITICALLY ENGAGING CLASS

A CML approach to teaching reminds educators and students that the questions that need to be asked are often the ones that challenge what some consider to be the most fundamental building blocks of society. Critical pedagogues such as Apple (2004), Freire (2010), Giroux (2004), and hooks (2010) address inequities of class in education. While a dominant ideology holds that class is disappearing in contemporary U.S. society, in fact class distinctions are growing. Hence, while ideologues of contemporary society claim that great inequalities of class have been overcome, this is simply false, as scholars such as Atkinson (2010) and Piketty (2014) have maintained. On the whole, dominant media such as film and television often celebrate the rich and powerful while presenting negative representations of poor and working people. Traditionally, U.S. television focused on middle and upper class families, and professionals like doctors, lawyers, or corporate executives, while tending to ignore working class life and poor people. Having studied TV portrayals of class on US prime-time sitcoms for over four decades, Butsch (2003) reports persistent patterns of underrepresentation of working-class occupations and negative stereotypes of working-class men. Butsch asserts that these representations work well to “justify class relations of modern capitalism” (p. 575). To be sure, some TV series like Norman Lear’s *All in the Family, The Jeffersons, Sanford and Son,* and *Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman* show problems and conflicts within working class life in sympathetic ways, as do some contemporary Hollywood films (Kellner, 2010).

While the growth of cable networks and the Internet has depicted more diversity, the majority of representations still valorize the wealthy at the expense of the working-class and poor. Although the entire media landscape should never be overly simplified as monolithic and one-dimensional in its portrayal of social class issues, it continues to favor a model of economic success grounded in dogged individualism detached from larger social structures or communities of subjugation, mutual support, and struggle.

In *When Hope is Subversive*, Giroux (2004) argues, "Market values replace social values. Power has become disconnected from issues of equity, social justice, and civic responsibility" (p. 62). In the struggle for democracy amidst educational and political crises, Giroux (2004) suggests that hope must be maintained. One such crisis, according to Giroux (2006), was Hurricane Katrina and its subsequent media coverage:

The bodies of the Katrina victims laid bare the racial and class fault lines that mark an increasingly damaged and withering democracy and revealed the emergence of a new kind of politics, one in which entire populations are now considered disposable, an unnecessary burden on state coffers, and consigned to fend for themselves. (p.174)

This "politics of disposability," according to Giroux (2006), is a direct result of rampant consumerist culture coupled with American neoconservatism. In other words, the media coverage of Hurricane Katrina offered America an image and a narrative to what many had suspected all along: those living in poverty are largely considered drains on economic progress, which is synonymous with social progress, and thereby considered disposable.

The inverse of disposability is "secular immortality," (Hirschmann, 1990), which abounds in popular magazines, and depicts how the narrative of the entrepreneurial moguls "built something from nothing" (p. 35). According to Hirschmann (1990), "secular immortality" occurs when "those whose lives and possessions are celebrated and ultimately immortalized in our culture are those believed to have worked industriously, channeled their personal resources in effective and productive ways, and constructed some form of notable material monument to symbolize those efforts" (p. 39). To illustrate this point, Hirschmann identifies Lee Iacocca, Donald Trump, and Ross Perot as three icons of wealth who embody the Horatio Alger myth. Indeed, for many decades the Horatio Alger myth of rising from rags to riches has been replayed in literature and diverse media, comprising a key element of dominant American ideology. This trope tends to promote a deficit perspective of the poor and homeless as people who fail due to their own laziness or ineptitude, regardless of the institutions and systems that create the unequal playing field.

In a CML course offered to undergraduate students at a private Jewish university, students analyzed popular TV depictions of the poor and working class. After being introduced to constructivist pedagogy, the students divided themselves into groups and chose to analyze an episode of *Seinfeld,* entitled *Muffin Bottoms*. In this episode, the cast makes anonymous charitable donations to a local homeless shelter. Upon deciding that the tops of muffins were the only part worth eating, the *Seinfeld* characters secretly drop bags of muffin "bottoms" outside of the nearby homeless shelter.

Before using the CML concepts to analyze the show, these students remarked, "Seinfeld is just hilarious," and "The show is daring; it uses things that happen in everyday life and shows how hilarious life really is." The students felt that *Seinfeld*, with its references to Jewish culture, and its observational comedy, depicted Jews favorably and humorously, and for these reasons, they liked it. After analyzing the episode using the CML concepts, and listening to a presentation given by a scholar who was formerly homeless, the students became more critical. The students identified that at its comedic core, the narrative mocked "the homeless" to request quality food donations as it reinforced the stereotype that they are sentenced to settle for remnants of the wealthy. One student summarized the shift in perspective his group gained:

Well, we're initially laughing because we think that it would be absurd for a homeless person to complain about receiving a muffin bottom. But, we wouldn't want anyone to just give us leftovers. And if we think it's okay to feed people like they're dogs, then it's no wonder we are okay with them living in makeshift places resembling doghouses. (Pikelis, 2014)

During this exercise, students gained a working familiarity with semiotics (concept #2) and positionality (concept #3). Before this, the students were largely unfamiliar with the signs and coding systems of the genre of comedy. Moreover, they had not regarded their class privilege as influencing their engagement with media. As CML does not aim to vilify media, *Seinfeld* proved to be a particularly effective program to use with these students because it resonated with their Jewish identities, yet revealed the ways in which media representations can promote injustice in the form of classism.

Dominant media representations of class often celebrate the rich and denigrate working-class and indigent people. Just as criticizing biased representations of class is an important dimension of CML, so too is explicating and validating media texts that present positive images of the working class, women, people of color, LGBTQIA individuals, and others who are often represented negatively in mainstream media. As the concept of intersectionality suggests, these representations often overlap and intersect, thus offering complex and productive examinations in the classroom.

LOOKING CLOSELY AT RACE AND RACISM

As we explore the politics of representation, we need to address issues of race and racism in media because as Omi and Winant (2015) assert, "race has been a master category, a kind of template for patterns of inequality, marginalization, and difference throughout U.S. history" (p. viii). This history of racism in the U.S. has had devastating effects and continues today by normalizing American identity as white, thereby marginalizing other racial identities, dividing the country along the "color line", and contributing to ideological and structural systems that benefit whites while disadvantaging people of color.

With the category of race, it is often through challenging the taken-for-granted issues in life that classrooms see transformative results. In *Racial Categories in Medical Practice: How Useful are They?*, eight medical students explore a 2005 episode of *House MD* in which Dr. House prescribes a drug to an African American man after making a series of assumptions about the patient's medical outcome based on his race. Using the show as a foray into the question of race illustrates a CML inquiry into a social construct that many students take for granted. The authors argue that "racial categories are historical, not natural" (Braun, Fausto-Sterling, Fullwiley, Hammonds, Nelson, Quivers, Reverby, & Shields, 2009, p. 271). Reviewing examples of how racial categories have been operationalized to prevent "miscegenation" and to promote racial "purity" throughout the 20th century (p. 272), Braun et al. (2009) argue that the concept of race is not merely semantic in nature, rather that cultural stereotyping done by physicians "could produce poor health outcomes if clinician[s] [are] more attentive to what [they] *think* they know about this 'type' of patient than to the individual before them" (p. 274). This inquiry, initiated within the context of House MD, is an example of how, by applying concept #6 (social justice), educators can ask students to challenge what has for so long been taken for granted as a fundamental identity marker in medicine.

CML pedagogy helps students question the social construction of race and racism through debunking the connection of race with biology and genetics. To better understand the roots of race and racism, Hall suggests exploring the "circuit of culture" and the ways practices of *representation* create shared meanings (Hall, Evans, & Nixon, 2013). By invoking ideas from Afro-Media Literacy (Byard, 2012), educators can explore the connections between science, slavery, and colorism with current portrayals of African Americans in news media and popular culture. The history of eugenics and scientific racism remains unknown to many students in the U.S., even though it still informs much popular discourse and many media messages such as the New York Times best seller, *Bell Curve* (Hernstein & Murray, 1996) and *A Troublesome Inheritance: Genes, Race and Human History* (Wade, 2014) written by a 30-year veteran New York Times science writer (Rendall, 2014). While studying the ways many groups of people suffer from racist ideologies, CML educators also focus specifically on the experiences of African Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans, since they continue to be the groups most heavily affected by racial microaggressions, deficit thinking, and disproportionate rates of incarceration and violence. Exploration of the social construction of race and racism helps demonstrate how the repetition of racist ideology contributes to racial microaggressions that are now less overt, but still highly damaging. When people experience words or actions (cues) that suggest their marginality, a *stereotype threat* is likely to occur, causing anxiety, affecting physiology (sweating, hypertension, increased heart rate, higher blood pressure), and impairing cognitive thinking abilities (Steele, 2011).

While taking a CML teacher education course, one pre-service science teacher turned his ninth grade biology class into a CML inquiry. As his students were studying DNA and genetics, Alexander Dinh posed the question to his students, "Where do racial categorizations come from?" To answer this question, his students split into inquiry teams to research and then create Public Service Announcement (PSA) videos to explain their findings. Using their cell phones to film and edit, students unpacked the science about transcription and DNA translation as well as discussed the ways science has been misused to promote racism. In one PSA, the students report:

The idea of genetics causing racism has constantly been twisted and turned in all sorts of directions. Ninety-nine percent of our genes are similar to all around us. That one percent is what makes us unique and apart from everyone else. Yet, society creates racism. Looks and appearances, judging of one another, [telling] racial jokes, are what racism is and it needs to be stopped. All must be informed about what genetics are to fully understand the concept of racism. (Stop Racism, 2013)

This project highlights the transdisciplinary nature, and potential, of CML pedagogy. While conducting their research, the students learned not only about biology, but also about how biology as a field can be used to uphold a dominant ideology. Moreover, the students learned how to construct a convincing narrative, one they hoped would change the minds of people viewing their PSA online, as well as their peers' in the course and at their high school.

Boske and McCormack (2011) investigated the effects of incorporating CML pedagogy into a media club discussion among Latina/o students at a Texan high school by asking the students to analyze the film *Happy Feet.* One participant's comment highlighted the importance of using CML, as well as the stigma that some educators have attached to studying media: "We never talk about this kind of stuff in school. If we have a movie in class, it's because the teacher doesn't want to teach that day. I think more kids would want to come to school and learn if they had chances like this to really think about what is going on out there" (Boske & McCormack, 2011, p. 175). Using a critical approach to *Happy Feet*, this student began thinking about society, justice, and how seemingly trivial media products, such as children's films, often reinforce stereotyping and prejudice.

The students all agreed that this activity increased their awareness of bigotry and highlighted how their silence about stereotypical representations of their culture increases the profit of production companies and the likelihood that those stereotypes would continue to materialize in popular culture. Their central investigation was closely aligned with concept #4 (politics of representation). *Happy Feet* became the means by which they explored representations of ethnicity, accents, and depictions of intellect (and ignorance) among various cultures. While these students engaged in an inquiry process over the course of a semester, touching upon the first five CML questions, their response demonstrated their attention to concept #6 (social justice):

Before viewing the children's animated film, participants identified the movie as 'funny,' 'good,' 'fun,' and 'a simple children's movie about a dancing penguin.' After participating in conversations centered on critical inquiry, issues such as race, native language, and sexual identity emerged. [Participants] did not recognize these issues until they were afforded spaces to critically reflect on the film. They assumed issues of race centered primarily on tensions between Blacks and Whites. Throughout their analysis of the film, participants reconsidered the need to broaden their understanding and critically think about the discourse of race and the need for their lived experiences as Latino/as to be heard. (Boske & McCormack, 2011, p. 176)

Through their questionnaire and interview responses, students revealed how their critical awareness and sense of social justice grew as they applied a CML lens to their viewing of *Happy Feet.*

The versatility of the CML framework enables educators to highlight social justice issues in various mediated forms. Using Google pictures of downtown Los Angeles, a Social Studies teacher challenged her high school students to critically analyze how their neighborhood was represented. Although her students' urban community was often depicted as a high crime zone, she wanted them to consider other factors about the community, aspects that commercial media often ignored. She explains, "I brought in pictures from Google of their community, and then asked them to make observations on how this compares to what they see/what they do not see [on television and the Internet] and which perspectives may be missing in these photos" (Funk, 2013, p. 110). This activity focused on concepts #2 (languages/semiotics) and #3 (audience/positionality). Following the class discussion, students took home worksheets to "interview their parents about what they valued and didn't value about their community, so as to deepen the content" (Funk, 2013, p.111). By sharing their findings with the class, the students became social scientists. They discovered how perspectives are often influenced by life experience, culture, family dynamics, socio-economic status, and so forth. Students gained greater perspective and the ability to imagine their reality through another's eyes. At the core of this exercise were concepts #3 (audiences/positionality) and #4 (politics of representation), prompting students to collaborate with their communities to explore the multiple identities within a family or community and how they are represented (or often mis-represented or underrepresented) among media. Exercises such as these nurture students' inquiry and empathy and prepare them to live in a mediated and networked world, one where the veracity of every message should be questioned, or at least contextualized and acknowledged as having a specific perspective.

PROBLEMATIZING GENDER AND SEXUALITY

The cultural dominance of patriarchy creates assumptions about the subordinate roles women are expected to serve in relation to the privileged positions from which men benefit. CML questions how patriarchy and the domination of women are advanced or contested by media representations that often promote one-dimensional stereotypes of Mary Ann (the virginal girl-next-door) or Ginger (the hyper-sexualized object), while seldom offering a more dynamic, nuanced, or complex portrayal of women.

Because of the predominance of patriarchy, many educators, especially females, feel disempowered or detached from feminist ideas (Flores-Koulish, 2006, p. 244). In a 2006 study, female pre-service teachers (PSTs) used a critical approach to analyze Madonna's music video, "What It Feels Like for a Girl." While analyzing the video, the PSTs frequently commented on feminists' struggles for equality by referring to women as "they" instead of "we." This indicates an attempt to be objective, which contributes to their reluctance to taking a position. According to Flores-Koulish (2006) this posturing of objectivity is "neutering and disempowering" (p. 244). These PSTs grappled with ideas related to the politics of representation and commercial interests behind media productions yet failed to identify with a feminist perspective that was in their own best interest.

The PSTs initially tried to respond to the video by claiming "That's just [Madonna's] her feelings . . . that's her artistic expression" (Flores-Koulish, 2006, p. 244). They initially considered Madonna's music video as merely a reflection of her personal beliefs and individual attitude, not as representative of a larger social problem. Because of their relativistic stance, the students struggled to analyze the video critically. When encouraged to read deeper into the video, they could see that Madonna was challenging a stereotypically masculine genre of music videos, yet they consistently wanted to assess Madonna's performance as strictly reflective of her personal attitudes and beliefs. This exercise engaged the PSTs in deep discussions concerning concepts #1 (social constructivism) and #4 (politics of representation). Dialogues such as these underscore the need for educators to explore how the ideologies and structures of patriarchy and sexism intersect with capitalism and heterosexism.

When heterosexuality appears as the "normal" way of being and understanding gender and sexuality, a perspective of heteronormativity prevails. This normalization of the gender binary (male/female) and heterosexuality is reinforced when portrayals of romantic relationships are limited primarily to those between men and women in mainstream movies, songs, and advertisements. As heterosexual love and gender conformity are ubiquitous among media, they are assumed to be the dominant mode of living, or the only option. As a result of this dearth of representation among media, non-heterosexuals and the gender-creative suffer negative consequences.

The role media play in perpetuating stereotypes requires educators to engage their students actively in questions of which groups are benefiting and which are being harmed by all messages, concept #6 (social justice). All too often LGBTQIA people experience physical violence, psychological intimidation, and verbal abuse. Schools are increasingly being recognized as a contentious space where much social justice work remains to be done, as evidenced by scholars of law and queer studies as well as the passage of recent legislation (Biegel, 2010; Butler, 2004; Ehrensaft, 2011; Halberstam, 2011). Heterosexism and sexism continue to plague educational settings. Protective legislation can be a good start to actualizing equity, but to achieve ideological transformation in schools today, educators and students need habitual practice in the art of asking critical questions.

Christensen (2000) argues that by asking students questions about what they know - their families, popular culture, cartoons, media entertainment, etc., educators can begin to transform students' thinking from a deficit model to an asset approach that is more empowering and validating of the students' own culture. This is an opportunity to use the students' *funds of knowledge* (Moll, 1998) as resources in the classroom. In her Literature and US History high school classroom, Christensen (2000) starts the semester by guiding students through an exercise in sharing personal stories, or what she calls a "collective text" (p. 103). Students do this to gain a deeper understanding of how history and stories are always deeply embedded in the cultural context that surrounds them. During one such exercise, a young man shared that, because his mother was a lesbian, he felt he could not bring his friends home. "He was afraid his peers would think he was gay or reject him if they knew about his mother" (Christensen, 2000, p. 103). Using this topic as a discussion springboard, students began to "discuss sexual diversity more openly. Students who were rigidly opposed to the idea of homosexuality gained insights into their own homophobia . . . Those with homosexual relatives found new allies with whom they could continue their discussion and find support" (Christensen, 2000, p. 103). She and her students interrogate gender roles by asking where they come from and how they are reflected in popular culture. More importantly, Christensen challenges her students to consider "who benefits?" from the socially constructed rigid frameworks of sexuality and gender (p.103).

Questions such as "who benefits?" encourage students to consider their own social responsibility (concept #6) in maintaining or challenging cultural norms. Christensen tasks her students to consider who gains, profits, loses, or is harmed by media messages that promote heterosexism. Students explore "a variety of texts from novels to historical documents to first-person narratives to movies, speakers, role plays and field trips" (p.105). Christensen's (2000) students are exposed to concepts of social constructivism (concept #1) and semiotics (concept #2) in order to "engage them in a study of their lives in relation to the larger society" (p. 106).

In addition to equipping educators and students to examine the egregious forms of domination and discrimination, CML pedagogy also challenges educators to ask questions about subtle forms of injustice. For example, one UCLA Teacher Education instructor begins the academic quarter by administering a "heterosexual questionnaire" to his students. Questions include, "What do you think caused your heterosexuality? To whom have you revealed your heterosexuality and how did they react?" (Funk, 2013, p. 70). He subverts his students' perceptions of "normal," so that they, in turn, think about how they can challenge their own students to think critically about the assumptions they make based upon their systems of beliefs, cultures, experiences, and ideological perspectives. This exercise elicits conversations about many of the six CML concepts, yet at the core is concept #4 (politics of representation). In today's media culture, representative democracy is often promoted as participation in surveys and questionnaires, which contribute data that are then represented in media to support or challenge different ideological perspectives.

FOSTERING DEMOCRACY AND GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP

In the early 20th century, John Dewey argued that democracy requires educated citizens and that schools should promote education for citizenship and participation in democratic processes. CML aims to advance goals of democracy, justice, and citizenship, yet in an increasingly globalized and networked world, a critical and transformative pedagogy should teach students to think about their roles as justice-oriented global citizens. In *Educating the 'Good' Citizen: Political Choices and Pedagogical Goals,* Westheimer and Kahne (2004a) present a framework of citizenship for educators to examine their pedagogical objectives. They distinguish three models of citizenship taught in school as:

1. The personally responsible citizen, who assumes that to solve social problems and improve society, citizens must have good character, be honest, responsible, law abiding members of a community;
2. The participatory citizen, who assumes that to solve social problems and improve society, citizens must actively participate and take leadership positions within established systems and community structures;
3. The justice-oriented citizen, who assumes that to solve social problems and improve society, citizens must question and change established systems and structures that reproduce patterns of injustice over time. (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004a, p. 242)

Westheimer and Kahne (2004b) argue that these three types of a "good" citizen do not rest along an imagined continuum of citizenship, rather they often conflict with one another. By emphasizing merely personal responsibility or participatory citizenship education, educators may inadvertently steer students away from social justice-oriented citizenship:

The emphasis placed on individual character and behavior, for example, can obscure the need for collective and often public sector initiatives; second, this emphasis can distract attention from analysis of the causes of social problems; and third, volunteerism and kindness are put forward as ways of avoiding politics and policy. (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004b, p. 3)

The pedagogy of a social justice educator needs to be firmly rooted in questions that challenge students to reconsider the assumptions they take for granted as "normal," even the concept of citizenship.

Calling attention to a lack of social justice education in the curriculum, Westheimer and Kahne (2004a) point to the California Department of Education's restriction on schools from participating in activism, advocacy, lobbying, and marches to celebrate Cesar Chavez Day (p. 244). Teachers and students are encouraged to celebrate the individual achievements of Cesar Chavez (California Department of Education, 2014), as if he operated outside of the social context of history, without the support of countless activists, and isolated from other struggles for civil and human rights. Educators must be cognizant of the kind of citizenship they promote through their pedagogy, because "the choices we make have consequences for the kind of society we ultimately help to create" (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004a, p. 265). As highlighted by concept #4 (politics of representation), what is omitted from a curriculum can be more significant than what is included, because increasing students' exposure to a broad range of perspectives and experiences is integral to promoting social justice and what Ferguson (2001) calls "critical solidarity."

Critical solidarity involves recognizing the interconnections between people and information as well as demonstrating empathy to be in solidarity with those marginalized or oppressed by these connections (Ferguson, 2001). As the proliferating media landscape increasingly shapes students' culture, it is imperative for educators to understand how media engagement will soon be synonymous with civic engagement, and how this engagement can be utilized to foster critical solidarity. Ferguson suggests that the relationships people have with media are not autonomous; rather, they depend on taking positions related to social contexts. Because everyone is always "taking sides," Ferguson (2001) calls for critical solidarity as "a means by which we acknowledge the social dimensions of our thinking and analysis. It is also a means through which we may develop our skills of analysis and relative autonomy" (p. 42). Critical solidarity means teaching students to interpret information and communication within humanistic, social, historical, political, and economic contexts so they begin to understand the interrelationships and consequences of their actions and lifestyles. It also means joining in solidarity, or global citizenship, with the disempowered in a collective struggle for a more just world. Many of these ideas are being promoted internationally by organizations such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the European Commission. However, in the U.S., few reform initiatives promote this type of pedagogical change (Gozálvez & Contreras-Pulido, 2014).

For two decades, UNESCO (2014) has championed establishing peace "on the basis of humanity's moral and intellectual solidarity." To this aim, UNESCO has been researching media education, holding international conferences, and publishing reports that encourage the international community to embrace media literacy. It now promotes media education that is intimately linked to global citizenship and human rights. In 2006, UNESCO published a media education kit in Arabic, English, and French (Frau-Meigs, 2006), and in 2011, it published a *Media and Information Literacy Curriculum for Teachers* in ten different languages (Grizzle & Wilson, 2011). Commissioned by UNESCO, Tornero and Varis (2010) investigated digital and media literacy to develop a conceptual framework, which they presented in their book, *Media Literacy and New Humanism*. Here, they argue that educators need to move beyond an instrumental view of digital literacy to one with an essential critical component necessary for students to inquire into.

…the reasons why we interpret media texts with a given bias or orientation; the mechanisms through which media communicate world views, points of view, beliefs and ideologies, that is, a kind of culture, which they do in a stealthy, silent way, as if they were not doing it, as if their discourse were transparent. (p. 96)

Tornero and Varis (2010) assert, "universal global citizenship is synonymous with media literacy for all" (p. 119). Framing this as an economic and civic necessity, they assert that the ultimate value of media literacy is peace, concluding: "This means accepting the elementary principle that no one is right without dialogue and there is no peace without freedom and justice" (Tornero & Varis, 2010, p. 126).

Some Latin American and Spanish media educators call for "educommunication," an interdisciplinary combination of the academic fields of education and communication. Gozálvez and Contreras-Pulido (2014) assert that educommunication "has a civic purpose, that is, it must be endowed with an ethical, social and democratic base that empowers citizens in their dealings with the media" (p. 130). Educommunication calls for global citizenship that includes multiple notions of civic engagement. "It is a call to a certain condition: to be an independent being in possession of freedom, acting with responsibility and as a protagonist in the various spheres or dimensions of public life" (Gozálvez & Contreras-Pulido, p. 130).

Social activism, a necessary component to an equitable democracy, often represented by pictures of people striking, signing petitions, or marching through downtown streets, can start with students challenging media representations they find unjust. Some CML teachers ask students to analyze stereotypical representations of gender, ethnicity, and class in music videos, online games, or questionnaires, while others work with students on interactive projects that engage students in community outreach and team-based research. Hence, education for democracy and social justice requires students to question media and create alternative representations that challenge media underrepresentation and misrepresentations.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, we have developed a concept of critical media literacy (CML) that involves six concepts and questions that advance critical inquiry and provide a framework for critically engaging with media, popular culture, and new technologies. We discussed the myth of objectivity and the problematic assumptions it creates that lead people to believe some ideas are "normal" or "natural" and education is non-political. CML calls for examining the hierarchical power relations that are embedded in all communication and that ultimately benefit dominant social groups at the expense of subordinate ones. Hence, critical media literacy provides a theoretical framework and transformative pedagogy to empower students to question media, challenge hegemony, and participate in society as justice-oriented global citizens.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Critical: Critical analysis involves examining a text (whether a media representation, cultural artifact, practice, or other communicative act) for the purpose of considering its myriad connections/intersections with contextual factors and the ways that culture reproduces dominant relations of power and subordination and thus serves the interests of ruling groups.

Cultural Studies: An interdisciplinary field of critical inquiry that was developed by the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at the University of Birmingham in the 1960s in England that continues to expand globally, offering critical insights into cultural practices and artifacts (some of which involve popular culture and media). The field of cultural studies examines the ways in which contemporary cultural practices create and are created by social forces and relationships with ways of knowing and controlling power.

Gender-Creative: Also known as gender non-conforming, not in relation to sexual orientation, but identity. These terms connote that an individual expresses a gender identity that is either different from the one assigned at birth (transgender), or one that cannot be (or refuses to be) defined within the male/female binary.

Ideology: A domain of ideas that represents the ruling ideas in a society as "natural" and self-evident. Developed by Marx to critique the dominant ideas of the ruling class, the concept has been extended to describe ideas and representations that naturalize relations of power and subordination in the areas of gender, race, sexuality, and other domains of society, as well as class. Ideological perspectives that are hegemonic, or dominant, are often so ingrained or habitual as to be undetectable without the practice of critical reflection.

Intersectionality: Recognition of the way different identities and forms of oppression, privilege, and/or identity overlap and interact. People are influenced by numerous dimensions of identities that change in different contexts and interact with each other at different times in various ways.

Naturalize: To explain an existing phenomenon, behavior, or trait by linking it to an imagined proper order found in religious texts, cultural presumptions about nature and the animal kingdom, and dominant ideologies and social conceptions. When a concept, such as heterosexuality, is "naturalized," to be the unquestionable norm of human relations, it stigmatizes other forms of human interaction such as homosexuality as unnatural and problematic, and thus helps reproduce dominant ideology.

Normality/Normalcy: Is rooted in the concept of probability originally stemming from the field of Mathematics. Used in popular culture, the term denotes a sense of predictability in behavior, identity, or expression, and thereby connotes a sense of social correctness, cultural acceptability, and/or representations among dominant media programming which reproduce the standards and dominant ideas and social behavior as “natural” and “normal.”

Objectivity: The notion that things exist independently outside of human subjectivity, thereby having neutral and unbiased cognitive status. Objectivity became the goal, or dominant ideal of knowing, based primarily upon Descartes’ 17th century theories on dualism (the mind-body and subject-object split) in which objects are seen to exist outside of the subject, who is interpreted as a neutral observer of the external world.

Representation: Material presented through a medium of communication (aural, visual, tactile, etc.). A representation is never neutral because it is always shaped by people (all with distinct subjectivities) who decide what and how to represent, as well as the structures of the media and dominant cultural forms through which it is created, captured, and shared.

Transformative Pedagogy: A progressive educational approach that includes democratic constructivist-based pedagogy for the promotion of social justice and democratic ideals to transform students and society. Transformative pedagogy empowers learners to engage in dialogue to co-construct meaning from educational material and experiences through an inquiry-based approach (as opposed to what Paulo Freire calls a “banking” orientation). It also promotes personal experiences, dialogical pedagogy, and aligning education with social justice.

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Chapter 20
The Freedom of Critical Thinking:
Examining Efforts to Teach American News Literacy Principles in Hong Kong, Vietnam, and Malaysia

Jennifer Fleming
California State University – Long Beach, USA

Masato Kajimoto
The University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong

ABSTRACT

This study examines how college educators in Hong Kong, Vietnam, and Malaysia adopted and adapted lessons gleaned from a news literacy curriculum developed by journalism instructors at Stony Brook University in New York. In doing so, the chapter situates the emerging field of news literacy within parameters of its parent field, media literacy, and current trends in digitization, globalization, and information freedom. Details on how educators in Asia made a pedagogy designed for American citizens relevant to their students and how they negotiated country-specific social, cultural, and political contexts are included. Future directions in research include more in-depth and comparative understandings of the processes at work in localizing media literacy frameworks as well as an exploration of what media literacy educators in the United States and other democracies can learn from their counterparts in countries where accessing, creating, and disseminating information could be considered subversive activities.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

In Fall 2014, the world's news media were focused on Hong Kong where tens of thousands of people took to the streets to demand representation in upcoming elections. Some western media framed the demonstrations as a clash between democracy-aspiring young people versus the Communist Party of China, which resisted calls for local input in the selection of candidates for the Hong Kong Chief Ex-

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ecutive position. Western media sources referred to the movement as the "umbrella revolution" because protestors were armed with little more than umbrellas to help shield themselves from clouds of pepper-spray (The Economist, 2014). In Chinese state-run media, the demonstrations, if they were mentioned at all, were framed as an impediment to economic progress or a hassle to commuters, and searches on Baidu, the dominant search engine in China, using the phrase "umbrella revolution" turned up no results, while the same search on Google outside of Chinese borders generated thousands of stories, images, and links (Thanh Ha, 2014). One of the main reasons for the difference in coverage of the same event is the Chinese government's position on information and civil disobedience: information should be tightly controlled, dissent should be discouraged, and political protestors should be punished.

Even as authoritarian approaches to information access and dissemination reign supreme in China and many other countries around the world, interest in "global" media literacy education based on programs developed in democracies has been intensifying. There is good reason for this: The world is becoming increasingly connected through the widespread proliferation of mobile phone and computing technologies and the rising popularity of social media platforms made possible by Internet-enabled devices. According to the Pew Research Center (2014), cell phones have become part of everyday life for billions of people around the world, while access to the Internet is steadily increasing and smartphone ownership is gaining a foothold in many emerging and developing nations. These figures make it seem as though McLuhan's (1964/1994) conceptualization of a "global village" is alive and well in the digital age. That is, a world in which geographic distances, national borders, and cultural, political and linguistic differences become less prominent thanks to the global reach and influence of electronic media. But the information realities for those who live, work, and teach in countries governed by authoritarian regimes or dictatorships are drastically different than those who live in nation states that promote and protect rights such as freedom of expression, freedom of the press, and freedom to peacefully assemble and protest.

In the United States, for example, media literacy educators generally teach students how to access, evaluate, analyze, and create media messages (Aufderheide, 1993), with many paying close attention to the perceived ill-effects of advertising and/or media products produced by profit-seeking corporations. The thinking is that commercial media enterprises, news media organizations in particular, create and distribute messages designed to attract audiences, instead of to fully inform them, thereby threatening the ability of citizens to make reasoned decisions about their governance (Kellner & Share, 2007). Thus, media literacy educators encourage students to critically examine and question the audience and authorship, meanings and production techniques, and potential interpretations of media messages, as outlined in the popular "Key Questions to Ask When Analyzing Media Messages" teaching tool (National Association for Media Literacy Education, 2009). The news literacy program developed and taught by faculty in the Stony Brook University School of Journalism shares the same analytic focus on mediated messages, but with several noteworthy theoretical and practical differences.

At the turn of the 21st century, the structural shift in the delivery of journalism from print and electronic media to digital platforms caused concern for the owners of newspapers and operators of news stations across the United States, while news workers and scholars sounded the philosophical alarm. The Pew Research Center described 2005 as the year of "unpleasant surprises" for the newspaper industry because every indicator of the health of a newspaper was on a steep downward path (Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2006). Circulations were dropping dramatically and many newsrooms were shrinking, while some were closing all together as news audiences and advertisers fragmented across digital media delivery platforms. Fuller (2010) summarizes the dominant sentiment of journalism insiders and watchers when he concludes that newspapers had suffered "catastrophic" damage at the hands of the information revolution (p. 3).

For Howard Schneider, founding dean of the Stony Brook School of Journalism, the time of disruption in news seemed like the right time to think differently about journalism education and citizenship instruction. Schneider, who had just ended a 35-year career as a journalist at *Newsday*, argued that information was moving too fast, and the opportunities to deceive and mislead impressionable young people too many, for journalism educators to stand by and do nothing. In response to the digital deluge of information and misinformation, Schneider created a freshman-level course on how to judge the reliability and credibility of news reports based primarily on his experiences as a newspaper reporter and editor. Schneider (2007) called the course "news literacy" and argued its lessons would nurture a more informed citizenry:

The ultimate check against an inaccurate or irresponsible press never would be just better-trained journalists, or more press critics and ethical codes. It would be a generation of news consumers who … could differentiate between raw, unmediated information coursing through the Internet and independent, verified journalism. (p. 67)

Schneider's idea to educate all university students, not journalism majors, on the ethical principles and editorial formulas of the press attracted attention and investment, precisely because of journalism's historic ties to the American democratic experience. The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation announced in 2006 that it would dedicate $1.7 million to help Schneider develop news literacy and teach it to 10,000 Stony Brook students. The foundation's 10,000-student stipulation transformed news literacy into the most popular course on campus and one of the largest experiments in contemporary journalism education and media literacy.

The foundational assumptions guiding the instruction of news literacy at Stony Brook include an emphasis on the importance of freedom of the press and of expression, and a celebration of an investigative, fact-based, watchdog press in democracy (Fleming, 2014). Even so, scholars and educators from unlikely countries have expressed interest in teaching news literacy inside their classrooms—countries without democratic or freedom of expression traditions such as Russia, China, Bhutan, and Vietnam. Given the drastically different approaches to information and journalism in these countries (De Beer, 2009; Hachten & Scotton, 2012), numerous questions come to mind: Why are international educators attracted to news literacy? How do they localize news literacy lessons so they adhere to country-specific social, cultural, and political realities? What are the common themes in the localization process?

The authors of this chapter address the aforementioned questions through a case study that explores how the Stony Brook news literacy model was contextualized, localized, and taught in Hong Kong, Vietnam, and Malaysia. The authors start with a review of literature on global news media philosophies and freedoms, media literacy, and news literacy. Next, they provide details on the study's method, data collection, and participants. This discussion is followed by identification and explanation of key news literacy analytic frameworks that the educators overseas modelled their curricula on. Analysis of interview and observation evidence suggest that the educators interviewed turned to news literacy to help their students make sense of the intense and fast-moving digital media environments. Results also indicate that the educators found the frameworks designed for American students useful in teaching their students how to systematically assess the accuracy and quality of information, even if participatory democracy is largely a foreign concept in their countries.

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

International News Media Philosophies and Freedoms

The terms *news*, *news media*, *journalism,* and *the press* are synonymous expressions in this chapter. The reason for this is news is the outcome of journalism, news media are the channels through which news is transmitted, and journalism is the method of creating news. Schudson (2003) defines journalism as the "business or practice of producing and disseminating information about contemporary affairs of general public interest and importance" (pp. 11-12). DeFleur and Dennis (2002) characterize news as "current or fresh knowledge about an event or subject that is gathered, processed, or disseminated via a medium to a significant number of interested people" (pp. 73-74). Gans (1979/2004) determines that one of the primary functions of journalists is to manage information. He goes on to question and criticize the journalistic practices documented in his study of newsgathering practices at CBS Evening News, NBC Nightly News, *Newsweek*, and *Time*, but concludes that news is a powerful, "distinct form of knowledge" that is the dominant source of nonfiction for most Americans (p. 311).

Forms of journalistic knowledge, however, are not exclusive to the United States and are highly dependent on social, cultural, political, legal, and technological factors. Merrill (2009) divides international media systems into two broad categories: 1) monolithic and state-controlled entities and 2) more pluralistic, open entities. Monolithic systems generally adhere to communitarian philosophies and thereby justify information control and the punishment of those who are perceived to be speaking out against the state, in the name of social stability. Pluralistic media systems reflect more libertarian approaches to information in that diversity of opinion is welcome and celebrated, and freedom of expression is classified as a fundamental right that is to be protected because it is viewed as essential for democratic systems to function well.

Merrill points out that press freedom in pluralistic societies typically means freedom to publish without government interference; however, he is quick to add that there are many ways to restrict the flow of information beyond direct government censorship or laws that stifle expression. These methods include, but are not limited to, harassment, imprisonment, local customs, self-censorship among journalists, and commercial biases. Regardless, Merrill likens media cultures around the world to thousands of flowers blooming (or withering):

Certain soils are producing some kinds of media cultures, and other soils are producing quite different ones. One of the main, if not the most important, determining ingredient is freedom—or lack of it….Another ingredient is national security—or lack of it. Another is economic development—or lack of it. Another is a basic moral philosophy—or lack of it. And yet another is a democratic proclivity—or lack of it (p. 8).

Simon (2014) contends that freedom of expression is a "universal right" and argues that authoritarian governments, militants, terrorists, and criminals are "lashing out" and threatening journalists and other information providers such as bloggers because it is now more difficult than ever to manage and manipulate information (p. 172). Simon, who is executive director of the Committee to Protect Journalists, an independent nonprofit organization based in New York that promotes press freedom worldwide and monitors the murder and imprisonment of journalists, uses the deaths of journalists in Iraq, Syria, the Philippines, Columbia, and other countries as well the lawsuits and intimidation faced by journalists as evidence to prove that the battle over information is becoming more precarious and dangerous in the digital age (see Committee to Protect Journalists, 2014). The information environments in the societies examined in this chapter—Hong Kong, Vietnam, and Malaysia—provide further evidence of a digital age information paradox of seemingly more state-sanctioned control, surveillance, and punishment even as technology has for all intents and purposes democratized the acts of accessing, creating and sharing information for billions of people around the world.

Western values such as democracy and a vibrant, independent, and free press have long been part of Hong Kong society. Yet, Willnat and Wilkins (1998) characterize Hong Kong as being in a constant "tug of war" between tradition and modernism (p. 30). Hong Kong is a center for international commerce and it boasts a highly educated, technology-savvy population. 75% of Hong Kong's 7 million residents access the Internet regularly, with the majority of them reporting active Facebook accounts (Internet World Stats, 2013). At the same time, Hong Kong is constantly in the shadows of China not only geographically, but also culturally and politically, especially since political control was ceded from the British government to the Chinese government in 1997. China promised to maintain the status quo for at least 50 years under the "one country, two systems" doctrine and called Hong Kong a Special Administrative Region. However, the Hong Kong Journalists Association (2014) maintains that freedom of the press protected under its constitutional Basic Law has been undermined by "invisible hands," which refers to the political pressure imposed on advertisers including multinational corporations and large local businesses to place or pull advertisements. Most media companies in Hong Kong depend heavily on advertising revenues to fund their operational expenses. As a result, this tactic to influence editorial stances seems to be effective, as many news outlets in the city are owned by business tycoons who rely on Chinese money. In addition, a series of violent attacks on outspoken journalists has also contributed to forms of self-censorship across newsrooms, according to the association's annual report. Reporters without Borders (2014d), a worldwide press and information freedom watchdog based in France, ranks Hong Kong 61st out of 180 countries on its World Press Freedom Index.

The Reporters without Borders rankings are based on numerous variables. Researchers analyze data from questionnaires about pluralism, media independence, self-censorship; legislative frameworks and protections, transparency of governmental activities, and communication infrastructure. The surveys are sent to journalists, researchers, and human rights activists around the world. Reporters without Borders also takes into account the number of journalists, citizen journalists, and netizens abducted, beaten, arrested, jailed, or killed in connection to their information gathering activities as well the number of journalists that fled into exile. In addition to Hong Kong, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan are the only other societies in Asia with respectable information freedom records, according to the index. China ranked 175th out of 180. In fact, China is often the target of Reporter without Borders (2014a) condemnations because of the frequent disappearance or imprisonment of journalists, bloggers, and other freedom of information advocates as well as the increasing number of cyber-attacks originating in the country. Only Somalia, Syria, Turkmenistan, North Korea, and Eritrea fared worse on the list.

Vietnam performed just as poorly as China on the 2014 World Press Freedom Index, coming in at 174th. Reporters without Borders (2014c) points to the harassment, beating, and/or imprisonment of journalists and bloggers in Vietnam for the low ranking. It also frequently documents, publicizes, and criticizes numerous instances of people facing lengthy jail sentences for allegedly publishing online anti-state propaganda or materials, even as Vietnamese society continues to modernize and its economy improves. The World Bank (2014) called Vietnam a development "success story" because it has gone from one of the poorest countries in the world, with a per capita income of below $100 in 1986, to a "lower middle income" country with a per capita income of $1,960 in 2013. Roughly 30% of Vietnam's 90 million residents have reliable access to the Internet and almost two-thirds of those with Internet access have a Facebook account (Internet World Stats, 2013).

The ruling coalition government in Malaysia claims that strict censorship measures there are necessary to protect its largely-Muslim population from foreign influence (British Broadcasting Corporation, 2013). Reporters without Borders ranks Malaysia 147th on its World Press Freedom Index, which is one position above Russia. The organization is especially critical of the Malaysian government's harassment of bloggers through lawsuits or criminal charges brought under the 1948 Sedition Act. According to the Reporters without Borders (2014b) blog on Malaysia, a website reporter could face up to three years in jail for defaming police, while an online newspaper was sued by Prime Minister Najib Razak for libel over user comments that were critical of him. Close to 70% of Malaysia's 30 million citizens have Internet access and almost 14 million Facebook accounts are registered in the country (Internet World Stats, 2013).

Media Literacy

Interest in media literacy education on a global scale has been growing as billions of people increasingly live their lives through screens—smartphone screens, tablet screens, computer screens, and television screens. According to Kellner's (1995) media culture hypothesis, the ubiquity of mass media in modern societies means media are dominant socializing agents. That is, media teach people and influence how they behave and what to think, feel, believe, fear, and desire. Giroux (1999) calls the lessons of media public pedagogy. Public pedagogy are accidental in the sense that they are not products of reasoned and well-researched teaching and learning scholarship, but rather they are the results of complex interactions between technological, social, and cultural forces. It is the perceived damaging influences of media culture and public pedagogy that media literacy educators and advocates are most concerned with mitigating and combatting through participation in instructional programs designed to develop critical thinking and information processing skills in students.

Broadly speaking, media literacy curricula are intended to train students in examining and interpreting messages from the mass media, to encourage critical analysis of these messages, and to teach students to develop their own independent opinions about what they hear or see in mass media outlets. However, Tyner (1998) suggests that media literacy is more about education than media because it "expands literacy to include reading and writing through the use of new and emerging communication tools. It is learning that demands the critical, independent and creative use of information" (p. 196). This understanding is consistent with Considine's conceptualization of media literacy when he asserts, "media literacy constitutes both a subject of study and a method or process of teaching" (cited in Flores-Koulish, 2005, p. 4).

Hobbs (2010a) defines media literacy as a "constellation of life skills that are necessary for full participation in our media-saturated, information-rich society" (p. vii) Silverblatt and Eliceiri (1997) describe it as "a critical-thinking skill that enables audiences to decipher the information that they receive through channels of mass communications and empowers them to develop independent judgments about media content" (p. 48). A widely-cited definition of media literacy is the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and communicate messages in a variety of forms (Aufderheide, 1993). Variations of this definition permeate U.S.-based media literacy scholarship as do claims that the aforementioned skills cultivate essential citizenship traits. This civic stance is best expressed by Masterman (1985), who writes, "Media [literacy] education is an essential step in the long march towards a truly participatory democracy, and the democratization of our institutions. Widespread media literacy is essential if all citizens are to wield power, make rational decisions, become effective change-agents, and have an effective involvement with the media" (p. 13).

Potter (2004) reorients the focus of media literacy education from the political to the individual. He argues that the most effective media literacy teaching strategies focus on personal consumption and interpretation habits. His cognitive approach is based on the idea that there are three mental building blocks that influence perception, selection, and interpretation of media. The first and most important building block, Potter (2008) argues, is the personal locus, which refers to personal decisions about information-processing tasks. The more a person is aware of the reasons behind content choices, the more he/she can control "mindful processing" of information (p. 117). The second building block is knowledge structures. Knowledge structures, or sets of information in a person's memory, are important because they allow students to tap into and build upon previous knowledge. Potter's third and final building block consists of more traditional media literacy skills such as analysis, evaluation, and synthesis.

News Literacy

News literacy represents a specialized subset of media literacy; what makes it distinct from other media literacy approaches is the instructional focus on news texts exclusively, which is understandable given that news is produced with different tools and techniques than other media messages, and news audiences expect news reports to be accurate. Potter (2004) breaks media messages into two types: social and factual. Social information is composed of beliefs that cannot be verified the same way factual information can. Factual information, on the other hand, is made up of "discreet bits of information, such as names (of people, places, characters, etc.), definitions of terms, formulas, lists and the like" (p. 44). For Potter, audiences watch or read factual information when they consume news because news messages are composed of facts: "With news messages, the intention of the media is to evoke in audience members a sense that they are being informed" (p. 45).The theory and practice of news literacy, however, is dependent on how each instructor defines the term, conceptualizes key lessons, and designs analytic frameworks.

The most prominent news literacy curriculum to date is the one developed in the School of Journalism at Stony Brook University. Taken as a whole, the Stony Brook instructional model is designed to teach students how to identify, evaluate, and analyze news sources as well as appreciate high-quality, investigative journalism (Fleming, 2014). The marker of high quality news in American contexts is often the work of so-called "watchdog" journalists—journalists who, as sociologist Michael Schudson (2008) puts it, "get in the face of power—and are enabled to do so because both their doggedness and their irreverence is protected by law, by a conducive political culture, and by a historical record of having served self-government well when they hunt down elusive or hidden facts" (p. 10). Other published work on the Stony Brook approach include Loth's (2012) descriptive account, Klurfeld and Schneider's (2014) reflection on their experiences developing and teaching the course, and Hobbs' (2010b, 2011) critiques that suggest that the pedagogy is little more than nostalgic propaganda from newspaper journalists.

RobbGrieco and Hobbs (2012) categorize the Stony Brook model as a "journalism school" approach to news literacy. They contend that its practitioners generally focus on issues concerning freedom of the press and the role of news media as watchdogs of those in power to "nurture healthy skepticism and oppose cynicism to motivate informed civic participation over apathy" (p. 22). The other major variant of news literacy, according to RobbGrieco and Hobbs, is the "global" approach, which is based on more traditional media literacy frameworks and definitional elements such as the ones designed and advocated by the National Association for Media Literacy Education (2007, 2009). RobbGrieco and Hobbs (2012) believe that instructors who adhere to the global approach encourage critical examination of media industries and state ideologies, comparison of differing media systems, and assessment of how new technologies and social media platforms are changing news production and consumption practices.

Mihailidis (2012) offers the edited text, *News Literacy*. In it, he argues through his concentric model for 21st century news that as news industries change so must pedagogies aimed at developing critical thinking skills about news because technology-savvy citizens contribute to the "news chamber" through mobile devices that enable them to receive and share information instantaneously; they take advantage of participatory tools that increase competition for information and attention; and they easily spread information they retrieve or collect themselves (p. 8). The text also includes numerous case studies from around the globe that explore the intersection of news, digital media, news literacy, and media literacy. To name just two cases, Mexican scholars Guerrero and Restrepo (2012) introduce and explore what they refer to as "prodiences," which refers to a new model for content production that recognizes the line between news producers and news audiences is becoming increasingly blurred, while Mujica (2012) reports on a dynamic web-based news literacy curriculum used at the Salzburg Academy on Media & Global Change in Austria.

METHOD

A case study examining efforts to adopt and adapt principles and practices from the Stony Brook news literacy model in Hong Kong, Vietnam, and Malaysia was conducted. The case study method is well-suited for descriptive or explanatory research questions that seek to understand what happened or investigate how and why something happened. It should be noted that case study research is limited in the sense that it is difficult to generalize findings beyond the specific cases investigated. Instead of striving for generalizability, one of the main aims of the qualitative approach to scholarly inquiry is to develop an understanding of the perspectives of people involved in the subject under investigation (Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2009). The following questions guided data collection and analysis: Why are international educators attracted to news literacy? How do they localize news literacy lessons so they adhere to country-specific social, cultural, and political contexts? What are common patterns in the localization process?

Data Collection and Analysis

Three types of evidence were collected and analyzed: documents, observations, and interviews. The majority of these data were retrieved in September, October and November 2014. Instructional documents such as syllabi, lesson plans, lecture presentations, assignments, and workshop agendas and handouts were collected; an observation of a news literacy class in Vietnam was conducted; and interviews with nine people were completed using a variety of methods due to the vast distances between the researchers and participants—distances that spanned four countries and 13 time zones. Six of the participants were interviewed in-person; two answered questions via email; and one was interviewed by phone. The researchers interviewed several of the participants more than once, and they contacted select participants with follow up questions or to seek clarification on issues raised in previous discussions.

Given the primary objective of case study research is to develop an understanding of a real-life situation from the perspectives of people who are involved in it, the researchers focused heavily on interview data in their analyses. The importance of interviews in case study research is consistent across qualitative methodology literature. According to Yin (2009), interviews are "essential" sources of evidence (p. 106); Merriam (1998) classifies them as "primary" sources of data (p. 94). The semi-structured interview format the researchers followed allowed them to be responsive to participant answers, follow up on issues raised, and pursue unexpected ideas about how the participants viewed and taught news literacy in their countries. With the exception of the email interviews, all of the interviews were audiotaped. The recorded interviews were transcribed and pseudonyms were assigned to participants who wished to remain anonymous.

The default approach in qualitative research in education, and social science in general, is to mask the identity of participants through the use of pseudonyms (Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2009). Anonymization is preferred in order to protect participants from repercussions that could result from speaking candidly about the subject examined. Simons (2009), however, argues that anonymization is not the most appropriate procedure to adopt in case studies that examine a single institution or program that is unique or programs that include high-profile individuals or public figures who would be difficult to anonymize. Two participants, Masato Kajimoto and Richard Hornik, were difficult to anonymize because of their leadership activities in the development, instruction and expansion of the Stony Brook news literacy model overseas, and thereby they agreed to be identified in presentations and publications resulting from this research. All other participants were assigned pseudonyms. Their home institutions and disciplinary specialties were also masked.

Participants

Masato Kajimoto

Kajimoto is an Assistant Professor at the Journalism and Media Studies Center ("JMSC"), the University of Hong Kong. He previously worked as a web producer and reporter at CNN. Kajimoto has emerged as a leader in the development, instruction, and expansion of news literacy in the Asia-Pacific region. As part of these efforts, Kajimoto has given guest lectures, and designed, organized, and hosted several teacher training workshops. 28 people have travelled to Hong Kong to participate in these weeklong workshops: 22 university educators, one PhD student, three administrators, one high school teacher, and one journalist. Countries represented include China, Malaysia, Vietnam, Myanmar, Bhutan, Japan, and South Korea. In addition, Kajimoto is the co-author of this book chapter. As a co-author, Kajimoto made significant contributions in the study design and data collection as well as preparation of this manuscript. He conducted all of the interviews and observations in Vietnam and Malaysia. In turn, the other co-author interviewed Kajimoto as a means to gain independent insight into news literacy activities in Hong Kong.

Richard Hornik

Hornik is the director and founder of the Stony Brook University Center for News Literacy Overseas Partnership Program. He taught his first news literacy course at Stony Brook in 2008. Previous to joining the journalism faculty at Stony Brook, Hornik worked for close to 25 years as an editor and reporter at Time, Inc., where he served as TIME's correspondent in Warsaw, Beijing and Hong Kong. In addition, he played an important role in localizing and de-Americanizing the news literacy curriculum at the University of Hong Kong when he was a visiting lecturer there in fall 2012. He has also helped train educators from China, Vietnam, Rwanda, Bhutan, Israel, Poland, Russia, Malaysia, South Korea, Myanmar, Japan, and Australia on the Stony Brook news literacy model.

"Trang" and Students "Linh," "Annie," and "Chi"

Trang teaches at a prominent public university in Vietnam. She met Hornik and Kajimoto during news literacy institute in Hong Kong in summer 2014. After the institute, Trang taught a 12-hour elective course titled in Vietnamese, "How to Read Newspapers Analytically," as a guest instructor at a private university, not at the university she works for, as her university was unwilling to support news literacy due to the political climate in Vietnam. Linh, Annie, and Chi were students enrolled in Trang's news literacy course at the time of the site visit. Two of the students were studying marketing; the other was pursuing a degree in software engineering.

"Anh"

Anh teaches at another large public university in Vietnam. She participated in the 2013 summer news literacy institute in Hong Kong. She subsequently conducted three workshops on news literacy in Vietnam at different universities, but again not at the national university that employs her. However, she incorporated some news literacy elements into a course on media economics. She also produced a booklet in Vietnamese to introduce the Stony Brook news literacy model to other educators in the country.

"Rose"

Rose is an instructor at different public university in Vietnam. She attended the news literacy summer institute in Hong Kong in 2013. She incorporated some news literacy elements into her lower-division courses immediately following the workshop, but did not continue. She sensed that the government (and university officials) did not want her to use current examples to teach critical thinking about a longstanding political conflict between Vietnam and China.

"Damia"

Damia is a faculty member at a private university in Malaysia. She learned about news literacy during the 2014 summer institute in Hong Kong. Although there had been other educators from Malaysia who participated in previous institutes, she is the first person to incorporate the Stony Brook model into university lessons there. She said that she is organizing a news literacy workshop for other educators at her university, and she is trying to find a way to gain approval for a full-semester news literacy course based on the Stony Brook model.

CONTEXT: THE STONY BROOK MODEL AND OVERSEAS PROGRAM

The Stony Brook News Literacy Model[1]

News literacy as a skill is defined as an ability to judge the reliability and credibility of news reports, whether they come via print, television or the Internet. The ultimate outcome of news literacy instruction based on the Stony Brook model is for students to be able to identify reliable information. Reliable information is defined as actionable information that allows students to make a decision, take an action or reach a conclusion.

The freshman-level news literacy course at Stony Brook is divided into 14 units, each with its own set of learning outcomes. The titles of the units and their associated outcomes reflect the belief that news is not only different than other information sources, it is also more important because of the methods journalists employ in the collection, production, and dissemination of news and the role of an investigative and accurate press in democracies. The conceptual flow of the course as reflected in the titles of the units and the learning outcomes associated with each is shown in Table 1.

Stony Brook news literacy students meet twice a week: The first meeting takes place in a large lecture hall filled with about 200 students. The second meeting is known as a recitation, which are smaller, discussion-based classes of between 20 and 25 students that reinforce and explore in-depth ideas introduced in the preceding lecture. According to instructional materials, students are taught that the methods at the heart of a watchdog journalist's commitment to truth and the public interest are verification, independence and accountability ("VIA"), which is reflected in the information "neighborhoods" framework.

The Taxonomy of Information Neighborhoods is a grid that separates news from entertainment, promotion, propaganda, and raw information. News is parsed from other types of information because, according to the grid, news has different goals, methods, practitioners, and outcomes. For example, the goal of news is to inform whereas the goal of entertainment media is to amuse. The crucial message for students is that journalism is different from other categories of information because it is created with different techniques and for different purposes. Journalism focuses on real events and actual people and is produced in real time, often under extreme deadline pressures. Thereby, once a student determines that a text belongs in the news "neighborhood," he/she can examine it more closely for markers of verification, independence, and accountability.

According to instructional materials, the discipline of verification requires journalists to gather, assess, and weigh information, add meaning to facts through context, seek enough information to make a story balanced and fair, and explain how they came to learn the facts and, when appropriate, what they didn't know. To assess the level and rigor of verification in news stories, students are directed to look for examples of direct and indirect evidence. Eyewitnesses, documents, records, photographs, and videos are examples of direct evidence. Alternatively, second- and third-hand accounts are examples of indirect evidence. Independence in news literacy contexts means the producer of a news piece does not have stake, economic or otherwise, in the outcome, and therefore is committed to finding and publishing multiple sides of an issue. Accountability refers to standing by one's work, which in a journalistic sense

Table 1. News literacy units

Unit #1: What is News Literacy, and Why Does It Matter? o Situate news in personal, social, and cultural contexts o Define news literacy and break down the meaning of reliable information
Unit #2: The Power of Information o Explore the desire to receive and share information o Examine the role of technology o Understand the importance of freedom of expression to democracies
Unit #3: The US News Media: Too much freedom, or not enough? o Understand the philosophical and practical underpinnings of journalism in the U.S. o Examine the presumed and assumed responsibilities of the press in democracies
Unit #4: Know Your Neighborhood—What Makes Journalism Different o Recognize the key values of journalism: Verification, independence, and accountability o Differentiate journalism from other information sources with news neighborhood grid
Unit #5: What is News and Who Decides? o Examine news judgment and the decision-making processes of journalists o Identify and question the motives that drive journalistic decision-making
Unit #6: Opinion Journalism o Differentiate between news reports and opinion in news o Name the purpose of opinion journalism
Unit #7: Balance, Fairness, and Bias o Understand the concepts of fairness, balance, and bias in news texts o Analyze news texts based on the concepts of fairness, balance, and bias
Unit #8: Truth and Verification o Distinguish between direct and indirect evidence and assertion and verification o Compare how journalistic notions of truth differ from scientific understandings of truth
Unit #9: Evaluating Sources o Distinguish between categories of sources in news narratives o Assess evidence provided by sources in news texts
Unit #10: Deconstructing the News o Detect inconsistencies in news reports using news literacy principles and frameworks o Test to see if conclusions in news reports are supported by the evidence provided
Unit #11: The Power of Images and Sound o Judge how images and sounds in news reports influence audiences o Explore how digital technologies can alter images and sounds in news reports
Unit #12: Deconstructing TV News o Determine how news literacy deconstruction elements apply to television news o Think critically about television news reports and production elements
Unit #13: The Internet and News o Examine the new opportunities and responsibilities of digital age news consumption o Apply news literacy APC (Authority, Point-of-View, Currency) in web content analysis
Unit #14: The Future of News o Discuss what it means to be news literate o Explore how to pay for investigative journalism in the digital age

typically means two things: the author of a story and the outlet that distributed it are clearly identified, and they publish or broadcast retractions and/or corrections when mistakes of fact are made.

These foundational understandings build up to the pinnacle of the news literacy course: deconstruction. Stony Brook educators argue that students can assess the veracity of information in news texts and the overall quality of journalism by following a series of deconstruction steps: 1) Summarize the main points of the story; 2) Did the reporter "Open the Freezer?"[2]; 3) Evaluate the sources using I'M VAIN mnemonic device (see next paragraph); 4) Does the reporter make his/her work transparent? 5) Does the reporter place the facts and the story in context? 6) Are the key questions answered? (Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?); and 7) Is the story fair or balanced? The deconstruction of news framework, which is based on journalistic methods and mindsets concerning information, is positioned to students as a way for them to systematically evaluate news media messages so they can identify reliable and actionable information.

Extra instructional time in news literacy is spent on deconstruction step #3, source analysis. For the journalists-turned-educators behind the Stony Brook model, sources, meaning the individuals quoted in stories, were extremely important in their work as journalists, and therefore sources play a significant role in determining the validity and quality of information in news reports. Stony Brook educators utilize the mnemonic device, "I'M VAIN," as a means to provide students an easy-to-remember technique to evaluate sources and the evidence they provide. The I'M VAIN device is broken down as follows: *I*ndependent sources are better than self-interested sources; *M*ultiple sources are better than a single source; sources who *V*erify are better than sources who assert; *A*uthoritative/*I*nformed sources are better than uninformed sources; and *N*amed sources are better than unnamed sources.

In brief, Stony Brook instructors are trying through news literacy education to honor and advance a philosophy of the press deeply rooted in the American democratic tradition. The premise of news literacy rests on the assumption that the key to civic culture in the digital age is not a more virtuous press, but rather a more virtuous audience that appreciates watchdog journalism and demands reliable information from news sources (Fleming, 2014). According to Stony Brook news literacy logic, the chief pedagogical pathways to determine the quality of news sources are lessons and activities that focus on differentiating news from other types of information, deconstructing news stories, and analyzing the sources quoted in news stories.

The Center for News Literacy Overseas Partnership Program

The Stony Brook University Center for News Literacy Overseas Partnership Program was created by accident, or as its founder and director Richard Hornik put it, out of necessity. It was necessary to create a news literacy entity on the Stony Brook campus that specifically catered to international educators because of the unexpected interest in the pedagogy from abroad.

Howard Schneider, creator of the Stony Brook news literacy model, first envisioned news literacy as a new, "demand-side" idea in journalism education and thus urged his contemporaries in universities across the United States to follow his lead in educating the consumers of news and information on the practices and principles of the press, instead of just focusing on training future journalists how to research, report, and write news stories (Schneider, 2007). The idea attracted attention and investment, particularly from foundations interested in supporting programs aimed at increasing civic engagement among young people. The U.S.-based Knight Foundation dedicated $1.7 million in 2006 to further develop the model through the newly formed Center for News Literacy. Other organizations, including the Ford, MacArthur and McCormick foundations, also dedicated hundreds of thousands of dollars each to further advance the center's curriculum development and teacher training efforts. The injection of funding has allowed educators at Stony Brook to develop a substantial news literacy presence online including a Digital Resource Center that is meant to be an open source clearing house of news literacy course building materials where educators from inside and outside the United States can access, download, and utilize lectures, assignments, current news examples, and exams.

Hornik became the de facto contact for inquiries about news literacy from abroad. The Overseas Partnership Program was formed in 2012 thanks to a private donation to support news literacy activities overseas, particularly activities in what Hornik calls "transitional" countries, meaning countries that are transitioning from various forms of governance including, but not limited to, communism or autocratic rule to more democratic systems and/or countries that are transitioning from rural economies to more advanced ones. The program has received additional funding from the Simons Foundation. Hornik estimates that the combined donations should cover the costs of the program's undertakings, which primarily consists of training foreign educators on the Stony Brook model, until 2016. He adds that that the original funder has expressed interest in supporting new opportunities overseas as and when they arise.

Hornik's goal for the overseas program is to form "meaningful, lasting and equal" partnerships with educators from around the world. He believes the core principles of news literacy instruction—differentiating fact-based journalism from other types of information and assessing the veracity and reliability of information—are universal and necessary skills in media-saturated societies. He ultimately seeks to assist international educators, rather than dictate to them so-called "best" practices based on American standards that he is most familiar with:

There's no news literacy orthodox. Everybody gets to do with it as they like. There's no way we'd ever reach scale if we try to do it by ourselves. We just have to find like-minded people who think what we've come up with is an interesting approach to teach critical thinking about information. [The instructors can then] adapt and adopt the model to their own cultural [and] economic environments.

Hornik stated that the theory and practice of the overseas program is organic because the needs of educators are assessed on a country-by-country basis. This is understandable given the diverse social, cultural, linguistic, historic, and legal conditions in the countries of educators he has worked with. Hornik spoke about a recent connection he made with an educator from Rwanda, who expressed interest in utilizing elements of the Stony Brook curriculum to teach critical thinking skills to students in the African country that is still recovering from the genocide of roughly one million people in 1994. In contrast, news literacy instruction in Bhutan, a tiny, landlocked country between China and India that has recently transitioned from an absolute monarchy to a constitutional monarchy, is viewed as a method to help people there learn about the principles and practices of an informed citizenry (Adler, 2014). Many countries in Asia pose different kinds of challenges because of direct or indirect state control of news media. Hornik characterizes the media environment in Asia as a "bizarre mix of state and free market" because governments still control or exert control over media content, but many outlets still have to be profitable. This, in turn, according to Hornik, puts the editors and the consumers of news in "a difficult place."

RESULTS

Several patterns emerged in the examination of the decision-making involved in adapting and adopting the Stony Brook news literacy model in Hong Kong, Vietnam, and Malaysia. All of the instructors interviewed said it was essential to localize current news examples so students could analyze news texts and stories they were already familiar with. Part of the localization process included "de-Americanizing" the Stony Brook curriculum, which meant removing any reference to the relationship between an informed citizenry and the health of a democracy. The final pattern identified was a belief among instructors overseas no matter their country of origin that the Stony Brook model is still valuable without its informed citizenry foundations because of the emphasis on developing critical thinking skills about information. These patterns are explored in more detail in the discussion that follows, which is organized by country, given the different socio-economic climates in each.

Hong Kong

Masato Kajimoto, a journalism and media studies professor at the University of Hong Kong, has played an integral role in bringing news literacy to Hong Kong and numerous other countries in Asia. Kajimoto first heard about news literacy at Stony Brook shortly after the Knight Foundation grant was announced in 2006, but he did not pay close attention until he was searching for ways to better teach his students how to tell good journalism from bad. The traditional approaches to media literacy he was familiar with did not adequately address this desire, so he was inspired to research the Stony Brook model further after watching a few of Howard Schneider's lectures on YouTube. Kajimoto downloaded some instructional materials and has been incorporating ideas and activities from the Stony Brook curriculum into his "Principles of Journalism and News Media" class ever since.

Kajimoto defines news literacy education as a "pedagogical effort to conceptualize methods of news consumption. It aims to teach critical thinking skills to assess the credibility of each piece of information in news reports so that news audiences can make informed decisions and judgments." The following elements from the Stony Brook model are emphasized in the classes he incorporates news literacy lessons into:

1. **Power of Information:** How does reliable (and unreliable) information affect our daily lives? How is information disseminated in the digital age?
2. **Definition of News:** What is journalism? How should it be different from other forms of content production?
3. **Truth and Verification:** Who provides information? Where is the evidence? What is asserted? What is inferred? What is verified?
4. **Fairness and Bias:** What constitutes bias? Who is biased, media and/or audience? What is fair coverage? Is balanced coverage always fair?
5. **Images in News:** How do news images affect our perception of reality? How do technologies alter visual information?
6. **Deconstruction of News Reports:** How should news reports be systematically evaluated so that "actionable" information can be identified?

Between 120 and 130 students enroll in "Principles of Journalism and News Media" in fall terms, and between 80 and 90 in spring sessions. The course is a requirement for journalism majors, but it is also open to all university students as an elective, so Kajimoto reported that he has taught news literacy to students from a variety of disciplines including law, engineering, business and finance, and arts. About 75% to 80% of the 18 to 20 year old students are local "Hong Kongners." The rest are from all over the world, although mainland China and South Korea are represented the most. Kajimoto added that the

University of Hong Kong and thereby his classes have a good proportion of local Hong Kong students who have been educated overseas, as it is not uncommon for Hong Kong parents to send their children to the US, Canada, UK, Australia for a few years of high school.

To localize lessons, Kajimoto said that he removes all news examples originating in the United States and replaces them with recent and local news events and major international news stories. This means that news events central to the Stony Brook curricular narrative in the United States such as the iconic *Washington Post* investigations that contributed to the resignation of President Richard Nixon or the catchy, albeit macabre, "Open the Freezer" reminder to evaluate sources carefully that was inspired by rumor-filled coverage of Hurricane Katrina are only briefly mentioned in Hong Kong news literacy classrooms. Kajimoto also said that he leads discussions in tutorials about external constraints to news media flows such as censorship in China and other factors including competitive business environments for media companies and cultural perceptions of journalism in different countries.

Kajimoto's lecture on how to assess the reliability of information found online about the fall 2014 "umbrella revolution" protests in Hong Kong provides insight into his localization decision-making. During the lecture, he pointed students to *Asia Sentinel's* investigation into claims reported and repeated without question in mainstream Chinese media such as *China Daily* and some Hong Kong media as proof that the United States was supporting the protesters. *Asia Sentinel* is a Hong Kong news website. Its investigation revealed that the original source of the story was an anonymous blogger who provided no supporting evidence that "secret meetings" between Hong Kong democracy advocates and officials from the Washington, DC-based National Endowment for Democracy took place. Regardless, Hong Kong Chief Executive Leung Chun-ying alluded to the allegations in comments to media, telling reporters the protest "is not entirely a domestic movement, for external forces are involved" (Berthelsen, 2014). Kajimoto used the *Asia Sentinel* story to demonstrate to students how rumors and unsubstantiated claims are often passed off as truth, and also how to go about evaluating the credibility of sources and the accuracy of information. He subsequently encouraged students to question and investigate anonymous assertions like the *Asia Sentinel* journalists did.

To "de-Americanize" news literacy lessons, Kajimoto said that he played down many references to journalism and democracy as well as the role of an investigative press as a watchdog of those in power, and he ignored related subjects like the First Amendment because the ideas are not relevant to Hong Kong socio-cultural contexts. Instead, he said that he emphasizes to students the importance of fact-based texts and the applicability of critical information evaluation skills to their daily lives, whether they realize it or not. He recalled: "I tell my students that news literacy skills are not just about political participation but also about everyday decisions that are often influenced by the information we get from news reports: which mobile phones to buy, how much water to drink, and so on."

Kajimoto has worked extensively with Stony Brook Overseas Partnership Program Director Richard Hornik on ways to effectively localize and de-Americanize news literacy curricula (see Hornik & Kajimoto, in press). He met Hornik in 2012 when Hornik was a visiting lecturer at the University of Hong Kong. Hornik was in Hong Kong to try and figure out how to make the Stony Brook model work in foreign learning environments. To do so, he spent 15-20 hours every week hunting down local news examples to use in the "Principles of Journalism and News Media" class he was assigned to teach. Hornik said he came to realize that these examples were crucial in teaching news literacy and making meaningful connections with students. Kajimoto reported that he learned from Hornik the importance of finding fresh news examples every semester so his students could connect course concepts with unfolding news events.

Beyond formalizing a framework to localize and illustrate Stony Brook news literacy concepts, the meeting between Kajimoto and Hornik also turned into a multinational collaboration that led to the development of news literacy institutes for Asian educators. The first institute was in summer 2013 at the University of Hong Kong; the second was in summer 2014. The agenda for one of the weeklong workshops reads like a crash course in news literacy with lessons, sessions, and activities on the information neighborhoods, journalistic truth and verification, and source evaluation. The goals of the workshops include: 1) to prepare educators to incorporate the concepts of news literacy into their teaching; 2) to help them develop teaching plans and a news literacy curriculum; 3) to build a network of like-minded educators in the Asia-Pacific region and beyond.

Reflecting on their experiences teaching news literacy in Hong Kong and training other educators in the region on the Stony Brook model, Hornik and Kajimoto (in press) formulated a theoretical foundation for the localization and de-Americanization of news literacy. They recommend that Stony Brook concepts need to be critically interpreted for local students, instead of just translated; the local media ecology should be explained along with changing news consumption patterns and journalistic practices as they vary from country to country; and the local news examples used to illuminate analytic tactics need to be frequent and "fresh," meaning recent, ripped-from-the headlines issues and stories.

Kajimoto said that efforts to teach news literacy in Hong Kong are becoming increasingly collaborative. Kajimoto talked specifically about how he is working with Anne Kruger, a lecturer at the University of Hong Kong, in adapting the curriculum to reflect social media trends. He noted that his college-age students consume news predominantly on social media platforms where the many-to-many communication model has brought about "mass amateurization" of journalism with a second-by-second sharing cycle (Shirky, 2008). He added that he believes the future of news literacy in Hong Kong lies in college classrooms *and* other levels of education. He said that interest in news literacy education seems to be growing in middle schools and even in elementary schools. He suggested that one reason for the interest in news literacy education and instruction in the critical evaluation of information in general is the popularity of social media among children and teenagers. Another reason, according to Kajimoto, is structural and strategic: Current affairs was recently made a "Liberal Studies" subject in Hong Kong, which means that certain news events would be part of essay questions on standardized university entrance exams.

Vietnam

In a communist country where a single political party dominates the public conversation through media ownership and censorship (British Broadcasting Corporation, 2012; Broadcasting Board of Governors, 2013), teaching news literacy concepts that originated from an American institution can be a sensitive matter. The three basic traits that define journalism in the Stony Brook model – verification, independence, and accountability ("VIA")– for instance, can be controversial in Vietnam as the media and journalists are expected by law to serve the interests of the state and the nation's political stability (Socialist Republic of Vietnam, 1999). If an instructor defines "independence" as "freedom from control, influence and interest," it simply denies the existence of true journalism in the country, which potentially gives a message that being news literate means unequivocally questioning the government's strong grip on the media. Trang, who works at a major public university in Vietnam, experimented with news literacy curricula as an adjunct instructor at a private university. She commented: "We don't have independent journalism in Vietnam. When I talk to the students, I have to emphasize that…. Basically, all the news agencies belong to the government. Every single day, every single week… there is censorship in every media. We are limited with a lot of things."

Overall, the Vietnamese educators interviewed said that they have been struggling with the delicate nature of the news literacy in their country. Offering it as a full-semester course at a large public university would require a series of approval steps that could not only take a long time but also catch the attention of authorities that may not like the idea of critically discussing real news coverage in classrooms. Offering it in the form of small-scale workshops for students, school teachers and journalists is a more practical option. As a result, they said that they have been organizing more than a few such events across the nation starting in 2013, but even this approach has proven to be a problem occasionally with sudden cancelations ordered by the local authorities (see Jolly, 2014). In Vietnam, there tends to be a fine line between the closed-door, in-class discussions at a university, which seem to be mostly free and not constrained, and the public display of such discussions, which seem to be scrutinized by the relevant authorities.

Under these circumstances, Trang decided to offer a course not at the public university she works for, but at another small private university as a 12-hour optional personal enhancement module. Instead of using potentially sensitive words like "news" and "citizenship," she used a more descriptive title in Vietnamese, "How to Read Newspapers Analytically" – a common tactic that has been adopted by other educators in the past who named their workshops "Becoming Smart News Readers" and such. She also turned a critical thinking course offered by an international high school into a news literacy course while teaching there part-time. Likewise, to avoid unnecessary administrative and political hurdles, the other educators said that they simply incorporated some of the news literacy concepts into existing university courses on journalism or media economics.

Although the media ecology and educational environments in Vietnam are very different from the ones in the United States and in Hong Kong, all three of the Vietnamese educators interviewed stated that they did not need to change the core elements of the Stony Brook model, as identified by Hornik and Kajimoto (in press). These elements include lectures, discussions, and activities on: 1) the power of information; 2) the definitions of news; 3) understandings of truth and verification; 4) assessment of fairness and bias; 5) critical examination of images; and 6) deconstructing news texts.

Take the notion of "information neighborhoods," for example, which falls under the definition of news and understandings of truth and verification categories. Anh, a lecturer at a large public higher education institution in Vietnam, integrated news literacy lessons and analytic frameworks into a media economics course. She said that distinguishing "news" from "propaganda" could be truly an eye-opening experience for many students in Vietnam who have been educated under Marxism-Leninism philosophy. She added that a complex idea about the sources of media products had been understood by her students a lot better when taught by applying the news deconstruction skills: "The learning aim is to make sure students can self-evaluate the news based on VIA criteria *before* considering news as a public good."

The Vietnamese educators interviewed for this study who taught parts of the Stony Brook model emphasized the importance of using local news examples in lessons, but they also felt that they needed to add extra theoretical underpinnings to their discussions in order to put the Vietnamese news media into context. Media ownership and how it affects the overall media messages in relation to the concept of journalistic "independence," for instance, was something that could not be neglected in a country where the government ultimately controls much of the news operations. The instructors said that the day-to-day difficulties and dilemmas experienced by local journalists were essential to understanding news gathering in Vietnam because such limitations cannot be detected just by "deconstructing" a report. When I'M VAIN source evaluation is discussed, for the same reason, educators said it was important for them to touch upon the "off-limit" sources as well as the tacit constraints the news sources have when they talk to journalists. Trang added: "If they [students] understand the vulnerability of the people who are represented in the media, they are going to learn a different way of looking at it."

In addition, Trang and Anh said that media portrayals and representations of certain groups such as women in society needed to be addressed when teaching about images in news reports because they felt that the media landscape in Vietnam is increasingly dominated by more light-hearted, non-political and entertaining news stories because they are "safer" to disseminate, especially in the age of social media. Such environments, according to the educators, have been diverting the attention of the public from serious news events. In other words, they believed that macro-level perspectives of media practice that are traditionally discussed in the more wide-ranging field of media literacy, as well as the sociological aspects of mediated communication that are often highlighted by media and cultural studies scholars, should also inevitably become part of news literacy education in Vietnam.

As mentioned previously, Reporters without Borders (2014d) ranked Vietnam 174th out of 180 countries listed on its World Press Freedom Index due, in part, to the harassment and imprisonment of journalists and bloggers. The news literacy instructors, therefore, said that they needed to take into consideration what is not being reported by journalists, or possibly censored by the government, when they used news examples in classes. They agreed that this was not an easy task. On the one hand, the theories that concern the political economy of media operations would help students understand the conditions in which the media messages are produced (media literacy), but on the other hand, such conceptualizations did not do much service when the aim of the teaching was to evaluate the reliability of each piece of information in a particular news story (news literacy).

Despite this limitation, however, the three Vietnamese news literacy educators interviewed said that the Stony Brook model helped the majority of their students grasp the fundamental objective of the model, which is to equip them with critical thinking skills to assess the credibility of information in news reports. Cumulatively, the instructors have taught more than 200 students aged between 15 and 22 years old about news literacy. The instructors described how many of their previously apathetic students became interested in news and cared about quality of journalism; how students tried to get more information from other news sources including foreign news sources in English before they shared some news items on social media (Vietnam does not block English-language news websites or social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter unlike China); and how students made sense of the nuances of the blurred lines between propaganda and journalism in the country.

The three students interviewed who participated in the 12-hour enhancement module designed and taught by Trang found the concepts and skills discussed in the course effective in the development of critical thinking skills, which they believed could also be useful in their majors. They all said that they looked at news reports differently after participating in the module. Annie commented: "After taking this course, I think more. We have to know if information is real or not… I now search for more information." Linh said that she "developed an urge to dig more and look for the truth" and admitted that before her news literacy experiences she "trusted the information [on the media]." Linh added that she found the skills she developed in news literacy classes helpful with her activities on a debate team. All of the students interviewed reported that they chose news sources more carefully and researched more critically when they were interested in a topic.

Trang pointed out, however, that the socio-economic background of the students is an important factor to consider in the design and instruction of a news literacy curriculum in the Vietnamese educational system. Those students whose family can afford sending their children to international high schools and private universities where she has experimented with news literacy instruction tend to be from wealthy middleclass families from urban areas (Earl, 2013). This means that they likely had already been exposed to different views and more western-style approaches to education. Therefore, many of Trang's news literacy students already did not blindly believe what they saw, heard, and read in a media system controlled by the government: "They all know we have one single ruling party. But that only applies to my current students at a private one [university], those students who have the economic capital. In another [public] university, it is not the same. I have met many students who strongly believe in extreme communism."

In Trang's observation, the students at bigger public universities have much more diverse backgrounds and there is a large group of students who have never had a chance to learn how to question "authoritative views." As a result, she believed that they need much more guidance in comprehending the basic ideas of the Stony Brook model. This sentiment was echoed by Anh, who mostly taught news literacy at a public university. Anh said: "They [students] let the power dictate what they think and how they should think… due to [the] fear of being isolated." Anh added that her public university students were initially "not critical enough" and tried to avoid confronting "mainstream viewpoints." Even after developing critical thinking skills, she said, many of her students still had "the tendency to believe whatever I said" in class. Anh admitted that she was not happy with this because she wanted her students to become comfortable with learning about and arguing from different perspectives.

Trang and Anh emphasized that the news literacy lessons they integrated into their courses are needed for Vietnamese students. As social media platforms such as Facebook are becoming the dominant sources of news for students in their country, they said that they believe identifying quality information should be an essential skill for future generations. They added that they are working with colleagues to explore the possibilities of offering more workshops and also a full-semester course at some universities despite the difficulties described above.

Malaysia

Like Vietnam, the media in Malaysia are heavily controlled. Ranked at 147th on the World Press Freedom Index (Reporters without Borders, 2014d), the country has some of the strictest censorship laws in the world (British Broadcasting Corporation, 2013). However, university-level media education in Malaysia is very different from that of Vietnam due to its political climate. Unlike single-party states such as China and Vietnam, there are active and influential opposition parties in Malaysian politics. In the historic general election in 2008, in fact, the opposition parties successfully denied the ruling coalition a two-thirds parliamentary majority. Regardless, research shows that although the news media outlets in the country are largely affiliated with certain political parties through ownership structures, the political dialogue in the public sphere, especially on the online platforms, are multifaceted as a whole (Abbott, 2011; Kenyon, 2010; Liow, 2012; Pepinsky, 2013).

In addition, the idea of teaching critical thinking about current affairs using news reports within higher education did not seem to be a politically sensitive affair, at least for Damia who incorporated elements from the Stony Brook model into her teaching for the first time in 2014. Damia said that she did not feel any pressure or constraints. She teaches at a private university that offers a full range of communication and media studies programs that includes journalism, public relations and creative industries. Like the educators in Vietnam, she said she also thinks that the Stony Brook news literacy curriculum can be fully applicable to her teaching as long as she takes into account the "Malaysian context."

One such context unique to the country is the language diversity. On top of the official Malay-language, English is also widely used in the nation, especially in business and higher education. Many of the ethnic Chinese that account for nearly a quarter of the population are also fluent in standard Chinese. More than seven percent of the country's population has their origin in India and many in this ethnic group also speak Tamil (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2011; Government of Malaysia, 2014). Damia said most of her students are trilingual, or at least bilingual, and their news consumption patterns are often dictated by their preferred language to get news more than the editorial stance or the news organization's credibility. To reflect the multilingual society, in each of the three main languages (Malay, English and Chinese), there are more than a few popular newspapers that are widely sold in the newsstands and convenience stores across the country. For avid news audiences in Malaysia, according to Damia, it is not uncommon to crosscheck the news reports across the languages and publications as people are well aware of the fact that most news outlets are affiliated with certain political parties and thus the news content in different languages tends to cater to particular demographic in the society.

Coupled with this diversified "mainstream" media environment and the popularity of alternative online news media such as *Malaysiakini* and the *Malaysia Insider*, Damia said that some of her students already had discerning attitudes towards news reports before participating in her news literacy units. For this reason, Damia said she thinks that the Stony Brook model would be easily accepted and adopted by other educators in Malaysia. She also believed that the English-language materials created in the United States could also be used as is unlike in most other countries in Asia, which is an advantage for educators in Malaysia because it would make the process of localizing and de-Americanizing news literacy concepts less laborious.

Damia partially incorporated elements from the Stony Brook model into two courses, "Introduction to Journalism" and "Media Ethics." Taken together, about 200 students majoring in media-related fields, but not necessarily journalism, have learned about news literacy in her classes. She said the concepts and activities were received well by the students and thus she planned to utilize more news literacy lessons and activities in the future: "It was very interesting because when students analyzed the stories [in class discussion], they knew exactly what to look for. Then, they were discussing and debating among themselves. It was fun." Damia estimated that in the future she would spend about half of the introductory course on news literacy training, and she would dedicate about 25 percent of the ethics course to news literacy. She believed these allotments would give her enough time to discuss the characteristics of the nation's news industry and other related social theories that are missing from the Stony Brook model.

When discussing concepts such as "journalistic truth," "fairness" and "accuracy," for example, Damia said that she explained the challenges that Malaysian journalists face. For her, it was important for news audiences to understand the constrained choices working journalists in Malaysia make. What sources to interview, what facts to include, what opinions to be represented, and other decisions affect news stories, but journalists in Malaysia are not free to make the same choices their American counterparts do. She recommended to her students that when they "deconstruct" news content using I'M VAIN and other tools, they also needed to take into account the dilemmas unique to Malaysian journalists before judging the reliability of information in order to fully understand how to "read between the lines" of news.

In Damia's view, political awareness is relatively high among students in Malaysia, and news audience members know that the media are controlled under certain conditions. She said that the boundaries drawn by different regulations, stakeholders and other factors are known in the society: "They [authorities] allow you to report, but you have to do that within the means of certain prerequisites. You cannot report on certain rights. You cannot question the royalty, things like that…. The general population [in Malaysia] accepts that journalists cannot write about this because their hands are tied."

Therefore, the value of news literacy education for Damia was not so much in its aim to sensitize the students to political contexts in Malaysia, but rather to look at news literacy as a practical strategy in the "smart" consumption of news – how to verify the authenticity of pictures, how to track down the record of social media posts, how to find out the owners of certain websites, how to weigh sources and evidences in news reports, and other tools and techniques packaged in the curriculum. She commented: "I am thinking how I could get my students to incorporate [news literacy skills] into, for instance, their re-tweeting and re-sharing [on social media]. Even for me, personally, at the beginning before joining the workshop [in Hong Kong], when I see someone who re-tweeted something [interesting], knowing that it comes from a friend, I would re-tweet without reading it."

Damia said that she is encouraging colleagues at her institution to integrate Stony Brook news literacy concepts into their classes, especially those who teach journalism because she thinks news literacy also builds a solid foundation for journalism majors. She also said that many media educators need to be taught news literacy skills in her country because they use frequently media content to illustrate various points, some of which may not have credible information for an academic discussion. Damia added: "We should be credible for our students. News literacy skills also tell us how to be credible as a teacher."

IMPLICATIONS, FUTURE DIRECTIONS, AND CONCLUSION

Merrill (2009) warns that the volume of voices in international news media systems is increasing "far beyond their need or value" and thereby it is becoming harder to find "credible information, and high ethical standards [in journalism] will be the exception" (pp. 18-19). The news literacy model developed by journalism educators at Stony Brook University in New York aims to address the growing challenge of finding "credible" information in the fast-moving global digital media sea. The intent of the pedagogues is not to turn students into journalists, but rather to make them more informed and engaged citizens through the development of cognitive techniques laser-focused on the quality of information found in journalistic texts—texts that Schudson (2008) characterizes as "valuable" forces in democratic societies.

The idea that more discerning media consumption practices developed by instructional interventions will lead to better citizenship practices, which are most often measured by participation in elections, awareness of current affairs, and contributions to political discussions, is the dominant theoretical underpinning of "journalism school" and "global" approaches to news literacy (Mihailidis, 2012; RobbGrieco & Hobbs, 2012; Schneider, 2007) as well as more traditional, all-encompassing media literacy frameworks (Masterman, 1985; Mihailidis, 2014; National Association for Media Literacy Education, 2007; Potter, 2010) However, an often overlooked variable is that seemingly universal views on information and democracy must be negotiated and mitigated by educators who live, work, and teach in countries where citizens do not enjoy the press and information freedoms awarded to citizens of western societies. Yet, scholarly literature that examines how educators in emerging or transitional countries conceptualize and teach news and/or media literacy is difficult to locate because, in part, the majority of research available on these subjects originates in democracies with western press systems. This study was designed to address the gap in literature.

This study demonstrated that the Stony Brook news literacy model had relevance in Hong Kong, Vietnam, and Malaysia, even though the information environments in these countries are drastically different. In the process of localizing and de-Americanizing the news literacy curriculum, the instructors interviewed for this study reported that they had successfully interpreted distinctly American concepts by identifying the pertinent key elements for their students with different knowledge structures and interests. Thereby, to evaluate a pedagogical method that deals with news media content requires a thorough understanding of the political and socio-cultural environment in which the teaching is taking place because mediated messages in news reports are cultural products that are constructed from particular journalistic practices directed and limited by the country-specific social conditions (De Beer, 2009; Hachten & Scotton, 2012). This is one of the reasons educators in the U.S. who teach the Stony Brook news literacy model spend time discussing the First Amendment and the traditions of American journalists whereas educators in Asia have effectively stripped from their curricula all American elements to give room to discuss how journalism is being practiced in their countries as well as the process of news production and consumption specific to their societies.

Thus, the study serves as an important reminder that when educational material from one culture is translated into another culture, the schemata that formed the basis of common understanding in the original culture could and often should lose its intended meaning in the other culture. Participatory democracy is nothing more than a theory in many parts of the world, even if billions of people are participating in seemingly democratized digital cultures through Internet-enabled communication devices such as cell phones, smartphones, tablets, and computers. This is not to say that news literacy and/or media literacy instructional interventions are of no value outside of western societies; this chapter, in fact, proves otherwise.

Educators in Hong Kong, Vietnam, and Malaysia reported that they were attracted to the Stony Brook approach to news literacy because of its focus on the veracity of information. However, the theoretical basis of instruction in these countries shifted from democracy-enhancing and mindful processing of information to mindful processing of information exclusively. These educators also added other elements foreign to the Stony Brook or "journalism school" approach to their curricula by drawing on academic theories that have been used to explain social phenomena related to news events in their countries. Although they said it was still too early to judge how effectively the localized and de-Americanized variants of the Stony Brook model advanced the critical thinking skills of their students, anecdotally the educators reported positive results and they also said they have been reaching out to other schools and educators in their countries to spread the word about news literacy.

Future projects that carry the ideas presented in this research forward include quantitative assessments of news literacy teaching approaches and learning outcomes in the United States and abroad. These types of data would prove helpful in comparative understandings of how the original Stony Brook news literacy model and international adaptations of it influence the advancement and enhancement of critical thinking skills. Another possible research direction includes in-depth examinations of how educators in Asia use news literacy concepts to teach critical evaluation of social media messages.

Ultimately, this study offers an intimate and international look into the localizing and de-Americanizing processes involved in adapting and adopting a news literacy model based on distinctly American press principles and practices. While de-Americanizing is a term most often associated with public diplomacy discourse (Thussu, 2014), its theory that globalization is no longer exclusively the domain of the United

States and other western powers is useful in understanding the motivations of educators in Hong Kong, Vietnam, and Malaysia who were attracted to a curricular model built on lofty democratic aspirations that were of little relevance to their teaching practices. What was relevant to the educators who participated in this study was teaching their students how to think critically and methodologically about the quality and veracity of mediated messages in the digital age, news and social media sources in particular.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Accountability: Responsible or answerable for your work.

Independence: Freedom from the control, influence, or support of interested parties.

Journalism: The business or practice of producing and disseminating information about contemporary affairs of general public interest and importance.

Journalist: A person who gathers information and produces news reports that are paid for and distributed by news media outlets.

Media Literacy: The ability to access, evaluate, analyze, and communicate information in a variety of forms.

Netizen or Citizen Journalist: A person without an affiliation to professional news outlets who gathers information and produces news reports.

News: The outcome of journalism.

News Literacy: The ability to judge the reliability and credibility of news reports, whether they come via print, television or the Internet.

News Literacy Education: A pedagogical effort to conceptualize methods of news consumption. It aims to teach critical thinking skills to assess the credibility of each piece of information in news reports so that news audiences can make informed decisions and judgments.

News Media: The channels through which news is transmitted.

Reliable Information: Actionable information that allows students to make a decision, take an action or reach a conclusion.

Verification: The process that establishes or confirms the accuracy or truth of something.

ENDNOTES

1 For more on the Stony Brook news literacy model and/or to access curricular materials, go to: http://www.centerfornewsliteracy.org/

2 “Open the Freezer” refers to a seminal story about Hurricane Katrina in which a reporter got the facts wrong because he failed to verify. Under the shocking headline “Katrina’s Body Count Could Reach 10,000,” *The Times-Picayune* journalist Brian Thevenot (2005a) reported that bodies were piled on top of each other inside the freezer of the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center. Thevenot’s report was based on information provided to him by National Guardsmen who were standing outside the freezer. But Thevenot did not open the freezer to see the bodies for himself and, it turned out, the story was nothing more than a rumor that made its way into the paper: The guardsmen had told Thevenot a story they heard in the food line at a nearby staging area for police and military personnel. The incorrect *Times-Picayune* story and Thevenot’s (2005b) analysis in

American Journalism Review explaining how and why he got it wrong became required reading for news literacy students as a means to demonstrate accountability, and the "Open the Freezer" phrase became a simple, albeit macabre, reminder to verify information.

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Section 5
New Media Technology

Chapter 21
When Journalism Met the Internet:
Old Media and New Media Greet the Online Public

Mike Dillon
Duquesne University, USA

ABSTRACT

American news organizations have long been criticized for failing to anticipate, appreciate and exploit the Internet as it became a fact of daily life in the mid-1990s. This chapter explores and analyzes the lack of planning that stymied the development of journalism on the Web and cast doubt on the viability of traditional public-service journalism with its enduring values of accuracy, fairness and advocacy. Specifically, the essay documents and analyzes the online debuts of two venerable "old media" news outlets (The New York Times and The Los Angeles Times) and two "new media" Web news outlets (Salon and Slate) in the mid-1990s by exploring the claims they made about their aims, purposes and expectations as they introduced themselves to the public via their salutatory editorials. It is a cautionary tale for a digital world that reconfigures itself in ever-quickening cycles.

INTRODUCTION

The Internet became a fact of everyday life in the mid-to-late 1990s (Manjoo, 2009). By 1996, about 13% of Americans were online, and spent about 30 minutes per day surfing the Web; by 2000, the number of Internet users had more than tripled and penetration had reached 44%. By 2014, penetration reached 87% (Internet World Stats, 2014).

The Internet's impact on traditional news media outlets was quickly, and painfully, felt in the mid-to-late 1990s. Many newspapers and magazines created online versions without giving careful thought to aesthetics, function, audience or – most disastrously – revenue. Some stepped into the digital realm assuming that familiar and predictable models of economic support would manifest naturally. Others took a build-it-and-they-will-come approach.

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Meanwhile, Internet service providers, Web portals and aggregators, such as AOL, Netscape, Yahoo and (eventually) Google, presented users with a Whitman's Sampler of news, information, entertainment and trivia from a wide and rapidly expanding array of sources and services that undercut every facet and feature of the traditional news business – information, speed, and display and classified advertising. Aggregating gave regional or specialized publications entrée to new audiences, but reduced all members of the aggregate – including the flagships of American journalism – to the status of supporting players in an epic ISP-directed narrative of the day's events.

"Old media," i.e. traditional newspapers and magazines, continued to conceive of and market themselves as destinations designed for specific kinds of visitors (people interested in journalism and advertising), but Web portals functioned like airports, serving as points of departure to an almost infinite number of destinations. Thus, just about any kind of advertiser could be confident that his or her message would find interested parties at Web portals. Between 1999 and 2009, as advertising revenues at newspapers slumped, annual online advertising revenues increased from just under $5 billion to nearly $25 billion (Kirchhoff, 2011).

Newspapers stumbled onto the Web with crude avatars of their print products. It was as if in the 1930s, as highways expanded, the Pennsylvania Railroad rushed into production a steam-powered, cast-iron automobile that looked just like a locomotive. Meanwhile, "new media" enterprises, such as Microsoft-sponsored *Slate*, reached into the world of tradition and cast celebrity cable journalist Michael Kinsley in the role of digital shaman whose reputation in the world of print and broadcasting would serve as a foundation for a new, Web-based journalism.

According to Chyi & Lasora (2007), newspapers had widely proliferated this model:

By 1996, most major metropolitan newspapers had rolled out websites, but seemingly with little thought to new opportunities – and problems – inherent in the new technology, and little more than wishful thinking when it came to a revenue model. By 2003, more than 1,500 U.S. newspapers had launched websites. (p. 177)

Whether tethered to established newspapers or magazines, or created out of thin air, Web products that promised the "feel," credibility, ethos and style of traditional professional journalism by and large did not capture the public's attention, or at least not enough of its attention to compel it to seek out and pay for online news, information, commentary and entertainment from established newspapers. It's also possible their indifference had deeper roots – i.e., they hadn't been terribly interested in the old media products they'd been buying for years but simply acting out of habit or lack of choice – until they were offered new options via the web (Barnhurst & Nerone, 2001).

BACKGROUND

American news organizations have long been criticized for a lack of planning, for not more effectively anticipating, appreciating and exploiting the Internet. Journalists such as ProPublica Editor Richard Tofel (2012) assert that this lack of planning stymied the development of online journalism and cast doubt on the viability of enduring journalistic values such as accuracy, fairness and advocacy. The diminishment of these values, in turn, endangered democracy itself (Jones, 2009).

Looking back from the perspective of 2010, *Newsweek* (which after a long decline, became an online adjunct of the Web-based *Daily Beast*) concluded that

…newspapers are getting wiped out in part because they didn't realize they were in the information business; they thought their business was about putting ink onto paper and then physically distributing those stacks of paper with fleets of trucks and delivery people. Papers were slow to move to the Web. For a while they just sort of shuffled around, hoping it would go away. Even when they did launch websites, many did so reluctantly, almost grudgingly. (Lyons, 2010)

The uncertainty, tentativeness and anxiety with which traditional news organizations reacted to the online environment is unsurprising and understandable given the rapidity with which the Internet permeated American – and global – culture. According to Rogers (2003), "The Internet has spread more rapidly than any other technological innovation in the history of humankind (p. xix)."

In trying to react to rapid change, some newspapers formed partnerships with ISPs (as *The New York Times* did with AOL), invested in an architecture (doomed, as it turns out) of micropayments, and counted on existing copyright laws to protect their product. The powerful synergies propelling the Internet, however, quickly swept these strategies aside.

JOURNALISM AND THE WEB: FLAWED ASSUMPTIONS, MISSED OPPORTUNITIES

In his essay, "Newspapers and Thinking the Unthinkable," Shirky (2009) argues that newspaper publishers were not taken completely unaware by the Internet but underestimated its potential and were unimaginative in their preparations for its ascent as audiences' prime medium of communication:

Revolutions create a curious inversion of perception. In ordinary times, people who do no more than describe the world around them are seen as pragmatists, while those who imagine fabulous alternative futures are viewed as radicals. The last couple of decades haven't been ordinary, however. Inside the papers, the pragmatists were the ones simply looking out the window and noticing that the real world increasingly resembled the unthinkable scenario. These people were treated as if they were barking mad. Meanwhile the people spinning visions of popular walled gardens and enthusiastic micropayment adoption, visions unsupported by reality, were regarded not as charlatans but saviors.

Nonetheless, successful or not – and they were not – news organizations that created online news sites in the 1990s *did* make plans. The explanations and justifications they offered for those plans as they introduced their new online products reveal their assumptions about their audience, the role of journalism in American society, the uses of new technology, and revenue models. With few exceptions the assumptions and predictions old and new media organizations made about journalism on the Internet would prove to be disastrously deficient and shortsighted.

How their plans panned out, however, is not the focus of this paper, which instead attempts to answer a different question: Why did journalists venturing online in the mid-1990s plan and act as they did in the areas of functionality, utility, design, marketing, anticipation of future trends and assessment of the online audience? The most compelling answers to that question are provided by the journalists themselves, in the form of "salutatories "they wrote to introduce their inaugural online editions to prospective audiences.

The salutatory is an old tradition in journalism. People and organizations have founded newspapers, magazines, cable networks, websites and blogs for a wide range of reasons. In addition to whatever financial or ideological motives they reveal, the salutary editorials that heralded the appearance of new offerings since the first days of the Republic have made rather bold assertions about their authors' visions and values: *This is the way journalism should be done! These are the ideas that matter! This is what people need and want! Listen up!*

Salutatories are valuable not because they can be proved prescient or foolish in hindsight, but because they are an expression of epistemology – a speculation of the future based not just on the circumstances of the historical moment in which they are written, but also on perceptions, interpretations and assumptions about change in the past, as well as the nature of change itself.

Taking salutatories on their own terms, in the context of their own time, reanimates a rhetorical situation by examining "those contexts in which speakers or writers create rhetorical discourse" (Bitzer, 1995, p.301). They tell a story not of what was happening, or what eventually happened, but of what people believed (or hoped) would happen based on their perceptions of the environment in which they were operating. As Walter Lippmann (1922) pointed out in *Public Opinion*, published in an age when technology was increasing the might of both the sword and the pen:

. . . . . . whatever we believe to be a true picture, we treat it as if it were the environment itself . . . what each man does is based not on direct and certain knowledge, but on pictures made by himself or given to him. If his atlas tells him the world is flat he will not sail near what he believes to be the edge of our planet for fear of falling off. (p.4)

The online debuts of venerable "legacy" news outlets (*The New York Times* and *The Los Angeles Times*) and new media news outlets (*Salon* and *Slate*) demonstrate how a flawed reading of the environment, as well as a failure to draw sensible lessons from the past, fueled flawed expectations and predictions about the future of journalism – on the Internet and in general.

The debuts of online versions of *The New York Times* and *The Los Angeles Times* were chosen as old media case studies because they propose vivid and distinct approaches to providing online journalism. *Slate* and *Salon,* meanwhile, represent prominent and well-financed new media ventures that combined the functions of traditional magazines and newspapers, in addition to new features unique to the digital sphere, attracted significant attention, and achieved instant, if short-lived, popularity. In addition, all four websites debuted within a 13-month period, between November 1995 (*Salon*) and December 1996 (*The Los Angeles Times*) – the dawn of the age of journalism on the "Information Superhighway," as boosters were fond of calling the Internet.

In method and narrative form, history proceeds from hindsight. The arc and final act of the story are known; memoirs and letters shed light on motives that principal actors succeeded in concealing from their contemporaries, or even themselves; the endeavors that so-called rugged individuals imagined they were carrying out in perilous isolation are shown to have emerged from broad social patterns. And yet, whatever we might be able to demonstrate after the fact about motives, or powerful social currents that were inchoate to the people navigating them, the experience, reality and *weltanschauung* of those people as they acted in history are worth considering on their own merits.

Novice reporters learn that the primary measure of a story's value is the "so what" test. Throughout the history of American journalism, publishers, editors, producers – and now aggregators, bloggers and social media creators – have anticipated the same question from audiences they hoped to reach: So what?

They've responded with a wide variety of answers, promising everything from a revolution in class relations (Joseph Pulitzer's New York *World*, 1883), to a revolution in morals (Hugh Hefner's *Playboy*, 1954), to an assertion of basic humanity in the face of slavery (Lloyd Garrison's *Liberator*, 1833), to a flippant promise to pay no attention whatsoever to "the old lady in Dubuque" (Harold Ross's *New Yorker*, 1925), to a cheerful vow to furnish advertiser-friendly information with undemanding brevity (The Gannett Corporation's *USA Today*, 1982). So, too, late 20th Century journalists venturing online projected a vision of the place of journalism in a digital American culture and promised a new approach to journalism they were confident would resonate with the online publics they sought to captivate.

ISSUES, CONTROVERSIES, PROBLEMS

A variety of factors shaped the rapid expansion of the Web, increasing content, platforms and audiences/users. First, broadband capacity and usage expanded (De Argaez). As Internet usage increased, sales of computers rose; as a result, the per-unit cost of PCs, which in 1996 typically sold for $2,500, decreased rapidly (Polsson, 2012). Blogs, websites with specialized content, and video sites captivated audiences by offering a mélange of approaches and styles to reporting and telling stories about the world. The number and reach of these sites grew exponentially and were embraced by ecstatic investors. According to Lewis (1996-b), despite losses of $600,000 in 1995, Yahoo's initial public offering in April, 1996, took off "like a rocket ship," with an initial valuation of nearly $1 billion. On the initial day of trading, shares opened at $13 and reached $43 within a few hours.

The introduction of cheap desktops and dial-up Internet service during the 1990s is often described as a "revolution," but it was a revolution that tended to anarchy, without a grand or coherent cause propelling it, nor a consensual vision of what the revolution might accomplish. Instead, whether they ventured online eagerly or with trepidation, news and information providers offered wildly diverse perspectives on how the Internet would affect the content, and commerce, of journalism.

Established and new high-tech companies exploited emerging connective technologies, focusing their energies on designing portals (Netscape, Microsoft Explorer, Yahoo, AOL) that allowed access to an unwieldy set of Web destinations, or producing machines (PCs), or software (MS Office) that helped users utilize those portals.

The development of the destinations to which these portals transported users, however, was haphazard and unsystematic. For instance, after an astounding initial success, MySpace lost favor with users and was overtaken and made irrelevant by Facebook, in part because MySpace had no page design parameters and users proceeded to build a psychedelic Tower of Babel of different fonts, colors and templates. After paying $580 million to acquire MySpace in 2005, News Corp unloaded it in 2011 for $35 million (Horne, 2011).

New ventures created exclusively to do business on the Internet were hit-or-miss. Some sites possessed the traction for long-term relevance and even financial success while others could not capture the attention of a fast-grazing public. No matter how farfetched the business plan, investors were eager to shovel money into Internet startups in a variety of fields. For instance, "Webvan" proposed to deliver sundries ordered online within 30 minutes – with no delivery charge. The venture burned through nearly

$400 million in two years and went bankrupt in 2001 (German). Even Disney's sure touch could not create online alchemy: its go.com portal was here and gone in three years and forced Disney to take a write-down of nearly $1 billion.

In a sense, the early days of the Internet resembled the emergence of radio seven decades earlier. Like radio, the Internet represented a connective technology that offered a relatively cheap and uncomplicated vehicle for people to participate as both receivers *and* senders. Frequency limitations and signal interference led to federal license requirements for radio broadcasters and ended an early period of democratic, if chaotic, participation in radio. No such scarcity justified government intrusion on the Web, however.

How did new news media and old news media publishers introduce themselves to a new public environment, the online public forum, in the mid-1990s? Echoing salutatories throughout American journalism history, they announced their debuts on the digital stage with aplomb and optimism, but their framing of the Internet as a medium of news and comment took distinctly varied forms.

Traditional news outlets were slow to see the threat the Internet posed to their utility and profitability and even slower to identify opportunities to effectively exploit the new medium. Like everyone with something to sell or something to say, they seemed to know only that it was necessary to establish an online presence as quickly as possible.

According to Peterson (1996), while newspapers took tentative steps to collaborate in the areas of advertising, distribution, they dithered on the issues central to online viability. The failure to assess both threat and promise, the failure to formulate a workable financial model for what amounted to an entirely new – and competing – version of their editorial product, and the inability to coordinate their efforts to establish standards, combined to catalyze an astonishingly swift decline in perceived and actual value for an institution whose flagship members, such as *The New York Times*, *The Los Angeles Times* and *The Washington Post*, traced their roots to the nineteenth century and which, less than two decades earlier, in the age of Watergate, enjoyed unprecedented social prestige, pop culture cachet, political influence and profitability.

These old media outlets described the Internet as an exciting new vehicle to deliver traditional news to the public. The content, form and standards of traditional journalism would be maintained. When the *Washington Post* made its online debut on June 19, 1996, Publisher Donald Graham declared that, "People look to *The Washington Post* for the most authoritative and complete coverage of government and politics as well as for our investigative reporting, foreign news and our lively style features."

Traditional news outlets, confident in their own influence and power, declared that their content, acquired at great expense, would also be protected: The *Los Angeles Times* initial user agreement (1996) sternly warned users: "You may not modify, publish, transmit, transfer, sell, reproduce, create derivative work from, distribute, repost, perform, display, or any in anyway commercially exploit any of the Content . . ."

Editors made a nod to the ways in which Web-based news might indeed offer new forms of content, but these ideas were vague and tentative. Their salutatories, for all their bravado and good cheer, contained a tone of wistfulness that indicated traditional journalists would be perfectly satisfied to do business as usual if not for the fact that the Web was undeniably now a part of the media landscape and must be dealt with somehow. To be fair, though, they were navigating with crude maps. Data analytics began to emerge as a sophisticated tool to discern audience tastes and preferences in the late 1990s, after news organizations initial surge to the digital environment. The term "big data" and its early proponents such as John Mashey, the chief scientist at Silicon Graphics, did not begin to gain cachet outside of the tech sector until the early 2000s (Lohr, 2013). Newspapers struggling to translate journalism into a new environment cannot be fully faulted for lagging behind companies whose sole focus was on technological efficiency.

The salutatories of *Salon*, *Slate*, *The New York Times* and *The Los Angeles Times* illuminate the assumptions that propelled journalism on to the Internet in the 1990s and sowed the seeds of its ongoing struggles in the new electronic environment. While news sites have evolved and journalists have become more sophisticated in their creation of content and understanding of audiences, one gets but one chance to make a first impression.

SALON

What Is SALON?

SALON is an interactive magazine of books, arts and ideas. Inside SALON you'll find not only authors, artists and thinkers, but a kinetic community of readers and kindred spirits eager to thrash out cultural issues.

We are inspired by the creative potential of the Internet, but unlike many other websites, SALON is not a techno-cult. As refugees from the atrophying world of newspapers and magazines, our primary allegiance is to written communication, to the power of the word. We think of digital technology as an exciting means to an end, but not the end itself. – From the Salon salutatory, November 12, 1995.

New media news outlets such as *Salon* bid a rude good riddance to the obsolete world of print and promised a bold new journalism – democratic, interactive, instantaneous and perpetually in motion. It was also still married to "the power of the word" in a medium designed to transcend the word.

Salon (1995) sneered at the "atrophying world of newspapers and magazines." These were dead forms and *Salon's* editors were delighted to dance on their graves. "American journalism has become a pitiful giant, ensnarled by commercial formulas and political tribalisms. Where once its voice shook mountains, it now squeaks cautiously and banally." *Salon* boasted it embodied a powerful (if syntactically awkward) new voice, amplified in importance and influence by the new digital technologies: "The Net allows publishers to burst these bonds, to howl again."

While *Salon* promised "militant centrism" and made confidently clairvoyant assertions about journalism's new role, it also assumed that the ideal reader – as the publisher imagined him or her – would remain *exactly* the same: interested, attentive, concerned, engaged, sober, reasonable, and respectful of fair play. In contrast to its storm-the-Bastille call to digital arms, *Salon's* instruction in the decorum it expected of visitors who wished to participate in interactive democracy (as defined, hosted and refereed by *Salon*), sounded rather like an English butler reluctantly inviting the downstairs staff to tea: "We request that you use your real name when participating in a discussion. This makes for a responsible exchange. We also make a plea for common courtesy. Slander and boorishness don't encourage an enlightening meeting of the minds."

Salon instituted a fee structure, but few readers cared to pay the toll. By the early 2000s it was nearing bankruptcy and eviction from its San Francisco offices . . . and pleading for donations. It survived, barely, but by 2008 the militant tone had faded and *Salon* was humbly describing itself as a purveyor of "social content [and a] curated blog network." At this writing it persists, but as a whisper, not a howl, another bit of backchannel flotsam in a churning digital river that long ago passed it by.

Slate

Welcome to SLATE

By Michael Kinsley -- Posted Tuesday, June 25, 1996, at 3:30 AM ET

An introduction and apologia.

The name? It means nothing, or practically nothing. We chose it as an empty vessel into which we can pour meaning. We hope SLATE will come to mean good original journalism in this new medium. Beyond that, who knows? Good magazines are exercises in serendipity . . .

SLATE is basically a weekly: Most articles will appear for a week. But there will be something new to read almost every day. Some elements will change constantly. Other elements will appear and be removed throughout the week. Every article will indicate when it was "posted" and when it will be "composted."
– From the Slate salutatory, June 25, 1996.

Slate debuted as an online-only product and in that sense can be classed as a new media news outlet. It was, however, bankrolled by Microsoft, which by the mid-1990s qualified as a warhorse in the software business, and fronted by Michael Kinsley, a 45-year-old former *New Republic* editor and a panel member on CNN's *Crossfire* program.

Kinsley's address to readers assured them, by invoking the Old Testament-era metaphor of "the empty vessel," that new media *Slate* was a great blank to be filled in by a talented editorial team with deep roots in print. Kinsley spoke to readers in a chatty, we're-all-in-this-together tone of voice, but quickly established that *Slate* was in business to attract followers *and* profits. His explanation of *Slate*'s financial model, alas, could well have served as the motto of Internet journalism for nearly two decades to come: "For the reader – you – there is good news . . . our billing system isn't ready yet."

Nonetheless, *Slate* intended to, and eventually did, charge $19.95 per year. That subscription fee, readers were assured, was far less than the cost of printed magazines (at least at newsstand prices) and was essential to ensuring quality journalism.

Depending on advertisers would not be healthy even if it were possible. Indeed, one of Slate's main goals is to demonstrate, if we can, that the economies of cyberspace make it easier for our kind of journalism to pay for itself. If the Web can make serious journalism more easily self-supporting, that is a great gift from technology to democracy. (Kinsley, 1996)

Slate also promised an early form of aggregation – intelligence from other news publications in advance of their press runs: "'In Other Magazines' uses the covers and contents of *Time*, *Newsweek*, etc., as a handy measure of what the culture considers important. (We aim to have these magazines in *SLATE* even before they reach the newsstands or your mailbox)." Under the heading "So What's In It?" *Slate*, like many of its online brethren, offered the readers a very limited "new experience" that would remain largely under the control of professional gatekeepers.

Hedging its bets on hypertext, *Slate* explained that readers who clicked on the "Consider Your Options" tab could download the entire magazine, reformat it to look like a traditional magazine, and then print the entire issue (A pre-printed mail subscription to *Slate* could be had for $29.95, far less, presumably, than the cost of ink for one's printer to print it oneself).

Some of *Slate's* "innovations" recalled the medium-is-the-message mentality of early film actualities of dancing horses and sound recordings of barking dogs, reflecting an age-old assumption that simply offering a familiar experience through a novel medium was enough to draw – and keep – an audience: "Every issue will have a poem, read aloud by the author, with text." *Slate* also promised to post downloadable video and audio of political ads that political consultant Robert Shrum would deconstruct.

Slate assured readers who might feel disoriented or anxious by the rate of mid-1990s digital change that it could depend on *Slate* to protect and preserve the informational proprieties to which they were accustomed. *Slate* vowed it would soon have the freewheeling, audacious and often ill-mannered Internet under control.

Finally, we intend to take a fairly skeptical stance toward the romance and rapidly escalating vanity of cyberspace. We do not start out with the smug assumption that the Internet changes the nature of human thought, or that all the restraints that society imposes on individuals in 'real life' must melt away in cyberia. There is a deadening conformity in the hipness of cyberspace culture in which we don't intend to participate. Part of our mission at SLATE will be trying to bring cyberspace down to earth. Should be fun.

Fun it may have been, but profitable it was not. While *Slate* drew distinguished contributors and was recognized for journalistic excellence, it dropped its subscription plan in 1999; it is now owned by The Washington Post Co.

The Los Angeles Times

Welcome to The Los Angeles Times Website

It is a pleasure to share with you the resources of our fine newspaper and our knowledge, guidance and experience of Southern California. By looking for our home page, you have indicated that you are curious, someone who wants to discover, someone who appreciates information that is timely, well-written, useful or just plain interesting . . . It is our hope that what you find in our pages is an invitation. We want your participation as we evolve with additional information about how we see the world from Southern California, about how we can provide sources, data and personal observations that can make our time together richer and most useful.

We think the newspaper itself provides a variety of classy reports from near and from far away. We think we can help link you to other Southern California sites that we find helpful. We think we can give you the basic Internet tools to make your time at the computer worthwhile. Our name stands for credible, accurate and timely information. We hope you agree we deliver. – From The Los Angeles Times salutatory (Schwadron, 1996)

Beyond platitudes and vague promises of enriched content, old media companies struggled to explain to readers how their online versions would work and what advantages they offered.

Los Angeles Times Deputy Managing Editor Terry Schwadron's stiffly solicitous inaugural message to online readers flattered them for their good taste in seeking out the *Times* on the Web and told them they could expect pretty much what they already got in the print editions (except for free, a fact he omitted). In any case, Schwadron assumed people truly interested in "credible, accurate and timely information" would continue to buy and read the print edition, and he encouraged them to do so.

Enthusiastic early adopters of the new digital media of the sort Schwadron was addressing, however, were disdainful of hierarchy and assumptions of professional privilege and prestige, and were drawn to the Internet as an alternative to top-down, take-it-or-leave-it content, an attitude established news outlets either missed or chose to ignore. Instead, in promoting their online products, they repeatedly stressed the idea that the journalists would "provide," "guide" and "monitor" users' online experience.

Schwadron's promise to keep users abreast as the *Times* evolved, as the *Times* "saw the world," and as the *Times* selected and chose to "provide" information, assumed that the traditional gatekeeper approach to journalism would continue to define and regulate the relationship between journalists and citizens on the Web. (*The Washington Post* also conceived "interactivity" in hierarchical terms, creating a "Web Exploration Society . . . that encourages visitors to the site to explore the online universe through guided, themed Web Safaris.")

The interface *The Los Angeles Times* constructed to help readers navigate its site appeared to have been designed for small children or elders who could not set the blinking clock on their VCRs. It completely missed the point that in the early days of Internet availability, users were typically affluent young professionals undaunted by technology and relatively unencumbered by old media habits . . . or loyalties. Atkin and Jeffres (1998) applied diffusion theory to Internet user demographics and concluded that early Internet users represented "a young, educated adopter profile," who were likely to have been early computer adopters a few years earlier (p. 475). This was not the same relatively homogeneous mass that made up newspaper circulation in 1996.

To this savvy cohort, *The L.A. Times* (1995) offered "Hunter," a Golden *Retriever* who spoke to readers (under an adorable photo) in the first person-canine: "HI! My name's Hunter, and I'd like to welcome you to the website of *The Los Angeles Times*. The Web people here asked me to introduce the site because I know its nooks and crannies. I spend all day fetching stories to match members' interests, so I know my way around better than almost anyone. (Come visit me after you've read this!) If this is your first time here, you may not realize the depth and breadth this site has – it makes my paws hurt just thinking about all the places to go."

Again, in a medium built to foster self-designed, decentralized, user-selected pathways to information, *The Times* promised users a controlled experience with a faintly Soviet-style appellation: "Think of us as Information Central. We're to help you through every step of your Internet experience." Hunter signed off with a Winnie the Pooh-inspired "TTFN" (ta-ta for now).

While sophisticated customer relationship management (CRM) and enterprise resource planning (ERP) programs would not be widely diffused and adopted until the late 1990s, *The Los Angeles Times* and other media companies – particularly those covering the dot.com revolution – did not need sophisticated analytics to tell them their approach to the new web audience was woefully misguided; they needed only to read their own news reports.

The New York Times

The New York Times Introduces a Website

The New York Times begins publishing on the World Wide Web today, offering readers around the world immediate access to most of the newspaper's contents . . . The electronic newspaper is part of a strategy to extend the readership of The Times and to create opportunities for the company in the electronic media industry, said Martin Nisenholtz, president of The New York Times Electronic Media Company. – From the salutatory of the online iteration of The New York Times (1996)

After making select content available online to AOL members since 1994, *The New York Times* online edition debuted on January 22, 1996 with a very specific, and limited, mission: "Offering readers around the world immediate access to most of the daily newspaper's contents . . . including the newspaper's crossword puzzle" (the very first feature it successfully hid behind a pay wall).

The *Times* created a separate corporate division to run its site, which would offer free access, "initially at least . . . and generate revenue from advertising." The story introducing the service quoted Publisher Arthur Sulzberger, who somewhat contradictorily vowed to seize the possibilities of the Internet but also asserted that *The Times*' online objectives would not stray far from its print traditions.

Like other old media outlets, Sulzberger assumed readers in the new digital universe would want and accept a hierarchical experience – with *The Times* acting as filter and agenda-setter:

Our site is to take full advantage of the evolving capabilities offered by the Internet. We see our role on the Web as being similar to our traditional print role – to act as a thoughtful, unbiased filter and to provide our customers with information they need and can trust.

The story's kicker quoted the optimistic president of a consultancy that lent counsel to interactive ventures: "*The New York Times* name will get people to look at the product once, or maybe twice," he predicted. "The market is booming for newspapers on the World Wide Web."

Actually, it wasn't. Nor was it booming for online-only sites that offered users traditional journalistic content, even when those sites represented a new approach to creating and delivering that content. Joint online efforts such as PoliticsNow.com, a partnership of ABC News, *The Washington Post*, *Newsweek*, *The Los Angeles Times* and *The National Journal*, launched in advance of the pivotal 1996 elections and described as "a deep-dish digital buffet of campaign news, chat and games," failed to attract advertisers or visitors. PoliticsNow.com went offline in March 1997 and was revived, briefly, as "Cloakroom" by *The National Journal* (Allen, 1997).

CONCLUSION

Whether they represented old media or new media, journalists who ventured onto the Web in the mid-1990s were explorers in a new and, initially, sparsely populated landscape. Only 20 million Americans – a mere seven percent – were online in 1996, and dialup service offered a slow and severely circumscribed experience; just connecting to the Web through a modem could take up to a minute and there was not enough channel capacity for much more than text and images.

No one knew how large the audience would become or what effect broadband and wireless access would soon have on Web content, interactivity and mobility. But a lack of certainty does not preclude an assessment of probability. Despite fuzzy acknowledgements that the Web would "evolve," old *and* new media outlets showed little foresight or realization that the dialup internet was a crude prototype that would quickly be refined, made faster, more versatile, and easier to use – a development anyone with even a layman's knowledge of older communication technologies like radio, television and recorded music, could have predicted.

New and old media news outlets also misjudged their audiences, though audience metrics were available from ISPs and data provided by cookies from the sites themselves. Neilson would soon be monitoring and measuring the audience as well. Absent in most old and new media online salutatories is a clear idea of who the online audience really was.

Rather than framing an appeal that offered unique features to new potential audiences – young, mobile consumers who were not subscribing to newspapers in great numbers even before the dawn of the Internet – news outlets such as *The Los Angeles. Times* seemed to assume they were addressing the exact same people who already bought, and would continue to subscribe to, the newspaper. There seemed to be no insight that online function should dictate online form; newspapers simply digitized print conventions in the areas of graphic design, story selection and presentation. In addition, even news organizations that managed to reach the end of the digital rainbow found that there was no pot of gold waiting for them. Online advertising is diffused across hundreds of thousands of websites, not a few thousand traditional and online media companies focused primarily on news. As ad revenues from print plunged in the 1990s, the uptick in internet-generated revenue was miniscule, and hardly enough to offset losses.

Hindsight proves this was a disastrous strategy based on a short-sighted reading of the emerging online market. By 1999, about 40% of people aged 18-34 read newspapers, a figure that would decline by 25% by 2011. By contrast, in 1999 about 70% of older citizens (aged 55 and up) subscribed to newspapers, although the size of the cohort would also drop dramatically (Edmonds, Guskin & Rosensteiel, 2012).

Clearly, the assumptions news organizations made about the present led them to stumble into the future. However, no one set out to fail. A key assumption of both old and new media journalists was that journalists should embed traditional values and methods into a new platform.

The preservation of these traditional values remains a prime objective for online journalists committed to the public service functions of journalism. According to ProPublica's Tofel (2012),

We should care not about newspapers themselves but about the highest level of quality journalism that they have represented for a century or so. The future of that kind of journalism will depend largely on our ability to create new institutions, and adapt old ones, so that we can respond to technological change with business creativity, entrepreneurial determination, self-confidence, and common sense.

But, as Jay Rosen (1999) has pointed out:

The press cannot speak to the same country twice. Nor can it claim its common paths to news are the only ones imaginable . . . To cover news is to judge what is newsworthy; such estimates of worth involve ideas about politics and power, images of democracy, views of culture, and of the individual, all of which are subject to change as conditions remake themselves. In these ways and others, journalism requires imagination.

Those conditions changed radically in the mid-1990s with rise of the Internet, which has thus far transformed virtually every form of news, entertainment, politics and social interaction. While journalists could not be expected to see into the future, the salutatories that heralded their entrance to the online world of information of ideas demonstrated a distinct lack of imagination and a stubborn desire to transport the past into the future instead of assessing and reacting to the realities of the present.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Aggregators: Web sites that offer news and information for a variety of distinct news websites.
New Media: News organizations created exclusively for the Internet.
Old Media: Traditional, print-based news organizations that created online iterations.
Revenue Model: Organizational and financial mechanisms to generate revenue and profit.
Rhetorical Situation: Those contexts in which speakers or writers create rhetorical discourse.
Salutatory: An editorial in which debut print and web publications introduce themselves and explain themselves to the public.

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Chapter 22
Immersive Journalism Design Within a Transmedia Space

Nohemí Lugo Rodríguez
Tecnológico de Monterrey, Mexico

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this chapter is to contribute to the theoretical frame of transmedia journalism by proposing a question-based model that focuses on transmedia design when an immersive journalism piece is integrated into a transmedia space. Immersive journalism is a new medium that could be effectively used to foster social empathy by means of virtual reality stories in journalism. The chapter is guided by the following ideas: (1) narrative strategies that may be useful in the design of immersive journalism experiences; (2) aesthetic principles of immersive experiences; and (3) inclusion of an immersive experience in a transmedia space. Thus, this chapter reviews the narrative techniques and aesthetics of immersive experiences that might contribute to the design of both the immersive piece and the transmedia space.

INTRODUCTION

Virtual Reality (VR) headsets such as Oculus Rift, Samsung Gear, HTC Vive, Google Daydream, Google Cardboard, and PlayStation VR are now cheaper and more portable than previous interfaces for experiencing virtual reality. Their presence makes the production and the consumption of immersive experiences for different purposes, including journalism, simultaneously easier and more widespread. VR has been used to produce immersive journalism: "the production of news in a form in which people can gain first-person experiences of the events or situations described in news stories" (De la Peña, Weil, Llobera, Giannopoulos, Pomés, Spanlang, & Slater, 2010, p. 291). In addition to these three-dimensional (3D) modeled environments, 360-degree video has been used to report in the field and to produce what could be called live action immersive chronicles and documentaries.

Immersive journalism has become a new asset of the transmedia journalism space. Transmedia space, according to Saldre and Torop (2012) "appears as a notion that integrates meta- and inter-communicative levels, presuming the interpretation of the same message as the sequence of proto- and meta-texts described in different discourses and fixed in different sign systems and media" (p. 41). An immersive

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experience may function both as a *mothership*, that is, the main work from which other products derive (Jenkins, 2009), or it may function as an *extension*: Media products that have a complete meaning on their own but serve to enrich the main story (Scolari, 2013; Gambarato, 2013). When combining VR with other media in order to create a transmedia space, VR should have a clear, non-superfluous role in the whole user experience.

Since immersive journalism is a recent trend, it is necessary to develop a theoretical frame that assists in both the design and analysis of immersive journalism within a transmedia space. This chapter contributes as a theoretical-practical tool for journalists, researchers, and students of communication and journalism. Thus, this work includes a literature review from the fields of journalism, digital media aesthetics, virtual reality and transmedia storytelling. In order to write this chapter, the author explored different interfaces such as Oculus Rift, HTC VIVE, and Samsung Gear; downloaded different VR applications for general purposes; used different headsets such as Google Cardboard, Viewmaster, and VMAX; and downloaded different immersive journalism experiences on Android and IOS phones. The chapter is guided by the following ideas: (a) narrative strategies that may be useful in the design of immersive journalism experiences; (b) aesthetic principles of immersive experiences; and (c) inclusion of an immersive experience in a transmedia space.

JOURNALISM AND VIRTUAL REALITY

Journalism in this century has broadened its meaning. Van der Haak, Parks, and Castells (2012) argue that journalism is about telling meaningful stories on what is new or what is happening in the world, understanding it in context, explaining it to others, and making it available to the public so they can use it for their own needs. This demonstrates how journalism in this century is more contextual than it was in the past. Fink and Schudson (2014) explain how the rise and predominance of contextual journalism started in the 1960's. Furthermore, they clarify the difference between conventional stories and contextual stories: Conventional stories answer the "who-what-when-where" questions, usually ignoring or only implicitly addressing "why"; they describe activities that have occurred or will occur within 24 hours; and they focus on one-time activities or actions. In contrast, contextual stories vary formally, have a wider focus, and describe more complex issues.

According to Menke, Kinnebrock, Kretzschmar, Aichberger, Broersma, Hummel, and Salaverría (2016), contemporary journalism, has been influenced by convergence culture and has been evolving over the last two decades. Van der Haak et al. (2012) insist that "good" journalists in the 21st century tell fact-based stories about the real world through text, audio, and visual media which people can relate to, share, and appropriate. Through the transmedia nature of journalism, a journalist should consider how every medium is used for doing what it does best (Jenkins, 2006) and ideally, as with any social or cultural transmedia project, active user participation should be included in the design (Lugo, 2016).

What virtual reality does best as a medium is to offer users the opportunity to "see for yourself" and "be there." For Ryan (2015), virtual reality is the latest technology that attempts to erase the interface in favor of creating a believable experience. Wilson and Zoranzo (2015) declare that one of the main advantages of virtual reality is stereoscopic depth, which creates the illusion that the viewer is seeing objects in a virtual space. The advantage of VR is the ability to present stimuli in three dimensions. The power of virtual reality simulations is evident in fields as psychology and neuroscience studies because of the key feature of this medium that makes the user a participant: *Presence*. North and North (2016) relate *presence* with the awareness of being in a place, with the realness and vividness of the place and experience, and with the behavior of users. It is considered a good sign that users behave as if the virtual world portrayed is real. When used for social purposes, VR offers the opportunity to be in somebody else's shoes.

Through the use of VR, one may observe what it is like for a Syrian girl to live in the Za'atari refugee camp (*Clouds over Sidra,* Here Be Dragons, Arora & Milk, 2015); what it is like to be in the vicinity of a bombing in Aleppo (*Project Syria,* De La Peña et al., 2014); what it is like to live in a confinement cell (*6x9:A virtual experience of solitary confinement*, The Mill, The Guardian, Panetta, & Poulton, 2016); what it is like for a man to go into diabetic shock in a Los Angeles food bank (*Hunger in Los Angeles*, De la Peña & Virtual Pyedog, 2012); what it is like for three children in different locations around the world to see their houses destroyed and to be forced to leave their homes (*The Displaced*, Silverstein, 2015); what Fukushima is like years after a nuclear disaster (*Fukushima, contaminated lives*, Verdú, 2016). These are just a few examples of immersive experiences that try to connect average citizens with an unfamiliar situation experienced by others.

Chris Milk (TED, 2015), director of 360-degree VR documentaries, has claimed that VR technologies are "empathy machines." Empathy created through VR could be explained as feeling in a similar way to the way one would feel in real life; thus, the immersive experience represents a situation that in real life would make people feel empathy. Empathy is a complex psychological response. It is studied in fields such as neuroscience and psychology. Empathy is an oriented emotional response congruent with the perceived welfare of another person (see Batson, Batson, Slingsby, Harrell, Peekna, & Todd, 1991). Decety and Ickes (2009) emphasize that empathy is a process in which observation, memory, knowledge, and reasoning are combined; they add that it is essential to recognize the other person as like oneself, while maintaining a clear separation between self and other. However, the empathy of users cannot necessarily be predicted nor controlled. Keen (2006) points out that users' experiences differ from one another. In the VR realm, North and North (2016) consider that there are individual differences in the sense of *presence* when subjects are confronted with the same virtual environment. The individual's personal experiences contribute to this factor and this is very difficult to be controlled by designers. It is important to add that users may possibly also have physical reactions to VR experiences: "One problem associated with using VR is that it can cause nausea and dizziness, a phenomenon known as 'simulator sickness'" (Schuemie, Van Der Straaten, Krijn, & Van Der Mast, 2001, p. 188). However, there are high expectations that this new medium can foster empathy. In addition, empathy is not just seen as a reaction from the audience, but it is also viewed as a strategy in psychology and in narrative empathy studies. This chapter, therefore, explores the design of immersive journalism experiences, which in most cases up until now are stories. Theoretical explorations can be useful in inspiring designers to reflect on and analyze immersive journalism pieces from a storytelling and media aesthetics points of view.

IMMERSIVE JOURNALISM DESIGN

Empathy and Narratives

Batson, Lishner, Cook and Sayer (2005) state that humans can feel empathy for strangers in need and that these empathic feelings include sympathy, compassion, tenderness, sorrow, and grief, for instance. They add that "these feelings have been found to be a source of motivation to help relieve the empathy-inducing need" (Batson et al., 2005, p. 15). According to Sillesen, Ip, and Uberti (2015), empathic responses increase as we gather more information about others. Hence, knowledge and time are important factors in the generation of empathy: Human contact should continue for at least thirty minutes for a person to feel empathy for somebody he/she does not know. Interestingly, empathy can be induced. For more than 20 years, Batson has conducted diverse studies related to the relationship between empathy, altruism, and, the change in attitudes. Batson, Chang, Orr, and Rowland (2002) found that inducing empathy toward a member of a stigmatized group can improve attitudes toward the group as a whole. According to these authors, empathy inducement has been used to improve attitudes toward people with Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), toward the homeless, and toward racial and ethnic minorities. These authors, who propose an improved model based on Batson's et al. (1991) first model, add that their results provide reassurance about the practical value of using empathy as a technique for creating more positive responses to the plight of the stigmatized. Empathy changes not only attitudes, but also actions: "Those induce to feel empathy appear willing to put their money where their mouth is. And if they are, then there may be real reason for optimism" (Batson et al., 2002, p. 1666).

It is important to remember that immersive journalism productions are mediated experiences. The way in which designers decide to organize information may vary. *Form* is an essential aspect of empathy stimulation. In this sense, the power of narrative as a communicative form over other formats is clear. Oliver, Dillard, Bae, and Tamul (2012) highlight the power that narratives have to foster feelings of empathy and compare this to the power that narratives have to motivate actions and to alter beliefs and attitudes. In their study, they illustrate specifically how narratives help to reduce prejudices toward stigmatized groups (Oliver et al., 2012).

In the narratology field, Taylor, Hodges, and Kohányi (2003) discuss a concept they call *narrative empathy* and describe it as the sharing of feeling and perspective-taking induced by reading, viewing, hearing or imagining narratives of another's situation and condition. Specifically in the field of journalism, Fink and Schudson (2014) mention, among other types of journalistic contextual stories, *social empathy stories,* which encourage readers to "be interested in, have compassion for, or empathize with the experiences and problems of people who are largely unfamiliar to them" (p. 11). According to Fink and Schudson (2014), these *social empathy stories* have the following characteristics:

- Describe a person or group of people not often covered in news stories.
- May answer the question, "what does it feel like to be this person?"
- Use personal experiences to talk about larger social problems.
- Often begin with anecdotal leads, using many direct quotes from their main sources.
- Structure narratives around the observations of sources rather than those of a detached observer.

Social empathy stories appear to follow part of the empathy model proposed by Batson et al. (2005), since this model implies two of the following steps: (a) adopting the perspective of a needy individual leads to increased empathic feelings, then (b) these feelings lead to a perception of increased valuing of this individuals' welfare. *Social empathy stories* also appear to use what Keen (2006) calls *ambassadorial strategic empathy*, which refers to cultivating readers' empathy for an in-group, often for a specific purpose, such as an appeal for justice, for recognition, or for assistance.

Oliver et al. (2012) showed that when there is compassion for a specific individual, such as a character in the story, then a certain attitude toward the group represented by the character is generated. This study was based on the model proposed by Batson et al. (1991). Oliver et al. (2012) discuss the importance of taking the perspective of the other (e.g., the character represented) in the empathy process. However, from the storytelling point of view, the way that perspective-taking is induced in a narrative should be carefully crafted. Keen (2006) argues that the achievement of *narrative empathy* is frequently taken for granted via the use of a small set of narrative tropes, such as the use of first person narration and the interior representation of a character's consciousness and emotional states. The author points out that more empirical testing is needed to make sure that these and other strategies can effectively promote empathy in readers.

In addition to avoiding false generalizations about "narrative recipes" to foster empathy, producers should be careful to avoid over-stimulating audiences. Maier (2015) explains how mass media have contributed to what has been described as *compassion fatigue,* which is an indifferent or negative attitude toward the pain and suffering of others. Readers are tired of formulas that over-simplify complex challenges and that stereotype victims. These hero-victim portrayals are a failure in storytelling when trying to promote an important cause; other failures in storytelling are caused by psychic numbing, sensationalism, and lack of context. When journalists and VR designers work together to design an immersive experience, they need to explore the aesthetics of this medium to tell stories, and they need to be innovative. However, there are no specific formulas for achieving this.

Immersion and Narratives

Immersion is defined by Janet Murray (1997) as a sense of being contained within a space or state of mind that is separate from ordinary experience. Since immersion could be considered both a personal and a psychological state, different media offer different degrees and methods of immersion according to the language of each medium. This is not an exclusive affordance of digital media, as theater, novels, and films are immersive as well. Ryan (2015) proposes three forms of involvement in narratives that appear especially suited for virtual reality: Spatial immersion, temporal immersion, and emotional immersion.

Spatial Immersion (The Response to Setting)

Ryan (2015) asserts that there is a difference between space and place, since the second has an emotional meaning for users because they are somehow emotionally and cognitively related to that space. Murray (1997) adds that immersive experiences are disrupted by the inconsistency and incompleteness of an environment and yet are reinforced by encyclopedic detail and a sense of vast spaces within clearly marked boundaries. Moreover, Jenkins (2004) presents the concept of *environmental storytelling,* which creates the preconditions for an immersive narrative experience in four ways: (a) by evoking pre-existing narrative associations, (b) by providing a staging ground where narrative events are enacted, (c) by embedding narrative information within their *mise-en-scène*, and (d) by providing resources for emergent narratives.

Evoking Pre-Existing Narrative Associations

In this case, users recognize the place. This could be because it is a real place, like Paris; because it represents the conventions of a narrative genre, for instance a horror movie; or because the space refers to a specific fiction that users know, such as spaces in the Harry Potter saga. Recognizing Hogwarts in a movie after having read the novel or recognizing the objects placed in a thematic attraction park after having watched the movie are examples of this. Evidently, this also fosters emotional immersion.

Providing a Staging Ground Where Narrative Events Are Enacted

In this situation, users are playing roles. For instance, in the *Bioshock* saga video games, or *The Last of Us* video games, users play a first-person role. The player interacts with objects and non-player characters, and when the player arrives at a specific place, spends certain amount of time in a given zone, or uses certain objects, then pre-determined events occur.

Embedding Narrative Information Within Their Mise-en-Scène

The *Bioshock* saga is particularly good at this. Much of what players learn about the nature of the setting and its history comes not from text or character dialogue, but rather from forgotten objects on the street, plaques on walls or (sometimes defaced) statues, puddles of blood next to protest signs, government posters warning about certain groups or activities, locked doors, etc.

Providing Resources for Emergent Narratives

In video games like *The Sims* or *Minecraft*, users can create identities, stock and trade belongings, and have interactions with other characters, whose relationships are not predetermined. This also happens in massively multiplayer online role-playing games (MMORPG's) where the player can choose, form, and develop the identity of her character throughout the game.

These four strategies of *environmental storytelling* were proposed by Jenkins (2004) in reference to video games, but they can be applied to virtual reality in two ways: (a) determining how to use the space to tell a story and evoke memories, feelings and narrative genre conventions, what Jenkins calls creating *evocative spaces;* and (b) deciding how users are going to participate in the virtual space. Users can participate in a virtual space in the following three ways: (a) as witnesses observing what occurs around them; (b) as actors enacting a narrative in a first-person role; or (c) as explorers and builders, both exploring the space and building their own narrative.

Temporal Immersion (The Response to the Story)

The reader's involvement in the process of time progression within a story is referred to as *temporal immersion*. The passing of time matters to the reader because it is a process of disclosure. Ryan (2015) notes:

The art of creating interest in a story requires an efficient interweaving of two temporal dynamics: the dynamics inherent to the temporal unfolding of the told events, of the causal chain that constitutes story, and the dynamics inherent to the telling, to the revealing or withdrawing of the information that enables readers to apprehend the logic of the story. (location 31%)

Emotional Immersion (The Response to Characters)

According to Schuemie, Van Der Straaten, Krijn, and Van Der Mast (2001), "Perhaps one of the most important consequences of presence is that a virtual experience can evoke the same reactions and emotions as a real experience" (p. 187). While Ryan (2015) describes this kind of involvement in relation to identification with characters, which is essential, it could be said that emotional immersion is a consequence of all the strategies used for the user to be present: Identification with characters, spatial immersion, and temporal immersion. It is worthwhile to remember another affordance of digital media proposed by Murray (1997): *Agency*. *Agency* occurs when interactivity is meaningful and users directly see the power of their actions. Ryan (2015) proposes two criteria for classifying interactivity, according to the relationship between the user and the storyworld:

Membership of the User

The user's interaction with the storyworld can be *internal,* when the actions of the user correspond to events in the story of the world, or *external,* when the user controls the story from a godlike perspective or is simply not "inside" the story.

Creative Power of the User

In an *exploratory* interaction, the user might be able to observe what exists in the world but not be able to change anything. In an *ontological* interaction, "the storyworld evolves as a result of the interaction" (Ryan, 2015, location 50%). The observations of these two criteria can then be presented in four combinations. User interaction may thus be one of the following: (a) *internal-exploratory*, (b) *external-exploratory*, (c) *ontological-internal*, and (d) *ontological-external* (Ryan, 2015).

In many immersive journalism experiences, users can just select where to direct their line of vision, but they do not belong to the story in an explicit way. This is the case of *Clouds of Sidra* (Here Be Dragons et al., 2015), which is an example of *external-exploratory* interactivity. In some works, such as *Underworld* (The Guardian, 2016) and *6x9* (The Mill and The Guardian, 2016), users take the place of a character that enacts a narrative that they cannot change. These works are examples of *internal-exploratory* interactivity. However, immersive journalism has yet to present examples of *ontological interactivity, either internal or external*. Even so, there are instances of *ontological interactivity* in VR applications, but not in the field of journalism. One example is *Tilt Brush*, where users can draw the world around them, in a similar way to what happens in the videogame *Minecraft*, where users create and inhabit their own world.

The combination *internal-exploratory* interactivity might appear to be the best option for VR because it promotes more involvement inside the world as a character and provides a sense of wandering and exploring. However, this depends on the purpose: While many immersive journalism projects will be focused on creating a contemplative aesthetic, some others might be more focused on creating an active experience through agency. This would be more like what is done in video games, where actions of the user are a priority. In this sense, the concept of *game aesthetics* coming from the game design field could be useful for VR. "Aesthetics describes the desirable emotional responses evoked in the player, when interacting with the game system" (Hunicke, LeBlanc & Zubek, 2004, para. 11). Nevertheless, immersive journalists will need to develop their own set of aesthetics. For now, some of the aesthetics stated by these authors could work as a base to clarify the specific emotions that the immersive journalism experience is trying to foster. From the list that Hunicke et al. (2004) propose, the most appropriate aesthetics for immersive journalism are the following: (a) sensation—game as sense-pleasure, (b) fantasy—game as make-believe, (c) narrative—games as story, and (d) discovery—game as uncharted territory.

Some immersive journalism projects are already exploring different levels of agency as well as more specific aesthetics focused on evoking emotional responses. For instance, in "Arctic 360: A virtual experience of a disappearing landscape" (The Guardian, 2017a), spatial immersion is most important, since the objective is to contemplate how the arctic is being destroyed. The emotional reaction desired might be indignation. "See for yourself" and "contemplate" might be the main purposes to reach this emotion. In "First impressions: A virtual experience of the first year of life" (The Guardian, 2017b), users are placed in the perspective of an infant who is in her parents' living room. Here the most interesting activity is exploring the point of view of a baby. In this story, temporary immersion is more important than spatial immersion, since the user can hear and see how the baby changes his/her outlook over time; in this experience, "wonder" might be the main emotion fostered.

In "Underworld" (The Guardian, 2016), the user can travel through London's sewers. Here the user has a lamp, and by moving a joystick, he/she can explore the sewers guided by a narrator. Interaction goes beyond just directing the user's line of vision. It is still an exploratory interactivity but because of its internal nature, the user might feel more active than just looking around. The environment attempts to foster curiosity and fear, and its interface is similar to that of a video game. The aesthetic of the experience is "discovery." In "6×9: A virtual experience of solitary confinement" (The Mill & The Guardian, 2016), the user is invited to "hear the stories and experience the psychological damage that can happen during extreme isolation." This experience makes the user step into the shoes of a prisoner in a confinement cell. In this case, 3D modeling, 3D animation, two-dimensional (2D) animation, audio and video are used in a masterful way. The emotions fostered could be anxiety, frustration, and indignation. The aesthetic is "narrative."

Immersion Production Technologies and VR Media Language Exploration

The influence of immersive production technologies also impacts the affordances and constraints that filmmakers and VR designers have. 3D environments built into video game engines such as *Unity* and *Unreal* allow one to make up the story, as well as to design both the space and the interaction. 360-degree stereoscopic video cameras record live action, which helps to create immersion, especially in cases where settings are real world places and where it is very important that real characters are known by the user. However, due to their nature, 360-degree videos constrain the interaction of the user. In the following paragraphs, there is a brief comparison of how immersive journalism experiences, whose objective is to foster awareness and empathy, explore the aesthetics of the media used.

Clouds over Sidra (Here Be Dragons et al., 2015) is a mini documentary of a girl living in a refugee camp produced with a stereoscopic 360-degree camera. *Project Syria* (De la Peña et al., 2014) is a 3D-modeled environment based on real scenarios and contains real audio from bombings in Syria. *6x9* (The Mill & The Guardian, 2016) is a 3D modeled and animated immersive experience about being locked up in a confinement cell. These three immersive experiences have a linear temporal structure. Two of them include personal and real stories to connect to a bigger problem just as traditional social empathy journalistic stories do. In *Clouds over Sidra* and *6x9*, characters narrate their story. In all three of these stories it is important that the user approximates a sensation of authentically being in the space in order to be immersed in that world: A refugee camp, a street in Aleppo, a 6x9-foot confinement cell. However, the power of the media and the explorations that authors make with media language used is very different in these three stories. In *Clouds over Sidra* (Here Be Dragons et al., 2015), identification is reached through listening to Sidra's thoughts and observations about living in a refugee camp. Spectators can see her room, her school, the playground where children take turns playing. The user is an invisible witness, limited to only looking around. Sidra narrates her story as a first-person narrator but is not talking to the user. She is seen on the screen just three or four times; the rest is voice-over dubbed in English. She looks directly at the camera in only two shots. The camera movements are basic; there are no close-ups and few possibilities to vary the camera shot. Audiovisual language is very basic in comparison to regular 2D live action films. In this film, the camera is always at a considerable distance from Sidra. In regular videos, a close-up to see her expressions, the combination of subjective views, and a variation in angles and shots could tell the story in a different and certainly even better way. Nevertheless, an emotional impact, which is difficult to explain, remains. This might be due to the 3D stereoscopic vision. Seeing real people, in a real situation, is very powerful.

In *Project Syria* (De la Peña et al., 2014), based on a 3D-modeled environment, the intention is similar: Promoting awareness about the situation Syrians, especially children, are living in. There is a narrator telling the audience facts. The environment is very well modeled, based on a real street and real people, but the characters look fake, like robots. The user can move around the space but movement does little to substitute the connection obtained from live action.

6x9 (The Mill & The Guardian, 2016) appears to be the best experience in its immersive design and the exploration of media selection and media language. The purpose of this immersive experience, according to The Guardian (2016), is that it "aims to highlight the psychological toll on those subjected to such harsh incarceration for between 22 and 24 hours a day." It presents temporal, spatial, and emotional immersion strategies. Users are immersed in a virtual, but photorealistic 6x9-foot confinement cell that was modeled based on a real cell, and they hear real stories and see fragments of real footage. In nine minutes, users experience what it is like to be day and night in a confinement cell, since the piece has a temporal structure. Selective lighting is used to direct the user's attention to certain objects in the room. When users look at the illuminated objects, stories emerge. Users are supposed to go through the experience in first-person. The narrator invites the user to enter the cell and take part in the experience directly. At the same time, the user is a witness who hears and sees visualizations of the thoughts, visions, hallucinations and daydreaming of the incarcerated based on the testimonies of prisoners that have been in such confinement. This is done using 2D animation, simulating video projected on the wall of the cell, and motion graphics.

Immersive language is very young. As with any other media from the past, virtual reality may borrow resources from other media and develop its own. For now, producers are experimenting with the media and discovering how to use and how to extend it. Based on the concepts explained in this section and on the work from Fink & Schudson (2014), Ryan (2015), Murray (1997), Hunicke et al. (2004), and Jenkins (2004) —with original work from the author—some questions to be considered in the design or analysis of immersive journalism narratives are posed in Table 1.

IMMERSIVE JOURNALISM IN A TRANSMEDIA SPACE

Immersive journalism experiences, especially if focused on awaking emotions, might be consider a complete experience in the sense that new media easily promote wonder, surprise, and as producers claim, they have a great potential to promote empathy. Following the trend brought by VR, these immersive experiences appear to be a novelty, a new strategy to attract readers to online newspapers. Within just a few months during 2016 and 2017, The New York Times, The Guardian, CNN and El País each published their first immersive experiences. While VR is a unique medium through which one can experience stories, these stories are short experiences with a specific point of view and limited information. If used for journalism, activism, awareness-raising or any other purposes related to citizenship, they are not enough to increase knowledge or foster awareness alone. Maier (2015) claims that the news media can

Table 1. Immersive journalism narratives design

Criteria	Questions
Narrative and immersion design	• What is the intended purpose? Is it informative or persuasive? If persuasive, what should the user's expected reaction be? • What are the different emotions that the piece should invoke in order to promote empathy? (in the case that it is a social empathy story). • Are any stylistic devices used for persuasion (e.g., metaphor, analogy, symbolism)? • Are there any game aesthetics involved? (e.g., narrative, discovery). Is this a contemplative or an active experience? • Is this a story based on characters, conflicts and drama or world-building? Does the user experience a story, a specific situation or a place? • What strategies are used to promote involvement and immersion? Are they temporal, spatial, or emotional? • How is the user inserted into the story? Is he/she placed in the shoes of a character? Is he/she an invisible witness? Does he/she enact or build a narrative in the immersive environment? • Does the environment promote agency (i.e., actions that are related not just to interaction but to the story itself)? • Is the immersive experience multimedia in nature (i.e., several media are used within the given environment) or hypermedia in nature (i.e., several media are used and the user can choose the surrounding scenery)? How does this affect the experience?

influence people's charitable and emotional responses to humanitarian crises, particularly when people are given *mobilizing information*. Immersive experiences could be the point of entry to a transmedia story, a transmedia game, a transmedia world or to journalism in general which could be considered a complex transmedia space. According to Saldre and Torop (2012), "understanding transmedia projects in terms of worldmaking instead of storytelling is justified by the scope of its applicability to both artistic and non-artistic as well as to narrative and non-narrative texts" (p. 28). This is very important in the field of journalism where many texts are non-artistic, non-narrative and non-fiction. The concept of transmedia space is also more suitable for integrating other recent assets into the transmedia journalism design such as newsgames, persuasive games, and data visualization.

As seen in the different examples provided in the previous section, VR allows users to immerse themselves in the world which was constructed or portrayed. The constructed world can be a literal, realistic, surreal, fantastic or symbolic space. Thus, immersive experiences can be a valuable part of transmedia space, presenting a rich panorama of an issue, complete with different points of view, diverse characters, expert opinions, and testimonies. For this reason, the immersive experience could also function as a *mothership* (Jenkins, 2009) or a *nuclear text* (Zorrilla-Abascal, 2016) that expands through other different media that complement the piece. In this way, users could immerse themselves not just in the VR experience but, as Rose (interviewed by Jenkins, 2011) states when talking about deep media, readers can delve into a story at any level of depth they like. In every extension users could also play different roles: As readers of news extensions, spectators of video extensions; participants, moderators, commentators and distributors of social media extensions; players in game extensions; and content producers or collaborators in the production of extensions (Lugo, 2016).

Currently, a few *immersive journalism* productions exist which are integrated with other media. For instance, the first The New York Times documentary that used immersion, *The Displaced,* is "a feature story, interviews, three photo essays and, for the first time in the history of *The New York Times*, a virtual-reality film" (The New York Times, 2015). Frequently, journalism productions are *hypermedia* (i.e., different media which converge on the same platform and are connected through hyperlinks) instead of *transmedia* (i.e., different media which are dispersed across different platforms) because online newspapers are interested in attracting reader traffic and keeping the reader on their own website in order to promote the sustainability of the website. However, a hypermedia focus can constrain the ways in which readers can participate in the experience.

A particularly good example of how an immersive experience can be included within a transmedia space is *6x9* (The Mill & The Guardian, 2016), as it fits the definition for transmedia storytelling proposed by Jenkins (2009): Each medium should be used for what it does best. This documentary, which reports on seven people in confinement, is comprised of a VR experience, which functions as a mothership for the following media: Audio testimonies, a video testimony, a podcast dedicated to psychologists who are experts on the topic of discussion, an audio documentary, a written report, and a multimedia chronicle. All these texts were published throughout the week from April 27, 2016 to May 4, 2016 by The Guardian.

Using intertextuality, *6x9* offers transmedia extensions in an exemplary way by quoting segments of interviews made with people in confinement and with experts. Therefore, the user is introduced to the characters' more meaningful experiences in the immersive environment, but they can search for their complete testimonies separately. In fact, the immersive experience is partially a summary of the seven testimonies from people in confinement and from the expert testimonies. These complete interviews, available in podcasts, are much longer. Moreover, The Guardian dispersed some content on some other platforms. In addition to their website, audios were available on iTunes and on Soundcloud. Hyperlinks, interspersed throughout the written texts on the blogs, take the user to a whole other space, *Solitary Watch* (Casella & Ridgeway, 2013), a multimedia web-based project dedicated to the topic of solitary confinement in American prisons and jails.

Part of transmedia design is making sure that the content is not just a redundant offer for reader, but that the transmedia content is strategically dispersed, offering new and valuable content across different media platforms. Jenkins (2009), Scolari (2013), Pratten (2011), Gambarato (2013), and Zorrilla Abascal (2016) propose different transmedia design frames. Based on that—with original work from the author—Table 2 proposes key questions to be asked in the design of transmedia journalism spaces.

Table 2. Transmedia journalism design criteria questions

Criteria	Questions
Transmedia journalism design	• What are the properties of the constructed world? How does the concept of world building work for this transmedia piece? (In an abstract, literal or symbolic way). • What role is the immersive experience playing in the design of the whole piece in terms of transmedia design? Is the immersive experience supposed to work as a mothership or an extension? Does this depend on the user's point of entry? • How is the world building and immersion constructed? How is this achieved through the immersive experience and the extensions? • What are the expansions? Are the pieces distributed in sequential or parallel moments? • Are they distributed throughout the online newspaper website or what other platforms are used? • How is the whole transmedia discourse built in relation to the immersive journalism piece? Is there any kind of intertextuality between the immersive journalism pieces and other expansions and among expansions that assist in promoting a deeper experience for the reader? • How will the user have the opportunity to participate in some or all of the pieces comprising the transmedia work? (Roles: Commentator, distributor, moderator creator, player, etc.). • What are the functions of expansions in terms of storytelling? (e.g., backstory of the issue, knowing other stories, knowing more characters of the same story, knowing more related issues, knowing more locations where the issue takes place, knowing different points of view or different voices, predicting future consequences).

CONCLUSION

When discussing virtual reality in general, one may overlook the fact that there are at least two different media involved with different forms of logic: 360-degree stereoscopic videos and environments created in video game engines. Hence, the kinds of stories, the kinds of interactions, and the aesthetics of these two media are very different. To be immersed in a story, a user might be an onlooker or a main character who represents the group for which empathy is trying to be fostered. The point of view appears to be a complex matter when there is a camera that directs the user's point of view, which can be partially changed by user, but which is limited by the fact that the camera does not allow close-ups. Although VR uses certain visual language conventions common to other media such as photography and movies, there can be different narrators competing in the space.

In immersive journalism now, social empathy stories are the most popular. Therefore, it is important to measure, through quantitative and qualitative techniques, how effective these immersion experiences are in terms of promoting social empathy and fostering certain actions or attitudes in people, not just during the experience, but in the short and long term afterwards. Game design theory and serious game theory might be useful for promoting empathy and emotional immersion in immersive journalism experiences where the user plays an active role in changing reality. Role-playing games allow players to explore institutional, geographical, and temporal settings that would otherwise be inaccessible, allowing players to learn from the consequences of choices made in the game world that would be impractical or dangerous to experience directly (Raphael, Bachen, Lynn, Baldwin-Philippi, & McKee, 2010). There might be a crossover between immersive journalism, newsgames, and serious games. Transmedia artivism, for instance, works at exploring not just how to disseminate content and attitudes through art and media, but also how to promote these attitudes so that people apply them to their public life.

In immersion, it is also important to consider ethical aspects within the discourse of the virtual environment. This field of ethical discourse should be developed along within immersive experiences. The frame for video game discourse proposed by Pérez-Latorre (2015) could be a useful starting point. The author divides the discourse into the representation of the world, the representation of the gameplay, and the representation of the characters. Translated to VR environments, the representation of the world, the representation of the characters, the role of the user, and the actions of the user could be initial categories for ethical discourse in immersive experiences.

As pointed out in this chapter, immersive experiences have a great potential for promoting empathy, since virtual environments allow the user to be present in a place where he/she can experience moving/touching situations. However, it is important not to assume that an immersive experience inevitably fosters social empathy. In order to foster social empathy, it is necessary to have storytelling abilities, to wield new tools and conventions that are emerging, as part of virtual reality as a medium. It is essential to innovate, not only in technology, but also in discourse creation, in response to a compassion fatigue tendency that has been triggered by mass media.

It is best practice to implement immersive experiences as part of transmedia spaces and not on their own. This is due to the existing constraints on the media, which include costs, limited duration of experiences, the need to tell contextual stories in contemporary journalism, along with the commercial imperatives for online newspapers, such as generating more visitors or keeping visitors within the newspaper website. Thus, newspapers and news agencies need to consider other issues besides spreadability in order to get the audience to participate more actively in transmedia spaces, especially since journalism involves not only business but also social good. The theoretical review and the questions presented here intend to contribute to the academic toolbox for the analysis and design of transmedia journalism narratives and spaces, whenever they include immersive journalism experiences. Further studies should be made to broaden this frame.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Agency: The power of the user to participate actively in virtual environments.

Compassion Fatigue: Newspapers readers' and spectators' unwillingness to get involved with social empathy stories as a result of mass media strategies that have desensitized them.

Contextual Journalism: Journalism that goes beyond informing news. It goes deeper, explores more complex social issues and contextualizes readers.

Immersion Aesthetics: Immersion media language and principles important to consider in immersion design.

Immersive Experience: Environment or film created in order to immerse the user in a situation. It can be created with different techniques such as 360° cameras or 3D video game engines.

Immersive Journalism: The use of immersion spaces usually through virtual reality environments so readers experience different kinds of journalistic stories.

Narrative Empathy: The narratology field of study that considers how empathy is fostered through authorial strategies and what happens with the aesthetics of reception in relation with empathy.

Presence: The subjective sense of users of virtual reality environments to react to virtual spaces as if they were a real space.

Social Empathy Stories: Contextual journalistic stories that promote empathy for a specific group or cause.

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Chapter 23
Computational Journalism:
Shaping the Future of News in a Big Data World

Lady Dhyana Ziegler
Florida A&M University, USA

ABSTRACT

In this chapter, the use and application of big data in the news gathering process is discussed. The author explains how the combination of journalism, computer science, and social research introduces a new paradigm to the news industry and academic programs. The chapter explains how the impact of computational journalism on the news product and the use of big data analytics are applied to assess trends and habits of human interaction in all aspects of news coverage. The author purports that big data is essential to the news industry to make predictions and/or draw conclusions to produce a better news package. The author stresses the point that shaping news in a big data world challenges the foundation of journalistic principles and practices but the credibility and integrity of the news product must be maintained. The chapter introduces the Z Wheel communication process model as a new tool for shaping news in this big data environment.

INTRODUCTION

According to IBM, 90% of the data that exists in the world today is only two years old. It is also estimated that there is now 2.5 quintillion bytes of data in the world, up from only 800,000 petabytes in the year 2000. This number is expected to rise to 35 zettabytes by 2020. Much of the new data is being generated by social media. Twitter alone generates 7 terabytes (TB) daily, and Facebook generates 10 TB. It is also estimated that other businesses generate terabytes of data every hour of every day. Ultimately, these volumes are incalculable, since estimates of the amount of big data tend to be out of date as soon they are published (Zikopoulos, et. al., 2012).

Big data is defined as "the overwhelming volume of information produced by and about human activity, made possible by the growing ubiquity of mobile devices, tracking tools, always-on sensors, and cheap computing storage" (Lewis, Zamith, & Hermida, 2013, p. 34). So how do we keep up in a "big

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data" world and discuss its impact at such a rapid growth rate? Perhaps the answer lies in the question, and we have to keep swimming upstream and hope we survive. Nonetheless, big data is instrumental in predicting our future, ready or not. The problem is we are not ready for it. "In short, the term big data applies to information that can't be processed or analyzed using traditional processes or tools" (Zikopoulos et al., 2012, p. 3). This is the challenge for most corporations, the news industry, and educational institutions. Even the powerful search engine Google is grappling with the challenges of living in a big data world and generating effective measurement tools for predictions. Hal Varian, Google's chief economist admits as much: "we don't have any better ways to predict the future. What we're working on is predicting the present" (Mui, 2014, p. A5).

If corporations and powerful search engine platforms such as Google are trying to keep up, then the news industry and educational institutions have their work cut for them as it relates to teaching and training the next wave of journalists who will create and disseminate news, using big data as a tool. Yet, big data is already part of the news cycle. Social media, which relies on and disseminates big data, is increasingly becoming the central part of human interaction. Social media sites have replaced news wire services and other traditional means of researching and packaging news. As a result, news theories and communication process models of the past are almost non-existent in the world of "big data." Social media and citizen journalism are now major players in the shaping of news today. This is a major challenge with which the news industry and educational institutions are grappling, despite experiencing budget cuts, outdated equipment, and a lack of resources that are needed to function in this new environment.

There are also questions associated with the rise and reliance on big data. Does bigger make it better? How does it impact the field of journalism in relation to truth, ethics, overall news product, and the audience? What about the need for privacy, given the fact that so much data are collected on individuals and communities? How about protection from hackers, who seem to be able to crack any safety net that stores big data including personal finances, medical information, user habits, and other consumer information? This is the new world in which we live. There are some who point out that companies and institutions are relying too much on hard data, and thus may be blinded to other critical ways to gauge trends. "Some argue that what's really needed is an overhaul of how we measure – and judge – the world to include intangibles such as happiness, education and health" (Mui, 2014, p. A5). While this is a noteworthy suggestion, the issue is much more complex.

More data is not always better, said Jasper McMahon, co-founder of Now-Economics, which does not use social media or search trends in its calculations. You can be blinded by having access to masses and masses of data. But that exposes you to masses and masses of noise." (Mui, 2014, p. A5).

McMahon has a point but many do not have a choice and must engage with big data in their corporate, educational, or public service institutions. It's no easy task because the widespread embrace of big data can be overwhelming to many who are faced with having to sift through volumes of data in an effort to stay on the competitive edge and maximize effectiveness.

Journalists and educators will need to rise to these challenges to maintain their stance as interpreters of credible news that is transmitted to an audience. This chapter will discuss the challenges journalists and educators are facing and the skill sets needed to assess and shape the news in a big data environment.

BACKGROUND

The Emergence of Computational Journalism

Today's journalism requires a set of new skills that incorporates big data. Journalists need to understand computer-assisted reporting techniques and navigate the Internet. They must create and apply analytics and data visualization techniques to enhance their story telling. While some analytical techniques have long been used by journalists, social science techniques are now being added to explore certain phenomenon in the reporting of news stories and analysis of trends. In the past, social scientists were used as sources, but now reporters must adopt social science skills as well, and develop a broader understanding of research techniques. This new skill set can be called "computational journalism."

Computational journalism involves the application of software and technologies to the activities of journalism, and it draws from the fields of computer science, the social sciences, and media communications. New technologies may enhance the traditional aims of journalism, or may initiate greater interaction between journalists and information and communication technology specialists. The enhanced use of computing in news production is related in particular to three factors: larger government data sets becoming more widely available; the increasingly sophisticated and ubiquitous nature of software; and the developing digital economy (Flew et. al., 2010, p. 1).

This definition in itself indicates the new approaches to news gathering or reporting skills that are needed in this new digital environment. It goes further than basic computer knowledge. Computation journalism includes an understanding of analytics, algorithms, data sets, data visualization, and a more specialized approach to the gathering of information. According to technology journalist Leah Hoffmann (2013), "computation is really the only way to grapple with large data sets," (p.22). Learning these skills require a new approach to journalism education and shifts in gathering techniques for news organizations across the countries. Time Berners-Lee, founder of the World Wide Web, urges journalists to get comfortable with big data.

Data-driven journalism is the future. Journalists need to be data-savvy. It used to be that you would get stories by chatting to people in bars, and it still might be that you'll do it that way some times. But now it's also going to be about poring over data and equipping yourself with the tools to analyze it and picking out what's interesting (Gray. et. al., 2012, p. 2).

As stated earlier, this big data environment takes the interactivity of several entities: journalists, computer scientists, software developers, social scientists, educators, and other scholars -- to make this shift to generating digital news from big data. While computational journalism "provides greater opportunities for collaboration and co-creation between professional journalists, citizen journalists, and their readers" (Flem, et. al., 2010, P.6), there are several questions and challenges associated with this approach. Audiences have expectations of the final news product they receive; journalists have expertise in news gathering; and citizens bring a fresh approach to news. But where are the gatekeepers to ensure truth, quality, ethics, and credibility in the end product?

To some this shift may look like a good deal: Why not trade a few newspapers for what appears to be infinite access to information? But as news staff decline, so too does the public's ability to monitor power (Cohen, Hamilton, &Turner, 2011, p. 66).

Undoubtedly, the future of journalism is still unfolding and there is much to teach and learn as it evolves to the big data world. As is the case with the profession itself, journalism education will have to become a part of this change and include other disciplines to survive in this new world. It's also worth mentioning that this isn't the first time the profession has gone through dramatic change. Technology developments have reshaped journalism.

A half-century ago, photocopying machines quietly revolutionized accountability journalism. The ability to copy documents worked in tandem with new freedom-of-information laws to make possible more sophisticated investigations. The machines let whistleblowers share agency records (such as correspondence and memoranda, inspection forms, and audits). Previously, investigations would often depend on undercover reporting, an ethically dicey practice. But the copy machine turned reporters' attention to documents and with them, to a new level of ethical clarity and accuracy (Cohen, Hamilton, & Turner, 2011, p. 66).

Clearly, there will be more lessons learned in this big data environment that will set the stage for the future. There can be no denying that advances in computers, the Internet, interactive multimedia, and social media have created an exciting future for journalism. The old saying "a picture is worth a thousand words," has never had more meaning in this world of big data. Data visualization and graphics paint pictures of data that have enhanced how we view government information, economic, consumer trends and geographical data.

SOCIETAL IMPACT ON EMERGING TRENDS

The news industry has changed and will continue to change as budgets shrink and news staff struggle to shift their news gathering techniques in a big data world. But the question still remains, what will be the impact on news consumption? The decline of newspapers and a less reliance on the traditional news agencies and other gatekeepers have changed the game. And the impact of this is on the news product. Journalists and educators must understand how large-scale data collection, algorithmic analysis, computational practices, and the production of public knowledge interact. That is the challenge of now and the future.

Today, there are fewer reporters gathering original material than in a generation. By some reports, full-time newsroom employment has fallen by one-quarter over the past ten years. Bloggers, citizen journalists, and some non-profit news agencies have made up for only a small part of this loss. The growth in the online news organizations has been mostly in the role of aggregators, who read other blogs and news reports, and select, aggregate, edit, and comment on their findings. There is a real danger that the proud tradition of original, in-depth investigative reporting will fade away with the ailing traditional news media (Cohen, et. al., 2011, p.1).

There is no question the news media can and will evolve. But will it maintain its standards as things change?

Internet of Things

The next phase of technology infrastructure, called the Internet of Things, is on the horizon and expected to have a phenomenon impact on economic life in the future.

This new technology platform is beginning to connect everything to everyone. Today more than 11 billion sensors are attacked to natural resources, production lines, the electricity grid, logistics networks and recycling flows, and implanted in homes, offices, stores and vehicles, feeding big data in the Internet of Things. By 2020, it is projected that at least 50 billion sensors will connect to it (Rifkin, 2014, p. 2).

The Internet of Things is expected to have an enormous impact on the global economy by 2025, according to a General Electric study. The Internet of Things is about collaboration, universal access, and what is considered a shared economy, in which goods and services are exchanged outside of the traditional economic system, which results in a creation of social capital that is evolving outside of the capitalistic approach that has existed in society. People are already sharing car services and using social media sites and redistribution networks to share many goods and services. The Internet of Things is more concentrated on access as opposed to ownership which has far-reaching implications for the economy.

People can connect to the network and use big data, analytics and algorithms to accelerate efficiency and lower the marginal cost of producing and sharing a wide range of products and services to near zero, just as they now do with information goods (Rifkin, 2014, p. 3).

Journalists will increasingly find new avenues of data gathering as the Internet of Things becomes a greater part of the economy. Besides the implications for the economy, journalists will have to adjust data gathering techniques as this era of societal collaboration continues to evolve.

Social Engagement

Social media has changed the way audiences consume and share information. It has had a profound impact on the news industry and the way news is received and disseminated. One impact has been the reduction in the number of print newspapers. Some believe that even though traditional news media sites are online, they are too slow to break the news, compared with the almost real-time delivery of information on events via social media postings.

Aided by social media networking sites and smaller social media outlets, users are able to document the news as it happens in real time and reach a huge number of people. Furthermore, people reading the news posts of others are able to engage with the original poster by contributing their views on the topic while sharing it with others. Suddenly, online papers are no longer the favored place to get the news and instead (intentionally or unintentionally) turning to 'citizen journalists' for their news (Demers, 2014, p. 1).

Citizen Journalism

Aided by social media, citizen journalists – individuals outside the journalism profession and often contributing content on a voluntary basis -- are finding their way into traditional media. In many cases, they are hired by news organizations to serve as their eyes and ears in various markets. Additionally, while users posting their thoughts encounter both positive and negative interactions, but the feedback encourages more reaction and engagement, thus adding to the conversation -- regardless of the outcome.

There are both positive and negative issues associated with citizen journalism which is now at the center stage of user-generated news and dissemination. Information must be accurate, and often, it's difficult to verify initial reporting. One example is the information that appeared on the Reddit site after the bombing of the Boston Marathon in April 2013. The information posted on Reddit was incorrect and resulted in a manhunt for the wrong man. This is just one example of how inaccuracies can occur with citizen journalism, employing social media sites such as Facebook, and Twitter. This further underscores the fact that information must be checked and double checked – one of the sacred tenets of traditional journalism. Besides the need for accuracy in reporting, social media and ethics are occasionally finding themselves on a collision course. After all, social media, like the larger internet, "evolved without a moral framework" (Ziegler, 2014, p.1).

Crowdsourcing

These new initiatives are resulting in, much more collaboration between individuals, and a trend that will only continue to evolve into the future. It's a shift in the communication paradigm, and the voices shared in this technological environment demonstrate the true meaning of living in a democratic society as more people express their opinions through the use of social media and crowdsourcing. One effective example of crowdsourcing was demonstrated by *The Guardian* in the United Kingdom when they investigated the expense claims made by Members of Parliament in 2009. They released their data collection and the public could search these data by member. "A key benefit to *The Guardian* was that no other media entity was able or prepared to replicate the study, enhancing the reputation of *The Guardian* for investigative journalism," (Flew, et. al., 2010, p. 6).

WikiLeaks

Another example of crowdsourcing as a form of news reporting is WikiLeaks. "WikiLeaks is an international organization that publishes anonymously submitted document submissions and leaks otherwise unavailable to the public, (Flew, et.al., 2010, p. 6). The site was launched in 2006 and has posted numerous confidential government documents including 75,000 on the War in Afghanistan and 300,000 on the War in Iraq. Other documents include illegal websites addresses, email accounts, and other types of sensitive information involving several countries. While the release of this information can be a national security nightmare for governments, WikiLeaks contends it only releases attributed documents and believes the worldwide community are more than capable of discussing and scrutinizing these data. Others, however, argue the release of these types of documents by WikiLeaks is irresponsible and morally unacceptable. The United States government has condemned WikiLeaks for disclosing classified information.

Clearly, crowdsourcing, as it relates to the release of unauthorized information by WikiLeaks, has far-reaching implications for the future. There are broad ethical and moral implications as it relates to safety, security, and privacy. In fact, the impact of WikiLeaks is still in motion.

Social Trends

Technology has changed the way researchers gather, view, and disseminate information, and this is impacting the perceived quality of news. A survey on the impact of social media on news conducted by ING among a sample of international journalists and public relations professionals found that journalists are widely engaging in social media posts, "despite having doubts about their reliability" (ING, 2014, p. 1). The study reveals that while journalists did not believe the news generated through social media was reliable, more than half of those in the survey were still using it to find out what people were talking about. In addition, 60% stated that they felt less restrained to share their ideas on social media than in traditional media and did not feel a need to apply journalistic principles, such as fact-checking. The journalists also stated they found the opinions of individual consumers more credible than those coming out of professional organizations. PR professional agree news is less reliable due to journalists not checking their facts (ING, 2014, p.1). The survey results further indicate that 45% of the journalists surveyed are putting out 60% to 100% of the news published as soon as possible without checking facts. In fact, only 20% surveyed check facts before publishing their stories (ING, 2014, p. 2). They feel they can correct it later. This is extremely troubling because, unfortunately, most people don't see the corrections. They will accept the first story they see on traditional and/or social media.

If social media is driving this trend of disseminating news without fact-checking and just correcting it later, it is a sad commentary for the field of journalism and the future of the industry. It represents a shift from truth, credibility, and integrity that are at the core of the profession as well as journalism education and training. There is a code of ethics by which journalists are supposed to abide. These basics, principles, and practices are at the cornerstone and foundation of the field of journalism that have existed for centuries.

The ING (2014) survey results indicate that the use of social media to generate news is expected to be a growing trend among journalists in the future. According to the responses, 73% are using tweets, videos, and other user-generated content in their stories, although 32% find these posts unreliable. Based on these data, the future will generate more questions than answers and even if there are answers, will they be reliable?

Along with the social engagement and information delivery of social media, it's also big business. Social media trends have emerged to such a level of importance that IBM, the world's largest computer company and supplier to large enterprises, built and markets a solution specifically to accelerate use of social networking. Cognos Consumer Insights (CCI) describes what people are saying, how topics are trending, and all sorts of data that affect a business and displays it into a rich visualization engine. CCI is a personal analytics solution that empowers analysts and business users to explore, analyze, visualize and share insights without compromising IT values (IBM Corporation, 2010). The news industry will also utilize these tools to generate news stories on business and consumer trends. While all of this information is important, it may still not be ready or verified to be shared with audiences, though it may be considered a great tool for product marketing.

SOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Toward a New Paradigm

To succeed in a big data world, journalists will need data skills and analytics to assess "the volume and variety of data while it is still in motion and not at rest" (Zikopoulos, et.al., 2012, p. 9). However, traditional, established approaches cannot get lost in the shift to adaptation of a big data environment. In fact, there must be a blending of traditional journalism practices and new data skills to assess and deliver news to audiences today. News is still about storytelling and bringing important information to the public. It may require new approaches and processes to gather information but the goal of packaging information and delivering it to an audience remains the same. Therefore, it requires the blending of the old with the new. Computational journalism introduces new tools to journalists that can be utilized to gather and package the news of the minute, hour, or day. Delivering the news today and the future calls for an adjustment to new tools just as electric typewriters replaced manual ones and computers replaced those.

Several leading journalists agree that big data is reshaping the profession, and these opinions are voiced in the *Data Journalism Handbook*. Here are a few comments that appear in the introduction:

Around the globe, in fact, the bond between data and journalism is growing stronger. In an age of data journalism lies in the ability of its practitioners to provide context, clarity and, perhaps most important, find truth in the expanding amount of digital content in the world (Alex Howard, O'Reilly Media)…

Some stories can only be understood and explained through analyzing-and sometimes visualizing – the data (Cheryl Phillips, The Seattle Times)…I think it's important to stress the "journalism" or reporting aspect of 'data journalism'. The exercise should not be about just analyzing data or visualizing data for the sake of it, but to use it as a tool to get closer to the truth of what is going on in the world (Cynthia O'Murchu, Financial Times)…

Data journalism is bridging the gap between stat technicians and wordsmiths (David Anderton, freelance journalist)….

Good data journalism is hard, because good journalism is hard. It means figuring out how to get the data, how to understand it, and how to find the story (Chris Taggart, OpenCororates), (Gray, J. et. al., 2012, pp. 1-7).

These journalists' comments underscore the importance of blending traditional journalism practices with new data skills.

The Z Wheel

For decades, journalists operated under the Lasswell Model, a linear communication process model that describes communication from point to point. Who says what, in which channel, to whom and with what effect cannot be applied in a linear fashion in this technological savvy world that now exists. Journalists cannot apply the Lasswell Model to communication today because it no longer fits the paradigm shift to big data. It was simple to apply because one could easily identify the originator of the message but that is no longer true today. Additionally, the Lasswell Model did not take in account any feedback from audiences. Today, the news story can start with the audience especially with the addition of citizen journalists. Couple with these factors, there is constant feedback generated from a variety of sources, such as social media.

The Z Wheel (see Figure 1) is a circular communication process model that can be applied to the field of journalism in this big data environment where information is constantly in motion. The Z Wheel emphasizes practices and processes of news gathering from assessment to dissemination of the news content. It blends traditional journalism skills with new ones. It emphasizes the need for strong reporting skills, research, truth, and ethics at its core. The root of journalism principles and practices remain the same, and that is, to deliver news that is credible to an audience. It relies on the principles and practices of journalism that have existed for decades. The objective is to deliver a quality news product to an audience that is grounded in truth.

This will also require the ability to conduct adequate research. Mark Hansen, director of Columbia University's Brown Center for Media Innovation, says data "have something to say about how we live. But they aren't neutral, and neither are the algorithms we rely on to interpret them. The stories are often incomplete, uncertain, and open-ended" (Bell, 2012, p.3). The issue grows more acute when coupled with the fact that journalists often do not check facts and just want to get information out fast and make corrections later. Even in era with abundant data, there is still a need for skilled journalists that have strong reporting skills. "Without journalists thinking in data," Hansen states, "who will help us distinguish between good stories and bad?" (Bell, 2012, p.3). This has important implications for the credibility of news, as well as, accuracy, truth, research and ethics in reporting.

Figure 1. The Z Wheel, a circular communication process model

The pressure to speed up content production and delivery of news in order to beat out the competition can sometimes garner mistakes. The Z Wheel re-emphasizes practices and processes that should occur in the news-gathering environment. The impact of big data on ethics requires a special note because social media and the Internet which houses big data have evolved without a moral compass. Fairfield and Shtein (2014) explain the impact of big data on ethics:

Most of social science ethics focuses on rights and responsibilities toward the individual human participant. Big data as a technique does not accommodate this well. There can be millions of research subjects, yet none of them has given informed consent. The traditional focus of social science has been on physical, rather than information harms, and on not harming individuals, but big data impacts communities as much (or more) than individuals (p.39).

This has strong implications for various races, ethnic groups, cultures, etc. The privacy issues are enormous. The digital divide may even grow wider as a result of big data.

The other spokes on the Z Wheel indicate the need for big data skills and analytics but the assessment of that data is the key to credible news. "Newsrooms will rise and fall on the documentation of real-time information and the ability to gather and share it" (Bell, p. 1). Journalists will have to know what information is credible and how to use it in generating the news intelligence of the day since big data can now generate from so many spaces and places. There is a need to assess credible sources and double check facts. As the Z Wheel spins journalists don't always know where the information originated which is another big shift from the Lasswell model that is linear in nature. The circular Z Wheel does more than just describe who, what, which channel, to whom, and what is the effect of the communication process.

The Z Wheel serves as a check and balance of the practice of journalism in relations to the news process and big data in general. Therefore, journalists will have to be diligent in the practice of their craft. Other spokes on the Z Wheel display the need to deliver and package a quality product, response time, distribution, and interactivity because there is an expectation of feedback due to today's world of social media and user engagement. There will be constant feedback from the audience regardless if it is a message received through traditional mass media, social media, or other means on the Internet which are outlined on the outer Z Wheel. Feedback will be constant. Therefore, the reputation of a reporter or newsroom will rest in his or her ability to deliver credible news that is not at the expense of good journalism principles and practices.

The purpose of the Z Wheel is a reminder of journalism's responsibility. It serves as a guide that blends traditional journalism practices with the evolution of new skills that interact and intersect in this evolving technological environment. As the Z Wheel spins, the center circle always reminds us of the end goal, to deliver credible news to the audience.

FURTHER RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

The term "big data" describes the volume of information produced. It can be accessed on the Internet from mobile devices, and other computing systems. The technology will continue to evolve and big data will expand. Journalists and educators must continue to discuss the use and application of big data in classrooms and newsrooms. This phenomenon will require ongoing research. Anderson (2013) asserts that "if computational practices are the salvation of journalism, this salvation is certainly a double edge sword" (p. 1009). He believes the answers lie outside of journalism. Daniel (2010) says "the concept of computational journalism is not new, and builds upon computer assisted reporting, precision journalism or database journalism techniques" (p. 2). Nonetheless, journalism is still transitioning to computational journalism so more research is needed in the area to discuss the impact, practices, and processes. One thing is for sure. Big data will continue to take a center stage in the news process and checks and balances must be in place to ensure credibility of the news product. The Z Wheel circular communication process model can serve the industry well in that capacity.

As Google executives intimated, they are just trying to keep up with the present. Perhaps other futurists will have predictions similar to Philip Meyers to help guide us through the thicket of change but for now, various disciplines such as journalism, computer science, social science, business and other fields of study must keep their fingers on the pulse. The tools will continue to evolve and improve. Software will increase and the learning curve will be steep for some and easy for others who are growing up in this new world. The implication of the impact of "big data" on the news product must continue to be assessed and studied as well as user engagement. Audience feedback will continue to be a measuring stick; however, since there may not be an originator, the cycle of the feedback will have to be measured against its own impact. In short, future research will grow out of the evolution of big data and journalists, educators, and researchers will learn along the way. This is only the beginning of an exciting future. There will be a need for on-going research and analysis along the way to measure the impact of "big data" on shaping news.

CONCLUSION

The world has changed. Journalists and educators need to adjust to the challenges of big data and make a shift in the way news stories are generated, researched, and packaged in order to meet the needs of the audience. There is no doubt that change is inevitable and it's time to embrace new skills. Computational journalism has arisen to the forefront of this new environment as journalism and computer science merge together as a new skill set to engage in a big data world. It's considered by many to be a good marriage as long as there is mutual respect by both disciplines. Houston (2010) reminds us about the predictions of futurist Philip Meyers "for journalist to prepare themselves for the new journalism environment," (p. 50). He quotes from Philip Meyers' book *Precision Journalism:*

They are raising the ante of what it takes to be a journalist," pointing out that at one time a successful journalist needed only dedication, energy, and talent for writing. From the time his book first appeared in 1978, Meyer recognized the need for new skills for journalists: "The world has become so complicated, the growth of available information so explosive, that the journalists needs to be a filter, as well as a transmitter; an organizer and interpreter, as well as one who gathers and delivers facts…In short a journalist has to be a database manager, a data processor, and a data analyst, (p. 51).

Meyers' predictions have indeed come to pass, and journalists and educators have to embrace change. In doing that, journalism practices and principles cannot be forgotten in the transition. Clearly, there is a need to incorporate new skills in the delivery of the news products. The Internet, social media, and citizen journalists are dictating this shift. But trained journalists must maintain the insight, news judgment, and understanding of the true rules of what is quality and credible news. Journalism is still communicating a message and about telling stories. It is the interpretation of the intelligence of the day in the news cycle. It still requires research, credible sources, ethics, truth, and reporting skills to package credible and quality news that is clearly communicated to an audience. The Z Wheel is a circular process communication model to remind journalists and journalism educators of their responsibility to the profession.

There are many challenges associated with the ability of journalists to assess big data. However, trained journalists know how to deliver and shape the news. Those who are just trying to be timely and not checking facts to keep up with trends and social media are doing the field of journalism an injustice. It is still important to check and double-check the facts. Credibility and integrity have to be established out the gate. The standards of the profession cannot be lowered in a big data world. It should be an enhancement of the news product with all the data accessible for journalists to use.

Search engines and new technologies represent tools that can be used to generate and package news stories across digital platforms. Algorithms, data visualizations, mapping are tools that can be applied to provide a clearer understanding of the data to guide the reader but the journalists must still explain the meaning. Since all these data are available, the use and application of this information must be grounded in ethics. Remember, just because it's there doesn't mean one has a right to invade privacy and forget the journalism code of ethics. The Internet and social media evolved without a moral compass so journalists must still apply the rules of the profession. Journalism has an amazing future with its ability to tell a credible story across digital platforms. Journalists must take the responsibility seriously and stay true to the profession.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Algorithms: A step-by-step procedure or formula for solving problems. They are used for calculation, data processing, and automated reasoning.

Analytics: A methodology used to discover and communicate meaningful patterns in data.

Computational Journalism: The application of software and other technologies to the field of journalism that draws from the fields of computer science, the social sciences and media communications.

Crowdsourcing: The process of obtaining needed services and ideas or content by soliciting contributions from a large group of people, and especially from an online community, rather than from traditional employees or suppliers.

Data-Visualization: The modern equivalent of visual communication that uses information graphics, such as, tables and charts.

Lasswell Model: One of the earliest communications model developed by Harold Lasswell in 1948 that describes the communication process of who says what, in which channel, to whom, and with what effect. It is linear in nature.

Quintillion: The number that is represented as a one followed by 18 zeros.

Terabytes: It is a measure of computer storage capacity and is 2 to the 40^{th} power or approximately a thousand billion bytes.

Wikileaks: An international, online, non-profit, journalistic organization which publishes secret information, news leaks, and classified media from anonymous sources.

Z Wheel: It is a circular communications process model that emphasizes the process and practices of journalism in a "big data" environment. It is a tool designed for journalists and journalism educators for use in the newsroom and classroom.

Zettabytes: It is a measure of the storage capacity and is 2 to the 70^{th} power bytes or, in decimal, approximately a thousand exabytes or a million terabytes.

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Chapter 24
Data-Driven Information Consumption:
Heralding a New "Golden Age" of Journalism and Content Creation?

Joseph McKendrick
Independent Researcher, USA

ABSTRACT

Things are changing dramatically within the publishing industry. However, news media itself isn't on the wane, as many pundits are stating. In this chapter, the author explores how the business model for media organizations is shifting away from print, and away from the "gateway" approach to journalism and content development, in which a few select articles are presented to audience by editors, writers and reporters. In its place, the new digital media model is creating a plethora of content from many different sources, oftentimes first-hand accounts, original sources, or commentary. In the process, rather than resulting in a dearth of news content, audiences have access to an often dizzying, overwhelming and potentially contradictory content. This is creating potentially new roles for news and publishing organizations, serving as sources of validation and aggregation of content. At the same time, the rise of digital media is providing consumers a far wider range of choices pushing media organizations to provide content more tailored to their audiences.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter takes a broad view of changes shaping the publishing industry and the editorial and journalism profession. The author will examine the current state of traditional media, and how that is evolving, driven by digital platforms and new types of industry participants taking advantage of those platforms. The author will look at the ways data analytics is opening up new opportunities for news organizations.

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WELCOME TO THE NEW AGE

Are we in the midst of a decline in the editorial and journalism profession, or are we actually entering a new golden era? Many observers have been arguing that we have and continue to experience the former; that is, the pillars of the profession are being swept away by the internet tide, that the business model that supported the hiring and paying of editors and journalists is being disrupted. In its place is a wide online assortment of services and community-based social sites, with an easily clickable, vast array of information –often first-hand accounts on social media or original sources posted on the web -- on a moment's notice.

Beneath all the doom and gloom however, there is a new movement afoot. That is, the editorial and journalism profession is arising in a new form, built on electronic capabilities, more responsive to readers, and driven by data on what audiences seek and prefer within their content. Behind this is the need for informed reporters capable of looking behind the misinformation and hysteria potentially created by the internet, capable of validating information being provided and shared on a particular issue or event.

Events such as the disappearance of Malaysian Airlines Flight 310 in March 2014, or the downing of Flight 210 over Ukraine in July 2014, resulted in wild, unsubstantiated rumors over the internet (Pepitone, 2014). As NBC News reported shortly after the disappearance of Malaysia Flight 310, Chinese social media (most of the passengers were Chinese citizens) was rife with rumors that the aircraft had been spotted making an emergency landing somewhere in China (Pepitone, 2014). As the Ebola virus ravaged parts of Africa and a traveler from an affected country was diagnosed and died of the disease in Texas, social media networks lit up with rumors and exaggerated accounts of the spread of the disease to North American shores (Luckerson, 2014).

The ultimate trusted authority on such events, in turns out, were editors and journalists reviewing and reporting the facts as they were known, through well-known news channels. While there is a wide and almost unlimited variety of sources of information now available through internet-based channels, few have the credibility that signals that due diligence was taken to ensure that the information was the most up-to-date and credible reporting available.

Is the "old" news delivery model – built on a few, established gatekeepers and editors checking and double-checking on reported information – threatened with extinction? Is this model being replaced by a more free-for-all mode of multiple delivery channels, in which audiences are expected to survey and assemble to draw their own conclusions? Looking at the numerous obituaries that have been surfacing on the state of today's news organizations, one can be forgiven for thinking so.

But from the ashes of the collapsed old news delivery model, a new phenomenon may be rising. There is evidence that contrary to the common accepted belief that the news business is on the wane, the editorial and journalism profession may actually be entering a new golden age, built on instantaneous engagement with social networks around the global, supported by data-driven capabilities. Most importantly, information needs to be built on a foundation of trust and engagement with the audience, which points to a new emerging role for news organizations.

First, let's take a brief look at what is happening with the old model. The news publishing business itself suffered substantial losses over the past decade, though these losses appear to have stabilized in recent years. Circulation revenue for U.S. newspapers recorded a second consecutive year of growth, rising 3.7% to \$10.87 billion in 2013, according to preliminary data compiled by the Newspaper Association of America (NAA, 2014). Overall, total revenue for the multiplatform U.S. newspaper media business amounted to \$37.59 billion in 2013, a slight decline from \$38.60 billion in 2012.

Proceeds grew in several other categories — digital advertising, direct marketing, and other, newly-developing sources — while income from traditional print advertising channels declined. This trend reflects an industry evolving its business model in a significant way, taking advantage of developments in technology, consumer behavior, and advertiser interest, to grow audience and diversify its revenue stream. (Newspaper Association of America, 2014, para. 3)

The industry's numbers appear to reflect a precipitous collapse over the long term. Alan Mutter, a highly regarded industry consultant, points out that "combined print and digital advertising revenues at the 1,300-plus newspapers in the nation tumbled 55% from $46.2 billion in 2003 to $20.7 billion in 2013, according to the NAA (Mutter, 2014). Classified print advertising was hit the worst in the 10-year period, plunging by 74% to $4.1 billion in 2013. National print advertising dropped 61% in the decade to not quite $3.1 billion in 2013 and retail print advertising fell 53% to $10.1 billion in 2013."

There is also a dismemberment taking place of news content. The challenge was explored by Bill Grueskin, Ava Seave and Lucas Graves in a report out of Columbia Journalism School. (Grueskin, Seave, & Graves, 2011, p. 13). They note:

In the online world, content has become atomized, with each article existing independently of the next. It is as seamless for a reader to go from a tallahasseedemocrat.com story to a video on msnbc.com as it is to read back-to-back stories in Esquire magazine. The economic consequences of this fickle information-gathering are devastating for legacy news organizations, especially because they have ceded many of the benefits of aggregation to sources like Drudge Report, Huffington Post and Google News.

The challenge is to better connect with audiences, which have been leaving in droves for online sources, and this forms the basis of the new industry model that is now emerging. Entrepreneurs and venture capitalists have taken an interest in the news business in its evolving form, embracing digital media startups and outlets as the next paradigm of information delivery. In the process, there is a conversion taking place between the vestiges of the "old" media – print outlets – and the emerging digital class.

Justin Fox, a former editorial director of the Harvard Business Review and columnist for Bloomberg View, for one, says the venture capitalist community – which fuels the technology industry – is seeing potential in the emerging digital media model (Fox, 2014). Writing in *The Atlantic,* he points to some examples of new media organizations that have been surfacing in recent years: Amazon founder Jeff Bezos' purchase of *The Washington Post* for $250 million; eBay founder Pierre Omidyar's similar investment in First Look Media; and investments by Silicon Valley venture capitalists in news platforms such as Medium. Marc Andreessen, a storied high-tech investor who was the founder of Netscape Communications Corporation, which opened up the World Wide Web in the early 1990s, has been an avid proponent of digital news media.

The result is an emerging new paradigm for news delivery, undistinguishable on one level because it is simply delivery of information from newsgatherers and reporters over digital channels, versus being disseminated on paper through physical distribution channels. David Plotz, editor of *Slate* magazine, wholeheartedly agrees that this is actually a "golden age" for the editorial profession – to the point the world is now being overwhelmed by it. In a recent speech, he observed how "digital journalism has, for all intents and purposes, become journalism." (Plotz, 2014)

The move to digital is not drying up the pool of opportunities and innovation in journalism and content creation – if anything, Plotz continues, "There's way too much of it." *The New York Times* – the stalwart pillar of the old journalism world – now publishes 250 items per day online, he illustrates. This may sound like a lot, he adds, "until you realize *Huffington Post* publishes 500 per day. Fox News publishes 1,500 per day. Yahoo publishes 3,000 per day. That's just stories." As he notes, news reporting has not gone away, but is even more pervasive:

Digital journalism has metastasized, so that most journalists don't even spend their time reporting and writing stories, what with the tweets, Facebook and LinkedIn posts, vines, videos, podcasts and email blasts. Increasingly, it feels like everyone is publishing everything all the time, and no one actually has time to read any of it.

In addition to a plethora of news sources, there's an accessibility and permanence to it as well. That is, a news item no longer vanishes as yesterday's newspapers are put in the trash, or at the conclusion of a 60-minute television clip. All news content now remains accessible to anyone who wants to view it, at any time, for as long as it remains part of a website – which potentially could be decades, if not centuries. "Digital platforms extend the lifespan of journalism," write Grueskin, Seave and Graves. They note:

In the analog era, news stories were as ephemeral as fruit flies. An article was prominent for a day, then available only on a library's microfiche; a video would be broadcast to millions on the nightly news, then it would be sent to a network's vault. Journalism now can be freely accessible for as long as a publisher wills it to be. In the words of one programmer, there is no such thing as 'yesterday's news.' News organizations can make money from their archives as part of a subscription or pay-per-view service, or as part of a scheme to provide more content and build traffic and ad revenue. But as increasing amounts of content stream into archives, consumers may have greater difficulty finding what they want. (p.13)

Readership studies reaffirm that news consumption has been taking a dramatic upturn, due in large part to the proliferation of new, easily accessible digital channels. While there has been a well-documented demise in the circulation of many print newspapers and journals, online news consumption has been going in the other direction. Research by The Pew Research Center's Project for Excellence in Journalism tracks the trends shaping the way news is presented and consumed. "Online news consumption has risen sharply in recent years, following the rapid spread of digital platforms," write Jane Sasseen, Kenny Olmstead and Amy Mitchell in an analysis of the findings of the Pew Research Center's 2012 News Media Consumption survey. (Sasseen, Olmstead, & Mitchell, 2012).

The rise in news consumption is attributable in no small part to its immediate availability to audiences that are now comfortable with a range of intelligent devices, from PCs to smartphones to tablets. "News is becoming more mobile, more social, and more real-time," writes Nic Newman, a digital strategist, in the latest report from the Reuters Institute and the University of Oxford. The latest survey "reveals continuing shifts in how, when, and where people access the news, with digital patterns becoming more entrenched – particularly amongst the younger half of the population. Audiences increasingly want news on any device, in any format, and at any time of day" (Levy & Newman, 2013).

The rise of technology on the consumer side is also driving the increased choices audiences now have. This has shifted the balance of power to the news consumer, who may pick and choose news content from a variety of content, representing a variety of approaches and viewpoints. "Content is content, long form or short form (our reporters have succeeded with both strategies)," according to Lewis DVorkin, chief product officer of Forbes Media (DVorkin, 2012, para. 11). As he describes it:

Content is not really print or digital. Media organizations — both new and traditional — place it where they do solely for business reasons. A new breed of voracious news consumer will simply discover it, consume it, talk about it, share it — and even create new content around it — whenever they want on the platform and device of their choice.

SOCIAL AND MOBILE

While news organizations have been scrambling to deliver more immediate, customizable and sharable content to audiences, social media channels have also evolved to become news providers in their own right. Social media has become an important piece of online news consumption – either as an alternative to dedicated news sources, or as an adjunct to existing media organizations. A June 2012 Pew Research Center study found that 19% of Americans saw news or news headlines on a social network "yesterday," more than double the nine percent who had done so in 2010. The acceleration is not just among the young, the research adds. "Roughly 34% of those aged 18 to 24 said they saw news on a social networking site yesterday, up from 12% in 2010, and so did 30% of 30-to-39-year olds, up from 19% in 2010. Social networking is now a part of this process as well: 15% of U.S. adults get most of their news from friends and family this way, and the vast majority of them (77%) follow links to full news stories" (Sasseen, Olmstead, & Mitchell, 2012).

"In 2012, social media continued to expand its role in the news ecosystem, establishing itself as an indispensable tool for distributing content and attracting new readers, as well as for building deeper engagement with current ones," according to The Pew Center. The 2012 Pew study also observes how Sree Sreenivasan, the chief digital officer for Columbia University and a professor of digital media at its Graduate School of Journalism, "counted 100 news organizations around the country that had designated social media editors. That number now stands at 184" (Sasseen, Olmstead, & Mitchell, 2012).

The availability of news content through a variety of digital channels may ultimately be boosting audiences as well, research also finds. The widespread availability of relatively inexpensive devices, such as smartphones and tablet computers, means audiences are capable of accessing the latest news information at any time or any place. "Most mobile news users are not replacing one platform with another; they are consuming more news than they had in the past," write Sasseen, Olmstead and Mitchell. A 2012 study by Pew Research Center and the Economist Group for example, found that 31% of tablet users actually spend more time reading the news, and at least 43% say using a tablet computer actually has increased their news consumption. In addition, digital news consumers aren't wedded to a single device or channel. The Pew survey also found that 77% of tablet news users indicate they also get news on a desktop or laptop computer; 54% also get news from a smartphone, and 50% get news in print. About 25% of tablet news readers report they get news through all four channels.

Mobile devices are also transforming the news environment through the rise of what is called the "second screen" phenomenon, in which users log onto the internet while also watching television. Although the practice goes well beyond news, it has become popular around live news events such as the U.S. presidential debates, election night or the State of the Union address.

The Pew Research Center asked whether people used two screens simultaneously to follow some election-rated events (rather than using a second device to do unrelated activities like e-mail or shopping). Of the 56% of the public who watched the second 2012 general election presidential debate between

Mitt Romney and Barack Obama, 11% "dual-screened," reporting that they followed the debate on both a computer or mobile device and television at the same time, according to Pew Research survey data.

Dual-screening during live news events "has the most potential for news organizations, offering an opportunity to leverage viewers' desires to communicate online and to engage more actively with the content they are seeing on the screen, especially if the event is occurring live," according to Pew.

While the computer "remains the primary device for accessing digital news, the key underlying trend is about growth in access from multiple devices," says Newman. "One-third of our entire global sample now gets news on at least two devices and 9% use more than three. This is important because, along with other researchers, we find that as people acquire more devices they consume more news in aggregate (time spent) – but also access news more often throughout the day."

Some devices "are used more heavily for news than others," Newman adds. For example, "85% of computer users say they access news on that device each week, compared with 63% of smartphone users, 60% of tablet users, 54% of smart TV users, and only 17% for the e-reader."

But multi-platform is not just about digital news, Newman points out. "Across all of our countries, an average of 49% of those who access news on a tablet say they also read a printed newspaper at least once each week; 81% also watch TV news and we see similar patterns with smartphone users."

THE TRUST FACTOR

Behind all this ubiquitous access, however, audiences still seek to validate the information they are gathering. Historically, the reporter, followed by the editor, served as a filter between incoming information and the reader, serving to validate and authenticate information, and eliminate or put away for further investigation any information of questionable merit. With the directness of digital media and social media, that filter is either substantially weakened or eliminated altogether. The Reuters Institute survey also cast further light "on the importance of trusted news brands," Newman adds. "In all countries we asked if people agreed that they preferred to get news from sites they know and trust." (Levy & Newman, 2013, p.13) The figures were universally high, they add, with 82% supporting the proposition in the US, and 77% in the UK. The high levels of trust accorded to established news organizations also was boosted by the proliferation of devices used to access and view news stories, Newman observes:

Asking the question in a different way ('I don't notice which sites I'm looking at…') showed a slightly different picture. Trust in traditional brands was also high when compared with blogs or social media. Broadcaster websites in the UK were trusted by 79%, with newspapers showing over 60%. In comparison, Facebook (8%) and Twitter (9%) were widely mistrusted – although heavy social media users were significantly more likely to trust what they found. Trust in news brands increases significantly with the amount of usage, so it is not surprising that smartphone and tablet news users also show more trust in traditional brands. We also find, in terms of their behavior, that users of these devices are much more likely to go directly to a brand (50%) using a desktop icon, on a smartphone, compared to the overall sample (34%). The more devices – and the heavier the use – the better they tend to do.

CHANGING MEDIA MODELS

Behind the new sense of excitement for opportunities within the media business is the inherent ability to capture and leverage data – based on readership transactions and preferences – that is not only changing the media business model, but is also reshaping the way news and information is gathered, prioritized and presented to audiences. The data revolution, which is only getting started, is reshaping the media business, and is a vital part of the move away from print and to digital platforms. The digital platform – news delivered via social media, websites and apps – is a dominant force on the business side, and is shaping the news-gathering and selection process as well.

Only two decades ago, there were substantial barriers to entry in the news business. Establishing and managing a news outlet required substantial investments in infrastructure. Newspapers required printing presses, paper, and extensive distribution channels throughout their communities. Television and radio stations required production facilities and studios, as well as broadcast capabilities. Both print and broadcast media needed talented people to identify, pursue and present news stories. Now, thanks to the internet, these barriers are gone, unleashing a plethora of news sources, from “citizen journalists” to the traditional outlets. To survive and stand out from this unlimited competition, news organizations need to be able distinguish themselves and their content from the rest. Ken Doctor, a former executive with the Knight Ridder newspaper chain and editor of the Newsonomics blog, estimates that it takes less than $25 million – dirt cheap by business standards -- to a launch a significant digital news operation (Doctor, 2014, para. 15):

The price of entry is what’s key in this new business. No printing presses or broadcast pipes. At this moment, the world has conspired to make relatively cheap entry — at $25 million or less — quite possible. It’s also possible to project a new credibility for such new products: Digital audiences have become accustomed to taking new brands seriously, seemingly overnight.

The impact of these changes – and a more profound abundance of choices – is dramatically transforming the media industry, which in turn is reshaping the way content is identified, developed and presented to audiences. Fox observes that “on the national level, at least, there are all manner of experiments and signs of success. *The New York Times* has, thanks partly to the success of its metered paywall, returned to a 19th-century model whereby circulation brings in more money than advertising. Buzzfeed has, by astutely catering to the massive new distribution network that is Facebook, built a huge audience at relatively low cost, while bringing in revenue with clever (and clearly labeled) modern equivalents of the ‘reading notice’” (Fox, 2014).

Fox also points to the burgeoning role of social media sites such as Facebook and Google in news delivery. Which openly compete “with media companies in that, like them, it makes money by delivering audiences to advertisers. These two are also possibly the most successful such enterprises ever.”

This rise in online news consumption is creating increased competition and disruption to the publishing business model, says Newman. Nevertheless, he added, new readership data “offers some signs of hope for those investing in original news content. More people say they’ve paid for digital news in the past 10 months and we have data for the first time about the types and frequency of digital payment. Traditional brands continue to attract the largest online audiences and we find that trust in news brands remains uniquely valued by young and old.”

In this brave new world, literally thousands of online news providers are competing for readers' attention. At the same time, it's likely the disruption of the news content delivery model will continue for some time to come. As Newman observes:

Most news organizations are reconfiguring their workflows for the multi-platform age – trying to drive more output to more platforms with the same number (or fewer) journalists Finding new audiences and revenues is proving more challenging. Some news organizations are looking to exploit niches, others are pushing for scale and paywalls are going up around the world. As ever, success will depend on a combination of clear strategies and a strong understanding of changing audience behaviors. (Levy & Newman, 2013, p.16)

DATA RULES

The rise of digital platforms is creating new models of journalism and content creation. One approach is to use digital tools to create new types of journalistic and editorial engagements. For example, Enda and Mitchell point to an online forum, Contently, which provides an outlet for journalists. The site "connects thousands of journalists, many of them ex-print reporters, with commercial brands to help them produce their own content, including brand-oriented magazines." *Fortune* also has a similar forum, called *Fortune* TOC—Trusted Original Content, which is targeted at marketers for distribution on their own platforms.

At the same time, new, online-only publications have come to the fore. One prime example is the *Huffington Post,* an online-online news and opinion journal that became a dominant force in new media within a very short time since its founding by Arianna Huffington in 2005. In 2011, the Huffington Post property was purchased by AOL for $315 million. "In just six years, Huffington has built her site from an idea into a real competitor— at least in the size of its audience—with *The New York Times*," The Columbia Journalism School report observes. During this time, *The Huffington Post* "has mastered and fine-tuned not just aggregation, but also social media, comments from readers, and most of all, a sense of what its public wants." (Grueskin, Seave & Graves, 2011)

Aggregation is a particularly notable hallmark of the site, they add, helping "media companies, new and old, understand the appeal of aggregation: its ability to give prominence to otherwise unheard voices and to bring together and serve intensely engaged audiences, as well its minimal costs compared to what's incurred in the traditionally laborious task of gathering original content."

At the core of this formula for success has been *Huffington Post's* ability to leverage data analytics to reach and engage with audiences. "Huffington Post also developed an ability to respond quickly to the data that it was getting on traffic and usage—something that is a crucial component of success in digital journalism," Grueskin, Seave, and Graves state. "Indeed, data analysis has moved from being a required skill in media companies' finance departments to being an essential part of the résumé for editors, writers and designers."

This form of analytics is applied to build traffic to attract online readership, which can be readily measured, they add. "One method of building traffic is to hop onto hot topics," they relate, noting that internal guidance from AOL's editorial directors suggest that as an example that if 'Macaulay Culkin and Mila Kunis are trending because they broke up,' someone should 'write a story about Macaulay Culkin and Mila Kunis.' And editors are told to always keep expenses in mind. The cost of content can run from $25 for a freelance article that needs 7,000 page views to break even, to a $5,000 video that will require a half-million streams to recover its costs. Catchy headlines, such as 'Lady Gaga Goes Pantless in Paris' (from AOL site StyleList.com) are important to entice readers from search." Neel Chopdekar, vice president at AOL Media, called this "bionic journalism—the best of man and machine." (Grueskin, Seave & Graves, 2011)

Is bionic journalism – this mode of content selection – what's best for new media journalism and its audiences? Adherence to generating page views based on search engine optimization and resulting soft news – such as celebrity coverage – may be an ugly byproduct of this process. At the same time, the variety and scope of various online digital media provides greater choices for consumers who wish to seek out more personalized experiences, filtered to the types of information they seek.

There is risk in going too far with audience data collection. A reader may follow a link from a news aggregation site, for example, to a news organization's page, but may only spend a few minutes reading an article before moving on to another provider's site. Typically, the bounce rate – the percentage of readers who only read one article and leave the site entirely – may range around 50%, according to web experts (Hartwig, 2013). "Most readers spend far less time on digital sites than they did on legacy platforms," The Columbia report finds (Grueskin, Seave & Graves, 2011).

One hallmark of the digital new era, then, may be the phenomena of consumers "voting with their feet" – simply turning to alternative information sources. With the ease of simply clicking from one site to another – and with so many different news providers to choose from – news consumers are far more fickle with their choices of content, and are not likely to exhibit the loyalty that was seen for hometown newspapers or TV/radio outlets. For example, in a survey of 2,000 U.S. adults in 2013, the Pew Center found that "nearly one-third—31%—of people say they have deserted a particular news outlet because it no longer provides the news and information they had grown accustomed to. And those most likely to have walked away are better educated, wealthier and older than those who did not—in other words, they are people who tend to be most prone to consume and pay for news," according to research from The Pew Center (Enda & Mitchell, 2013).

The rise of choices in the digital media world may also ultimately promote more comprehensive coverage – there has been a movement seen across some digital properties to offer more in-depth, greater coverage and analysis of topics, including embedded graphical and visual elements, also referred to as "long-form" content. To gauge the public's view of how the industry's financial travails have affected news coverage, the Pew survey asked people whether they thought news stories were less complete than they used to be or whether there simply were fewer of them. About half—48%—of respondents said stories are not as thorough as they were before, while slightly less than a third—31%—said stories are fewer.

In the process, new modes of content presentation are evolving to meet these demands. "There is a shifting trend toward consuming long form content on mobile and tablet devices, whether it be articles, videos, TV series or movies - people are opting for the long story," according to a report from Coulls, a digital media advisory service (Coull, 2014). "It's all about giving the viewers what they want, something publishers are now able to do because the technology is available to provide it" (Coull, 2014, para. 39). "Within long form content we have videos that play while you're in amongst the content - galleries, advertising, music - it's all contextual. The experience for the user is multi-faceted and the potential for engagement is greater than ever." (Coull, 2014, para. 30)

Today's news sites generate a plethora of information that may or may not be captured. Not only which stories are being viewed, but also how they're being viewed, how much is being read, and what other types of content are being read along with it. That doesn't necessarily diminish the role of journalists and editorial professionals, but actually may enhance their ability to deliver timely articles of great quality and significance to audiences. Forbes' DVorkin describes how he is seeing this shift play out (DVorkin, 2012, para. 3):

The availability of statistics puts the journalist's tried-but-far-from-true gut feeling to the test in real time. Reliable user data just didn't exist in the medium's early days. Now, the numbers illuminate everything all the time for journalists-turned-product-people like myself. You can track the digital news consumer's first click, second and each one after that. You know how far down the screen they scroll. And most important, you learn what they think as the social conversation evolves. When we look at what's produced, commented on and shared on Forbes.com and digest all the data, what lies behind news usage today becomes clear. Speed, perspective and analysis are certainly important — but in-depth reporting that often starts its life in longer Forbes magazine stories is fast becoming one of the news enthusiast's most rewarding clicks.

DATA IMPACTS ON NEWS ORANIZATIONS

Disruption is the key word about what is happening in the news industry these days, and this disruption is taking many different forms. It is also having a significant impact on the many areas of the organizations and people gathering and synthesizing news content for audiences. At the core of this disruptive process is data – the industry has evolved from a static state to one that is moved and shaped by the data it is generating and acting upon. The important thing to remember is disruption is not a bad word – it simply means new ways of doing business and new players have emerged that are challenging the status quo, while making news information more accessible to wider audiences.

There are a number of disruptions that result from digital media adoption – much of which is challenging, but much of which can have also a positive impact on the delivery of news and information.

For example, while technology has wiped away barriers to entry in the news business, it is also creating opportunities to develop stronger, more responsive news channels. "Digital platforms provide ways for audiences to build quickly with lower marketing costs than in traditional media," Grueskin, Seave and Graves point out. They also observe that "digital provides a means to innovate rapidly, determine audience size quickly and wind down unsuccessful businesses with minimal expense." No longer do substantial capital expenditures have to be made:

A video service need not build tall antennae atop the highest hills in town, and print publishers can avoid capital-intensive investments in printing presses. The large staffs associated with getting information to readers—whether they're camera crews or printing staffs—aren't as necessary. The development time from idea to market is shortened, greatly increasing efficient use of a firm's resources. But because competitors can imitate or adapt more quickly, it is difficult to cash in on innovations. The shorter cycles can lessen the length of time that innovations remain unique, relevant and valuable (Grueskin, Seave & Graves, 2011, p.12).

Additional benefits mentioned by Grueskin, Seave and Graves include the availability of real-time audience information, enabling editorial managers and journalists to not only see content that is popular with audiences, but also quickly get a sense of the profile of the audience, and how they are engaging with the content. In the process, publishing organizations have the opportunity to deliver highly targeted content to those audiences as well. However, they also caution, too much diversification may result in too many choices that news consumers may not have the time or attention span for too wide of a range of choices.

SOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Collecting and monitoring audience data opens up new avenues for news organizations. There are a number of ways editorial organizations and journalists can participate in the revolutionary new model that is reshaping the industry. The following are recommendations for moving to a data-driven new operation:

- *Understand that news is now a two-way delivery channel.* Until recently, publishers and broadcasters took in information, and selected and packaged it up for consumption. Now, understanding and engaging with audiences is now an essential part of the news presentation process. News organizations need to be open to ideas and input from their audiences.
- *Employ the right tools.* News organizations need the right tools to capture the audience numbers. There is a need for standards in the types of data being gathered on audience types. Many of the data analysis tools developed in the business world for analyzing market trend data will be just as useful for opening up and advancing the news process. Just as importantly, many of today's data analysis solutions don't necessarily require statistician skills to mine and interpret results. Today's data analytics packages are available via Software as a Service (the cloud), or can be set up and installed relatively quickly onsite. Such tools offer highly graphical front-end dashboards that enable users to quickly spot trends see who the outliers may be. In addition, as Ken Doctor observes, "digital-only content management systems get the content out on all platforms with far fewer people and keystrokes. Ad automation and optimization maximizes revenue with fewer staff. Social sharing tools magnify voice for virtual pennies. NBC Universal, ESPN, and Vox can all extend their content and sales systems to serve their new properties, leveraging the digital technology investments they've already made" (Doctor, 2014).
- *Always question the data and the assumptions behind it.* Data may be delivering more a more accurate picture of audiences that anecdotal evidence or simple gut feel. But digital publishing managers and journalists should never take the data at face value. Data may always be flawed, as well as the sources behind it. Managers and journalists should apply the same level of critical thinking to the data they are working with as they apply to actual news content. Is the data clean? Is it verified? Why is a particular set of data being sourced?
- *Enlighten and educate management.* New organization executives and managers need to recognize the opportunity that data analytics provides to better serve audiences. News organizations may now rely on social media and website data for leads, as well as to determine trending topics. The author spoke with the director of a local television newsroom, which examines the trending topics at its website every morning to determine the priority of its news presentations.
- *Form partnerships.* With the rise of data-driven news and content consumption, digital media organizations will be providing many services that align with the types of services produced and generated by tech and social media providers. In many cases, this means competition for adver-

tising dollars, as social media platforms replicate many of the same services formerly provided through print newspapers – such as classified advertising, help-wanted advertising, and even legal notices. While competing on one level, publishers will often find themselves in partnerships with the social media platforms as well. By marrying the journalistic competencies of news organizations with the platform development skills of tech vendors, digital media providers may be able to host more powerful and far-reaching properties than if they tried to go it alone.

- *Acquire or grow new skills.* Editorial and journalistic skills – which include the ability to dig into stories, get all sides, and ask the right questions – will increasingly be in demand, especially as digital media providers seek to gain a competitive edge against the many players in this space, as well as social media-based reporting. At the same time, news organization managers and journalists will need to have the flexibility and adaptability to learn from the data and analytics tools they employ. This includes critical thinking skills, and the capability to look at information in new ways.

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Digital news organizations will increasingly arise from a fusion with the technology sector. For example, social media platforms have evolved into aggregators or supporters of community-based news, and thus, there is a convergence taking place. The relationship between the high-tech industry and the digital news industry needs to be examined. Issues that may be prominent include the ability to cover events in tech in an unbiased way, and retaining independence from deep-pocketed owners.

In addition, the types of data collected needs to be reviewed in greater detail, and there may be a need to standardize some of this across the channels.

The role of new digital media in meeting editorial and journalistic standards needs to be discussed – that is, citing multiple sources within articles, striving for impartiality, and presenting news that's relevant and pressing, even though it may run contrary to analytics. For example, celebrity gossip may drive traffic, but it's not always in the best interest of a news organization or its readers to stream large amounts of inconsequential news.

CONCLUSION

Welcome to what is clearly becoming an emerging golden era of journalism and content creation. The news media isn't on the wane, as many pundits are stating. Instead, the business model for media organizations is shifting, away from print, and away from the "gateway" approach to journalism and content creation, in which a few select articles are presented to audience. Instead, the new digital media model is creating a plethora of content, which may be overwhelming audiences. At the same time, the rise of digital media is providing consumers a far wider range of choices that is pushing media organizations to provide content more tailored to their audiences.

The bottom line is that journalism and editorial skills still matters – a great deal. "Our data show that there still is a yearning – in an ocean of content – for trusted news across a range of subject areas," says Newman. This is a role that established news organizations with journalistic traditions – as well as relative newcomers who understand the importance of journalistic and editorial integrity – can fulfill.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Big Data: Datasets that are either relatively large in size (generally more than 100 terabytes); occur in unstructured formats, such as video, documents, or log files; and is being delivered real-time or close to real-time.

Bionic Journalism: The combination of human prepared headlines and storylines, with selections driven by metrics based on number of visits to articles.

Digital Advertising: Advertisements or announcements that are featured within Internet channels, such as on web pages or through mobile interfaces.

Digital Journalism: The practice of developing and delivering news and commentary over online channels.

Digital Media: The delivery of information in the form of news, feature articles, videos or audio formats through Internet channels.

Direct Marketing: Individualized communication about products, services, companies or other organizations that is delivered directly to consumers, by mail, telephone, email, web channel, or social media.

Print Advertising: Advertisements or announcements that appear on the pages of newspapers or periodicals.

Social Media: Online channels or platforms that enable end-users to communicate and exchange information, photos, videos and audio files within virtual communities.

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Chapter 25
A Culture of Survivors:
SlutWalk, Third Culture, and New Media Communication

Jennifer L. Seifert
Ohio University, USA

ABSTRACT

Drawing from the literature in Intercultural and New Media Studies (INMS), this study explores the SlutWalk social movement, a transnational movement of protest marches. The author conducted interviews with seven SlutWalk organizers from various cities in the United States to understand what culture SlutWalk organizers are fostering through their work and the role of new media communication in their organizational efforts. Results of the interpretative analysis suggest that although SlutWalk organizers foster a survivor culture through activities consistent with intercultural dialogue and third culture building, their use of various social media outlets might be motivated by various definitions of localized need. In addition, organizers highlight a tension between prioritizing more global survivor experiences over individual experiences with sexual assault and reveal the possibility for new media communication to enable anti-social cultural interactions. These findings contribute to the continued development of theorizing in INMS related to virtual third culture and continued scholarship exploring the intersections between new media and intercultural communication.

INTRODUCTION

On January 24th, 2011, Officer Michel Sanguinetti, in a speech about sexual violence to a group of law students at York University in Toronto, Canada, stated, "I'm told I'm not supposed to say this, but women should avoid dressing like sluts in order not to be victimized" (SlutWalkToronto.com). Many students equated this statement with blaming the victim, and on April 3rd, 2011 - a mere six weeks after Sanguinetti's original remark – SlutWalk, a demonstration against victim blaming and slut shaming, was born. Four thousand people, some dressed in sweatpants, others in lingerie (Valenti, 2011), engaged in this public protest on the streets of Toronto, Canada.

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Although the story detailing Sanguinetti's comments was originally broken by the York University student newspaper (Kwan, 2011), new media technologies played an important role in diffusing the story and in the organization of the first walk. News of Sanguinetti's comments reached national and international audiences when several online outlets cited the incident. News of Sanguinetti's comments also circulated through social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter (Lawrence, 2011). As described by McNicol (2012):

On 18 February, a call for public protest in Toronto was posted on the community blog section of feministing.com (a feminist blog), and the first tweet from @SlutWalkTO appeared. SlutWalk co-founders Sonya Barnett, an artist, and Heather Jarvis, a Guelph University undergraduate student, heard about Sanguinetti's comments in February, and came up with the idea for a "SlutWalk" in the weeks following. (p.x).

Since this initial protest in the spring of 2011, the SlutWalk movement, aided by new media technologies, has gone viral. SlutWalk organizers forward that both Sanguinetti's comment and SlutWalk "lit the spark of what turned into a global firestorm" (SlutWalkToronto.com). Although organizers attribute the popularity of the movement to the collective outrage of sexual violence and the myths surrounding sexual assault, others attribute the success of the movement to new media. Wininger (2011) states, "What's striking about SlutWalk and its associated movements is not that women spoke out against sexual violence and the victim-blaming that is a hallmark of violence against women, but that this movement has such an immediate transnational online presence" (p. 144). With demonstrations organized all over the world in over 13 countries including New Zealand, South Africa, India, Singapore, Israel, Nepal, and the United States (SlutWalkToronto.com), it is important to explore how new media technologies have contributed to the organization of this global movement. Therefore, grounded in the literature surrounding Intercultural New Media Studies (INMS), I conducted interviews with SlutWalk organizers to explore if the communication in SlutWalk promoted virtual third-culture building.

INTERCULTURAL NEW MEDIA STUDIES, INTERCULTURAL DIALOG, AND THIRD CULTURE

As a growing approach to the study of intercultural communication, Intercultural New Media Studies (INMS) provides a useful framework by which to explore the intercultural communication embedded in the SlutWalk movement. Shuter (2012) argues that new media is transforming how we communicate across cultures and that, due to this transformation, new intercultural communication theorizing is warranted. Shuter (2012) asserts that traditional approaches to intercultural communication, conceptualizing difference in terms of nation-state, ethnicity, and race, should be expanded to include myriad cultures and hybridized cultures, which are possible due to new media technology. Within this paradigm, Shuter (2012) offers several directions for future research; however, of primary concern to this research are the concepts of intercultural dialog and third culture.

Intercultural *dialog* (i.e., Internet text as opposed to spoken discourse) has been an important approach to understanding intercultural communication that is gaining prominence in INMS. Characterized by expressiveness and empathy (Ganesh & Holmes, 2011), intercultural *dialogue* (spoken discourse) necessitates individuals in an interaction to accept difference to achieve deep understanding of the *other*;

however, it remains unclear if intercultural *dialog* (textual discourse) is achievable in the virtual world (Shuter, 2012). Exigent literature suggests that intercultural dialog(ue) in both virtual and organic environments are limited by similar factors (Cho & Lee, 2008), but also that the relationships built between individuals in online communities can carry over from the virtual world in the physical world (Preece & Maloney-Krichmar, 2005). Thus, there has been an increased emphasis in intercultural communication to understand how social media sites might facilitate the creation of hybridized cultures, often called virtual third cultures, through intercultural dialog.

Initially forwarded by Casmir (1997), third culture building is a process rooted in both culture and communication. A third culture, according to Casmir (1997), is “a new interactive relationship” (p. 109) and arises when individuals from different cultures create a new, hybrid culture. The third-culture building process begins through “initial contacts with a person, object or event in a given cultural, social, historical need, or may result in the emergence of a need” (Casmir, 1997, p. 110). Through need and contact, human beings from different backgrounds decide whether to rely on existing cultural values or, in the event that preexisting norms prove inadequate, develop a third culture. Not unlike all cultures, third cultures are ever-changing phenomena and often an adaptive response initiated “between those whose physical, emotional or intellectual survival is seen as being at stake” (Casmir, 1997, p. 111).

As new media technologies continue to change how we interact, many scholars have taken up the exploration of virtual third cultures. McEwan and Sobre-Denton (2011) explain that virtual third cultures, unlike organic third culture, are not bound by physical space and that “these spaces may incorporate and surpass national, ethnic and racial boundaries” (p. 254). The authors further explain that third cultures are far more involved than simply learning about other cultures, but embody a sense of community, include social support, and shared cultural rules, norms and behaviors (McEwan & Sobre-Denton, 2011). For example, Sobre-Denton (2011) identifies the INTASU (INT-ernational Arizona State University) organization as a virtual third culture. Members in the group often use slang words that are linguistic hybrids of multiple languages, exchange knowledge, arrange events, and engage in many other activities which position the culture created in this virtual space as an identifiable third culture.

There are several reasons to suspect that SlutWalk, much like the INTASU, has characteristics that parallel those of a virtual third culture. Not only does SlutWalk have a significant online presence (Kwan, 2011; Lawrence, 2011; McNicol, 2012), but Sanguinetti’s comments, and the resulting response, could have provided the need which Casmir (1997) suggests is the foundation of third culture development. In addition, with SlutWalks being organized globally, it would seem the directive of SlutWalk could appeal to a diverse group of individuals representing diverse nationalities and ethnicities.

Thus, seeking to further explore the SlutWalk movement in terms of INMS, I pose two general research questions “What culture are SlutWalk organizers fostering through their work?” and “What is the role of new media communication in creating and maintaining shared values, beliefs and norms of SlutWalk?”

METHOD

Many scholars warn us about the tenuous relationship between feminist discourses and mainstream media (Bean, 2007; Dean, 2010; hooks, 1994). Bean (2007) argues that “mainstream media, as an emphatically patriarchal, seriously conservative, willfully biased capital institution can be nothing but pernicious to liberal political thinking” (p. 10). Moreover, Mendoza, Halualani, and Drzewiecka (2002) argue that truly understanding identity avowals must go “beyond the surface rhetoric” to consider the political and strategic motivations behind identity movements and that "automatic de-legitimation of such on the basis of a mere surface analysis of the movement's rhetoric can have dire repercussions on the representation of cultural politics on the ground" (p. 322). Thus, in this quest to provide a description of cultural politics on the ground – a description divorced from mainstream media depictions – I rely on the voices and experiences of SlutWalk organizers.

Research Procedure

A request for informants was sent via email or Facebook message to all U.S. based SlutWalk organizations following Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval of the study. These organizations were identified by using a list maintained and shared by a SlutWalk organizer through previous collaboration.

Prior to our scheduled meeting time, informants were sent the informed consent document via email for their review, were given the opportunity to ask any questions, and verbally consented to participate in the study. After agreeing to participate, individuals first answered several demographic questions prompting them to indicate which SlutWalk(s) they had helped organize, what role(s) they filled, their age, and all of the racial and/or ethnic groups with which they identify. Following this, I adopted a semi-structured interview style and entered the interview with questions prepared but also allowed the trajectory of the conversation to prompt additional questions (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011).

On the onset, each interview felt somewhat power-imbalanced and awkward, but developed into a conversation characterized by mutual sharing, discovery, and warmth. In all of the interviews, I self-identified as a survivor and SlutWalker; however, the timing of these disclosures varied from one interview to the next. At the conclusion of the interview, if my directives had not been discussed previously, I described my reasons for conducting the study and asked for the informant's opinion about my directives. In addition, I asked informants if there was anything else that I had not asked that they wanted to share. Employing this orientation resulted in several very rich discussions and the addition of several questions to the interview protocol. With the exception of one interview conducted over the phone, all interviews were conducted over Skype.

Informants

Based on their self-identification, five informants were White/Caucasian, one was African American, and one identified as *other*. Informants had played an organizing role in SlutWalks in seven different U. S. cities total, representing a diversity of geographical locations. Six informants provided their age, which ranged from 20 to 44 years, resulting in an average age of 30; six informants were female and one was male. Interviews ranged in duration from 48 minutes to 101 minutes with an average duration of 68 minutes. Each interview was audio-recorded and transcribed, resulting in 72 pages of single-spaced transcripts.

Data Analysis

I analyzed the data using an interpretive, inductive analysis (Strauss & Corbin, 1998), looking for common themes in the participants' discourse. I paid particular attention to each organizer's descriptions of culture and how they described utilizing new media technologies. In the initial step, I became familiar with the data by transcribing each interview and, in checking the transcript for accuracy, again listening to each interview while reading the transcript. In the second phase, I highlighted sections of the transcripts that were of particular interest and made theoretical memos (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002). Finally, I re-read the data and the memos to organize the trends and identified exemplar passages to illustrate the themes.

Position of the Researcher

As a researcher, activist, and SlutWalk participant, I occupy a unique position within the academy, the SlutWalk community, and the phenomenon under study. First, as a survivor of sexual assault and SlutWalk participant, my experiences participating in SlutWalk as an activist prior to conducting this research became an important position through which I was able not only to create a rapport with my participants, but also to understand the communicative trends the participants were describing. That is, even though I had not performed an organizational role in SlutWalk or participated in any of the walks the participants helped orchestrate, both my SlutWalk and survivor experiences contributed greatly to conducting data analysis.

Second, I am a Caucasian, upper-middle class, educated female. Although in many regards, this position does not differ greatly from many of the SlutWalk participants I interviewed, these identities and lived experiences provide only a partial lens through which to engage in cultural understandings. Moreover, I am a digital native, an orientation that has been facilitated by access to technology by way of my socioeconomic membership. This identity contributed greatly to my understanding of organizers use of social media and afforded me the ability to recruit participants, conduct the interviews and participate in the various SlutWalk social media groups maintained by organizers. Thus, it is important to understand the interpretive analysis in terms of how these particular identities both enabled and constrained my reading of the data.

RESULTS

Survivor Culture

The primary themes that emerged from the data were those related to culture building. SlutWalk organizers identify several factors that characterize "need" as conceptualized by Casmir (1997). Shannon, a college student who holds two jobs in addition to being a primary organizer of the SlutWalk in her city, states:

The root of the walk is very reactionary. It's a push back against the culture. Specifically, it started with the cop in Toronto [Sanguinetti] and the last few years have still been a reaction. It's been a very reactionary movement which is why the name comes into play.

In situating the movement as reactionary, Shannon highlights Officer Sanguinetti's remarks as creating the need for both the movement and the name, a requisite for third-culture building. Additionally, in referencing the movement as a resistive strategy to the dominant culture, Shannon labels the current cultural values and norms inadequate in terms of critiquing Sanguinetti's comments.

Organizers predominantly express building a culture that centers on supporting survivors, but one that supersedes nationality or more traditional understandings of culture. Erin, a fitness enthusiast and mother, describes the culture of the walk she organizes:

Everyone has a different experience. Somebody who is deaf and male, their experience, the resources they get afterwards, the way their community embraces and treats them is very, very different. They have their own privilege of experience. White, middle-class women will have their own experience, their own privileged way of ruling out their experience. But, I think in that one moment, in that exact moment is the one time where all of us—who are different colors, different abilities, different classes—in that one split second, we understand one another. There is that one thread. I just really needed... I found out that it was important for me to be with my thread. SlutWalk has become my thread.

Erin posits that most individuals identify as sexual assault survivors and through the walk, suspend the particularities of their experience and the potential cultural deviations and reach a mutual “thread.” Yet, creating a survivor culture that supersedes national affiliation is not without challenges. Many participants express the challenge of de-emphasizing difference in terms of nationality and race. Allison, the primary organizer for her walk for three years, references this tension:

There’s such a thing as being too caught up in the politics of respectability. And difference matters and the critique is important. It’s important to point out that your experience is not universal, but certain aspects of being a survivor of sexual assault are 100% across the board universal […]. You know, it’s a different kind of experience, but a lot of the fallout is the same. There’s often PTSD, eating disorders, depression, insomnia, all sorts of things. It devastates you mentally and people don’t talk about it. All of those things, we’re all people, we all react in this same way. But then there are those differences, cultural differences that crop up.

Allison succinctly posits a tension expressed by many organizers: that there are many similarities in the experiences of being “survivors,” but that one cannot ignore the cultural differences between experiences. However, many organizers express difficulty in emphasizing these differences. As Amanda shares:

It’s very difficult to show a particular group that you support them while staying within the scope of what the organization is supposed to be about. Whether you’re gay, trans, queer, orange, purple, black, white, it doesn’t matter, we’re here trying to help you.

Many would like to reach out to a more diverse group of individuals, but lack the resources to do so. She continues by offering:

We have a large Hispanic community; a lot of them are not very wealthy. A lot of them don’t have Internet at home. They are victimized at a disproportionate rate, and we need to be able to reach out to them.

Although all the survivors express the desire to reach out to a more diverse group of individuals, the walk is very supportive to survivors of sexual assault in spite of perceived differences. As Marcus, a self-proclaimed slut and activist, shares:

I can’t tell you how many women, who were total strangers or acquaintances, that came up to me, hugged me and told me their sexual assault story. By the fourth time that happens, if you’re not affected, you’re dead inside […]. It’s very cathartic for people who have been assaulted and never admitted it, or have only told a close friend, to stand in front of a group and people and say “I’m a sexual assault *survivor." There's crying and hugging and it's a very emotional day. I think people get a great deal out of it, I know I do.*

While not directly stated, Marcus' experience would seem consistent with an experience of intercultural dialog. That is, Marcus describes a scene of mutual sharing and support, a component of intercultural dialog seemingly centering on survivorship. Echoing Marcus' experience, Erin offers:

People's souls are just damaged and continue to be damaged while we are shaming them. We are making a very important, critical individual impact for people who do choose to come out of the closet, into the streets, once a year to say "I'm a victim, I'm a survivor—Whatever label they want to pick—they can come and say, "This is my experience and I will be okay.

"Technology Is the Organization"

New media technologies play a pivotal role in the organization of SlutWalk. When asked about the role technology plays in her organization, Amanda responded point blank: "Technology is the organization. We exist almost entirely on the Internet." This observation is consistent with other organizers, as all of the participants report social media (primarily Facebook) as the core of their organizational efforts. Megan describes making an event on Facebook as "the one most critical thing I can do to garner support." Likewise, Marcus describes the relationship with his organizational efforts and social media in stating:

The upside is, without organizing online, we would have this event once a year, and that would be it. Having this online presence really allows us to keep this issue in people's minds year round. It's as simple as finding an interesting article and posting it on our page and letting people discuss it.

Likewise, Erika, in sharing her sentiments about social media, states, "It felt good to actually feel like you're having a conversation with people. Not just the people who are organizing but also with the people who are attending. People use the space to share their thoughts and vent." Yet, in addition to social media being a space to connect, all of the organizers identify their sites as creating the opportunity for undesirable interactions. Erin shared a story of such an incident:

We had crazy conversations going on our Facebook page. After a time, I started telling the organizers that if someone is trolling, making inflammatory comments, we have great people on our page who will jump in. People will do it for us, we don't have to be concerned.

Erin's insight emphasizes her trust in Facebook members to convey accurately the norms and values of the group; however, the negative interactions are not limited to those outside of the SlutWalk organizations. Erin, who conducts a search of SlutWalk on Facebook and Google weekly to "virtually watch" SlutWalks in other cities, shares her perceptions on the organizational efforts of another walk:

If you go to Facebook and look at SlutWalk [southwest city] Facebook page, what is going on it makes me want to quit [...]. We have some serious critics out there and if they screenshot that conversation that reflects on everybody [...]. There are organizations that just air all their business out there.

Levels of Connection

Although social media plays an irreplaceable role in organizational efforts, the organizers varied on the degree to which they engaged with broader groups of organizers on social media. That is, in addition to each organizer operating a Facebook page for their specific city, organizers report varying levels of participation in the international group. A little-known fact about SlutWalk is that there exists a closed Facebook group that is maintained by one of the original founders called the International Society of SlutWalk Organizers. Members are invited to the group by current SlutWalk organizers and, once vetted by the founders of SlutWalk, added to the group, creating, according to one organizer, the most current list of SlutWalk organizers across the globe. Yet, many of the participants expressed very little concern in communicating with individuals from other cities and/or countries. Marcus forwarded that SlutWalks "are kinda independently owned and operated." Likewise, Shannon states:

I couldn't even tell you the name of an organizer from another city. I have zero contact, and I don't feel like I need contact. The movement is coming forth from our city differently than it comes forth in any other city. It's different. Different things are going on. There's a different demographic, a different social atmosphere […]. What we're dealing with is different from what other communities need. I don't feel the need to be in contact with the other SlutWalk organizers just for that reason.

Although both these perspectives prioritize the local organizational efforts, others showed an increased concern with building connections in the international group. In describing how she interacts with other organizers on the international Facebook group, Amanda asserts:

We [in the international group] talk about fundraising stuff, permit stuff, IRS takes stuff, marketing, issues with past organizers, co-organizers. We keep track of all the organizers and all the dates of the walks. Sometimes we just post about news stories that are relevant. Kind of provide support to each other. It [being a SlutWalk organizer] can be a really emotionally taxing thing to do. Sometimes we just use it as a resource […]. The description of the group, if that helps is [reading from the Facebook group description], "This group is a networking and resource tool for those organizing the SlutWalk all over the world. We do this work within our own cities, but are an amazing group of people." Really, each city is its own organization. We're very loosely connected to each other.

Similarly, Erin emphasizes the importance of the international group: "We have a Facebook group [referencing the international group] where we all talk. There's a conversation going on daily, whether people are engaging in it or not. I've also developed several personal relationships with organizers from other cities." Given the varied levels of connection to the international community, it would appear the organizers take a functional approach to their levels of connection.

DISCUSSION

As an international movement, SlutWalk provides a fruitful context in which to explore questions about the role of new media in intercultural communication. Scholars argue that new media holds the potential to create hybrid cultures, ones that connect individuals beyond nation-state and other cultural affiliations

(Shuter, 2012). One way to understand these cultures is through the development of virtual third cultures, which involve more than inter-cultural contact, but sharing of common rules, norms, and beliefs. Results indicate that organizers are working toward third-culture building centering on survivorship, see technology as the organization and engage with other organizers at various levels.

Applying Casmir's (1997) framework, there is evidence to suggest that SlutWalk is engaging in a third-culture building processes centering on survivorship. Organizers' perceptions and personal experiences with becoming involved in the movement are consistent with a need created by Officer Sanguinetti's comment. Without exception, organizers report striving to create an environment that is supportive of survivors. Similar to INTASU (Sobre-Denton, 2011), SlutWalks use virtual space to organize events, share knowledge and communicate shared values, but also place a considerable emphasis on physical events. Third-culture building necessitates intercultural dialog (Shuter, 2012) and, even as SlutWalk organizations exist in virtual environments, the findings of this study suggest that the potential for SlutWalk organizers to engage in intercultural dialog rests in the physical events. Considering this finding in terms of INMS could suggest that in some instances, virtual third cultures utilize both virtual and physical interactions to achieve culture-building outcomes. Although this offers little toward discussions of whether intercultural dialog can occur in virtual environments, it could be possible that third cultures utilize virtual means of communication to supplement culture-building goals only in instances where face-to-face (FtF) communication is impractical. Hollan and Stornetta (1992) forward that individuals tend to consider FtF interactions as the gold standard when communicating in online environments. Perhaps, this preference might help explain why SlutWalk utilizes a combination of virtual and physical communications. Theories of NMIC might consider understanding third-culture building on a continuum from a virtual to organic in lieu of binary. Doing so would allow scholars to explore the circumstances (e.g., space/time considerations between members) that make each various form of intercultural interaction more preferable.

Interestingly, the findings of this study suggest that organizers are engaging with social media and thus, those of other nationalities in various capacities. In many cases, individuals are actively choosing not to interact in the international group, which might be related to subjective understandings of the need (as understood by Casmir's work) created by Officer Sanguinetti's comments. Simply put, many organizers understand the need to be located in their specific city and did not find that communicating with organizers in their country or others helped them achieve their organizational goals. It is possible that these various definitions of need could manifest in different uses of new media. Such a phenomenon would be consistent with theories of mass communication such as uses and gratifications theory (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1974), which posits that individuals utilize media to fulfill specific gratifications, in this case, gratifications associated with organizing. Alternately, within the third-culture building process, need and contact are interdependent. Thus, it is possible for need to be born out of contact, but it is also possible for contact to create need (Casmir, 1997). Among those who interact with organizers from other cities, it may be the case that contact with organizers from other cities is creating the impetus for third-culture building in culmination with Sanguinetti's comments and resulting in calls for social protest.

Perhaps most notably, the results suggest that SlutWalk organizers are striving to foster a culture based on an identity other than nationality and/or ethnicity, a factor which could, in part, explain the global popularity of the movement. Rape and sexual assault experiences bridge all cultural, national, and socioeconomic boundaries (World Health Organization, 2002). Thus, the ubiquity of sexual assault experiences might help explain how SlutWalk could raise issues that resonate with individuals across many cultures. However, striving to emphasize a culture beyond nationality and ethnicity continues to spur controversy among organizers and those critiquing the movement. This controversy is evident not only in these data, but mainstream conversations surrounding the movement. For example, in the United States, SlutWalks have been contested on the basis of race (Hobson, 2011). In *An Open Letter from Black Women to the SlutWalk Organizers* written by the Board of Directors of the Black Women's Blueprint and signed by numerous Black anti-violence activists, authors, who are scholars and community activists, question the ability of the movement to represent the interests of Black women. As cited by Brison (2011), "As Black women and girls, we find no space in SlutWalk, no space for participation and to unequivocally denounce rape and sexual assault as we have experienced it" (para 3).

Contrasting these critiques with the experiences provided by key informants raises important questions about social organizing around broader conceptualizations of culture. A considerable amount of scholarship in intercultural communication has adopted broader conceptualizations of culture such as gender and class (Martin & Flores, 1998), yet these findings point to the practical implications of social organizing around such broad notions of culture. There is considerable tension in highlighting a global versus a more localized understanding of survivorship, but it is not yet clear if the success of SlutWalk in organizing around these issues is attributable to broader cultural identifications or lack of difference among organizers. Thus, continued analysis of SlutWalk and other similar social movements could utilize critical dialogic approaches to provide insight into how activists and organizers engage in organizational activities and decision making (Xu, 2013). This study also provides unique insights into how new media communication might connect and empower otherwise isolated individuals.

Survivors of sexual assault are a stigmatized and silenced category of individuals in many societies (Burt, 1980), and it is possible that communication facilitated by new media has empowered and enabled the organization of these individuals in an unprecedented manner. Understanding the role of new media in this way is beneficial in the case of SlutWalk not only because SlutWalk organizers use a broad selection of new media platforms in their organizing, but due to the changing technological environment. Ganesh and Stohl (2013) argue that understanding the full scope of new media and social protest necessitates moving beyond analysis of particular technologies to understanding the "emerging technological environment" (p. 4). Such an environment is facilitated by the ubiquity of digital technologies (i.e., when technological affordances become so engrained in society they are taken for granted). Organizers seem well acculturated in ubiquitous digital environments and recognize that such an environment has made their organization of SlutWalk possible; however, digital technologies also have their drawbacks.

Lastly, although most participants saw social media as an enormous benefit to their organizational efforts, the results of this study also highlight a dark side of social media use within the SlutWalk organizations. That is, all participants encountering some interactions through social media that they described as "hostile," "hurtful," and "inflammatory." Although not described as such, the notion of cyberbullying, as described in the literature, might offer insight into the implications of these interactions. Hinduja and Patching (2010) theorize that the characteristics of new media hold the potential to exacerbate the harm of hurtful messages due to the permanence of computer-based messages and the ease and freedom with which hurtful comments can be made. Therefore, while new media holds the potential to support new forms of prosocial cultural interactions, there is also increased potential for negative cultural interactions. It is possible that the provocative nature of the walk and limited restrictions on social media platforms that SlutWalk make organizations more prone to receiving negative communications. Nonetheless, future research and INMS theorizing should consider how new media might create virtual environments with the capacity to facilitate prosocial and antisocial cultural communication.

CONCLUSION

Although SlutWalk organizers provided valuable information about the culture they attempt to produce through their efforts and the role of new media communication in their organization, these findings suggest that SlutWalk, as an international social movement, is complex and cannot be understood through a single study. My participants were exclusively organizers located in the United States and predominantly Caucasian. Future studies should explore the perspectives of SlutWalk participants, seek out more racially diverse organizers, and seek to understand their perspectives on the role of new media and culture created through the walk. Additionally, future studies should include organizers from other countries. Such studies might provide additional insight into elements of the movement that resonate with individuals outside of the United States and explicate additional culturally situated understandings of survivorship.

This study offers insights into INMS theorizing by offering support for virtual third-culture formation based around survivorship. Yet, given the various organizations' emphasis on both physical and virtual communication, SlutWalk suggests consideration of third culture hybrids, which utilize both virtual and face-to-face interaction to accomplish culture-building. Moreover, by identifying various levels of new media use, the study contributes to understanding how various subjective understandings of need might manifest in new media use. Finally, although emphasizing survivorship might offer insight into the international success of the movement, organizers highlight the tensions between emphasizing more global experiences and the potential for negative interactions made possible through new media platforms.

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Chapter 26
Tell China's Story Well?
Cultural Framing and Online Contestation

Bingjuan Xiong
University of Colorado, USA

ABSTRACT

The development of new media transforms human communication experiences in ways that are socially, culturally, and politically meaningful. This study investigates the Chinese government's use of new media in response to an international communication crisis, the Ai Weiwei case, in 2011. Through a discourse analysis of China's official online news website, China Daily, as well as Twitter posts, most salient media frames in China's online media discourse are identified. The results suggest that online contestation of media framing in China's official media discourse contributes to the formation of new cultural expectations and norms in Chinese society and challenges the government's ability to tell its own stories without dispute. The author argues that new media foster online discussion and stimulate public debate of China's accountability and transparency in interacting with domestic and global audiences during crisis communication.

INTRODUCTION

The development of new communication technologies transforms human communication experiences in ways that are socially, culturally, and politically meaningful. Not only do individuals worldwide use them for sharing information, constructing identities, building communities, and engaging in political actions, but also at the national level, single-party states like China begin to utilize new media to control the information flow and assert cultural and political influences (Ding, 2007/2008; Herold, 2011). The Chinese government is aware of the importance of new media and their global influences. This fact is reflected in an official statement by Cai Mingzhao, China's propaganda official, on October 10, 2013:

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At present, the media sector is digitizing and becoming networked, this is a good opportunity to realize a leapfrogging-style upgrade of dissemination capacity. We must persist in the simultaneous development of traditional media and new media, accelerate the integrated development of traditional media and new media, fully utilize new technologies and new applications, innovate media dissemination methods, and gain the initiative in a new round of dissemination capacity competition… Strengthen discourse system construction; strive to forge new concepts, new categories and new formulations that circulate in China and abroad. To tell China's story well, and spread China's voice well, foreign discourse system construction is extremely important (Cai, 2013).

As some researchers have noted, China has launched large-scale imaging projects around the globe to maintain and increase its soft power reach not only through traditional means such as establishment of Confucius Institutes, but also, more recently, through the use of a "smarter language" in tune with other foreign discourse systems (Yang, 2014; Zhang, 2009). In line with Cai's (2013) statement, the Chinese government aims to take advantage of new media to strengthen its discursive power within the international media environment by adopting a way of speaking that resonates with foreign audiences. However, in view of China's sociocultural and political particularities, questions arise with regard to: (a) how well the Chinese government utilizes new media to manage information flow to facilitate its global influences, and (b) how the online public reacts to the government's usage of new media, its "smarter language" and its self-proclaimed ability to tell a good story.

Communication scholars have emphasized the importance of connections between culture and new media. For example, Shuter (2012) notes that culture influences the social uses of new media but at the same time new media could potentially change culture. Privalova (2012) also points out that mediated communication in a given society has its own socio-cultural bearings and national colorings. Furthermore, Chen (2012) states that "new media does not only influence the form and content of information/messages, but also affects how people understand each other in the process of human communication, especially for those from different cultural or ethnic groups" (p. 3). In accordance with these discussions, scholars have called for a sociocultural approach to intercultural new media research (Cheong, Martin, & Macfadyen, 2012; Shuter, 2014).

The current study adopts a sociocultural perspective to examine the Chinese government's use of new media in coping with communication crises in the international context. More specifically, it analyzes "cultural framing" in the Chinese official media and the comments and responses to this "cultural framing" from the online public concerning the Ai Weiwei case which unfolded on the Internet in 2011. In the following pages, I first present a chronological development of the Ai Weiwei case; explain why it has created a communication crisis for the Chinese government in the international context and how it further prompted the government to use new media to defend its position. Then, I review previous studies that have contributed to our understanding of the Chinese government's use of new media, followed by a discussion of the theoretical and methodological rationale for the current study. Next, I conduct a discourse analysis of the Chinese government's official media discourse surrounding the Ai Weiwei case on the Internet and the comments and responses to this discourse from the online public, so as to identify prevalent media frames that are culturally embedded in the Chinese media discourse. Finally, I discuss the sociocultural and political implications of Chinese government's control and construction of information in the new media age.

BACKGROUND: THE AI WEIWEI CASE

Ai Weiwei (in Chinese 艾未未) is a Chinese contemporary artist who has gained international fame through exhibitions of visual arts (e.g., Sunflower Seeds in London, 2010) and architectural design projects (e.g., Beijing National Stadium, also known as the Bird's Nest). Meanwhile, he is also a highly profiled political activist who has been openly criticizing the Chinese government around a number of issues such as corruption and abuse of human rights in China. On April 3, 2011, Ai was arrested in the Beijing International Airport while he was going through security checks for a flight to Hong Kong. Ai's arrest and later two-month detention, when disclosed to the public through social media, immediately invoked global outcries and protests (both online and offline).

German Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle (France and Germany call for release, 2011, para. 3) called on China for an "urgent explanation" and the immediate release of Ai Weiwei on April 4. US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton (US criticizes, 2011, para. 1) criticized China's "worsening human rights record," demonstrated by the "arbitrary" arrest of Ai Weiwei. The British Indian novelist Salman Rushdie declared on *The Telegraph* on April 20 that China must set Ai Weiwei free and it was a "shameful silence" when it disclosed nothing to the public regarding Ai's detention (Ai Weiwei, 2011).

Overwhelmed by these harsh criticisms, the Chinese government had to defend its position and to "tell a good story" to people at home and abroad regarding the Ai Weiwei case. Benoit (1995) observes that "when our image is threatened, we feel compelled to offer explanations, defenses, justifications, rationalizations, apologies, or excuses for our behavior" (p. 2). In this sense, when the Chinese government failed to, in a timely manner, tell a "good" story about Ai's arrest to global audiences, a communication crisis arose with regard to the government's accountability and transparency in how they govern the country. In the new media era, any communication crisis can be easily intensified through immediate diffusion of information and news on the Internet (Cheng, 2009). This is what happened in the Ai Weiwei case. Only six days after Ai Weiwei's detention, the Chinese government started to utilize new media, mainly its official online news websites, to redress the growing international and domestic outcry. On April 9, the state-controlled newspaper *China Daily* (the US edition) – also the official channel for reporting Chinese news in English – published an editorial commentary titled "Political Activism Cannot be a Legal Shield" to respond directly to many accusations and criticisms from the international media. It is interesting to note that during Ai Weiwei's detention *China Daily* published several editorials that specifically addressed international English-speaking audiences. These editorials were published only in English and #*Ai Weiwei* became a sensitive keyword constantly subject to the government's censorship. Although Ai Weiwei was released on June 22, 2011, to this day his name is still monitored in the Chinese cyberspace by the authorities.

MEDIA FRAMING AND CULTURE

According to Gamson and Modigliani (1989), framing is the "central organizing idea for making sense of relevant events, suggesting what is at issue" (p. 3). This conceptualization is further expanded by Entman (2003), who states that framing is essentially about selection and salience:

To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, 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).

This notion of framing echoes with some other understandings of media framing, suggesting that it primarily functions as a "screening device" to foreground certain information about an issue while leaving out others (Dimitrova & Connolly-Ahern, 2007; Reese, 2001; Taylor, 2008). Tankard (2001) describes three distinct ways in which the framing metaphor has been used to examine media content. The framing metaphor can first be seen as setting a frame to a picture. When applied to public life, frame sets a boundary for making sense of a media event with its emphasis on selection and exclusion. Framing also sets a tone for the interpretation of actions and events in public life. In other words, when we use frames to construct and interpret media texts, the choice of frames affects our understanding of issues of public concern. The third notion of framing is quite similar to Entman's definition in that framing constitutes our perception and understanding of the mediatized world. On a similar note, Reese (2001) proposes a working definition of frames as "*organizing principles* that are socially *shared* and *persistent* over time, that work *symbolically* to meaningfully *structure* the social world" (p. 12, italics in original). Among these defining features of media frames, Reese claims that frames "organize" media content cognitively and culturally, and it is those cultural frames that stay with the general public more persistently and that typically go beyond one single story. Entman (2003) also argues that cultural frames are more likely to shape public opinion if they are strategically used in constructing media content.

To sum up, a theory of media framing is crucial for the current study because of the power of frames in assembling and disseminating information in certain ways that could influence authoritarian governmental control over the information flow and shape public engagement with media events in the new media era. Employing a certain media frame in media discourse is a strategic move from the point of view of the text producer; however, this move does not always guarantee the public's acceptance of this framing, especially in the face of a communication crisis.

NEW MEDIA AND THE INTERNET IN CHINA

Communication researchers have made significant contributions to our understanding of new media in contemporary Chinese society with regard to its sociocultural and political implications. For example, Wallis (2013), with her ethnographic study of young migrant women's mobile phone experiences in Beijing, demonstrates that cellphone usage has dramatically transformed the communication practices and sociocultural life of underprivileged women (e.g., allowing them to create a modern, rural-urban identity and to build new social relationships), but at the same time failed to transcend those structural obstacles that prevent them from "real mobility" within urban spaces in China.

Similarly, drawing upon his long-term ethnographic research on Chinese online activism, Yang (2009) documents the rising of a "communication revolution" that has significantly expanded ordinary people's awareness and ability to organize online collective actions and to generate social change. As Yang puts concisely, "Chinese citizens are increasingly resorting to contentious means in their struggle for a more just society. The Internet provides a new medium for citizens to speak up, link up, and act up against power, corruption, and social injustice" (p. 225). Other scholars have also written about the potential of the Internet, particularly interactive online media such as online news websites and blogs, in promoting an online public sphere for political participation and collective action against authoritarian regimes, for example, during the Arab Spring (Al-Saggaf, 2006; Douai & Nofal, 2012; Li, 2010; McCluskey & Hmielowski, 2012; Ruiz et al., 2011; Sun, 2012; Tang & Sampton, 2012; Tang & Yang, 2011; Xenos, 2008; Zhou, Chan, & Peng, 2008). These scholars discuss the political implications of the Internet from different perspectives; nevertheless, most of them allude to the idea that online media, including social media, have tremendously facilitated political expression and political participation. Al-Saggaf (2006) points out, "Many aspects make online media attractive to news readers, including low cost, ease and speed of access, and the opportunity for readers to ask questions, provide feedback, participate in discussions, and interact with other readers in ways not previously possible" (p. 313).

However, despite the "emancipating" power of online media, Zhou et al. (2008) conclude that the Chinese citizens are not "mature" enough in their use of online media due to their inability to deliberate on complex social issues and deal with disagreements in online communication. This finding draws our attention to the quality and the strategic nature of online media discourse that influences the potentiality of new/online media to promote political participation and create social change. For example, Sun (2012) finds that the "media logic," as portrayed by reality TV shows and media events, plays a crucial role in whether rural migrant construction workers can successfully claim wages owed to them. In most cases, these workers had to resort to some extreme tactics so as to attract media attention and get their voice heard.

Based on the previous studies on new media and the Internet in China, two important observations that motivate the present study can be drawn. First, although previous studies have offered illuminating findings about Chinese citizens' social use of new media in China (particularly regarding its political implications), there is a lack of scholarly attention to how the Chinese government at a national level utilizes new media to communicate with the global public when confronted with an international communication crisis, especially with regard to the role that culture plays in the governmental use of new media. Second, a sociocultural analysis of the use of new media, as scholars point out correctly, calls for a grounded approach that takes into consideration the contexts and the whole social interaction surrounding media texts (Cheong et al., 2012; Kong, 2014). In response to this call, I adopt a particular type of ethnography-informed discourse analysis –Action-Implicative Discourse Analysis (Tracy 1995, 2005) – as a useful method for the study of language and social interaction in contexts. More specifically, this method is used in this study to examine the interactivity between media users and the contexts, including the global/online publics, and the wider social interaction surrounding the Ai Weiwei case. Further explanation of this method is presented in a later section.

In view of the problems associated with a functionalist notion of culture in studying new media and intercultural communication (Cheong et al., 2012), I define "culture" as a distinctive way of speaking that is both sensible and normative to a group of people who share something in common, either geographically or intellectually. This definition draws upon theoretical discussions of culture from scholarly work within the tradition of Ethnography of Communication, more specifically, the conceptualization of culture by Gerry Philipsen (1975, 1987) and his associates (Carbaugh, 1988; Philipsen, Coutu, & Covarrubias, 2005). According to this tradition, culture can be interpreted as speech codes that are constantly invoked, contested, and (re)negotiated in people's everyday communicative practices.

My approach to how culture affects Chinese government's use of new media in response to an international communication crisis alludes to the notion and the practice of "Chinese culture" not as an essential entity but rather a code or resource for people to utilize, contest, and (re)negotiate culturally acceptable ways of speaking in a particular context. A relevant observation here is that what is cultural can well be political (Halualani & Nakayama, 2010), especially in situations of power difference. In this study, I am primarily concerned with the Chinese government's cultural ways of speaking or what I call "cultural framing" and the political consequences of these ways of speaking in dealing with international communication crisis in this new media age.

METHOD

Sample

The data collected for this study include online news reports, editorials, and online comments surrounding the Ai Weiwei's case retrieved from the U.S. edition of *China Daily* and public commentary that appeared on Twitter, one of the most popular social media outlets in the world. *China Daily* is a top state-controlled information channel that reports domestic news in Chinese and English. The *China Daily* website (usa.chinadaily.com.cn) allows the commenting function so that the online public can post responses to news. These comments and responses from global readers shed light on the public perception of the official information in the Ai Weiwei case.

Six news reports and editorials, and 113 online comments were obtained from the *China Daily* website from April 6 to June 25, 2011. This time slot was adopted because all major news reports featuring the Ai Weiwei case on the *China Daily* website appeared during this time. The final editorial addressing Ai's arrest was published online on June 25, three days after his release. After that, neither *China Daily* nor any other major Chinese newspaper published on this controversial case. Table 1 summarizes the titles, dates of publication, and the number of comments associated with each *China Daily* article. In addition, a comparative data set of 88 English tweets and 51 Chinese tweets was compiled to examine the public response in social media. It is important to note that only news reports and tweets exclusively talking about Ai's case were collected for the analysis.

Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis, as a method for empirical studies on language use in sociocultural contexts, has been widely adopted in communication studies. In this study, I conduct a specific type of discourse analysis called AIDA (Action-Implicative Discourse Analysis) developed by Karen Tracy (1995, 2005). This type

Table 1. News reports and editorials related to the Ai Weiwei case published by China Daily between April 6 and June 25, 2011

Publication Date	Title	No. of Comments
April 9, 2011	Political activism cannot be a legal shield	55
April 14, 2011	Ideological bias clouds Western views	19
April 29, 2011	Human rights lecture not needed	8
June 22, 2011 June 22, 2011	Ai Weiwei released on bail U.S. consul-general in HK must respect the facts	3 1
June 25, 2011	Legal procedure follows its own principles	27

of analysis attends to problems, interactional strategies, and situated ideals within existing communicative practices in a given situation (usually a problematic one). Ethnographic in nature, AIDA starts with a researcher developing extensive knowledge about the routine actions and interactions occurring in a communicative practice (e.g., "apologia" during a communication crisis). Based on this knowledge, the researcher then moves to identifying and naming the communication problem, analyzing interactional strategies, and eventually constructing a situated ideal that is practically useful for people to use to think and act wisely in their communication.

Tracy (2005) notes, it is not uncommon for researchers to focus on a particular phase (e.g., labeling the communication problem) in a single project because of the complexities and the depth of communicative practices in some situations. As such, this study concentrates on analyzing the media frames as one type of interactional strategy utilized by the Chinese government to respond to international condemnation of Ai's arrest. AIDA provides conceptual tools to identify salient cultural frames embedded in mediated discourses and to capture the contestation of these frames in the online media environment. More importantly, AIDA offers a systematic and empirical approach to the study of media framing. Tankard (2011) mentions a danger in the study of media frames; that is, frames sometimes are identified arbitrarily. Based on detailed analyses of the media content and the online comments and responses, AIDA provides a grounded study of media frames in sociocultural contexts.

RESULTS

Salient Media Frames in China's Online Media Discourse

In order to determine the most salient frames in Chinese online media discourse, I first examined each individual text to identify the underlying frames and then compared these frames across all the data I collected. As a result, my data analysis reveals that three salient frames appeared in the Chinese government's online media response to what happened in the Ai Weiwei case. Specifically, the themes "Western prejudices against China," "China's achievements," and "a new/different China" emerged. As the wording of these frames suggests, news reports and editorials from *China Daily* are more interested in constructing a positive national image (partly through positioning China as a victim subject to Western bias and demonization) than discussing the specifics of Ai's arrest. Table 2 describes the three frames with main threads of information and ideas that are exploited in the online media discourse used to construct them.

Western Prejudice Against China

In response to the international criticism, official Chinese media took a strong stance defending the government's position in the Ai Weiwei case, as shown by the titles of news reports and editorials, "Political Activism Cannot be Legal Shield" and "Human Rights Lecture not Needed." This overt defensive tone is built upon, most pervasively, the framing of "Western prejudice against China" (see Data Excerpt 1).

Data Excerpt 1:
"Ideological Bias Clouds Western Views"
China Daily 2011-04-14 08:02

Table 2. Media frames in China's online media discourse

Frames	Selected Information
Western prejudice against China	Ideological confrontation (China vs. the West) Cold War mentality Western media hostility China, not a dangerous place in Western perception Demonization of China
China's achievements	Economic development Political and legal reforms Social development
A new/different China	The "Black Era" is gone Human rights have been improved Judicial system is in place with order and fairness Corrupt officials are rare

Ideological confrontation is the default mode for some Westerners and Western media when it comes to issues of human rights. For these people, it has become an intuitive reaction to point their fingers at China when anyone they consider a dissident is detained or arrested on legal grounds.

The detention of artist Ai Weiwei is no exception.

They were so eager to criticize China that they were too impatient to wait for the completion of the necessary judicial procedure and reacted before the relevant Chinese [P]ublic [S]ecurity [D]epartment announced why Ai was detained.

Instead, they started their customary verbal condemnation of China without any hesitation, asserting that the detention of Ai was for political reasons.

These Western media, and even some government representatives, continue to maintain that the Chinese government is persecuting Ai because of his political views even after the relevant Chinese judicial department announced that Ai was detained because of economic offences.

The "Western prejudice" frame is constructed, mostly significantly, through language choice. It is not merely that "ideological confrontation" between China and the West (or the Cold War mentality in the West) is highlighted in the media, but more crucially that Chinese media interpret the actions and intentions of the West based on this ideological confrontation. As suggested in this editorial, this ideological confrontation becomes the default mode for Westerners and Western media to understand China. Their "intuitive reaction," eagerness to "criticize China," impatience to "wait for the completion of the necessary judicial procedure," and tendency to make assertions, all – descriptors of the West – indicate enduring prejudice against China, and it is these prejudices that should be condemned rather than what China has done to Ai Weiwei. In this sense, the "Western prejudice" frame is used to define the problem in the political drama by strategically incorporating certain information or facts, while concealing others. The questionable behavior of the Chinese government is de-problematized by deliberately channeling the public attention to those problematic biases that the West holds against China.

The hostility and demonization of China in Western media uncover another issue in the "prejudice" frame. Chinese media reference some potentially problematic terms and phrases used in the Western media as a strategy to confront and question the Western prejudice (see Data Excerpt 2).

Data Excerpt 2:
Political Activism Cannot be Legal Shield"
"*China Daily*, 2011-04-09 07:26

Chinese artist Ai Weiwei is being investigated over "suspected economic crimes," according to authorities on Thursday. Some Western media outlets immediately questioned the charge as a "catch-all crime," and insisted on interpreting the case in their own way.

Western media claimed that Ai was "missing" or had "disappeared" in previous reports, despite their acknowledgement of Ai's detainment. They used such words to paint the Chinese government as a "kidnapper."

Now they describe the police's charge as "laughable" and flout the spirit of the law. They depict anyone conducting anti-government activities in China as being innocent, and as being exempt unconditionally from legal pursuit.

In this excerpt, the writer questions the labels that the Western media assign to the Chinese government (e.g., "kidnapper") as well as the descriptors they used to report on Ai's case (e.g., Ai was "missing" or "disappeared"). By questioning these linguistic labels and descriptors, this editorial alludes to Western media's prejudices against China through this strategic "deliberate misunderstanding" of the situation. In other words, because of these prejudices, the West "immediately questioned the charge" and "insist[ed] on interpreting the case in their own way" despite their acknowledgement of that they did not know what "really happened."

China's Achievements

The second salient frame from the media concerns China's achievements and development after the national Opening Up Policy of 1978. This frame organizes the media content around discussions of China's economic and social development, as well as its political and legal reforms (see Data Excerpt 3).

Data Excerpt 3:
"Human Rights Lecture not Needed"
China Daily, 2011-04-29 07:56

During the past three decades of reform and opening up, China has achieved a lot in terms of economic development and openness and tolerance in society. People's living standards are rising and there has been marked progress in democratic decision-making and rule of law.

The emphasis put on positive developments of China is a strategic move in situations of crisis. Seemingly irrelevant information is included in this editorial to suggest a frame for the international audience to interpret the Chinese government's action in preferable ways. Interestingly, these news reports cover a wide range of China's achievements and progress, of which some are not relevant at all to what happened to Ai Weiwei. In Excerpt 4, the development of legal system in China is somehow linked to maintaining an economic order that "generates foreign exchanges powerful enough to purchase US treasury bonds."

Date Excerpt 4:
"Political Activism Cannot be Legal Shield"
China Daily, 2011-04-09 07:26

China's legal system ensures the basic order of this large-scale country. It guarantees the balanced development of civil livelihood and social establishment. Besides, it maintains an economic order that not only propels domestic growth but also generates foreign exchanges powerful enough to purchase US treasury bonds.

A New/Different China

This frame also sets out to promote a positive new image of China, but one different from the "achievement" frame; the focus here juxtaposes that China has gotten rid of its miserable past and is moving toward a promising future. More importantly, this new/different China requires the West to see China from a perspective that goes beyond this "default mode" of ideological confrontation between the East and the West. This framing, in particular, acknowledges the widely spread "bad" stories about China's domestic issues, such as human rights and corruption, but tries to downplay these negative aspects of China and at the same time highlight the differences between a "China in the past" and the "China in the present." See Data Excerpt 5.

Data Excerpt 5:
"Human Rights Lecture not Needed"
China Daily, 2011-04-29 07:56

According to the latest opinion survey by Reuters/Ipsos, 78 percent of Chinese respondents surveyed are optimistic about the future of their country.

The Chinese government and people are working hard to overcome difficulties and challenges along the way, as they endeavor to build a strong, prosperous, democratic, culturally advanced and harmonious socialist country. China will have a promising future.

Responses From the Online Public

A general observation about the online public response to these media frames on *China Daily*'s website is that the majority are very critical of the government's efforts and accounts in this case, while a small group of commenters resonate with these frames and use them in their own comments to attack the Western bias and conspiracy against China.

Commenters who accept the Chinese media framing of Ai's arrest accuse the West (the US in particular) of being hypocritical, practicing a double standard on human rights, and holding prejudices (and even conspiracies) against China, with no respect. The first two online comments below illustrate that how some readers make sense of the "Western prejudice against China" frame and use them to accuse the West of trying to demonize China in the name of protecting Ai's human rights and freedom of speech. See online comment 1 and 2. Similar to the framing strategy in the Chinese media, the focal issue in the online comments shifts from what the Chinese government has done to Ai to what the West has done (or been doing) to China.

Data Excerpt 6:
Online Comments
Comment 1 (2011-04-12 10:53)

"The US government ... does not round up and take away its citizens who merely criticize government officials."

The US govt fools the world and its citizens into BELIEVING that it is for "human rights," "free speech," freedom of assembly." We know it's baloney!

Comment 2 (2011-04-10 10:53)

Yes, patience is always a good virtue irrespective of any situation. Why are you so presumptuous to think that there will not be a trial? Do you mean western style legal nonsense? As I said earlier, "when in Rome do what the Romans do." Don't expect people all the world want the twisted western style democracy. It is just crazy like a demon invading, killing and raping smaller countries from Afghanistan to Libya. What a double standard evil!

However, not all commenters agree with how Ai's case is framed in the Chinese online media. The majority of them challenge these salient frames, especially the "achievements" and the "new/different China" frames; and they raise questions about the social and political progress (e.g., human rights and freedom of the press) claimed by the Chinese media. Their critical engagement with Chinese media's framing reveals deeper problems and crises within and outside of China (e.g., the tension between China and the U.S.). These comments point to the core problems in contemporary China, namely, the government's control of the press, its censorship on the Internet, and its lack of transparency. In contrast to those readers who buy into the Chinese official media framing, these critical voices contest the official frames in ways that direct the public attention to China's internal problems. See online comments 3 and 4 in Data Excerpt 7.

Data Excerpt 7:
Online Comments
Comment 3 (2011-06-22 14:27)

China's progress in human rights protection is out there for everyone to see' –where? Good working conditions, quality of water, freedom of speech, freedom to learn, freedom of the press, freedom of commerce – outside of Government press, these are not easy to find.

Comment 4 (2011-04-10 11:57)

If China is so sure of its position on Weiwei, why does it not allow the other side of the story…. it's all too familiar that whenever CNN/BBC starts talking about it, suddenly, by sheer coincidence, the screen goes black…why

The tweets (and retweets) on Twitter demonstrate a different kind of response to China's arrest of Ai in 2011. Most of the tweets between April 3 and June 25 are links for news reports, blogs, and online documentaries about Ai Weiwei, and these links are predominantly from American media outlets, such as *The New York Times* and *The Guardian*. Because of governmental control over the Internet within China, Chinese citizens need to find a way to bypass the "Great Firewall" or leave the country in order to gain access to Twitter. Based on the data we collected, these tweets (in Chinese and in English) were mainly spreading news reports and commentaries from well-regarded Western news networks to attract the online public's attention to what happened to Ai, but showed very little engagement with China's media framing. The (re)tweets that occurred on the Internet during Ai's detention make up 93 percent of all the English tweets (88 in total) and 94 percent of all the Chinese tweets (51 in total). This rising number of tweets during Ai's detention can be interpreted to the global public use of Twitter to broadcast Ai's arrest so as to press the government to release Ai.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION: CULTURAL FRAMING AND ONLINE CONTESTATION

The current study investigates the Chinese government's use of new media in response to an international communication crisis surrounding the Ai Weiwei case. Through a discourse analysis of *China Daily*'s official online news reports, editorials and related Twitter messages, the study identifies three most salient media frames in China's online media discourse, and traces how these frames are contested by the online public, and how they connect with deeper cultural frames that go beyond a single media event. Specifically, cultural frames such as "a new/different China" and "China-as-a-victim" are strategic communication devices adopted by the government to assert its discourse power and control on the Internet, as shown by the analysis.

In the Ai Weiwei case, the Chinese government had monitored the public discussion on the Internet and at the same time tried to introduce favorable media frames, intended particularly for Western and other foreign English-speaking audiences, to influence international public opinion. In the online media discourse, there are three salient media frames adopted by the government to explain what happened to Ai to the global audiences. These media frames, although seemingly not relevant to the focal issues in Ai's detention, point to some deeper cultural framing embedded in Chinese official media in response to a specific communication crisis in the international context.

The "Western prejudice against China" frame suggests a profound cultural thinking embedded in the government's official discourse to speak to global audiences regarding politically problematic issues. The positioning of China as a victim, who has been prejudiced against, converges with what Renwick and Cao (1999) called, a "China-as-a-victim" frame. Renwick and Cao state that the notion of Chinese victimhood is heavily informed by China's modern history, and that this frame frequently appears in China's media discourse to legitimize the Communist Party's rule in China and to provide convenient means for telling an official story to the international audience. In other words, "China-as-a-victim" media frame has become a powerful tool for the Chinese government in its use of online media to influence how international *others* perceive and interpret China's action. "China's achievements" and "a new/different China" also demonstrate some cultural resonance with the online public. Similarly, Wu (2006) found that China's progress (economic, political, and legal) was frequently invoked in the government's discourse surrounding the HIV/AIDs crisis in 2004.

Although cultural framing serves the government well to secure and maintain its control over the flow of information, the online public, through comments and tweets, questions the government's accountability and transparency, as in the Ai Weiwei case. Some comments echo the "China-as-a-victim" frame, referring to the U.S. as a "bully," while others are critical and dubious about the "progress" and "a different China" frames. Overall, online comments present various arguments against such framing and press the government to acknowledge people's right to have access to information on the Internet. As Yang (2009) notes, the communication revolution occurring on the Chinese Internet has raised the awareness of ordinary citizens and their ability to participate in political discussion, debate, and criticism. Thus, the findings of the current study confirm the social and political changes in Chinese society that scholars had observed.

The analysis indicates that the Chinese government executes its control over the media not only by monitoring access to media outlets but also by introducing suitable media frames. Nevertheless, Chinese citizens, who want to find out what is happening in China during international communication crises, such as the Ai Weiwei case, can turn to new media platforms like Twitter to explore, share, and form connections around the globe. In addition, Chinese citizens' use of new media, such as news sites and blogs, has raised new cultural expectations concerning the government's accountability and transparency in its communication with the online/global public. Nowadays, it is not unusual to see online petitions and comments that request the government to disclose information to the public. This emerging social norm in Chinese people's public life is intriguing. The government controls new media and utilizes them to assert its global influence culturally, economically, and politically; however, it cannot simply stop people around the globe from reading another version of the story being told. The results of the study suggest that online contestation of media framing in China's official media discourse contributes to the formation of new cultural expectations and norms in Chinese society and challenges the government's ability to tell its own stories without dispute. New media foster online discussion and stimulate public debate of China's accountability and transparency in interacting with domestic and global audiences during crisis communication.

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Chapter 27
New Media Technology and Development Journalism in Nigeria

Oluchi Emma Okoroafor
Imo State University, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

News consumption today is not the same as pre-satellite era when people waited for their newspapers or wait for an appointed time for the evening news on television but now people tune in to events happening around the world through 24-hours television news channels. More recently, readers, viewers and listeners are going online for their news. Television, newspapers and radio are still in Nigeria but there is a growing competition from interactive online media. The high technological revolution has significantly altered the way the public obtain its news and information, and has deprived the mass media of its traditional monopoly. Today various computerized sources are regularly being used in media organizations. This chapter seeks to explore how the new media technologies are helping journalists in gathering, packaging and dissemination of news on economic development and the challenges being encountered by the journalists in the use of the new media technologies.

INTRODUCTION

Development journalism looks and focuses at conditions in developing states (third world countries) and how to improve them. It covers news about the socio-economic issues that are often neglected, uncovering them and proffer workable solutions in order to build a healthy and balanced society. It exposes poverty worldwide and helps to research the causes, consequences and how to address poverty in developing nations. Development Journalism is the kind of journalism that pays sustained attention to the coverage of ideas, policies, programs, activities and events dealing with the improvement of the life of people. Development journalism involves putting in place all the necessary segments of a society in order to advance in a hitch-free way. That is to say, it looks at news reportage in a way to promotes national development to the advantage of the citizens, while gaining social and mental control over their

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domain, unlike the conventional journalism which goes around chasing breaking news to feed the masses with, at the detriment of developmental issues in the society.

The power of development journalism cannot be underestimated. It has been seen as a catalyst and purveyor of social change. It is used to create awareness about the problematic situation in a society. Development journalism attempts to document the conditions within a country so that the larger world can understand them. As development is central to every facet of the society, development journalism is used to propel developments in the society. That is to say, it is used to uncover the areas in the society that needs more attention and work by the government. When this is achieved, the society experiences growth in every ramification.

In addition, Wahl-Jorgensen and Hanitzsch (n.d) define it as independent journalism that highlights news of development projects, provides critical coverage of development planning and programs, and informs readers on how the development process is affecting them. Although the concept of development journalism sounds simple, it has been highly politicized since it was first conceived in the 1960s. Much of the debate over development journalism has focused on the issue of press freedom, and whether or not a commitment to covering economic development from a positive and even "emancipatory" perspective is fundamentally at odds with freedom of the press. In its early days, development journalism was linked to theories of communication and development, and was thus affected by the politics of the cold war.

Nigeria, as a developing nation has been engulfed with imbalance reporting which has negative effect on the people, and as such underrepresent the nation before the outside world. Most issues that concern the rural dwellers are given lower and poor reportage, while issues about the urban dwellers are projected wide and clear by the media, but it should be that both sides are given equal reported as they deserve the same attention and recognition by the government. The government belongs to the people, there should be a balance developmental projects for both the urban and the remote areas as no side has an exclusive right to enjoy alone the honey from the honey well. As earlier noted, this is one of the major reasons for development journalism, giving equal reportage on issues of concern to both the rich and the poor in a given society.

Development journalism holds the key to good governance in any society. This is seen in the way it is used to promote, project and support the activities of the government by the journalist, which brings about total progress in the society. In a bid to look at the development journalist as also an investigative journalist, Nwosu (1989) said that this is seen in the unfeigned interest and dedication of the journalist in pursuit of things that matter to the public through the way he carries out his duties, the public is empowered with information. As investigative reporters, they uncover the stories within the stories, revealing the multifaceted nature of the problem.

The areas a development journalist may cover include the following issues; economic development, agriculture and food security, health, sanitation and medicine, employment, education and literacy, information technological development, housing conditions, environmental sustainability, gender equality etc. Its main concern is the ordinary people, stability and partnership rather than official figures. Journalists are encouraged to visit the remote areas, interact with the citizens and report back. They also look at the proposed government projects to know whether it will improve the low conditions in the country and analyses whether or not they will be effective, if not, the reporter may come up with proposed solutions. In making sure that the proposed project is carried out, he becomes a middle man between the government (policy makers) and people, ensuring that the people are actively involved and their interest are well protected in the policy. The three key players must be involved in the project which will in turn make a healthy and vibrant democracy.

Early practitioners of development journalism used it more in the agricultural sectors. Nations like India, Indonesia, Malaysia and others used this as a medium to disseminate information on new agricultural methods in order to enhance and boost their agricultural produce. (Anand, 2014). It is the sole responsibility of any development journalist to advocate, support and promote any government policies that are in the interest of the society. It then behooves on the journalist to partner with the government and its policies in a bid to enhance the quality of life of the citizens. This can be achieved through sharing the common goal of building a progressive and stable society. As a good development journalist, he brings attention to issues that are overlooked or under represented by other media and by the international political community.

The new media technology is seen as any application that uses digital technique, computerized systems or data network to transfer information. New media technologies are digital and grounded on an interactive community. With this, the work of the development journalist is transformed and made simpler. This is seen in the way and manner the journalist gathers, processes and disseminates the information about developmental projects to the target audience. In support of the above asserting, Deuze (cited by Batos and Moutinho, 2009) identifies three major areas the internet has influenced the journalism profession. These include; advancement in democratic culture, availability of resources to its users and the opportunity for interaction between the people and their leaders. Hermans (2009) also aligned his view to that of Deuze when he pointed out that the advent of new media has indeed changed the way journalist works around the world. This seemingly change is seen in the way the journalist gathers, processes, shares and gets feedback on news and as a result of this paradigm shift, the public also adjusted in the way and manner they consume news.

The good rapport between the new media and development journalism practice is viewed on the premise that technology is the pivot of social change. The availability of internet enables the development journalist to do a background research in order to make his story free from factual errors which has a way of influencing the society in a good way, thereby bringing change on every facet. The new technologies used by the development journalist in news gathering, processing and disseminating of information to the target audience include websites, social media, computer multimedia, CD-Roms and DVD, e-mail, search engines, face-book, blog, twitter etc.

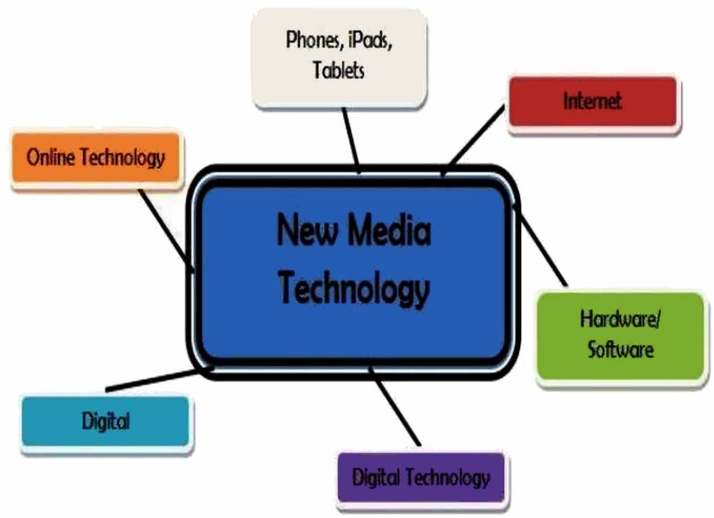
The above story can be represented as shown in Figure 1.

DEVELOPMENT JOURNALISM

The concept of development journalism emerged at a workshop for economic writers in the Philippines in the late 1960s (Gunaratne, 1996; Stevenson, 1994). At the workshop, the British journalist, Asia-hand and champion of development journalism, Alan Chalkley, told the participants that journalists should alert news audiences to development problems and open their eyes to possible solutions (Chalkley, 1968). Without claiming to be “a new kind of journalism,” development journalism represented “a new attitude towards the treatment of certain subjects” in relation to development. It was designed to serve the ordinary people, not the elite (Chalkley,1980, p. 215).

Theoretically equipped with the proliferating development communication paradigm, journalism was believed and expected to play a key role in facilitating and fostering national development. Such a belief and expectation constituted the driving forces behind the rising popularity of development journalism

Figure 1.
Source: www.slideshare.net.



among developing nations in Asia, Africa and Latin America. This has remained vital and vibrant in journalism practice despite criticisms and prejudices.

Historically, development journalism emerged out of the urgent need for social, economic and political development in Asia in the "chaotic aftermath of the Pacific War and colonialism in many Asian countries" (Richstad, 2000, p. 279). It was situated in "the growing number of independent economies in the world, the sharp rise in sophistication and modernization among them—and, most of all, the soaring aspirations of the people" in the post 1945 years (Chalkley, 1980, p.215). Its mission lied "in furthering the emancipation of such deprived groups as the urban poor, the rural people, women and so on, and helping them to participate in the political process, and to influence their destinies" (Quebral, 1975; as cited in Kunczik, 1988, p. 85).

Development journalism also grew out of the special role of journalism played by former journalists who became leaders of newly independent states in Africa. These include Ghana's Kwame Nkrumah, founder and publisher of the 'Accra Evening News,' Nigeria's Nnamdi Azikiwe, 'West Africa Pilot,' Kenya's Jomo Kenyata, founder and publisher of a Kikuyu newspaper, influential in the independence struggle and Tanzania's Julius Nyerere, publisher of 'Uhuru,' the TANU party newspaper" (Kunczik, 1988, p. 85). These journalists-turned politicians emphasized the importance of journalism in shaping national identities and promoting national cohesion (Kunczik, 1988). Where is the place of Chief Obafemi Awolowo whose newspaper organization is the only oldest surviving privately owned newspaper in Nigeria?

Having been practiced for more than four decades across three continents, development journalism has generated diverse principles and practices. Ironically, such diversity has not been duly captured in journalism studies. What is more disturbing is the absence of systematic and theoretical constructs and corresponding models to describe, explain and predict its different practices and performances. The situation is largely caused by the fact that, development journalism has long been neglected by the journalism research community.

Development journalism may not be new but, it is still a novelty in the Nigerian setting since we are yet to embrace its potentialities. Through the advent of technology, the world has become a global village. The media perform the role of teaching, informing, educating and entertaining the public, in addition to encouraging socio-economic and political development in nations of the world, Nigeria inclusive. It is not an overstatement that the Nigerian media give prominence to politics and business issues while reporting on developmental issues is scarcely covered therefore, affecting the development and growth of the nation. The relevance of the media as critical interface between the government and the people in a democracy is almost gone while media reports are mostly, uni-polar, from the government to the people without feedback (Falobi, 2010). According to Rogers (1988, p.573), he gives credence to this when he defines development "as a widely participatory process of social change in a society, intended to bring about both social and material advancement (including greater equity, freedom and other valued qualities) for the majority of the people through their gaining greater control over their environment. Taking from the explanation of Rogers, development journalism should examine news reportage in a way to foster the national development to the benefit of the greater masses in order to gain both social and mental control over their domain.

Certain types of news and issues though because of their negative nature have become stereotyped as development issues, while many others get ignored. Some examples of the former are illiteracy, unemployment, rural poverty and those of the latter are urban housing problems, sanitation, education and literacy levels or children in urban slums and the likes. However, the rural issues merit serious attention so do issues affecting the less-privileged sectors in any part of society. It would be a misconception to believe that the "disadvantaged" constitutes only the poor farmers. The urban migrant population, slum dwellers, street children, HIV affected people, rural tribes all of these people would come under the tag of the disadvantaged. It is important to identify them thus, because they deserve the attention of the authorities concerned. As communication revolution continues to shape the perspective of the society, the media industry is growing by leaps and bounds (long and energetic). This growth also gets reflected in the issues that are chosen for media coverage and the way in which these lappers. The growing urban-rural divide is evident in media reporting. Even at the urban level, most often, issues that affect the lowest common denominator in society are ignored. Power equations and commercial interests have taken over the commitment of the media (Aziz, 2014).

This form of journalism should also motivate the active participation of the affected people and advocate for their interest, rather than glossing over the views of the policy makers and planners. Development is a central social objective and the mass media play a decisive rule in this process. The assumption of development communication concerning modernization and dependency is no longer fashionable in Nigeria. In his view, Kunczik (1995, p.55) notes that development journalism comprises the reporting on ideas, programs, activities and events, which are related to improvement of the living standard, mainly in the rural regions. He then asserts that journalism is able to influence the development process by reporting on development programs and activities.

Accordingly, it is the journalist's duty to critically examine and evaluate the relevance of a developing project to national and local needs: the difference between a planned scheme and its actual implementation, and the difference between its impact on people as claimed by government officials and as it actually is. Kunczik then asserts that reporting on national and international events is only desirable if they constructively contribute to the development of the living standard of the citizens.

FORMS OF DEVELOPMENT JOURNALISM

There are different forms of development journalism as practiced by journalists depending on their backgrounds and setting. They are;

Investigative Development Journalism

Investigative journalism is a form of journalism in which reporters deeply investigate a single topic of interest, such as serious crimes, political corruption, or corporate wrongdoing. An investigative journalist may spend months or years researching and preparing a report. Investigative journalism is a primary source of information. Most investigative journalism is conducted by newspapers, wire services, and freelance journalists. Practitioners sometimes use the term "accountability reporting" (Wikipedia, 2000).

An investigative reporter may make use of one or more of these tools, among others, on a single story:

- Analysis of documents, such as lawsuits and other legal documents, tax records, government reports, regulatory reports, and corporate financial filings.
- Databases of public records.
- Investigation of technical issues, including scrutiny of government and business practices and their effects.
- Research into social and legal issues.
- Subscription research sources such as LexisNexis.
- Numerous interviews with on-the-record sources as well as, in some instances, interviews with anonymous sources (for example whistleblowers).
- Federal or state Freedom of Information Acts to obtain documents and data from government agencies.

The first form as classified by Kunczik (1995, p.84) is comparable to a western style investigative journalism. It comprises reporting which critically examines development projects on the one hand and controls government activities on the other hand. For this form to be effective, freedom of the press will be a basic requirement.

Benevolent Authoritarian Development Journalism

The other form of development journalism can be classified as benevolent authoritarianism. This allows systematic manipulation of information in favour of a subtle development serving the common welfare. Journalists in this background form a kind of free intelligence and critically examine the aims of national development and the applicable instruments in a rational discourse via reasonable criteria free of social constraints.

Socio-Technological Development Journalism

What seems to be a pragmatic solution for the mentioned descriptive and normative view, is offered by the so-called socio-technological development journalism. The approach strictly adheres to the needs of the population and supports the (normative) perception that the people concerned should participate in the development projects. The tasks of journalism from this view include motivating the audience to actively cooperate and on the other hand, defending the interests of those concerned. Interaction of population and journalists is required such that the audience is seen to be involved in the decision making process. To achieve this, journalists must be capable of distinguishing the crucial points and of comprehensibly pointing up, every social process for the recipients as complex as it may be. Assistance for interpretation has to be provided for decision making and journalists have to be committed to finding solutions while it is equally important to show success stories achieved by single citizens, which can serve as role models for the audience. Since development is considered as solution to social problems in general, development journalism is no longer exclusively limited to rural areas.

Mass communication theory posits that one of the preconditions for development journalism is the availability of a potential audience (Odhiambo, 1991, p.18). The other preconditions are the development of symbolic language technology and evolution of freedom of expression. Peters (2010) succinctly summarizes that, media development is sacrosanct to development journalism as a result; it will encompass a wide range of work which can be generally defined as actions in support of:

- A system of media regulation and administration that ensures freedom of expression, pluralism and diversity.
- Strengthening media capacity to inform people on issues that shape their lives.
- Plurality and diversity of media, transparent and equal market conditions and full transparency of ownership.
- Media as a platform for democratic discourse within a climate or respect for journalism that represents professional independence and diversity of views and interests in society.
- Professional capacity building and supporting institutions for advocacy and development of media freedom, independence, pluralism and diversity.
- Professional training and skills development and for the media sector as a whole to be both monitored and supported by professional associations and civil society organizations.
- Infrastructural capacity that is sufficient to support independent and pluralistic media so that the media sector is characterized by high or rising levels of public access; efficient use of technology to gather and distribute news information (GFMO World Conference, 2007).

The theory of development sees the press as an instrument of social justice and a tool for achieving beneficial social changes. In other words, the media should carry out positive development tasks in line with nationally established policy. However, in reality things have not worked out in line with this theory. In Nigeria, there has been pressure on journalists to ally themselves with the political forces, but in doing so they have lost their independence. In this way, journalists can be severely hampered from reporting fully, fairly and independently, hence one cannot be certain that, development does get advanced in such situation.

NEW MEDIA TECHNOLOGY

The term new media according to Musa (2009, p. 13) "encompasses the emergence of digital, computerized or networked information and communication technologies in the later part of the 20th century." Technology as reasoned by Rogers (1995) is an important aspect in the diffusion of an innovation. This innovation according to him is best communicated using the new media in order to reach the widest audience in the shortest frame. Joshi cited in Musa (2009) argued that, modern communication must serve as a means to societal development. In a similar manner, Rice (1984) defined the new media as communication technologies that enable or facilitate user-to-user interactivity between user and information. Flew (2002) contended that as a result of the evolution of new media technologies, globalization occurs. Croteau and Hoynes (2003:p.11) explained that, the new media "radically break the connection between physical place and social place, making physical location much less significant for our social relationships." Carely in Flew (2002) refers to the shortening of distance between people all over the world as "death of distance" The New Media has the ability to connect like-minded people all over the world. Monavich (2001, p. 41), remarked that the new media follows the logic of the postindustrial or globalized society whereby "every citizen can construct her own custom, lifestyle and select her ideology from a large number of choices".

Megwa (2011) believes that hybrised media – Community Radio and Information Communication Technology can lead to poverty reduction. In a study he conducted in South Africa on community radio, community conversation with stakeholders, face-to-face interviews with management and workers of community radio; focused group interview and observational study were used as data collection methods. It was conceptually established that technology can be good or bad depending on the usage. Rupert Murdoch cited in Ikiebe (2011, p.4), establishes this fact: To find something comparable, you have to go back 500 years to the printing press, the birthplace of the media. Technology is shifting power away from the editors, the publishers and the media elite.

Community media is about the people and the new media also empower the people to take their communication destinies into their hands, and that takes us into the concept of media convergence. Media convergence as a change force according to Ikiebe (2011, p. 4), is "producing borderless world, and is posing new regulatory, ethical, cultural, social and geo-political challenges." Media convergence produced conversed journalists in the digital age. Dominick (2009) explained that the convergence reporter is one who can write stories for a print or a website, shoot and post photos online, and a video as well. The concept presupposes the convergence of the print journalist and video journalist to produce the 21st century version of the news correspondence. This feat cannot be possible without the use of digital and cell phones, video cameras and high speed internet access. (Xu, 2005)

TECHNOLOGY AND JOURNALISM PRACTICES

Over the past quarter century, dramatic technological advances in the production, manipulation, and dissemination of images have transformed the practices of journalism, entertainment, and advertising as well as the visual environment itself. In an age of ubiquitous information, news junkies have never had it so good, at the touch of a button, online news is available everywhere from the "Times of India" on the web to online versions of the "The Hindustan Times" daily. With massive changes in the media environment and its technologies, interrogating the nature of news journalism is one of the most urgent tasks one faces in defining the public interest today.

The arrival of the digital revolution, the evolution of the Internet, the emergence of new forms of media, and the rise of online social networks have all reshaped the media landscape and made "the press" of 2011 something that many could not have imagined. From digital retouching to wholesale deception, the media world is now beset by an unprecedented range of professional challenges. Not only because of the different media that arise, but the new dynamics of work. Every day, the new devices and tools are added in exponential growth that sometimes appears to cause an excess of choices and opportunities that journalists and audience do not know yet. These new frontiers of media have enriched news and information resources and reshaped what traditionally has been the realm of print press, broadcasters, and news agencies. The challenge is to optimize fully the potential of the Internet and digital media without compromising civil liberties.

There are countless ways in which digital technologies have impacted on the practice of journalism, from the way reporters gather information and present news stories to how news organizations structure themselves and do business. Digital technologies have expanded quickly, permeating society with new formats and possibilities of communication. Multimedia has become part of the routine of the vast majority of professionals and require schools to change their ways of teaching and learning. If we look into the future, we can foresee a media landscape dominated by a highly fragmented, though active audience, intense media competition, and scarce advertising dollars. By embracing new technologies, professional journalism and media can hold on to their role as a vital information lifeline and continue to operate as the tool of a successful democracy.

With the dawn of the information age (and electronic journalism), journalists' functions have shifted from information transmission to information processing (Jurgensen & Meyer, 1992; Schudson, 1995). In McLuhan's works, we learn that every medium presents a different sensory experience to the world. It comes as no surprise then that journalism's foundation has begun to change with the latest medium – the Internet. The unique Internet attributes of interactivity and multimedia are forcing significant evolutions in journalistic culture as the basic mission of the reporter has evolved for the digital world. Web technology has provided opportunities for sources and audiences to participate in news production. Scholars have begun calling reporters "gatewatchers" (Bruns, 2005) and information "monitors" (Deuze, 2003), insisting that they share authority willingly and embrace "citizen media" (Gillmor, 2004). Buzz words such as "networked journalism" (Jarvis, 2006) and "communal media" (Jenkins, 2006) demonstrate how some people are thinking about the Web technology as an opportunity for a journalistic revolution (Bruns & Jacobs, 2006) where citizens have a responsibility to speak up, create content, and counter mainstream media in virtual venues (Kline & Burnstein, 2005).

Old media like publishing used to require a printing press. Circulation was limited to a fraction of a geographical location. Broadcasting via radio and television rely on expensive equipment to transmit signals around a country, regionally or globally. Now, once a user connects to the internet, he has access to a platform that is at once global and free. The new model assumes that the devices themselves are smart. This means that one may propose or explore new models of communication and coordination without needing to get anyone's permission. An individual with a camera or a keyboard is now a non-profit of one and self-publishing is the norm.

Looking closely on the impact of the new media technologies on development journalism, scholars like Mudhai (2004) and Kupe (2003) conclude on the advantageous nature of the new media technologies as one which gives room for the users to express their opinions (feedback) to an issue raised or published. Hence, making it interactive. They emphatically argue that this interactive nature of the new media technologies has made journalists in Africa and beyond to be in constant link with their news audiences. The new media technologies have not only made users to be in interactive mood, but it has also redefined what goes on in the newsroom. This implies that the development journalist can work without physically being in contact with his colleagues as all communication, sharing of files and data have been done electronically. In using the new media technologies by the development journalist and his audience, the practice of development journalism is speedily enhanced. That is to say, that the use of new media technologies can facilitate the improvement of information and knowledge of the people on developmental projects in the community.

The structure and pattern of the new media technologies bring more people into the communication channels with the view of interacting with the news conveners and at the same time addressing their concern/opinion in the media agenda (Castells, 2008). This implies that the rural dwellers are engaged in interactive session in order to participate actively in the developmental process. Apart from the enhancement of the interactive spread of information on developmental issues by these new media technologies, they also help to promote social change through raising awareness and at the same time, facilitate information assimilation by the public. As a result, the development journalist uses the resources (new media technologies) in news gathering, discussing with the correspondents and engaging the news audience on issues that concern them. The new media technologies offer both the development journalist and the audience different platforms for interaction and making them good source of information for developmental news and in return providing feedback to the sender.

It is the interaction the audience have that makes them to be co-producers instead of only consumers of the media content. This is because they are included or engaged in the developmental process. As a result of this involvement, there is a greater sense of belonging or ownership and when people's efforts are incorporated into such projects, this will in turn transform the whole community in the areas of information it gets and its usage. When this is the case, the news will be more reliable because it was generated through a process of co-operation.

The interaction with the public will also help the development journalist and the policy makers (government) to know what the people want and in return strategize on how best to address the issues raised, which can be achieved through planning a well sophisticated developmental projects in the community through which the people will be empowered. Although, in depth studies are of high importance here to ascertain the extent the new media technologies are helping its users in stimulating their participation in debate of public issues which are related to societal development.

In addition to the above view, Kariithi (2007) lends his support by submitting that the growth and impact of the new media technologies has pose a challenge to the definition of the traditional journalism and at the same time mounts pressure on the mainstream journalism to either adapt or face annihilation. But this challenge should be seen as a complement, not a threat.

DEVELOPMENT JOURNALISM: AN AFRICAN PERSPECTIVE

The mass media have been used as an extension of the government to project social, economic and cultural development which propels the creation of national identity. This was the case in many African countries after the independence from the Western colonies in the late 1960's. according to Domatob and Hall (1983), they noted that most African regions adopted the practice of development journalism basically to promote and foster nation building. This shows that the power of development journalism cannot be underestimated; although this approach received some restraint due to the power of the government in regulating the media agenda. As a result of this, a modified version of development journalism came into play which was geared toward promoting issues of national interest and at the same time protecting independent reporting (Skjerdal, 2011).

African media failed earlier in the promotion of local values due to poor infrastructure, lack of adequate technology and training. Additionally, the method that was employed proved not to be suitable for the local reality because of the complexity of the African society in terms of ethnic and linguistic groups, literacy level and social differences (Domatob & Hall, 1983). According to Odinambo (1991), all of these situations constituted a gap in reaching the poor class and empowering them through development journalism.

Consequently, the community radio medium was used in Africa because of the way ir provided information and empowerment for the local dwellers and also because of its power to cut across illiteracy levels and distance. Edeani (1993) in addressing the issues of concern on the local dwellers submits that, it is important to create more awareness among the development journalist and the policy makers, that is the government, about the needs of the community which will enhance meaning and effective polices, programme and activities on rural developmental projects. This means that when this knowledge is available, there will be more progress in the community.

According to a study carried out by the African Media Development Initiative (AMDI) in 2006, it was reported that a larger access or utilization of the new media technologies, especially mobile phones and internet are verified across the African region, and this is seen to contribute to a larger number of user generated contents. Berger (2010) sees the usage of new media technologies by the Africans as an opportunity to bring ordinary people to take part in discovering issues and proffering solutions to the problems that are pertinent to them. The approach in getting the media messages across to the masses was dominated mostly by the official voices and this approach did not give room for the poor people to participate in the developmental process in their regions, hence they were relegated to the background.

However, the coming or advent of the new media technologies changed the whole process and the poor people could feel being part of the whole process. This is so because development journalism employs many avenues to tackle issues of local concern and at the same time, makes the voices of both the high and low to be heard and in return their various developmental needs are met which enhances national growth and sustainable development.

To buttress the above point, Scott, Commonwealth and UNESCO (2009) argue that;

… the new phenomenon is that rapid advances in the media technologies mean that audiences are able to gather more and wider ranging content to offer to broadcasters. And not only is new technology available, it is also more accessible and increasingly affordable to members of the public.

Besides this, Wilson, Warnock and Panos (2007) submit that "it is necessary to ensure not only the quantity, but also the quality of the user generated content to provide a pluralist media environment." With this, the development journalist is faced with generating media and information literacy which will help his audience in understanding the function of media and at the same time evaluating their message content which will help them to make an informed decision.

THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY ELECTRONIC JOURNALIST

The model for electronic journalism in the digital domain is the on-line database, rather than the daily newspaper or regularly scheduled television news program because of the abundance of bandwidth. The primary vehicle for news distribution is a self-defining, open network, rather than traditional point-tomultipoint broadcasting or print. The twenty-first century news machine is an interactive, multimedia system possessing the power of television, the portability of newspapers, and the flexibility of the telephone network. It will take maximum advantage of an open network that makes much more efficient use of available bandwidth than a one-way, closed system like broadcasting or cable television. (Kaul, 2013)

As a result of the advent of the new media technologies, the way people consume news has changed in order to adapt to the paradigm shift in the technological highway. This makes the development journalist to also beef up in order to meet up with the trend of information sourcing and consumption need of his audience. News consumers do not wait again for morning to break so that they will source their news from the print media or wait for an appointed or scheduled time to listen to the news from the electronic media, instead, the news consumers go directly online to surf the news as it is breaking or happening. In fact, the new media technologies have breached the gap between the mainstream media and the news consumers. That is to say that because of the participatory or interactive nature of the new media technologies in engaging the news audience, the gatekeeping function of the journalists is no longer fashionable.

Similarly, because of the great and speedy advancement of these new media technologies, the news industries are running up to keep abreast with technological terrain in the information super highway. In order to achieve this, it behooves on the development journalist to submit his stories for the diverse platforms or medium available- such as online, print and broadcast. And for the journalist to achieve this, he needs to be multi-skilled in the use of his new media technological gadgets which implies that he will be a convergent journalist.

Consumers of news have become participate in the news process. With this current trend, journalists will spend less time guessing what their customers might want to know and more time packaging and organizing an almost infinite body of raw material into reliable and useful information packages (Kaul, 2013).

More separate news organizations will appear, each a good deal smaller and more specialized than those we see today. From these smaller and more efficient news operations, a far greater volume and

Figure 2.
Source: Royston Robertson Cartoons.

variety of news will emerge, aimed at much smaller audiences than today's news departments. The very notion of "mass" media will fade into history. Before long, the hot news format will be individually customized "information on demand." News gathering and production equipment will continue to get cheaper and easier to use. The news gathering and presentation process that once required a large staff of technical specialists will be performed quite routinely by lone reporters armed with inexpensive camcorders, notebook computers, and portable telephones. The material these newspersons produce will be simultaneously created and distributed in a wide variety of formats. To survive in this more demanding and competitive environment, news producers will have to find new ways to profit from smaller shares of the total audience.

PRACTICUM ON HOW THE DIGITAL JOURNALIST OPERATES: TERAN'S EXPERIENCE

In the past, part of the job of a journalist in a print media outlet means finding a good story, conducting interviews and doing in depth research, and filing stories within the allotted timeline. These elements remain at the core, but new elements have been added. Now the journalist needs to generate audio and video along with text. The journalist wants his email address on story he writes in order to have direct information relationship with his readers and employers. According to Regan (2000), he participates in chats and forums and uses the new tools of modern storytelling available on a medium like the Web because he believes that they will add richness and depth to any piece on which he writes and at the same time be able to get his report to readers as fast as possible, on whatever platform they want to receive it.

Figure 3. Fully integrated newsroom
Source: Innovation Media, 2010.

Publishing digitally in the 21st century, does not necessarily mean putting up anything into the Web site. This is because we are in the era when technology is changing the whole process involved in journalism practice. As telephones gave reporters the ability to remain on the scene of a story longer or TV allowed journalists to tell news stories using moving pictures, these new media are already changing the way journalists do and engage in their jobs. While the basic canons of journalism remain the same (honesty, fairness, accuracy). The change has been felt on how the message reaches the target audiences/ readers; the tools the journalists employ to do the jobs; the type of the relationship which exist between the journalist and the people who access the information (Teran, 2000).

Recent statistics from groups such as the Pew Research Center and The Poynter Institute show that more and more people are choosing to read their news online, few would say that it is an experience they prefer to reading a newspaper or watching a TV. (Audio is an exception to this argument, as digital audio, via the Web or wireless, is already comparable to other media.) But at the recent Seybold Publishing Conference held in San Francisco, people who work in this area were saying that within two to three years, small devices like PDA's or ebook readers will have screen resolution comparable to ink on paper. Only it will be better, they say, because it will be back lit (so you can still read in the dark), with better contrast. Technology is quickly eliminating the usual reasons reporters find to avoid creating extra material for their new media partners. For instance, the digital audio recorder is only slightly larger than a cigarette lighter. The video camera is palm-sized. Laptops are shrinking and soon will be half the size and weight they were only two years ago. In other words, the barrier to creating more content has more to do with attitude than with inconvenience. This is particularly true for print reporters, who love to complain about how overworked they are and while they are overworked, the reality is that most of the extra content mentioned above took almost no extra time to create or prepare. A more practical example of how these new media works effectively was seen in the experience of Teran (2000). He said,

A couple of weeks ago, during one of those beautiful fall New England days that seem to sneak past winter's guard dogs just before he decides to clobber us, I sat in Copley Square and wrote a column on my laptop. I didn't dictate it into my voice recognition software (which is how I normally "write" my first drafts—this piece, for instance, was about half typed, half spoken), because the background noise was a little loud. When I finished, I took my wireless phone out of my pocket, connected it to my laptop, got a good 56 kbps connection, and e-mailed the story back to the Monitor. Then I used my Instant Messaging software to chat with the editor of the piece about how he planned to edit it.

Teran, in another experience on another conference with the theme "Being Human in the Digital Age," in Camden, Maine. He used his digital voice recorder to "tape" an interview with James Adams, the head of an Internet security firm called iDEFENSE. The same day, he downloaded the digital audio into his laptop and sent a copy of the entire interview back to the Monitor so that his audio staff could do some editing. He also sent back a few digital photos he had taken (2000).

IMPACT OF THE NEW MEDIA TECHNOLOGIES IN THE WORLD

According to Teran (2000), he noted that despite the arguments by journalists in North America about whether or not we want to receive e-mail, the Internet and technology are changing the face of journalism around much of the world. E-mail in particular is transforming newsgathering. For instance, 10 years ago The Johannesburg Star in South Africa covered the neighboring countries of Africa using the wires like The Associated Press or Agence France-Presse. But in recent years, as editors and reporters around Africa started getting e-mail, the Star has been able to generate its own coverage of sub-Saharan Africa. As one editor recently told Powell, African journalists are now constructing their own journalism, and they are no longer dependent on an American or European view of what is happening on their own continent. And now, these same news outlets are beginning to share digital video and audio feeds.

Another great example of how technology is changing modern journalism is transpiring among Arab publications in the Middle East and Northern Africa. A group of editors set up a password-protected Web site in London where Arab editors can file an uncensored version of stories they run in their publications. The idea is that other editors around the Arab world can read these stories, and although they can't run them, it allows them to know what is really happening in other Arab countries so they can shape their own coverage to reflect the truth. Perhaps, an even more interesting comment came from one Arab editor who told Powell that the Internet is finally allowing his paper to cover America in depth. When Powell asked what that meant—after all, the Arab countries all get CNN and such—he replied that he had been able to create a network of Arab correspondents in the United States who cover events in the United States from an Arab perspective.

Within a few years, it will be impossible for authorities in totalitarian or communist countries to prevent their citizens from having first-hand knowledge of the news. Meanwhile, countries long accustomed to an American view of the world are finding ways to create news as viewed through their own filters.

Good journalists will be needed to report on these topics, as well as all the other issues that people are talking about. In the end, it is all about our readers/ viewers/audience and getting them reliable information in a timely manner. If we focus more on their needs, and less on our complaints, then moving into the new media era will highly beneficial to the society.

CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED BY THE DEVELOPMENT JOURNALIST

Some of the setback encountered by the development journalist in carrying out his duties as identified by Esipisu and Kariithi (2007) are:

- Lack of technological intelligence in the use of the new media by the development journalist. This invariably makes the journalist to perform below expectation.
- Another point is lack of access to the necessary information needed. The development journalist encounters some difficulties in accessing some information that are likely to enhance his reports about developmental project. These difficulties stem from the fact that if he gets to have those information, they may expose the government to some extent, and as a result, access is denied.
- Additionally, lack of finance has also been identified as a challenge to effective practice of development journalism. Due to the poor economy in Nigeria, sometimes, the development journalist is limited in the length of work he does, hence he makes due with the available resources.
- Similarly, the problems of poor and epileptic power supply, undependable telecommunication set up and internet connectivity have all limited the full and effective work of a development journalist. All these problems can be summed up under the umbrella of the "digital divide". As the

development journalists in Nigeria are not resistant to some of these problems, there is need to put into consideration the contextual complexities of these challenges when looking at the use of the new media technologies by the development journalists in Nigeria.

Odugberi and Norri observe that development journalist usually encounters hindrances in the area of:

- Low professional journalistic standards,
- Lack of financial resources,
- Work technical skills,
- Fragmented legal frameworks and an undemocratic political system.

Talabi (2013) conclude that there is risk of patronage- the media may not be able to break free from its political constraints and may operate according to clientelism or be captured by private interests. Nigeria development journalism has witnessed several challenges and according to Talabi (2013) they include:

- Firstly, impediments to development journalism among which are: The digital age has made it difficult to defining the role of the professional journalist vis-à-vis the citizen journalists (the receiver who is at the same time the producer of news). If professional journalists tailor their duty towards development journalism in the growing pervasiveness of digital technology, online journalism is a threat that lives in the subliminal of the press – fear of losing their job is conspicus.
- Secondly, mediated global challenges such as climate change, cultural and resource conflict among others are paramount to elites believes; the interest which the mass media serve and depend for economic survival.
- Thirdly, the ownership pattern is a pertinent issue. Business moguls who are publishers are not interested in development journalism because they have created a class fashioned after global trend for themselves. As such, editors and reporters stick to the mission and vision of the publisher to retain their job.
- Fourthly, lack of modern equipment to reach those who lack the wherewithal to contact the mass media and make news is a serious problem. The Marxist ideologists have submitted that he who owns the means of production also controls the media.
- Fifthly, the need to beat deadlines is also a major constraint to development journalism. Journalists' natural competition to have their by-lines perpetually often robs the poor masses the chances of making news. Since mass media is an elite means of communication journalists scout for news considered to be prominent. "Prominence" in this sense connotes maintaining the status quo which is of the western style, maintaining the interest of the elites. Hence, a means must be devised to reverse this ugly trend so developmental issues and issues of ordinary masses can be of importance.
- Sixthly, commercialization of news hampers development journalism. News of less importance filters into the public consumption as a result of news commercialization whereas other developmental issues are left unattended to. It is high time journalists digress from cash and carry journalism in order to serve both the reach and poor alike if the word "mass" has to be meaningful else, media will continue to promote the gap between the haves and have-nots. McQuail rightly quoted Picard, (2004) that the primary content of the media today is commercialized news designed to appeal to broad audience, to entertain, to be cost effective and whose attention can be sold to ad-

vertisers. The result is that stories that may offend elite minorities are ignored in favour of those more acceptable and entertaining to a larger member of readers. Stories that are costly to cover are down played or ignored; such stories that create financial risks are ignored and the effect leads to homogenization of media content in coverage of media issues (McQuail, 2005, p.125).

- And lastly, total dependence on the press releases which characterizes the present day journalism in Nigeria is not good for this part of the world. The implication is that ordinary citizen will be absolutely out of news. Of course, news releases are tailored to further the interest of the public figure that issued it, so instead of our media becoming development journalism it has become "envelopment" journalism.

CONCLUSION

Considering the way and manner the new media technologies are structured, the development journalists are expected to re-invent themselves in order to keep fit with the technological changes taking place in this technological world. In doing this, the journalists will not fade to irrelevance in the digital society.

We live in a world of automated computer dominance of communication in both private and public sectors. The mass media as an institution has been making use of informatics, a fundamental tool of the age of comp utopia, that is, the process of making use of computers and other electronic devices in information gathering, storage and processing in all aspect of life. New media innovations are occurring so fast, and the media industry is running to keep pace with them. While these web innovations may be disruptive (for now) as most innovations are, this upheaval is a much needed one --- a cathartic change from which a better news media industry will emerge and new or hybrid forms of journalism will surface.

The internet has totally transformed how the news is, not only disseminated but more how it is interpreted and understood. The fourth estate imparts information and analysis only as much as it suits its ownership, and hides from the public gaze the very real relations between leaders and led that have pertained ever since the advent of newsprint for the masses. Newspaper owners merely serve their own vested interests which is usually those also of the governing class - a nice, tight hegemony which bypass the interests of the people as a whole. Witness the comments below the line here on CiF - comments which are usually more valid, expansive and knowledgeable than the articles themselves, yet owe nothing to the agenda which the mainstream media do not address often times.

Good journalism has always been about networking because the best journalists have always listened, conversed and researched. There are still much to be learned about the social media revolution and we are still in the early days of experimentation. The changes happening in the news industry brought on by the rapid advances in technology should not be seen as a threat to traditional mass media but instead complementary in reaching targeted audiences in a world of personalized media by offering digital narratives, and customizable news experiences that allow users to share and participate. Although for the journalist, the tide of change will also bring about pressures on the need for multi-skilling, ability to produce rapidly, having less capacity to reflect, having less time to write beautifully, and possibly a shorter period to verify facts.

The twenty-first century news machine has become a reality, bringing enormous benefits, even as it forces society to make difficult choices. Without a doubt, this new technology will continue to change journalism. It is up to the society to make sure that this change is for the better. If the journalistic ethics is to survive the treacherous journey into cyberspace, society needs to therefore, answer the tough questions that new technology will raise about the role of journalism in a free society, remembering that technology no matter how powerful, can only be as useful and worthwhile as human beings decide to make it. As Edward R. Murrow warned many years ago, technology without thoughtful human involvement is merely "lights and wires in a box."

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Chapter 28
Training for Mobile Journalism

Maurice M. "Mo" Krochmal
Social Media News NY, USA

ABSTRACT

In just over five years, the growth of mobile communication has changed the practice and teaching of journalism in higher education as well as practice in the media industry. New devices and tools are released and adopted in rapid cycles. Social-media platforms thrive in the mobile environment. Journalists and journalism organizations are forced to explore new practices, while higher education works to integrate new methods into its curriculum. The author, an early adopter of mobile tools in practice, training and in higher education, examines the changes that have led to the mobile era, the new jobs now available, and how industry and academia are adapting.

BACKGROUND

In 2011, Brian Williams, then the respected anchor of NBC Nightly News, gave a lecture to students of the School of Communications at Elon University in North Carolina about the effect of technology on TV audiences.

"Now the president is competing with the author's iPad. He's competing with a 4-year-old after dental work falling asleep in the back seat," Williams told the students, the university's news service reported after the visit. (Townsend, 2011).

In 2015, Williams was no longer the anchor of NBC Nightly News, banished because he was caught fabricating memories. Williams was brought down because of the very technology he talked up in front of the Elon students.

In 2011, social media was becoming a part of the television production process: Today, a hashtag or a link to a Facebook Page are commonly displayed on the lower third of the television screen. Then, it was a novel idea. The first NBC News director of social media, Ryan Osborne, discussed social media training for employees in an interview with a blogger in 2010.

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I have found the best kind of training happens one on one. Simply introducing people to tools and how they can be used to tell stories. Within a big organization, we can have different goals and we want to empower our employees. (Smith, 2010)

One-on-one training might have helped Williams react to the allegations that surfaced about his activities in reporting in Iraq in 2003. But in 2015, Williams, the winner of just about every honor a television journalist might win, was fact-checked very publicly through social media, investigated by his employer and had to publicly acknowledge his errors.

Originally, servicemen involved in an incident involving enemy fire on helicopters had raised questions about Williams' retelling of events from an eyewitness perspective, but it wasn't until Williams appearance on "The Late Show With David Letterman" was posted to YouTube and then to Facebook that the soldiers had a platform to publicize angry complaints about the anchorman's recollections. Their comments on Facebook led a Stars and Stripes reporter to investigate, and Williams' fabrications came to light. (Somaiya, 2015)

Williams' denouement is a very high-profile example of new consequences in the digital era and the need for training to go beyond one-on-one coaching.

The year 2011, when Williams spoke at Elon, might well be regarded as the dawn of the mobile era, as the expanding popularity of Facebook and Twitter, combined with the growing convenience of always-on mobile, transformed media. Mobile media entered the mainstream via the wide distribution of second-generation smartphones, supported by higher bandwidth mobile broadband networks, and the wider availability of mobile applications.

In 2016, mobile has affected journalism in ways that overshadow the public embarrassment of one high-profile anchor. Affluent society is at an inflection point as smartphone penetration into the U.S. population (Sterling, 2015) matches social media penetration for Internet users, at 74 percent (*Social Networking Fact Sheet*, 2015).

INTRODUCTION

Mobile Phone as Printing Press, TV Station

The digital alchemy of social media plus mobile allows anyone with a smartphone to craft a tweet or a Facebook status that can circle the globe with the tap of a finger. Now, it is a journalist's job to do the same -- but better and faster -- and to judge truth or fiction in 140 characters, adding significant value using the same widely available mobile tools that anyone else can use to document every moment, and every misdeed.

In a three-week period in June 2015, journalists took advantage of new mobile apps to share live video from upstate New York (James, 2015), where two convicts were the object of a massive manhunt, to Charleston, S.C., where nine black churchgoers were killed in an evening bible study (Boughton, 2015), to the steps of the Supreme Court after a watershed ruling achieved legal equality for same-sex marriage (Scotto, 2015). Sadly, none of the original shared videos were archived, as the live-streaming service used did not keep video longer than 24 hours.

The early-adopter journalists were using Periscope, a live-streaming mobile app that first appeared in late March. It and its main competitor, Meerkat, captured the wider public's attention – not just journalism professionals – with the capability to easily and simply replicate the work of a TV truck or a satellite uplink in sharing live video to a global audience.

These seismic changes of digital, social, mobile and more are compelling journalists to seek training or education to integrate new skills just to retain their jobs, or to qualify for new jobs that just didn't exist five years ago.

Famously slow to adapt to the first wave of Internet disruption in the 1990s, traditional news organizations are now compelled by this next revolution to readjust their workforce through on-the-job training, experimentation and wholesale cultural change while journalism higher education introduces new classes, new curricula and seeks new teaching talent. Could the very future of journalism be at stake as new technical skills and knowledge are required – in addition to the traditional skills of journalism? That's has been the challenge since the dawn of the World Wide Web in the mid-1990's.

The author has spent the last 20 years in digital journalism and the last eight years working as an educator and strategic consultant in social media, mobile video and mobile strategy. As part of his work, he has created curricula and training classes for journalists and for higher-ed students. He has taught and lectured at New York-area universities as well as provided training and workshops to Dow Jones, the National Association of Hispanic Journalists, the Society of Professional Journalists, the New York Press Club and others.

This creative work gives the author the background and experience to inform journalism educators as this nascent field continues to evolve.

Demand Grows for More Mobile

News consumption is undergoing two fundamental changes – a shift to mobile distribution and audience interaction through social platforms – wrote Emily Bell, director of the Tow Center for Digital Journalism at the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism, in June 2015.

Existing journalism businesses and new entrants into the market must have a strategy to deal with their future which is centered on mobile distribution and which accepts that there is little they can do to control the environment in which their journalism is distributed. News businesses, which thought the shift from an analog model to a digital model was painful and fraught a decade ago, now have to make even greater adjustments. Social platforms which felt they could maintain their status as 'just a platform' and avoid the implications of bearing publishing responsibility are also realizing that this is untenable. What follows will reshape journalism more profoundly than we once could have imagined. This might be good news for consumers, but in terms of civic and democratic health, the jury is still out. (Bell, 2015)

The New York Times, which started its digital business in 1994 and debuted its website in 1995, in 2015 said it was getting more than half its digital traffic from mobile devices. That change is forcing it to make mobile technology its main priority, Marc Frons, New York Times chief information officer, wrote in April 2015 on the blog, "The Enterprisers Project."

Not only are we focusing more technology resources on mobile development, we are also rethinking how our newsroom and product development teams operate so that we can become a mobile-first company. And when we say mobile, we mean smartphone. That doesn't mean we abandon the web or the print newspaper, which remain vital to our business. But it does mean we now look at mobile as a platform *with its own unique rules for journalism, product development, marketing, advertising and technology. And we are repositioning our entire company to take advantage of mobile as the primary platform for consumption of digital media ... (Frons, 2015)*

In March 2015, The Times, justifiably proud of a proud history of long-form journalism, announced that it would develop "1-Sentence Stories" in advance of the launch of the Apple Watch, a wearable extension of Apple's mobile computing. The Times said that it had editors on three continents dedicated to "core mobile apps, including the [Apple] Watch." *The Times Rolls Out One-Sentence Stories* (2015)

Three months later, Times executives sent out a memo to staff, detailing an experiment where, for the period of June 15-19, 2015, employees within the headquarters in midtown Manhattan could only use their mobile phones to access the homepage of the news site as desktop computer access was blocked.

"We're hopeful that this temporary change will help spur us to make mobile an even more central part of everything that we do," the executives wrote in a June 12, 2015, email to staff republished by The Poynter Institute, a journalism think thank. (Mullin, 2015)

The ongoing cultural change at The Times even permeates its corporate "About Us" page, which starts with the headline: "We Were Wireless a Century Ago," relating the story of how the newspaper got news of the sinking of the Titanic by wireless telegraphy on Sunday, April 14, 1912. Who We Are. (n.d.).

First in Mobile-First

The idea of mobile first can be traced back to 2009, when digital pioneer Steve Buttry, the director of student media at Louisiana State University and previously digital transformation editor for Digital First Media, called for news organizations to adopt a "mobile-first" strategy.

We can't waste that much time in mastering the mobile market. We need to start thinking mobile first. Now. The world is moving swiftly to smart phones and we can't afford to be as far behind this time (in truth, it's too late to be ahead, but not too late to pursue opportunities that can lead us to a prosperous future). We need to make mobile innovation the top priority and the first thing we think of when we plan change in our organizations.(Buttry, 2009)

Mobile-first is not just about accessing a news website's home page on a mobile phone, it is also about doing business in a new way. That involves selling advertising, too.

At the end of June 2015, Circa News, an innovative mobile-first news service, announced it was going on "indefinite hiatus." The San Francisco-based 20-employee company, which started its work in 2011, shut its doors after it was unable to close on a second round of investment. The company explained its decision in a blog post:

We have now reached a point where we're no longer able to continue news production as-is. Our ongoing plan was to monetize Circa News through the building of a strategy we had spent a long time developing but unfortunately we were unable to close a significant investment prior to becoming resource constrained. We could have compromised and included off-the-shelf advertisements or charged a subscription for the product but we never felt like any of the simplest solutions would pair well with the high-quality experience we wished to achieve, or even bring in enough to make a difference. Farewell to Circa News (2015)

Circa went live on the Apple App Store in October 2012, at the same time smartphone ownership went over 50 percent of all mobile phone owners. *Smartphones Account for Half of All Mobile Phones* (2012)

The company's approach to the user experience blazed a trail in the emerging "post-article" world of mobile. Circa will be remembered for creating and popularizing the "card" format that reduces content, or "atomizes" it into an optimized format, much like a digital flashcard, for mobile display. Twitter and Google and many others have adopted this approach.

Circa arguably changed how news was delivered via mobile. Rather than producing news reports, Circa journalists functioned as news aggregators: They worked quickly, identifying and gathering news created by others to deliver updates via the Circa app. They were news innovators but couldn't overcome the advertising realities. (Newton, 2015)

Building Mobile Skills and Expertise Outside the Classroom

In April 2009, the author wanted to buy an updated version of the iPhone to use for a presentation at a journalism conference in Puerto Rico and to document his activities with pictures and video.

The next generation iPhone wasn't scheduled for released until late June, well past the conference date. So, the author purchased a Nokia N97 smartphone for $800. The phone had a touchscreen, a Zeiss lens for its camera and a sliding QWERTY keyboard. There were apps and services available for the phone, including live streaming via Qik and Kyte.

At that time, Nokia had retail stores across the country and the New York store was on the Upper West Side on 57th Street, where customers could browse phones and interact with the sales staff. When his first phone broke, the author was able to get it replaced for free. Sadly, Nokia shut down its retail unit at the end of 2009 (Bruze & Sandstrom 2009) and when the author's phone broke a second time, he decided to make the switch to an iPhone, version 3GS. The author also had a first-generation iPod and a first-generation iPad – neither of which had cameras mounted in the unit. From that, the author learned to wait out first-generation products and buy next-generation units when technology has developed more fully. That's why the author doesn't have an Apple Watch, or Google Glass. Well, that and an extra $2,000.

In 2010, the author was invited to be the "embedded" journalist on the 140conf Road Trip, a late-summer journey through the midwest U.S., starting in Cleveland and driving to Cincinnati, St. Louis and off to Kansas City. Then, north to Omaha, Sioux Falls, S.D., and Fargo, N.D., before turning east through Minneapolis, Madison, Wisc., and Chicago to finish in Detroit.

The author joined Jeff Pulver, a pioneer in IP telephony who started the company that became Vonage, and Alan Weinkrantz, a technology public relations professional, in a Buick Enclave furnished by General Motors, a sponsor of the trip. Besides luggage, the three travelers carried T shirts and gift cards from Kodak and a mobile receiver and WiFi unit provided by Sprint, a third sponsor. The technology allowed the three to connect to the Internet at 75 miles per hour as they drove 250 miles a day, on average, for 10 days. (Krochmal, 2010)

The WiFi unit enabled the travelers to stay in touch with people from the road as they drove from location to location, ending each day with "tweetups," or in-person meetings organized via Twitter. The travelers tweeted frequently and would announce via the Skype video messaging service that they were available to take video calls in the car. In rural Iowa, Twitter followers alerted the three to a restaurant with homemade berry pies and handmade ice cream.

The author used the WiFi to tweet, to share photographs on Facebook and to live-stream video on the Ustream.com service from the back seat of the hybrid SUV. The travelers would announce each morning where they were on the road and then would open Skype video messaging on a laptop to take calls – more often from across the world than the U.S. (Krochmal, 2010) Pulver had amassed some 300,000 followers on Twitter as one of the people that Twitter would recommend as a "follow" to new accounts.

To be mobile when the car wasn't in motion, the travelers would take the MacBook laptop outside of the car, going as far as possible while staying within the coverage range of the mobile hotspot. This all depended on the cell network being used. When the travelers crossed the border from South Dakota to North Dakota, the network just disappeared between the border and the city of Fargo. The travelers figured it was probably because there were not enough customers to justify an investment in cellular infrastructure. They were quite excited to cross over into Minnesota and see the WiFi light up.

Lesson Plans on the Road and in the Classroom

The road trip came just after the author had left his university position to pursue opportunities as a strategic consultant and a journalism trainer and educator. The trip allowed the author to test ideas he had developed for the classroom with a real audience. His main work was to document activities while on the road, and the author's first choice was HD video, shot with a Kodak mini cam, edited in Apple's iMovie software and uploaded to Facebook over the cellular network, or a hotel WiFi connection.

The author had created his first mobile journalism learning and teaching experience a year before this, in 2009, designing an exercise that would model how phones might be used in journalism, At the time, the author was teaching the introductory digital journalism course for majors, to a class of mostly freshmen and sophomores.

The author picked a Monday in November, near to the end of the fall semester, to send the students out on their reporting topic titled: An Hour in the Life of the University. Students were asked use their mobile phone (all had one, of varying capacities) to do a report from somewhere on the campus. The students could post a voice report, a text post (using a voice-to-text call-in service, Dial2do), a photograph, or video – whatever they could accomplish within the space of an hour. They each fanned out across campus to do their stories. Some did video with their phones, which was really pushing the tech capabilities of their devices at this point, They went to the gym, admissions and the student wellness center. They interviewed people and addressed relevant issues. Others choose to report from parking lots, or the physical plant or the student center.

The author collected the students' work, which they had published on deadline to individual Tumblr blogs, and then commented on them through email, and reblogged (reposted) the approved work into a Tumblr blog for the class to review. "Journalism Tools" (2009)

After the exercise, the author asked student to write a 250-word memo, reflecting on what they learned. Then, the class watched the work online and students critiqued the mobile reports.

At that time, the author's students all had phones of varying kinds. Most could take photographs, some could take video and all could do the tasks of a traditional phone. The exercise helped them see how a professional journalist could use this tool in the field, and the exercise allowed all to participate – regardless of the type of phone owned.

The author considered the class exercise a success. It overcame the challenge of doing such an exercise constrained by so many flavors of technology owned by the students. If a student didn't have any device, the author was prepared to lend a camera-less iPod Touch, which would operate on the campus-wide WiFi network. The students were judged simply by their ability to successfully execute some type of mobile-basked reporting, sharing it to the web, using proper grammar and style, and performing their work on a real-time deadline.

Today, this project would be much easier as students are almost all carrying smartphones, either Android and Apple, the market leaders, and the practice of sharing video has become more common. Still, the challenge would be to produce work that follows traditional journalistic values and practices.

Midway through 2015, the author delivered invited lectures on mobile journalism at three New York-area universities. In all these lectures, he learned that the students almost all had smartphones and were willing to download and test mobile applications within minutes of being tasked to do that. In one lecture, students actually downloaded the Vyclone iPhone app, and got online to help create a collaborative video. (Krochmal, 2015)

In his lecture, the author explains mobile hardware, locating the camera lenses, the microphones and then demonstrating how to properly hold a camera for maximum stability. This all takes about an hour.

Given a session of four hours, learners can get a background on the industry and the technologies, learn how their devices work, and learn best practices for operating their devices. And, they can actually go out on the street and create stories in the crucible of real-time pressure.

Get Ready to Use Technology

Exercises can be created that impart skills and experience for all students, even the rare ones who don't have a phone. For most exercises, the author chooses Tumblr, a free microbloging platform, as the hub for group exercises. Even students with feature phones (dumb phones) can create a Tumblr account, which allows users to call a number and record an audio file for posting. *Phone in Tumblr Audio Posts* (2014). Students can create their own microblogs, and a group can use a central account to reblog articles that are ready for public distribution.

After the initial on-boarding processing, learners should understand the technology they hold in their hands, where the cameras are, where the controls are and where the microphones are, as well as tips for extending battery life.

The next lesson is apps – the downloadable software modules that extend the power of the smartphone – which ones to use, what are the must-haves for free or paid. Learners should understand the difference between apps and the mobile web. They should also understand the processes involved in creating an app, and understand how it moves through the Apple and Google app approval process to the public.

The next level of training is audio and the apps that are available for sound recording. Sound is a critical aspect in digital video storytelling.

Then, perhaps the most important lessons – images. Photographs are important in the mobile world – articles with photos as seen as more attention-getting than text-only postings, so students should learn the basics of photography – shooting horizontally or vertically, filtering their images, or not, lighting/flash, editing and composition.

After exploring still photography, students will then learn video – shooting, framing and sequences and editing – and how to do it all effectively on their devices.

Learners are almost eager to put their training to the test, but should be exposed to stories that will inform and illustrate the lessons so far. Each process should be illustrated by an example of outstanding journalistic application as well as success stories from professionals.

After this training, the real world beckons. Students are given a timed street-reporting assignment that will require interviews and sequence shots. As in a professional setting, students should plan out their assignments in advance, considering what images and sounds they should capture as well as preparing what questions they should ask. The learners are expected to return with raw footage and time is then allotted to compile and edit their materials into a story. After the story, the students can demo their work, using a Lightning-to-VGA adapter to port the display from an iPhone to the typical projector found in many classrooms. Learners can then view and critique their work and that of their colleagues.

After the initial learning sessions, additional lessons can be created for collaborative video, using new apps that allow a central account to coordinate the work and video of additional cameras. Then, students can explore how to share a stream using emerging tools like Meerkat and Periscope.

The author chooses to focus on the Apple platform, because that is what the author owns and because there are many apps available. Additionally, Apple is favored by journalism organizations such as Gannett, which in 2012 bought hundreds of iPhone 4s to distribute to its reporters. (Romenesko, 2012)

Some apps will work on both platforms and those are preferable for teaching, otherwise, each app should be considered by platform and by the tasks it performs. In 2015, there are 1.5 million apps available through Google and 1.4 million through Apple. *Apple App Store: number of available apps* (2015)

The author decided in 2008 to concentrate on building mobile expertise by using a smartphone for note-taking, recording and storytelling at every opportunity, personally and professionally, and sharing on any social media platform, He downloaded and tested new apps almost weekly in an effort to stay abreast of the fast-moving technology.

To do that, the author has invested in extra batteries to charge the author's phone when an outlet is not available, and teaches what he calls the ABC of mobile – Always Be Charging. The author typically carries an onboard battery (Mophie) as well as two extra batteries, cords, extension cords, a small tripod and a phone bracket holder. The author's biggest problem is running out of storage space on his device. He owns a 16GB phone and has used nearly 200 apps. The author's onboard apps take up a lot of space, so he is constantly deleting those not used, opting to download them as needed from the cloud when on WiFi to avoid bandwidth overage charges. If one has purchased an app, or previously downloaded a free one, it is usually available for access from the app stores.

The author uses about six apps regularly to edit photographs on his phone, developing a signature style for his photos, tweaking them through at least two apps before uploading to Instagram and then disseminating to Twitter and Facebook. The edits the author makes usually bring out colors and sharpen the image, not much more than you could do in a darkroom.

Photography is one of the most popular uses of a mobile phone. In 2014, 1.8 billion cameras were sold, 95 percent of them on mobile phones, according to Tomi T. Ahonen, a mobile telephony analyst. The former Nokia executive estimates the global installed base of cameras at 5.8 billion with 3.56 billion of those on mobile phones. (Ahonen 2014)

Ahonen notes that the majority of phone cameras are on feature phones. He calculates some 1 trillion photographs were taken in 2014 – out of some 5.7 trillion pictures taken cumulatively in the history of photography. He also positively affirms the notion that the average user looks at his phone 150 times a day, attributing its origins to Nokia. He calculates that to take one usable photograph, the average user looks at his camera app eight times, including taking two pictures, and then deleting one. (Ahonen 2013)

Data-Needy Audience

The adoption of mobile technology has been remarkably fast. The telephone, introduced in 1876, took 35 years until it was used by one quarter of the American population. Radio, introduced in 1897, took 31 years, and television, unveiled in 1926, took 26 years. The mobile phone, developed by Martin Cooper of Motorola and released in 1983, took 13 years while the World Wide Web, introduced in 1991, took 7 years to penetrate to 25 percent of the population. Smartphones, introduced in 2007, took just three years. One quarter of the global population will have a smartphone by the end of 2015 and half by 2018, according to the publication eMarketer.

Smartphones are data thirsty, using 24 percent more data than feature phones, requiring carriers to provide more capable networks. Mobile data traffic has grown by no less that 69 percent a year since 2012. The iPhone 6 Plus generates twice the data that the iPhone 6 does, which is 10 times what the 3GS averaged, according to research by the Citrix company, a technology vendor.

Mobile is not limited to digital devices. Papyrus, the thin paperlike material used 4,000 years ago, made information more mobile in the same way pocket watches did to time in replacing clock towers on Main Street and grandfather clocks in the home in the 19th century.

The rise of mobile devices, called "Lazarus devices" by some for their ability to resurrect dead times like commutes or time spent in front of television, have fueled what others call an attention economy, measured by the time it takes to glance at a mobile phone screen.

The attention economy—which hinges on the time a mobile-phone user looks at their device—is a competitive one, and some experts feel that communication apps (such as Facebook) and communication devices (such as Apple's iPhones) have an edge on purely content-driven apps (magazine and newspaper apps) and formats (print magazines and newspapers). The idea is that a user is inclined to prioritize communicating with friends, family, or co-workers over reading articles or watching videos. If that zero-sum model holds, publishers will need to continue embedding their offerings within the devices and apps that make communication possible. (Makarechi, 2015)

Chartbeat, a New York-based analytics company focused on developing digital attention metrics for media, says digital content has at most 15 seconds of a reader's attention. (Haile, 2014) The company's quest is to change digital measurements standards from the click that has become the standard measurement in digital advertising, to something that better measures people's interactions with content.

The winner of the battle for mind share in 2015 seems to be digital devices, where users clock 5.38 hours a day of use – 2:51 on mobile, and 2.22 hours on desktop/laptops – eclipsing TV watching at 4.15 hours. (Oh, 2015) Flurry, another digital analytics company, said that in 2014 people spent more minutes a day looking at a mobile screen (177) than a TV (168). (O'Neil 2014)

Michael H. Goldhaber, speaking to the 1997 conference "Economics of Digital Information," at the Kennedy School of Government of Harvard University, January 23-26, explained his concept of the attention economy:

It is precisely because material needs at the creature comfort level are fairly well satisfied for all those in a position to demand them that the need for attention, or what is closely related to attention, meaning or meaningfulness of life, takes on increasing importance. In other words, the energies set free by the successes of what the author refer to as the money-industrial economy go more and more in the direction of obtaining attention. And that leads to growing competition for what is increasingly scarce, which is of course attention. It sets up an unending scramble, a scramble that also increases the demands on each of us to pay what scarce attention we can. (Goldhaber, 1997)

Kevin Roberts, the executive chairman of Saatchi & Saatchi, has discussed a new economy that goes beyond attention economy to participation. He explains his concept on his blog:

The Participation Economy is about conversations. Lots of them. We've been through the Attention Economy, which was a conversation of one to many. We morphed into the Attraction Economy, which brought more pull than push. Now the Participation Economy has joined the circle: it's many to many. Everywhere we go online, we can talk to everyone and everyone can talk to us. You might say that real democracy is finally at hand. (Roberts, 2009)

If you believe Goldhaber, then attention is what is paid, while Roberts envisions a complete circle where all can communicate with the value created in the two-way flow of conversation. This concept targets millennials. (Fromm, 2014)

Teaching Young Journalists-in-Training

In March 2015, the author received an invitation to teach a mobile journalism workshop for a select group of 20 students participating in the Knight CUNY Journalism Diversity Interns summer program at the journalism school located in New York City.

The author had a few weeks to prepare to teach a seven-hour class to students. Complications: Six students owned Android-OS phones, and the rest had varying iPhones, ranging from eight with iPhone 6, five using iPhone 5s and one on iPhone 4.

The program, funded by a grant from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, assembled a diverse group of aspiring journalists to come to New York for June and July in 2015. Rising seniors or recent college graduates, the students received one week of intensive journalism training before starting internships at news organizations across the city. The program provided each with a $3,000 stipend if their internships were unpaid, and the students were housed at a City College of New York dormitory.

At the end of the summer, five students were to be offered tuition-free enrollment to the graduate school.

The students spent the first week of their internship in daylong training classes to hone skills and give them new tools. The author taught a class on the third day of their first week and it was designed to take them through all facets of multimedia reporting – audio, still photography and video photography. After three hours of training and lunch on their own, they were sent out in pairs to the streets of New York to report on any story of their choosing. After reporting, they came back to the classroom, and using only their devices, produced a story, uploaded it to Tumblr, and then presented it for feedback.

The author prepared a PowerPoint to guide an interactive lecture that included writing exercises and multimedia exercises to prepare them to do their reporting in the field. (Krochmal, 2015)

To break the ice with the students, the author asked them to take out their phones, take a picture and tweet it, and the first to get it to the author's phone would win. They went after it, but the author's phone stayed quiet. Quickly, the author looked at the connectivity dots after a couple of students said they had sent their tweets. No service. Inside the steel and concrete of CUNY, the author's 4G LTE AT&T connection was dead. No bars, no dots. So the author handed the phone to an aide to connect to the WiFi system. Once done, the author's phone buzzed as the notifications came in.

The author asked the student to then send their photographs to a Tumblr site set up for the class, this time to make sure they had downloaded the app and had created an account as the author had asked them to do before class. During the class, the author asked the students to share a photo to the site to make sure that they were indeed able to accomplish that task, or to troubleshoot if they couldn't.

One of the challenges of being a roving trainer/teacher is classroom technology. In this case, the author had hoped to be able to project the screen on the author's iPhone to demo apps and processes. To make that happen, tech support came in and after a half-hour of jiggling wires and button pressing, the technicians exhausted the battery in the author's phone before finally being able to make the connection, using another phone. But, since the author's phone was dead and had to be recharged, the author was unable to do the demonstrations as originally planned.

The author shifting the lecture to a presentation on the history and background of mobile journalism while waiting for the phone to charge. While this was neither the author's preferred, nor planned, script for delivering the training, the author had to adapt. That's a good lesson to learn, for all.

Classroom technology is not a challenge that will go away. Most places that host training will have a projector and, given enough time, the mobile-to-projection connection hurdle should not be hard to overcome if the training sessions are created in modules, adjusted as needed.

PowerPoint is a challenge as whether to carry it as a file in a thumb drive, or post it/email it and then download. The last thing the author does in preparation is to upload presentations to Slideshare, where they can also be public and viewed on mobile.

Dealing with operating systems was the biggest challenge in this class as the author wanted the students to be able to complete the project regardless of the type of device they were using. So, the author conducted searches to find recommendations from journalists for apps for both Apple and Android, which is, globally, the most widely adopted system. Journalism, in this country, tends to use Apple products because of their simplicity and because of their wide adoption and because of the great choices in the app market. There is, indeed, as Apple advertises, an app for that.

The lecture took students through a short history of mobile multimedia in journalism and included some Twitter handles that the students could contact while we were talking. The students were excited when they got responses while they were in class, another great learning about how the technology works.

Before the planned lunch break, the students were introduced to audio applications that would allow them to record and save to their phone. They were told of the importance of audio in multimedia and were given the opportunity to write and speak a short speech to record (a 15-second introduction of themselves).

After a half-hour lunch break, the students were trained in video and video apps.

Then, they were paired off to discuss and, most important, plan stories they were to report. They had an hour to go out and report, using just their phones. When they were done, they returned to the classroom with an hour to produce their stories, share them to Tumblr and present them to their peers.

After the hour elapsed, the author gave the students an extra 10 minutes. There were lots of expressions of relief and the students were all able to file their final work on time.

On Twitter, the author mentioned the students' work and Wolfgang Blau, then-director of digital strategy for The Guardian, responded, seeking links to their work. (Blau, 2015)

This workshop was different from the others the author has taught because, in three weeks after the first session, the author was to meet the students again to discuss a longer-term mobile assignment that allowed them to report a story of their choosing and have more time to produce it, still only using their mobile phones. When the author met the students, they were to have rough drafts produced and had the opportunity to ask questions and talk about their progress. Two weeks after that meeting, the students would be asked to present their final stories for public viewing and publishing to a Tumblr blog.

The students were also to write a 250-word reflection on their learning and assess their progress. No grades were given in this work, but the stories would represent part of a portfolio of work that was to be used to select five students for the prize of a tuition-free graduate school enrollment at City University of New York Graduate School of Journalism.

For all of the students, the training in mobile journalism would help them enter a profession where it is becoming more important and expected for the journalists to be able to use their phone to create content in the field.

While video is the apex of the mobile journalism learning, still photography has not diminished as video has risen in use. Instagram, which started as still photos only and now includes 15-second videos, debuted in the Apple Store in October 2010 and attracted a million registered users within three days. In 2012, the app was released for Android and attracted more than a million downloads in one day. Facebook acquired the company in 2012 for $1 billion. Instagram, now with more than 300 million registered users, is one of the top social media platforms. (Banks, 2015)

The biggest influence on the author's use of apps photography was a free learning session in iPhoneography in 2011, the NYC Mobile Photowalk, sponsored by Adobe in New York City. Meeting in a pop-up art gallery set up by the CNET technology news service on Mulberry Street in lower Manhattan, a group of 60 people heard lectures and did hands-on learning before they participated in a photo walk in the surrounding neighborhood to take photographs with a trainer, then returning to the gallery to display the photos and get comments.

In that session, the author learned about using multiple apps to edit photographs and the growth of iPhoneography. Dan Marcolina, the author of the book *iPhone Obsessed*, published by PeachPit Press, led the session and invited members to contribute to a Flickr page (Marcolina, 2011) as well as on the Meetup page for the group (now defunct). He took the time to comment on contributions. (He recommended that the author use Snapseed, which has become one of the author's favorite apps.) This learning session has inspired the author for years now as it demonstrated that people have an appetite for this kind of training.

Issues, Controversies, Problems

In August 2015, the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) gathered in San Francisco for its annual convention. No doubt that a great number of the 2,000 attendees carried smartphones with them for the three-day meeting of journalism and mass communications academics who help set standards and practices in journalism higher education.

For the 2015 convention, the schedule of events for the convention listed no panels, workshops or sessions focused on mobile and only one speaker with mobile in her biography.

At the time this was examined, paper abstracts were not available, but the 2014 papers, presented at the Montreal convention, were peppered with mobile references, including the paper, "Mobile Journalism 101: Student Adoption of Mobile Devices in Producing News Content" by Dianne Garyantes, Rowan University; Mark Berkey-Gerard, Rowan University.

This study examines journalism students' use of smartphones to produce news content. Survey findings show that students regularly use smartphones for personal use, but most do not employ them when producing content for journalism assignments. Training and technical assistance from journalism faculty, *however, positively influenced student use of smartphones to produce news content. These findings provide empirical support for the positive influence of facilitating conditions, a construct identified in models of user acceptance of technology. Newspaper and Online News 2014 Abstracts (2014)*

While mobile may not be high on the agenda for discussion for AEJMC, it is on the minds of researchers. And, it is in the curricula of U.S. journalism and communications programs.

The James M. Cox Jr. Center for International Mass Communication Training and Research at the University of Georgia, in its annual survey of enrollments for 2013 (Becker, Vlad & Simpson, 2014), said that 47.7 percent of institutions responding offered courses in mobile content creation.

The author conducted an informal survey, and found examples of mobile-journalism training in higher education across the globe. The University of California-Berkeley offers short courses *Mobile Media: Producing Visual Stories with the iPhone* (2015) as did the New School in New York City *Reinventing Video Journalism for the Mobile Age* (n.d.). Ithaca College (New York) has also offered a course in mobile and social media journalism *JOUR 39026: Mobile and Social Media Journalism*. (n.d.)

At Morgan State University in Baltimore, Allissa Richardson champions mobile journalism with a $25,000 grant from the Knight Foundation's Institute for Interactive Journalism. At the University of Maryland, Ronald Yaros holds the title of associate professor of mobile and multi-platform journalism and teaches JOUR 689M.

In the fall of 2014, Robert Hernandez of the Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism of the University of Southern California taught "Glass Journalism," a class on augmented reality and the Google Glass technology. (Hernandez, 2014)

According to Mashable, a digital news publication, Syracuse and Northeastern universities also offered classes on this technology. (Wagner, 2014)

Early in 2015, Google pulled the plug on its 3-year-old Glass wearable technology experiment, a project that allowed a limited group of "explorers" to ante up $1,500 for the eyeglasslike computing device.

The company vows that Glass would return. *We're graduating from Google[x] labs*. (2015) Meantime, it introduced Cardboard, a virtual reality tool that mates a smartphone and cardboard to create a virtual reality viewer. *Google Cardboard*. (n.d.)

These courses illustrate a risk in this field – teaching a brand technology that may not pass the test of time. The author believes in teaching to the skills and giving the students the ability to use whatever platform is widely available and free.

Who Leads? Industry or Academia?

According to the 2013 survey of graduates in journalism and mass communication conducted by The James M. Cox Jr. Center for International Mass Communication Training and Research at the University of Georgia, 17 percent of students graduating with journalism and mass communications degrees said their jobs included mobile content creation. (Becker, Vlad, & Simpson. 2014)

Mainstream media is moving past an initial reluctance to adopt smartphone reporting as an everyday practice. Growing mobile readerships have news organizations planning and staffing for "mobile-first" operations, where the mobile audience is considered at the very inception of story reporting, where content management systems display how a story looks on a small screen, as well as newsroom availability of real-time analytics showing readership data on mobile and social media.

New job titles such as content coach (Gannett) and audience engagement editor (The New York Times and Wall Street Journal) are addressing the movement of Internet readers from desktop consumption to mobile devices.

The BBC offers training *Writing for mobile: Bite-size basics* (2014) in mobile journalism as do independent organizations, such as the nonprofit Poynter Institute *The Essentials of Mobile Journalism: Webinar Series*. (n.d.), or the for-profit Udemy.com *Mobile Journalism: Video and multimedia stories with iPhone*. (n.d.).

The BBC named Nathalie Malinarich as its first editor of mobile and new formats in March 2014 (Herrmann, n.d.), 16 years after she started off as a producer of the BBC's Spanish news service and 10 years after she became Americas editor, BBC, news website. The 1990 graduate of Pontificia Universide Catolica de Chile was promoted from her position as World Editor of News Online.

Her appointment came as the news service saw more than half of its traffic come from mobile devices over desktops during the work week, growing to more than 65 percent during weekends.

A year into her position, Malinarich created an internal guide to help BBC journos work with mobile. She advises journalists to write for mobile-first, then add additional content for tablets and desktop readers.

Always remember to preview stories for mobile if you can, and, once published, check the story looks as eye-catching, clean, accessible and readable as possible on every platform. Writing for mobile: Bite-size basics. (2014)

While Malinarich is relatively new to the post of mobile editor, Carey Gillette, of British Columbia's The Province newspaper, is a veteran of five years in a similar role and wrote about about the technology she manages. "*The Province* iPad app is really the best of both worlds for our readers," Gillette said in an article *Postmedia newspapers innovate with iPad editions* (2010). She took the position of mobile editor 10 days before the newspaper launched its first mobile application. "It's probably a position that every media outlet should look at adding to their staff," Gillette said in an interview in May 2012. "So you really need someone who will look out for the best interests of the mobile readers when decisions are being made."

Some say that every news publication should have someone whose title and responsibilities encompass mobile. Search for mobile editors and you will likely find Subhajit Banerjee, who has been mobile editor of *The Guardian* since 2011. His team in March 2015 introduced the mobile app, Moments, designed specifically for the Apple Watch. The application was designed before Apple made the technology public. (Sears, 2015)

In May 2015, the Wall Street Journal wrapped up a redesign of website and article pages, as well as launching an Apple Watch app of its own, by elevating Daniel Ho to executive mobile editor from his previous position as editor of mobile, tablets and emerging technology. The release announcing his appointment said he would be responsible for developing and managing apps for iPhone, iPad and Android while leading the team of mobile apps editors and reporting to executive editor Almar Latour.

"Mobile is understanding the mobile intimacy of technology — how it is so intimately connected to our lives," Ho said in a February 2015 article in the PBS Idea Lab online publication (Marcaletti, 2015).

Mobile journalism may well be about adapting journalism to an intimate technology, but in a news organization, it is changing cultures and introducing new workflows, ranging from rethinking deeply ingrained news cycles, to engaging the reading audience in new ways, to reporting in nontraditional modes, like streaming live a press conference or event.

Etan Horowitz started his job as CNN mobile editor in November 2011, after working for 11 months as a digital media producer for CNN International TV. He began his journalism career at the Orlando Sentinel as a suburban bureau reporter, then handled social media before moving to Atlanta in 2010. The 32-year-old started by functioning as a mobile evangelist in the newsroom. He explained his approach to championing mobile journalism in the newsroom in a 2013 interview with AJR

I'll stop by people's desks and share some mobile numbers with them or explain how they can better serve our mobile audience in their day to day job. The goal is really the "teach a man to fish" model to spread awareness about mobile and give people the tools to make a difference. (Billington, 2013).

In June 2014, the American Press Institute of the Newspaper Association of America invited Horowitz and 39 other mobile journalism leaders to Washington, D.C., for a conference on mobile at NPR's headquarters. Attendees included five executives from The New York Times, three from the Washington Post and USA Today as well as an executive from the New York Daily News, plus independent publishers and others.

The meeting produced a list of nine concepts for publishers to consider to adapt to the growth of the mobile audience:

1. A mobile-first organization has editorial, technology and business teams working together in new ways
2. Mobile news presentation should be different from web or print
3. Mobile and social media are intricately linked
4. Mobile apps and mobile websites are for quite different audiences
5. What it really means to "engage" a mobile user
6. What you don't know about the "second screen" and "utility" behaviors of mobile users
7. Advertisers buy audiences, not publications or platforms, and data is the key
8. Mobile advertising needs more creative thinking
9. How to hire or promote for mobile jobs (Sonderman, 2014)

At this writing, the mobile-journalism talent pool is limited. After all, with such a rapid development of the field, few people have five years or more experience in this arena. Sawhorse Media's *Muck Rack* journalist database lists 100 journalists with the word "mobile" in their profiles, while the FollowerWonk.com service lists 601 Twitter users that have mobile and editor in their profile. Searching for the terms "mobile" and "journalist" provides another 407 names. Adding "professor" to the search yields four names.

On the job side, a search for "mobile" on the site JournalismJobs.com in early June 2015 brought back 152 jobs, with one job matching criteria seeking mobile-only, a position ad for Mobile News App Senior Editor for Vandewater Media in New York.

The work of mobile requires comfort with technology and experimentation in addition to fundamental journalism skills and an understanding of how to work with editors who do news gathering, story production and staffing, according to the a group consensus from the Thought Leaders Summit (Sonderman, 2014).

In January 2015, the Rochester Democrat and Chronicle, at one time the Gannett chain's flagship newspaper, started advertising for a new position, content coach for mobile. The position was advertised as a top management position in the newsroom.

"Coach" was a new position for Gannett, which made a "mobile-first" commitment as part of its "Newsroom of the Future" restructuring ahead of the spinoff of the company's publishing division in June 2015. As other news organizations have experienced, Gannett's publications have been seeing an audience migration to mobile from desktop.

The mobile coach was on the third tier of newsroom management, answering to a deputy who reported to the executive editor. The job was described as requiring the ability to think mobile and inspire and coach journalists at all points in the content production process to create multimedia for mobile and then measure and analyze the performance of content against goals for reaching a target audience of the Gen-Xers – the generation between millennials and baby boomers.

The hiring process included writing a critique of the publication from a mobile perspective, as well as a site visit and interviews at all levels of the publication from a senior executive for the chain to the reporters working the news beats. The company filled the position in June.

Training Working Professionals

In 2013, the author led a group of eight journalists of the National Association of Hispanic Journalists in a four-hour workshop on how to use their smartphones to create stories. That session, held in Colombia's consulate near Grand Central Station in New York City, included a shooting exercise where the learners were sent out into the streets for two hours to gather video and pictures and to come back and produce a report. The learners' stories included interviews with many people on the street and in stores, professional narration and great video – all done in the space of a couple of hours after teaching and coaching. None had used their phones that intensely before.

A year later, one of the trainees went to the events of Ferguson, Mo. He sent the author an e-mail thanking him for the lessons he put into practice on the streets of Ferguson, which led him to land a freelance position reporting for a news organization in Boston.

A year and a half after that session at the consulate, the author taught a learning session for professional journalists at the NAHJ national convention in San Antonio in August 2014. The session included many mid-career broadcast journalists who have adopted social media and were looking to add mobile skills to their portfolios and to new job obligations as television journalists are now progressing past experimenting with video on their phones. The author led a quick one-hour session that spoke to the need to become comfortable using the phone to do additional reporting alongside the traditional work they were performing. The attendees were positive in their feedback for the session that included recommendations for apps to use. Some of the attendees were already using a few of them and were glad to see they were selected.

At the end of June, 2015,the author was invited to provide a 50-minute workshop for Social Media Weekend, a professional development event hosted by CUNY Journalism. The author presented to 50 people in a classroom, an impressive number, considering a session billed as "rock stars of social media" was scheduled concurrently.

This session was again about mobile journalism, but focused on best practices in streaming video live using apps like Meerkat or Periscope. The audience, composed mainly of post-college professionals, downloaded the Periscope app, working in small groups. In about five minutes, the attendees had downloaded and were prepared to create a Periscope live stream, which they could do at their convenience. The objective of the session, which was followed by a formal presentation, allowed the attendees to understand how to use the application. The hour-long session did not allow enough time for critiques and sharing of attendee videos, nor previously recorded “Periscopes” because of the 1-day shelf life of the mobile service.

Mobile Live-Streaming Market Moves Quickly

That 50 professionals were interested in exploring smartphone live streaming convinced the author that this will be an ever-more important and essential skill after it skyrocketed onto the scene in late winter of 2015. The story of two apps that have focused the public’s attention is worth exploring.

Meerkat, a live-streaming mobile app, hit the Apple Store in late February 2015 and then, accompanied by media fanfare, burst into the spotlight at the South by Southwest Interactive gathering in Austin in March. (Anderson, 2015)

Originally developed over eight weeks as a side project by the Israeli tech firm Life On Air, Meerkat launched on Feb. 27, attracting 15,000 users in its first three days, convincing the 10-employee parent company to consider Meerkat its flagship product. (Rubin, 2015)

Initially, Meerkat integrated tightly with Twitter. Users could log in to the then IOS-only app through Twitter and announce their streams via Twitter. And, a user could be notified that a Meerkat user Twitter friend was streaming. That is, until SxSW got underway on Friday, March 13. Over the weekend, Twitter shut down Meerkat’s access to the Twitter social graph, meaning Meerkat users couldn’t find and convert their Twitter followers as they had before. San Francisco-based Twitter continued to allow the Meerkat users to log in with Twitter credential as well as distribute their videos on the service. (Honan, 2015)

On March 26, Meerkat announced a $14 million investment led by Silicon Valley VC powerhouse firm Greylock Partners. The deal valued Meerkat at $40 million. (Massa, 2015)

At the same time, Twitter launched Periscope, a beta app and development team it had acquired early in the year for $100 million, according to the Wall Street Journal (Koh & Rusli, 2015).

Over 1 million people signed in to the Periscope service in its first 10 days on the market solely as an IOS product, Twitter reported. (Constine, 2015)

In the 30-day period starting Feb. 25, Meerkat peaked at over 30,000 daily mentions until March 25, when Periscope equaled Meerkat at just under 25,000 mentions, BuzzFeed reported. (Warzel, 2015) The market essentially doubled with the addition of a new app.

In the months since the two streaming services launched, they have achieved remarkable penetration of the cultural zeitgeist, if not in sheer numbers of users. People have used Periscope to share what’s on their TV or in their fridge while presidential candidates have streamed their announcement speeches.

Journalist Jon Ward of Yahoo News holds the honor of streaming the first Meerkat interview on March 3 with Sen. John Thune (R-S.D.). Because it doesn’t save videos beyond 24 hours, you can’t see an archived version on Meerkat, but it is available on YouTube. (Thune, 2015) Ward continued to live stream with his mobile and added Periscope to his toolkit.

In the 30-day period from May 15-June 15, 2015, Periscope ranged from 20,000 daily Twitter mentions to peak at 80,000 mentions on June 13. Meantime, Meerkat never reached higher than 10,000 daily mentions. For that period, Periscope had 1.47 million links shared on Twitter, while Meerkat had 302,841.

Considering that Twitter has 300,000 million engaged users, neither application has gone into the social-media stratosphere, but they have become an important tool.

Despite the popularity of the two mobile newcomers, live streaming, even on mobile devices, is not a recent breakthrough. Mobile streaming app providers Ustream and Livestream (then called Mogulus) launched in 2007. Since then, there have been many others – Flixwagon, Kyte.tv, Justin.tv, Zannel and Seesmic, just to name a few that are all but forgotten.

But the real trailblazer was Qik. In 2007, Santa Clara, Calif.-based startup Visivo Communications created the Qik video service (Gannes, 2007), focusing on provisioning software and services to run on Nokia's smartphones as it raised a $3 million second round of funding in April 2008. (Kincaid, 2008)

Competitor Ustream released its iPhone app in December 2009 (Van Grove, 2009) and Qik followed with an approved IOS app of its own. iPhone users had been able to use Qik since August 2008 if they were willing to jailbreak their phones as Apple did not approve live-streaming apps. (Arrington, 2009)

Qik grew its user base to 5 million when it was acquired by Skype in 2011. Then Skype was acquired by Microsoft, and Qik was pivoted to video messaging; the Qik streaming app was retired in April 2014. Ustream has focused on big clients and high quality production live streaming services, rather than the mobile market.

The ability to live stream gives the average user the ability to do what only used to be done with high-end equipment. The growth of this market is the result of better, more powerful hardware (smartphones), better software (apps) and increased mobile bandwidth. MetroPCS was the first carrier to roll out the advanced (4G) LTE mobile technology, followed by Verizon Wireless, in 2010. The other carriers followed. The Census Bureau's October 2012 Current Population Survey said that over half (54 percent) of mobile phone users reported using their devices to take photos or video, representing a 13 percentage-point increase in just 15 months. *Exploring the Digital Nation: Embracing the Mobile Internet* (n.d.)

In the industry, the ability to shoot and edit video is rapidly becoming a career-maker. Phil Chetwynd, global editor-in-chief at AFP, told the World News Media Conference in Washington, D.C., in June that the ability to produce video packages is one of the most important skills a journalist can have, according to a report by Journalism.co.uk Reporters for the Paris-based AFP produced 2,300 videos in 2014 – in addition to the agency's standalone video service. Chetwynd said it's a matter of practically.

It is now expected that if there's one slot on a police helicopter... that journalist must be able to shoot video and write. If we're going to send a reporter on a long features trip to Everest base camp in Nepal, it's essential that that person can shoot video to illustrate their stories. (Edge, 2015)

Not every journalist is video trained, so an hour, a day or a weekend of training might provide the initial steps to acquiring storytelling skills with video.

One way to acquire skills can include attending conferences. The first international mobile journalism conference was held in Dublin, Ireland, on March 27-28, 2015. The event was organized by Glen Mulcahy, the innovation lead for technology with RTÉ-Irelands National Public Service Broadcaster. The event offered a traditional offering of panels with practitioners, and exhibitors offering hands-on time with hardware and software. The second day offered three-hour workshops with the panelists from the day before. *Mobile journalism gets its MoJo* (2015)

The News:rewired journalism conference, held at MSN headquarters in London, on July 6, 2015, featured two sessions on mobile, a session on video, one on community and engagement as well as a session on smartwatches and one on virtual reality. *Announcing the agenda for the next news:rewired.* (2015)

To consider mobile on its own without also considering social media is a mistake. The two are inextricably linked.

Cory Bergman, the co-founder and general manager of the Breaking News app, which is now owned by NBC News, in 2013 warned that journalists were too enamored with social media and were under-estimating mobile.

It's also easy for newsrooms to experiment with social media without much technical effort, especially when drawing on many (mostly free) plug-and-play social tools.

Mobile, however, is hard, and the barrier to experiment is high. App development is downright difficult, requiring longer development cycles, talented designers and engineers – and deeper budgets.

. . . [M]obile is not just another form factor, but a completely new medium, from content to monetization. It's a fundamentally different mindset focused on solving problems in a new context. We can't just shorten content and shovel it onto phones. Or create a responsive design and say we have a mobile strategy. Or create snazzy retina-loving photos in a tablet app and charge people for it. (Bergman, 2013)

In its diffusion throughout society, social media is more deeply embedded in today's culture and what happens on social media, moves through media practices, as we have seen with the rise of Meerkat and Periscope, and whatever comes along next. A knowledge of the social-media environment that journalism now operates in is imperative.

So Goes Facebook, So Goes Media

Forty percent of all cellphone owners use social media sites on their phone, and 28 percent do so daily, Pew Research reported in 2012. Young people, blacks, Hispanics, the highly educated and those with a higher annual household income are more likely to use social networking services on their phones than other groups, Pew reported. *Social Networking Fact Sheet*. (2013)

With nearly 1.415 billion users in mid 2015, Facebook was the social network giant. China's Tencent (QQ) had 829 million users, followed by WhatsApp with 700 million, then Qzone, another Tencent property with 629 million users. Facebook Messenger (500 million users), WeChat (468 million), LinkedIn (347 million), Skype (300 million), Google +, Instagram and Baidu with 300 million, followed by Twitter with 288 million, Viber with 236 million, Tumblr with 230 million, Snapchat (200 million), LINE (181 million) Sina Weibo with 167 million and Vkontakte with 100 milllion *Social networks: Global sites ranked by users (2015)*

Also significant are: Pinterest (250 million), Flickr (65 million), Vine (42 million) and Meetup (40 million). *Top 15 Most Popular Social Networking Sites (*2015)

Facebook adjusted its newsfeed distribution algorithm to favor posts with video over photographs in June 2014, and the results are posts with video have a better chance of getting into any one viewer's newsfeed. (Welch & Zhang, 2014) After the algorithm change, video sharing, per person, in 2014, increased 75 percent and tripled on the news feed with 1 billion video views a day against 350 million photos uploaded daily, Facebook reported.

Facebook said in early January that video, photos, emojis, and stickers constitute a "new universal language," driven by mobile devices.

The company advised video creators to concentrate on great creative in the first three seconds and tell good stories. Surprisingly, the company also advised video creators to plan for sound-off viewing to the point of using text overlays. Sound, Facebook advised, should add value. *The New Universal Language*. (2015)

SOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Academia and industry are working on parallel tracks to address the shift to mobile. The foremost organization of journalism educators in higher education (AEJMC), while supporting scholarship and discussion on mobile, as seen, can encourage for papers and panels from its members as well as events and online discussions among its membership.

Higher education needs to find ways to fast-track new course development and curricular integration, while identifying potential and diverse teaching talent with real experience in the mobile world.

The challenge for higher education is to help learners understand a rapidly changing world, and equip them with intellectual abilities to rapidly understand new technologies and how to successfully adapt them to journalistic practice. So, the value of a class on Google Glass storytelling can equip a student with much more than a specific expertise in a tool that disappears from the marketplace, as seen with Qik, the pioneering early livestreaming tool that was shelved by its corporate owners. Teaching students how to thrive in this environment provides a lifetime of benefit, rather than a limited shelflife training on a particular tool.

Industry is moving to provide training for knowledge-hungry and can well benefit from focusing on the 9 concepts advanced in the 2014 American Press Institute gathering.

CONCLUSION

While the shift to mobile is inexorably on its way, training and determination of best practices for mobile journalism are in the diaper days for both industry and higher education.

Seven in 10 journalists said they had received some form of regular workplace training, which was up from two in 10 in 2002, The Poynter Institute reported in 2014 “Constant Training: New Normal or Missed Opportunity?” The survey of 1,118 newspaper journalists was conducted with support from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation.

Some 88 percent of the journalists surveyed said they could absorb more training. Social media was the top training topic, requested by half of the respondents (51 percent). Training on digital tools, at 43 percent, and video skills, at 35 percent, were the second and third-most requested topics. Data journalism was cited by about a third of the respondents (30 percent). Rounding out the top digitally focused topics were training on mobile devices (26 percent), web analytics (25 percent) and web design (24 percent). (Newton, 2014)

“Newsrooms making the digital transition need to train constantly. But even if they don’t, journalists who want to keep up have to take responsibility to learn on their own,” said Howard Finberg, the report’s author, in a release from the Knight Foundation. *Report Shows Big Gaps in Newsroom Training*. 2014)

The spread of mobile technology has made everyone capable of eyewitness news. This also means that journalists are increasingly expected to do what everyone else does – be it streaming, tweeting or video. And, as professionals, journalists are expected to do it better and to bring context and insight into the process, of course.

These new facets of journalism require training. Some skills can be delivered in an hour, others in a day or a week, but in a dynamic environment of change, learning has to be an ongoing process, the responsibility of both the journalist and the organization.

Brian Williams earned a second chance after a year on the sidelines, returning as a primetime anchor at MSNBC to host news shows covering the presidential campaign in 2016. Media and higher education, having survived the rise of the web, can get a second chance to innovate and survive, by adapting more quickly to advance the journalism profession, and, done well, the essential service it provides society.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Digital Communications: Communications reduced to binary code -- 1's and 0's -- for the use of computational platforms.

Facebook: Santa Clara, Calif.-based social network with over 1 billion members and one of the dominant platforms in social media.

Meerkat: New social media network based on mobile live video streaming.

Mobile Apps: Software product with limited functionality designed specifically for mobile devices.

Mobile Journalism: Emerging practice that integrate the use of mobile technology to gather news and information, under tradition ethics and practices, for distribution to an audience that is increasingly using mobile devices to read and interact with the news and newsmakers.

Multimedia: Multiple media forms used together, not limited to text, photographs, graphics, audio and video.

Periscope: New social media network, owned by Twitter, that allows users to live stream video to a global audience.

Smartphone: Mobile telephone that includes computational functionality and digital network connectivity as well as additional functions such as a still and video cameras.

Social Media: An emerging application of technology that allows users to create a digital profile and interact with others digitally on various platforms.

Streaming: Media shared over the Internet for immediate consumption.

Tumblr: New York-based microblog platform owned by Yahoo, offering social networking as well as distribution of short-form text and multimedia content.

Twitter: San Francisco-based social network that allows users to interact with each others through short posts and multimedia.

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Chapter 29
Who Brings the News?
Exploring the Aggregators Apps for Mobile Devices

João Canavilhas
University of Beira Interior, Portugal

Ivan Satuf
University of Beira Interior, Portugal

ABSTRACT

The spread of mobile devices and digital networks generate new perspectives for the circulation of news. The development of mobile communication technologies and the migration of habits consolidated in personal computers promote the expansion of news aggregators for smartphones and tablets. This work seeks to inquire the operational logic of applications designed to aggregate journalistic content. An immersive analysis shows that the general operations of these apps are based on three dimensions: integration between news and online social media, always-on recommendation systems, and parameterization of outputs. It is argued that the approach between aggregators and social media makes the news extrapolate its information domain and start to circulate as symbolic reference for online interaction. Finally, this work posits that the operational logic of aggregators neglect fundamental aspects of new technologies related to locative information.

INTRODUCTION

The circulation of news content on mobile devices is rapidly growing but at the same time it is facing huge experimental dispersion. The traditional media conglomerates have different approaches when it comes to the search for mechanisms to adjust their outputs to smartphones and tablets (Wolf & Hohlfeld, 2012; Westlund, 2013). Concomitantly, new agents, without any links to news companies, emerge as important intermediaries in the complex mobile ecosystem (Castellet & Feijóo, 2013).

In this paper we attempt to understand the functioning of a specific group of such intermediaries, i.e. news aggregator mobile apps, some of which are very popular among smartphone and tablet users, such

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as Flipboard, Pulse and Zite. We have worked on the assumption that news aggregators are not mere adjuvants, but rather important stakeholders that draw direct benefits from an ubiquitous and pervasive media system (Deuze, 2012; Ling, 2012) made up of high-speed digital transmission networks and "always-on" mobile technologies (Baron, 2008; Turkle, 2008, 2011).

Despite frequently cited in studies on mobile journalism, aggregating apps still require further consistent research. We believe that this gap in research may conceal a phenomenon which is decisive for our understanding of the present and, especially, of the future of news distribution and circulation, bearing in mind that the search for news is one of the most common habits of mobile digital device owners. (Taylor, Samuels & Ramey, 2011, Pew Research Center, 2012; comScore, 2013; Newman & Levy, 2014).

Some relevant data stress the need to have more in-depth analyses about aggregating apps. In only three years, Flipboard has reached an impressive 85 million registered users (Yeung, 2013). The app interface simulates on mobile devices the habit of reading paper magazines by combining visual and touch features. It is better adapted to tablet size but also has good usability on smartphones. It further allows users to integrate in a single platform their online social media and their favourite news channels. Although exact data about the activity of registered users is not available, suffice it to know that even if only 1% of them access the app on a daily basis that alone represents a contingent of 850,000 people.

The success of aggregating apps is reflected in the existence of several businesses that actively seek a means of adapting to the new distribution platforms. The rapid rise of Flipboard has caught the attention of traditional media such as The New York Times, which signed a contract in order to allow their subscribers to have full access to the newspaper contents through that app. It was the first time that this newspaper implemented a paywall strategy in a platform that does not belong to the group. CNN, The Telegraph, Forbes and other traditional channels also have agreements with Flipboard, but without immediate charging for access to the contents. Instead they explore the advertisements (featuring others and themselves) that pop up in between the news items.

Other businesses in the sector go beyond the actual contents and directly involve the aggregators and media conglomerates. In August of 2011 CNN purchased Zite under the justification that it aimed to expand its presence in the universe of mobile devices. The business value has not been officially announced but values ranging from 20 to 25 million dollars have been reported. Less than two years later, in May of 2014, Zite changed hands again. The buyer was now Flipboard, paying CNN approximately 60 million dollars (Bercovici, 2014). In addition to being in control of a direct competitor, Flipboard announced that it would incorporate part of Zite's recommendation algorithms to enhance its performance and subsequently discontinue their rival[1].

Another important negotiation for the sector took place in November of 2013 when the social media LinkedIn acquired Pulse for 90 million dollars (Geron, 2013). In addition to promoting the integration of two gigantic networks (at the time of negotiation Pulse had 30 million users), LinkedIn was also interested in increasing the number of visits and the users' time online by encouraging greater interaction with news content.

It should be further noted how technology giants shifted towards news-aggregating services for mobile devices. Facebook chose to develop its own aggregator, i.e. Paper, which incorporates news channels into the social media.

These examples show that the circulation of news combines traditional media (CNN, The New York Times) with major companies of the digital sector (LinkedIn, Facebook) and emerging start-ups (Flipboard, Zite, Pulse).

In this paper we analyse what is behind the apps in order to answer a direct but complex question: "Who brings us the news?" The goal is to understand the operations and features of aggregators that are directly related to contents.

In order to answer the question, we shall divide this study into three stages. We depart from a historical perspective that will allow us to explain the reasons that caused news aggregators to migrate to mobile devices. We will then demonstrate that mobile aggregator apps are structured around three features:

1. Integration of news content with the social media;
2. "Always-on" recommender systems;
3. Output parameter definition.[2]

In the third and final part of the paper, we claim that these features essentially rely on one of the many properties of mobile devices, i.e. networked portability, side-lining important functionalities of mobile technologies such as geolocation (with the help of GPS, QR code reader, and motion sensors).

THE EMERGENCE OF AGGREGATOR APPS

Why and how have aggregators reached mobile devices? The answer requires a twofold approach. On the one hand, it has to do with technological evolution, which allowed for the gradual adjustment of news content to cell phones. On the other hand, it is related to the migration of a habit: news aggregators were widely used on desktop computers, and users looked for ways of transporting that habit to the platform to which they grew more accustomed. This twofold analysis is intended to discard any attempt to apprehend the aggregating apps phenomenon in a one-dimensional perspective, be it technological or social.

The Technological Evolution

The expansion of 3G networks in the first decade of the 21st century was a disruptive innovation, capable of causing deep changes to the mobile ecosystem. First and foremost, the significant increase in the speed of data transmission allowed a wider variety of formats to be put into circulation.

The gradually falling prices of data packages offered by telephone companies, the improvement of Wi-Fi networks and the subsequent adjustment of HTML language for mobile browsers have made it possible for initial barriers to be overcome.

The technological evolution in these devices led to the decline of the telephone function in favour of new, more computer-like features (Klemens, 2010), as well as bigger and higher definition screens to display new contents. Standard QWERTY keyboards have been adopted in several models to make it easier to type longer texts. The reorganisation of technology added a new layer to news contents. The "push news" system (Fidalgo, 2009) remained important and it is still present in most apps (alerts), but the expansion of 3G connections was a definitive step towards the consolidation of "on-demand" content in mobile technologies, with consumers actively seeking contents.

Evolution met a turning point upon the iPhone launch in June of 2007, a "game changer" that influenced the entire composition of the contemporary mobile ecosystem. The physical keyboard was replaced by a single touch screen and interaction was now done through applications, i.e. software specifically designed to operate in this device. The gradual replacement of cell phones with smartphones is a paradigmatic change. The "telecom model", focused on the commercial exploration of voice transmission, made way for the "software model", based on the new computational features of devices and on the data-centred approach (Castellet & Feijoó, 2013). It was at this time that mobile devices turned into an exceptional platform for news distribution.

The approach would be incomplete if we failed to mention the remaining elements of the ecosystem: distribution channel for contents and services, operating system and software development kit (SDK). The distribution channels are the "stores" (App Store, Google Play, etc.) that group the apps into sections and provide access to registered users so that they may download them (freely or for a fee). Stores and apps are directly connected with the operating system (iOS, Android and Windows Phone, etc.) that controls all the functions of the device. This connection has technological and economic implications as it imposes constraints on the users, who will have access to a specific range of contents depending on their choice of operating system. Lastly, the software development kit is made available by companies that control the operating systems in order to allow external developers to create new apps.

For Goggin (2011), the release of the SDK was crucial for apps to become contemporary cultural elements, because it allowed thousands of developers to gain creative access to and decisively influence the contents available on mobile devices. Together, the two main operating systems – iOS and Android – offer on their distribution channels over two billion apps that feed the App Economy, a booming market worth thousands of billions of dollars worldwide (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2013).

The opening up to external developers helps to explain the heterogeneity and fragmentation of mobile contents (Feijóo, Maghiros, Abadie & Gómez-Barroso, 2009; Scolari, Aguado & Feijóo 2012). News aggregators can be regarded as a relevant sub-group of news apps. However, as we will conclude during this analysis, it is also a heterogeneous sub-group.

From the PC to the Mobile App

Aggregating platforms are quite popular on the internet. Their development was, to some extent, a response to the explosion of contents on the web and to the need to select and organise information without the user spending much time and effort (Calin, Dellarocas, Palmi & Sutanto, 2012). Aggregators work as intermediaries between content producers and consumers in an environment of data superabundance (Cádima, 2013).

Two of Google's main executives, Cohen and Schmidt (2013), ascribe the rise of new platforms to the widespread crisis of the traditional media, which proved incapable of competing with more agile and effective distribution channels. The type of intermediation accomplished on these platforms inflicts collateral damage on historically established business models and has therefore spawned a strong reaction from news companies, which witnessed the invasion of new competitors (Pauwels & Picone, 2012). The misappropriation of material and copyright infringements are but a few of the accusations that reach the courts (Isbell, 2010; Jasiewicz, 2012).

Users have been taking advantage of aggregators since the late 1990s, when Rich Site Summary appeared. This format is present in the web to this day. Commonly known as RSS Feed, the system allows users to subscribe contents from a variety of sources that are automatically gathered on a single graphical interface.

According to the environments in which they run, Fortes *et al* (2007) identify four types of aggregators: desktop-aggregators (run on the user's machine), web-based aggregators (run on a remote web server), widget aggregators (integrated in a web page or in a desktop side bar) and mobile aggregators (run on a mobile device).

Web-based aggregators operate on the basis of two main features: process automation and content customisation. Automation is the software's ability to perform previously defined tasks without human intervention. It is convenient when it comes to selecting different sources of information and receiving contents, avoiding the need to access all the websites where the news was originally published. In addition to being convenient, RSS is based on content customisation, which is one of the main characteristics of digital news contents. On a single platform, it is possible to gather news about one's favourite soccer team, posts from a blog on national politics, videos released on a newspaper website or any other kind of content.

Automation and customisation are the operational pillars of one of the most common aggregators - Google Reader - launched in 2005 and discontinued in 2013. Web aggregators integrate pull and push systems. The demands are set by the users (pull) and the news arrives automatically (push). Other aggregators remain active on the web, such as Feedly and Feedspot, but they are becoming more and more similar to social media.

It seems obvious that news-aggregating apps for mobile devices should have a solid baseline as well as a source of inspiration. Aggregators developed for personal computers have broken new ground and set new habits of online news consumption. The evolution of smartphones was accompanied by the adaptation of that kind of service to the context of mobility. In addition, the arrival of tablets on the market, since the iPad launch in 2010, encouraged the development of apps which aim to fully exploit the potential of screens and of ergonomic advantages in content consumption (Palacios, 2013). Indeed, some news aggregators seek to captivate users by means of attractive graphical interfaces that explore the tactile dimension (Palacios & Da Cunha, 2012).

It must be made clear that the shift from computers towards mobile devices is not a mere transposition. Rather, it represents a process of adjustment to new features. Smartphones and tablets have characteristics that set them apart from personal computers. Portability, touch screen, integrated GPS, motion sensors and other features make it necessary to rethink the operations performed by aggregators on mobile devices.

NEWS AGGREGATING APPS IN ACTION

Assuming that apps are software developed for mobile devices, we seek to answer an apparently simple question: "Who brings us the news?". In fact, the question is not simple and hence neither is the answer. The operations triggered by each piece of software have crucial implications on contents, determining the news that gets released and the manner in which consumption takes place. Through a careful analysis it is possible to uncover three basic features of these apps: integration of news with the social media, "always-on" recommender systems and output parameter definition.

Given the wide variety of aggregators available on app stores, we have selected a small but representative group for the purpose of this analysis. First of all, we selected only those apps that define themselves as news aggregators and are inserted in the "News" section of the App Store or in the "News and Magazines" section of Google Play, which are the two main distribution channels of mobile apps. Subsequently we searched for the most cited news aggregators in scientific papers and technology expert sites. Finally, we excluded those apps whose aggregation is exclusively done by news sites such as Circa, Inside and Newser, since contents are aggregated by professionals instead of software operations that interact with users[3]. This brings us to a group of twelve apps: Feedly, Flipboard, News360, Newscron, NewsMix, Niiiws, Paper, Prismatic, Pulse, SkyGrid, Trove, Zite.

Integration With the Social Media

The union between the social media and mobile devices has generated a force that is still difficult to measure but its consequences are immediate in several areas, such as journalism. The last few years have been marked by the intense approximation between the news and the online social media. The culture of sharing and the re-appropriation of contents produced by others on platforms such as Facebook and Twitter has led to the coinage of the term "spreadable media" (Jenkins, Ford & Green, 2013) to designate the new relationships between content producers, social media and the audiences.

It would be naïve to think that news companies could remain oblivious to such significant changes. Stories are reposted by users on the social media at the same time as newspapers, radios, television and news sites create profiles on those networks to interact with the public in a territory where they do not control the flow of data. Amateur videos posted on YouTube are used to illustrate stories on TV, mass media stories are released on YouTube and on other video-sharing sites only moments after their exhibition.

These phenomena translate into a major shift within the field of news production. We moved from a model focused on contents and their producers, typical of cultural industries, towards a model focused on users and their relationships to other users as well to the contents themselves (Giardina, 2012; Aguado & Güere, 2013). This change is not peaceful and many journalists disagree that the apps launched by the companies for which they work should be open to participation (Westlund, 2012).

At a time when Facebook gets one billion monthly visits from mobile devices (Lunden, 2014) and approximately 80% of Twitter traffic originates from smartphones and tablets (Durrani, 2014), aggregating apps are in a privileged position to explore the connections between the news, the social media and the users. Although optional, one of the first steps of all the apps under analysis is to encourage users to log into their personal accounts on online social media. But why would we want to associate a Facebook or Twitter profile with an aggregator when we are interested in consuming news? From the user's perspective, that decision may be influenced by the wish to make the most of all the app features, which depends on being logged into social media. Additionally, with the growing culture of sharing, it is fair to assume that a significant amount of users choose aggregators precisely because they are so closely interwoven with social media.

On the other hand, from the perspective of apps and their developers, the answer is more diversified. Four out of the twelve news aggregators analysed – Newscron, News Mix, Niiiws e SkyGrid – use integration with social media only for sharing news. This is a basic feature nowadays.

Two apps belong in a second sub-group: Paper and Pulse. The purpose of these aggregators is to create a news consumption environment that stimulates sharing in specific networks. Paper, developed by Facebook, only allows users of the network founded by Mark Zuckerberg to log in. This app allows you to see all the updates associated with your Facebook account. It further offers a news menu, which is automatically grouped into 16 sections. What is the purpose of that approach? Simple: every user has to be connected to Facebook in order to have access to Paper. To simply use the app means that you have to be logged into the social media, which brings up Facebook stats in terms of the number of visits and time spent online. At the same time, users are exposed to a series of news and pick the channels that appeal most to them, according to personal preferences. Since news consumption also takes place in the integrated environment of the social media, the probability of sharing the news on the "Timeline" is also expected to increase. More news circulating on Facebook means more "Likes", more shares and more message exchange.

It is enough to see how the news is grouped to realise that the operation mode of Paper tries to adapt news consumption to Facebook's interaction patterns. Among the 16 sections there are some traditional ones such as "Headlines", "Score" (sports) and "Tech" (technology), which could well be sections of any news site. However, other sections are not quite as conventional if we consider the formal model of journalism. That is the case of the "Cute" section, which aggregates news about animals, mostly pets, e.g. cats and dogs. Illustrated with pictures and videos, most pieces of news get thousands of "Likes" as well as dozens or even hundreds of comments. Every time that type of news is shared, it tends to trigger actions that feed the social media. The same goes for the "LOL" section, named after an acronym that is commonly used as slang in the internet and that stands for "laughing out loud". That section features links to websites such as Buzzfeed and Gawker, which are known for posting viral contents.

Another aggregator of this subcategory is Pulse, which offers the possibility of connecting exclusively with the LinkedIn user profile. Similarly to Paper, the goal is to incorporate a news content platform in order to strengthen the interactions of the social media. As we mentioned in the introduction, LinkedIn, currently the largest professionally-oriented social network online, bought out Pulse in a multimillion dollar transaction. In order to understand the business it is necessary to take a closer look at the social media. LinkedIn is built on a vast repertoire of professional CVs that are all interconnected. However, if the CV is already up-to-date and if connections with other professionals have been established, there remains little to do on the platform. Unlike Facebook, users are not encouraged to post dozens of photos, videos and personal messages. The average LinkedIn user is not an "always-on" type of user.

News circulation may help to stimulate interaction and hence the number of visits and the time spent on LinkedIn. The news itself is not of a personal nature and contents are often linked to topics of professional interest, whether they be specific or general. The app will show you the other users who also liked a given piece of news and allow you immediate access to their profiles. The aggregator experience expands onto other platforms. When going on LinkedIn on a computer, the following message will pop up: "Pulse recommends this news for you". Based on user activity, the system automatically selects some contents that can be read, commented on and shared on the web browser.

Therefore, the Paper-Facebook and Pulse-LinkedIn integrated systems demonstrate that the news-aggregating app may serve as an additional channel of support to online social media. These aggregators are exclusive to the social media with which they are directly associated, and they rely on the news feed as an appropriate means to catalyse interaction. The target is to keep online profiles permanently logged in and active. After all, "always-on" users are the ultimate goal of any social media platform.

Always-On Recommender Systems

The remaining six aggregators – Feedly, Flipboard, News360, Prismatic, Trove, Zite – incorporate the social media and their basic features as a content recommendation system, although they have different approaches.

Before analysing the apps, it is essential to stress that journalism has historically asserted itself as a recommendation system. That perception is present in the seminal study by White (1950) on the operations carried out by a newspaper editor (Mr. Gates) in order to select the group of events that would make the news. Later research has contributed to redefine the focus, which moved away from individual decisions towards the complex power relations of organisational structures (Gans, 2004). Despite that, the gatekeeping theory continues to be one of the most relevant theories in the field of journalism (Shoemaker, Vos & Reese, 2008). It lies on the idea that to select is to recommend, in other words, it is the journalist telling to his audience "this is what truly matters".

This centralised model, which prevailed well into the 20th century, was made possible thanks to the limited number of news channels and the intrinsic limitations of each one of them (space in the printed newspaper and time on the radio and/or TV). The proliferation of personal computers and the emergence of the World Wide Web have significantly altered the landscape. According to Bruns (2011), the influence of journalists on the circulation of contents stands in inverse proportion to the number of available channels. This is quite visible nowadays, as there are more mechanisms to manipulate the contents directly as well as an ever-increasing exposure to algorithmic and social recommendation networks, which are not necessarily based on the operation modes of journalism.

We are faced with a process of consolidation of "always-on" recommender systems associated with portable communication technologies, which are permanently connected to high-speed digital networks. Aggregator apps have become relevant platforms in this recent configuration. Obviously one should put into perspective the expression "permanent connection" as there are significant global inequalities with regard to technological infrastructures (Castells Fernández-Ardèvol, Qiu & Sey, 2006). However, research shows a steady fall in the prices of smartphones and network access fees. These factors are gradually allowing millions of people to join in the mobile ecosystem.

"Always-on" recommender systems result not only from technology but also from technology-related sociocultural changes. Turkle (2011) argues that today's citizens are living in a kind of "media bubble" that simultaneously isolates and connects because each one of us "is tethered to a mobile device and to the people and places to which that device serves as a portal" (p.155). This means that we no longer interact with the people around us. Instead, we connect with others who are physically more remote. These "others" demand from us the same as we demand from them: permanent contact.

Social media, such as Facebook and Twitter, are perfect environments for the proliferation of contents attuned to current events. As our emotional relationships are mediated by media technologies, Grusin (2010) contends that we also establish relationships of an emotional nature, maybe even of love, with our technological gadgets. From a similar perspective, Deuze (2012) claims that there is no life "outside the media" because we are immersed in the media. With our smartphones and tablets packed with apps conceived for communication and content-sharing, it becomes even more difficult to discern the boundaries of "inside" and "outside". In a study about young users of mobile devices, Gardner & Davis (2013) admit to the possibility that we become "app-dependent" if we allow mobile apps to restrict and shape our behaviour, choices and goals.

Life surrounded by the media has a number of consequences, one of which could be the transformation of everyday activities into digital data. With each message, photograph or video that we post on social media, we are giving computing systems an opportunity to take advantage from access to such data. Three of the news aggregators we analysed in this chapter do exactly that: Feedly, News360 and Zite. By logging into Facebook and/or Twitter, the app begins a search that within a few seconds will retrieve a set of keywords linked to content recommendations. In general, recommendations point to wide topics, e.g. "Technology", "Business", "Journalism", and "Music", or they may also contain direct links to the user profile such as the country of origin or current country of residence.

The analysis shows that the recommendation system is still rather basic if one bears in mind its potential, but it also demonstrates that it could be the initial stage of a trend that may definitively influence the course of news. It is not journalists who recommend the contents, nor is it the user who seeks possible areas of interest, but rather the software programmed to access a database (the user profile on the social media) that cross-checks data and selects "relevant" subjects. Much is said nowadays about the consumption of customised information, but customisation did not use to mean loneliness or isolation. What we post on social media does not concern only ourselves but others as well. A post on an online platform built for the purpose of interaction is always a reflexive action. We publish posts and await other people's reactions, and their feedback may take various forms, such as comments, "likes" or "retweets". The possible absence of feedback may have an influence on future posts, in terms of both content and form.

When aggregators go through our walls to recommend contents, the output could be the result of our own interactions but also of the expectations we transfer to the online universe. Ultimately this output is the reflection of our online experiences, be it real or fictional. The close relationship that we maintain with mobile devices and the constant flow of information that we transfer to the social media may lead to the development of apps that recommend news contents based on feelings and emotions. While this is a highly prospective analysis, it could be argued that the news tends to turn into an extension of the social media, even though consumption does not take place on platforms such as Facebook or Twitter. The future of "always-on" recommender systems seems to be pointing to the strengthening of what Pursell, Rainie, Mitchell, Rosenstiel and Olmstead (2010) designated as "Daily Me" or "Daily Us". The user's media life provides the input for the recommender system, based on the "digital representation of a real-world personality" (Uhlmann & Lugmayr, 2012, p.87). The consumption of news information is more and more attuned to the interests of users, according to their interactions with others through platforms that engage specific communication patterns.

Whereas Feedly, News360 and Zite use the information posted on Facebook and Twitter as a database for content recommendation, Flipboard, Prismatic and Trove take further advantage of the close relationship with the social media.

After all, what defines online social media? It is basically the ability to create a profile and use it as a hub, i.e. as a point of connection with other hubs in a jumble of connections where it is possible to produce, share and receive information conditioned by the user's own choice.

These three aggregators are authentic social media focused on news-sharing, encouraging users to create a profile on their apps. For instance, by allowing Prismatic access to your Facebook and Twitter profiles, the app will automatically inform which ones of your "friends" also have a Prismatic profile and it will suggest contents "from your activity" on the social media. A user profile will also be created automatically, with the same image as that of the Facebook (or Twitter) profile. On this space it is possible to see the users' interests (keywords that point to news topics they are most interested in), whom they follow (following) and who follows them (followers). Some expressions and symbols used on social media are incorporated into news aggregators. To "Follow" is a basic action on Twitter, and below each piece of news there is the famous "Like" button (thumbs up) on Facebook. Prismatic is a platform for news consumption camouflaged as social media. Profile posts do not include opinions, personal photos or videos of your most recent trip. The profile is a collection of news that the user decided to share and through which he/she expects to attract other people with matching interests.

Flipboard allows users to create "social magazines" based on personal interests. All contents are re-appropriations of news and information selected from various sources that the app allows users to aggregate in a single interface, similar to a paper magazine. Anyone can create a magazine about "International Relations" by aggregating news from sources such as CNN, Fox News, Washington Post, etc. The originality of the magazine lies not in the contents themselves, but in how they are gathered and presented. As pointed out by Thorson (2008), "one can no longer assume that an article originally published on the front page of the New York Times will be read in that context" (p.485).

The app recommends a list of "Flips by Friends" with the magazines made by persons that are on the list of personal contacts on Twitter and Facebook. The magazines created by the user, the articles included in these magazines and the number of users that subscribed to the contents, are also displayed on the profile information. In addition, Flipboard gathers all of the channels selected by the user in the "Cover Stories" section, where the contents posted on the Facebook and Twitter timelines are presented next to news aggregated into magazines created by other users and to material published on news companies' websites. Presented side by side, the interactions on the social media and the news blend into an uninterrupted flow of information.

Trove follows in the same footsteps, generating an automatic user profile as soon as users go on Facebook and Twitter through its app. It aims to encourage users to create "Troves", i.e. news-related sections linked to the user profile that may be followed by other users. This app also searches the user's social media in order to recommend "The best stories picked by people who share your interests". The mechanism behind Trove is basically the same as Prismatic and Flipboard. The goal is to create news-related sections linked to a user profile and connect with other people who take an interest in similar subjects. These people can be old acquaintances from the social media or new contacts established via the aggregator. As mentioned by Aguado & Castellet (2013), "the true strength of aggregators lies in how they incorporate the flow of social media into content consumption" (p. 203).

All three apps are in line with the emerging concept of "digital content curation" (Rosenbaum, 2011; Correa, 2012; Bruns & Highfield, 2012). At the epicentre of the process are the users responsible for selecting the contents. However those users do not act on their own, as they are constantly monitored by algorithms that recommend contents viewed by others. On these apps, the news feed is subject to the operation mode of social media. The "contents of others" turn into "my contents". But the process does not end there because "my contents" are always addressed to "others". Content consumption in the 21st century is definitely taking a very different path than in the broadcasting era. The news extrapolates the realm of information to become a symbolic reference for online social interaction. In essence, the system ceases to be "mediacentric" and becomes "Icentric", with the media serving as mere suppliers of contents that are then selected, commented on and contextualised by networks of users.

Output Parameter Definition

Mobile apps are the most recent phenomenon of a process that has been taking place for approximately 50 years, since computational systems began to permeate the social sphere. During the first years, computer programming was restricted to the execution of specific tasks, generally linked to complex calculations and process automation, and only experts were able to perform such procedures. Since the late 20th century, computer logic came to be used in connection with many daily activities through the continuous utilisation of software (Kitchin & Dodge, 2011; Manovich, 2013).

Software is a fundamental mediator of routine tasks. Even without noticing, the driver of an automobile equipped with an electronic injection system will interact with software every time he/she presses the accelerator pedal. The same is true of a citizen who withdraws cash from an ATM or makes a credit card payment. Even when it is explicit, the software may be concealed from the user. All computer operations are mediated by software, specifically its visible part, i.e. the graphical interfaces that allow for man-machine sensory interaction instead of forcing the user to deal with programming languages.

In the case of news-aggregating apps, all the programming was focused on achieving an intuitive way for the user to access the news, which is selected and organised beforehand. The tasks are performed by algorithms that are previously programmed by developers. But what is an algorithm? Broadly speaking it is a set of steps necessary to accomplish a task. In computing logic, the algorithm is a sequence of command structures aimed at the execution of a given operation (Goffey, 2008; Cormen, 2013).

Up until now we have analysed apps in which algorithms allow for the integration of news aggregators into the social media. It is now time to look at the algorithms used for the definition of output parameters directly by the user. Apps entail a number of parameters that are directly manipulated, e.g. the selection of contents to be aggregated. Choosing a specific blog from a list of options is to act directly on a parameter. The user tells the software "I would like to get updates from this blog only". This is, of course, the most basic level of parameter definition.

On News360, each news item recommended can be rated by the user. A positive rating will cause other news with similar contents to go up in the recommendation ranking. It is also possible to give a negative rating and thus lower the status of a certain type of content. The more ratings, the more the software will understand consumption patterns and produce more relevant outputs. As mobile devices become key items in today's apparel, parameter definition systems gain relevance due to their role in helping us make sense of the contents with which we interact.

Newscron is an aggregator that deals fundamentally with output parameter definition. The app presents a "default" set of news that can be thoroughly customised. Upon selecting the "Settings" menu, a set of 17 horizontal bars is displayed. These bars are equivalent to news categories, such as "Latest", "Knowledge & Culture", "Digital & Technology" and "Politics". By sliding a finger over each bar it is possible to change the pattern. The content layout possibilities are virtually endless. Imagine what it would be like to be able to buy every newspaper, put them in your pocket and, with only a few touches on the screen, to have the freedom of changing the parameters to consume only the news of the sections that interest you the most. What's better, the news is updated in real time. As there are no limits to the changes in parameters, it is possible to increase exposure to politics news during an election period or, if soccer is not your cup of tea, simply lower the level of sports news during the World Cup.

As with most apps under analysis, which firmly believe in the fusion between news and online social media, the definition of parameter outputs seems to be an emerging trend, which is evolving towards an enhanced customisation of information.

FAR BEYOND PORTABILITY

The characteristics of the apps presented in the previous item are deeply related to networked portability. The freedom of movements associated with the ability to send and receive data in high-speed networks promotes the use of social media on an unprecedented scale. The evolution of recommender systems associated with social media and the ability to change the parameters that generate the outputs are also direct consequences of technological mobility. With devices that are permanently connected within hand reach, news contents are now subject to new consumption habits focused on the re-appropriation and the continuous circulation of information. If personal computers were the departure point for the current state of affairs, then smartphones and tablets represent the consolidation of the user as the central element of a mobile ecosystem, as seen above.

Networked portability is only one of the aspects of mobile devices, the most elementary and visible one, but one that lies at the origin of several other features. The integration with the social media, the “always-on” recommender systems and the definition of output parameters are still located on the outermost layer of technology, whereas new horizons remain untapped by aggregating apps. It is in fact surprising that apps should have significant flaws when compared with the potential of the new media. Developed by start-ups and by giants from the digital sector, which are already born free from the shackles of the broadcasting system, they would be expected to, at least, offer experimentation models so that they could be distinguished from the traditional media that are facing evident problems of adjustment.

But what are, after all, the horizons that have yet to be explored by news aggregators? They are features that result directly from the mutual adjustment of software (apps) and hardware (smartphones and tablets), such as geolocation. The development of that feature could represent a new level with respect to the circulation of news information.

Geolocated (context-aware) information is defined as the association between the contents and the microenvironment in which the user is located (Gay, 2009; Gordon & Souza e Silva, 2011). Smartphones and tablets contain an array of resources that allow the data to be associated with their immediate spatial and temporal dimensions, such as the Global Positioning System (GPS), the motion sensors (accelerometer and gyroscope) and the camera (for QR Code reading or shape recognition). Scoble & Israel (2014) claim that mobile devices, social media, data, sensors and locations are the five forces that command the era of context. The present generation of aggregator apps has yet to realise that the exploitation of the last two forces – sensors and locations – is vital to adapt the consumption of news to modern times.

The integrated GPS in mobile devices, for instance, allows satellites to determine the user’s exact coordinates, placing news aggregators in a privileged position to take advantage of that feature. If a person is driving to work and comes close to the scene of a road accident, they may start receiving news in time to choose an alternative route. In this case, the advantages of aggregators as opposed to the traditional means are substantial. An app developed by a specific news channel would not issue a news alert unless it had information about that accident. Aggregators are able to program the algorithms to search for last-minute news about road accidents and other obstacles located within a certain distance radius from the user. As the goal of the app is to bring together different sources of information, all it takes to generate the alert is for a channel to spread the information.

The news aggregators analysed in this paper do not have significant context-related features. They focus exclusively on networked portability and thus reinforce the user-device duality, in other words, the subject that moves and interacts constantly with the smartphone. The potential of the user-device-environment triad is neglected. This is consistent with the study conducted by Goggin, Martin & Dwyer (2014) on locative news, in which the authors emphasize the low presence of news contents adapted to the geographic context of the users.

CONCLUSION

The possibility of accessing and distributing contents at any time and place requires new ways of adapting contents to smartphones and tablets. News-aggregating apps for mobile devices play an important role in today’s media ecosystem, because they are platforms that draw on the abundance of information resources in order to carry out the selection and organisation of the data. As the broadcasting system and mobile technologies take on new communicational shapes, the consequences for journalism are massive.

The aggregator apps strengthen the bond between the news and the social media. At a time when networks such as Facebook and Twitter control a significant slice of data traffic on mobile devices, it is expected that content consumption apps will take advantage of the situation.

The aggregators analysed in this paper have different approaches to the social media.

Paper and Pulse serve as catalysers of interaction for Facebook and LinkedIn, respectively.

In turn, Feedly, News360 and Zite take the users' actions on the social media as "always-on" recommender systems, suggesting topics that are likely to appeal to them. The user that is permanently connected with other people via the social media becomes the system's input. If ordinary life feeds the system and exerts influence on the recommendation of contents, it can be expected that the news (outputs) will bear an affinity to the users' feelings and emotional states.

The union between aggregators and the social media finds its highest expression in apps such as Flipboard, Prismatic and Trove. These aggregators are authentic social media, encouraging the creation of personal profiles on their own platforms. It becomes increasingly difficult to discern the boundaries between news and other spheres of social interaction. Future studies should extend the analysis about the activity of digital curation in aggregating apps.

The social media are complemented by the possibility of the users setting the parameters on the app, defining the contents according to personal choices. This is one of the consequences of the strong sense of identification between the device and its owner (Katz & Aarhus, 2002), who seeks, in this way, to adjust the information to his/her interests. The sophistication of algorithmic systems of output parameter definition, as is the case of Newscron, represents the ability to change in a few seconds the set of news to be presented. All it takes is to change a few parameters in order to transform the aggregator into a "sports diary" or into a collection of posts from political blogs.

But this strong connection between users and devices cannot be explored only in terms of the customisation performed by the user. This paper has demonstrated that the greatest shortcoming of mobile aggregators has to do with the absence of a relationship between the contents and the consumption contexts. The mode of operation lies at the surface of networked portability, which is the most basic feature of mobile devices. This causes the user's direct actions (the interactions on the social media and the definition of parameters) to be favoured over the potential arising from the immediate spatial and temporal context, such as the georeferencing of the news. This kind of contextualisation, which Canavilhas (2013) titles horizontality, builds "a chain of meaning in which the understanding of the informational element is achieved through the supply of data about the element within its spatial context" (p.7). In other words, other than what is suggested by the social media and the parameters defined by users, it is further possible to add a third layer of customisation that results from the exploration of the technology already available on the devices.

The vertiginous evolution of apps may alter the present-day scenario rather quickly. The existing apps provide periodical updates in order to fix bugs and add new features. Additionally, as the mobile system is open to developers, news apps, with significant bits of innovation, may be launched at any given time.

Another aspect to be monitored is the consolidation of the sector. Transactions like the purchase of Zite by Flipboard seem to be the beginning of a path that may well set the standards for apps and single out the leaders of the sector. The overwhelming number of apps available hinders visibility, causing a relatively small number of players to attract the attention of the public and thus gain greater influence. Recent data indicates that 80% of the apps available on app stores have extremely low download rates. These are known as "Zombie Apps" (Kelly, 2014).

Bringing content aggregation apps to the forefront of research is a valid initiative in order to understand the circulation of news contents in mobile devices, thus contributing to theoretical studies about the news in a context of mobility.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Algorithm: Set of instructions that enable a computer system to perform specific tasks.

Always-On Systems: Devices permanently connected to Internet.

App: Acronym of application, software developed for mobile devices, typically downloaded from an app store.

Content Curation: Online practice of gathering and (re)organizing text, video, audio, pictures, etc. in order to create new contents.

Contextualisation: A chain of meaning in which the main information is integrated in a set of related facts, figures, places or data.

Mobile Devices: Small computing devices with a touch screen and wireless internet connection, e.g. smartphones and tablets.

News Aggregator: Online platform tailored to select and organize digital news, automatically received from different web sources.

Push News: System to send/receive news alerts on mobile devices.

ENDNOTES

1 "Zite FAQ - Questions About Flipboard and Zite": http://blog.zite.com/228-2/

2 These features emerged from a larger observation, carried out as part of a doctoral research project currently ongoing at the Laboratory of Online Communication (LabCom), a research unit of the University of Beira Interior, Portugal

[3] For a discussion on the role of journalists in news-aggregating platforms see Anderson, C.W. (2013). What aggregators do: Towards a networked concept of journalistic expertise in the digital age. *Journalism*, 14(8), 1008–1023. doi: 10.1177/1464884913492460.

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Chapter 30
Journalists and Mobile:
Melding Social Media and Social Capital

Hans Karl Meyer
Ohio University, USA

Burton Speakman
Ohio University, USA

ABSTRACT

Despite the high profile of many social media activist efforts, such as the Arab Spring, researchers are still questioning whether these mostly online campaigns can lead to real world impact. Journalists are also asking themselves what role they fill as they watch, comment on, and cover the deluge of activism on Twitter, Facebook, and other sites. Through a comprehensive review of the literature on social capital and its intersection with the Internet and social media, this chapter suggests that social media can lead to social capital, but journalists provide the key ingredient to lead to lasting social change. Literature on the goals and aims of journalism, coupled with a review of its vital role in a community, point to the need for the context and verification that journalism provides in order for social media to transform into social capital.

INTRODUCTION

When Facebook become became the megaphone for Tunisian citizens to organize themselves and trumpet their causes to the world, many journalists, including Andy Carvin (2014) took notice. What he first saw in Tunisia and ended up chronicling closely throughout Egypt, Libya and other Middle Eastern and North African countries became what is now known as the Arab Spring, a movement that capitalized on social media in several parts of the world to enact real world government reforms. For Carvin, it also represented a "stunning revolution in the way breaking news is reported around the world – and who controls the news"

With countless revolutionaries using the Internet as part of their protests, anyone online could gain direct access to the news moment by moment – no filters, no spin, no delay. No longer did media outlets

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have a monopoly on international reporting; people on Twitter or YouTube could patch directly into the revolution of their choice. (p. xii)

For Carvin, social media director for National Public Ration in Washington D.C., the revolution couldn't be ignored because journalism had an important role to play. Through his book and his reporting on social media, Carvin, a journalist, told the stories that "would have otherwise fallen through the cracks of history if people on the ground weren't using social media to tell them" (p. xv). While he does not take credit for enabling or sustaining these movements, he does ask "What exactly does it take for one of these movements to go all the way and overthrow a regime?" (p. 7).

Within a less specific and less revolutionary frame, this chapter asks the same question. What does it take for an online movement such as those Carvin describes or other even less impactful movements such as the ALS Ice Bucket challenge, discussed later in this chapter, to gain real world traction after getting a start in online social media? In other words, can social media lead to real world social capital? And what is journalism's effect on the social capital that can be generated? Does a movement that begins with a niche audience on social media need the mass communication influence of mainstream journalism to really make a difference? Finally, how can academic research help denote the impacts of each and on each other?

We explore these questions by first defining social media in terms of real world and social media application. Next we explore the connection between the goals and mission of journalism as it relates to social capital and community building. Finally, we examine several examples, including what has been written of Carvin's work during the Arab Spring, to suggest that while social media has evolved to defy early social media theorists' predictions, it often needs the influence of journalists to shine a light on what's most important and help vet information to reveal what is true and what is unsubstantiated rumor or needless hyperbole.

DEFINING SOCIAL MEDIA

Social Capital

Social capital, in its simplest form, is the "ways our lives are made more productive by social ties" (Putnam, 2000, p. 19). In fact, society is most powerful when civic virtue is "embedded in a dense network of reciprocal social relations" (p. 19). In other words, social capital has transformative power when individuals can use their family, friends, and group affiliations to accomplish things for their lives, namely to get jobs, help government run efficiently, or just pass the time pleasurably with one another.

In the United States, social capital has always ebbed and flowed, Putnam (2000) says, even at some points collapsing and needing complete renewal (p. 23). However, the major premise of his book and the reason behind the title *Bowling Alone* is that Americans are becoming increasingly individualized and less likely to build social capital through leisure and political activism. Two of the main culprits Putnam blame are the media and technology. First, news and entertainment have become increasingly individualized (p. 216). People no longer need to attend a concert with scores of other community members to get their music fix or visit theaters to see plays or movies. Even the community building elements of news where people stand around the watercooler discussing the day's events are fading because electronic technology allows us to learn about the world entirely alone. Often modern media also blur the line between news and entertainment, further hindering society's ability to do something useful with what it learns. "At the very least, television and its electronic cousins are willing accomplices in the civic mystery we have been unraveling, and more likely than not, they are the ringleaders" (p. 246).

Social Media as Democratizing Force

The Internet, as one of television's electronic cousins, was not supposed to pull us away from civic engagement. In fact, Howard Dean, former chairman of the Democratic Party, called the Internet the "the most important democratizing invention since the printing press, 500 years ago" (quoted in Mayo and Newcomb, 2008). In fact, many people disagree that the Internet, in particular, has undermined social capital creation. Vergeer and Pelzer (2012) found that online activities that are supposed to be solitary, such as surfing for news or entertainment are increasingly becoming intertwined with socializing. Online and offline social capital are positively associated, they say, because people may simply be copying their offline social networks to the online realm.

This is particularly true of social media networks, such as Facebook and Twitter, where Valenzuela et. al (2009) said social media have developed, in part, as places to foster civic and political engagement, especially among young people. In fact, those who are most civic minded choose to join Facebook more often than those who are not. One reason, Ellison, Steinfeld and Lampe (2007) suggest is that Facebook makes it easier to communicate about civic issues and can even engage those who might otherwise be shy about engaging in discussion. In the social capital realm, social media such as Facebook might increase the potential to turn lists of online friends into social capital because it is easier to see from a list of connections which might be most useful in the real world (p. 1162). On the other hand, the authors found that social capital might be more difficult to sustain through social networks because how easy it is to make friends on social networks does not encourage the creation of strong ties. This effect cannot be explained by Internet use alone. Users need social media to make connections clear (Ellison, Steinfeld & Lampe, 2007).

Shah et al. (2001) also disputed the notion that all electronic activity blurs the lines between entertainment and news. The creation of social capital online relies mainly on the motives of the users. Those who actively choose to go online to exchange information are more likely across age groups and motivations to generate social capital. In fact, these active users are exposed to more mobilizing information and opportunities for recruitment than those who rely on traditional media, and they are able to more easily control the opportunities they select (p. 154).

Even Putnam backpedals a bit from his earlier assertion about the detriment to social capital that the Internet represents. In *Better Together*, co-written with Feldstein and Cohen (2004), he examines craigslist as a case for the creation of weak ties and social capital online. While not a perfect example of the kinds of offline communities that lead to real world social capital, they (2004) admit that craigslist has strong elements of community because it embodies many of the ideals that make real world communities vibrant: "localness, member participation in defining the norms of the group, aims and purposes beyond that of simply being together" (p. 240). While this one example does not suggest that everyone will abandon face-to-face relationships for online ones, craigslist does "suggest a role for the Internet in the mix of ways that people come to know, trust, and connect with one another" (p. 240).

The kinds of interactions Putnam and his colleagues describe on craigslist make other social networks effective as well. The key to creating bridging social capital through social media, Ellison et al. (2014) said, was making calls to action and receiving responses. This exposes users to not just their friends online, but friends of friends and enhances their network of weak ties. Nearly one-fourth of active Facebook users are sharing at least one request each month. "This represents a huge number of potential social capital conversions on and through the site" (p. 1118) and therefore a sizeable potential increase in the bridging social capital people can create through social networks.

Social Media Activism

Whether these connections through friends of friends are actually making a difference, however, remains up in the air. New media could create social capital, but are people actually taking advantage of their new power? The prevailing opinion, which has led to the creation of derisive terms such as hashtag activism, clicktivism, or slacktivism, is that they are not. The Internet has changed what were once primarily collective efforts for social action and turned them into mostly individual actions online (Shah, Friedland, Wells, Kim, & Rojas, 2012). In other words, people are largely content to use their new connections to advocate for a cause online without actually making a difference in the real world. This has become increasingly common, as society has moved many social activist campaigns online. The question that must be asked is if these online movements have the same influence as more traditional protest movements in enacting social change (Shah, Friedland, Wells, Kim, & Rojas, 2012).

Criticism of hashtag advocacy centers around one simple idea: It is easy for someone to "like" something on Facebook, or retweet something about a charitable effort. But is liking something on Facebook the equivalent of digital graffiti with no real benefit (Carr, 2012), or does social media activism go deeper and result in real engagement? Carr argued that only a few of the people who comment on social media about a social cause will do anything; the rest are simply burnishing their profiles. The ties of the digital world do not equal real world engagement (Carr, 2012). Furthermore there are those who claim the brief synopses offered on social media oversimplify issues (Dewey, 2014). In addition, social media has the ability to complicate things for the people campaigns are attempting to help (Welles, 2014). The international attention that comes with these efforts is powerful, but the added exposure can make things dangerous for those on the ground (Welles, 2014).

While social media allows these campaigns to gain traction quickly, it is difficult for those who started them to define objectives. Efforts quickly move beyond the intent of their creators (Herman, 2014). Organizers must understand that there is some element of narcissism involved in posting, and not everyone who likes something will take the cause seriously (Herman, 2014).

But there are positive signs using terms such as "slacktivism" may simply be an easy way to write off the influence of social media in an era where they have become the primary method for advocating social change (Ojigho, 2014). The Internet and social media are effective channels for learning about social issues and supporting causes or candidates (Wihbey, 2013). In the same vein, technology has created a new type of "media activist" who posts firsthand accounts from events and can provide coverage from the ground that might not be possible from traditional media (Simon, 2014). These social media movements can have sizable reach, and the most successful gain additional exposure through media coverage (Welles, 2014). Social media sources are gaining in popularity at a time of growing mistrust of the press (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2001). A number of people even question if the media are invested in the public interest (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2001). The challenge for social media campaigns is to capitalize on the potential for social capital to create genuine activism.

This challenge grows as some of the issues with technology that Putnam highlighted create difficulties in building engagement in the modern media era (Herman, 2014). The Web has increased connectivity and involvement, yet it can reduce their commitment to community (Wellman, Haase, Witte, & Hampton, 2001; Shah, Kwak, & Holbert, 2001). It is important to determine if people are working with others and building social capital or participating in asocial activities that turn them away from the community (Wellman, Haase, Witte, & Hampton, 2001) because connecting online and the real world can have lasting results. Online communities grow faster when they are created within traditional communities (Blanchard & Horan, 1998). Social media has been more effective than other sources in creating the intent to join a real-world cause (Jeong & Lee, 2013). Increased visibility from social media has also made individuals more likely to get involved in real-world causes (Jeong & Lee, 2013).

In addition, those who receive information from social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter are more likely to participate in social and political behavior, either online or offline (de Zuniga, 2012). Furthermore, social capital increases in virtual communities when opportunities exist for civic engagement (Blanchard & Horan, 1998) because people will actively choose the media sites that provide them with best gratification of their wants and needs (LaRose & Eastin, 2004). Online efforts for social causes can occur through social media without any sort of recognized leaders and allow for decentralized movements in a manner not previously possible (Howard & Hussain, 2011). This has led to more people willing to become involved in activism using social media if they believe the efforts will help to influence others (Lim & Golan, 2011). The online world provides the younger generations with a new outlet to become involved in traditional political behavior (Bode, Vraga, Borah, & Shah, 2014).

Social Media Advantages

The real measure of the efficacy of social media campaigns is the difference they have made, according to those who use social media to spur activism. They do not believe hashtag activism is a copout, or worse yet an act of vanity (Bertlatsky, 2015). Social media sites provide a vital way for protesters separated by geography to connect with one another (Bertlatsky, 2015; Gheytanchi & Moghadam, 2014). Further, social media allow activists to present their own message and create a community around an issue (Bertlatsky, 2015). This direct connection allows them to frame their stance without media interference. In addition, those who support social media campaigns compare liking something on Facebook to simply signing a petition (Dewey, 2014). Both are passive activities that require no further action but each holds the potential to become something greater. “Clearly, re-tweeting a message does not constitute activism the same way that donating time or money does, but re-tweeting a message could be part of a set of behaviors that lead to social change” (Welles, 2014). Social media have been a significant predictor an individuals’ involvement in protest and traditional political behavior (Boyle & Schmierbach, 2009). Overall the benefits associated with hashtag activism outweigh possible problems based on the potential to quickly disseminate a message (Ojigho, 2014).

Hashtag activism has the possibility to be a successful tool for mobilization (Ojigho, 2014), but the media plays an important role in any potential success. Media exposure helps offer social capital to causes (Beaudoin, 2009; Shah, Kwak, & Holbert, 2001). However, the degree of success depends upon the type of media outlet and the group targeted (Beaudoin, 2009). All forms of Internet-based media supplement network capital by serving as an extension of face-to-face or telephone content (Wellman, Haase, Witte, & Hampton, 2001). In addition, the same people who are involved in social efforts online are the same people likely to engage in the same behavior offline (Wellman, Haase, Witte, & Hampton, 2001; Shah, Kwak, & Holbert, 2001). This would seem to indicate that criticism of hashtag activism is misguided. "The efficacy of hashtag activism has been challenged and questioned, but critics are missing a crucial point: hashtag activism is only one tool in the advocacy circle and not a sole agent of change," (Ojigho, 2014).

JOURNALISM'S ROLE IN SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVISM

All of these increased tweets and retweets, however, increase exposure and the potential for media coverage. In fact, online activists and the success of digital campaigns in generating media coverage have altered the traditional method of gaining exposure for social causes (Dewey, 2014; Bertlatsky, 2015). In the past, activists who wanted to raise awareness about their efforts would have to convince some level of media to write or broadcast about their issues. The Internet has allowed people to bring their issues directly to the people without any type of media gatekeeper (Bertlatsky, 2015). And the media are watching. Social media activism is easy for the media to follow and cover movements (Ojigho, 2014).

Beyond attracting attention for movements, journalism has a greater purpose. Kovach and Rosenstiel (2007) defined journalism as a "discipline of verification." The major goal of journalism in a democracy is to educate audiences so they can be free and self-governing. Often this goes beyond simply sharing information. It means helping audiences mobilize themselves so they can make the best decisions about their future as possible. This can seem to cross over into the realm of activism, which may appear contrary to the values of fairness and balance Kovach and Rosenstiel (2007) also espouse, but it also helps fulfill another important mission of journalism: to provide a forum for public criticism and compromise.

The journalism industry has a long and complicated history with activism, and the Internet has only added to it. It is difficult to understand how the Internet influenced advocacy journalism without exploring the past. Changes in technology have simplified advocacy journalism, but the genre has been part of the industry dating back to the early 19th century (Burns, 2014). Muckrakers, activist journalists in war-torn areas, and the alternative media all have a history of promoting causes in reporting. Journalism has struggled nearly since its inception with balancing objectivity and other goals. Journalist Finley Peter Dunne (1968) wrote that the media "comforts the afflicted and afflicts the comfortable." Even the Society of Professional code of ethics has stated for years that journalists should "serve as a voice for the voiceless," and do no harm (2014). This is necessary because if everyone in the media reports using the same frame it becomes difficult for readers to gain a full picture of any situation (Ruigrok, 2010) and technology, such as social media, have only made this easier if journalists take advantage.

Some already have. Vice News during the protests in Ferguson, MO chose to simply record the protests to provide full coverage as opposed to the snapshot that comes from photographs (Peterson, 2014). The outlet then provided streams of the video that were hours long so the audience could watch the incidents unfold unfiltered (Peterson, 2014). This is a type of consumer experience impossible with traditional media. The expectation is that technology and new forms of media will provide a space for activist reporting that is decreasing in the modern corporate media (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2001) Technology has changed traditional reporting methods to such an extent that instead of simply informing the public, journalists are now pushing public agendas (Witschge, 2013).

Glenn Greenwald, one of the journalists who worked with Assange to publish information from Wikileaks, said the journalism that makes the biggest difference is the kind that pushes toward activism.

I find much to admire in America's history of the crusading journalist, from the pamphleteers to the muckrakers to the New Journalism of the '60s to the best of today's activist bloggers. At their best, their fortitude and passion have stimulated genuine reforms. (Hare, 2013)

Like Greenwald, a number of journalists are proud of their positions of advocacy on issues, especially those involving social justice (Sullivan, 2013; Ferdus, 2014). The main argument against journalistic objectivity is that reporters should write for the public good. Altschull (1996) argues that journalists should take action for what is best for the community. Objectivity simply supports the status quo (Altschull, 1996).

In addition, social responsibility theory has been used as justification for the public journalism movement in which some journalists and even a few publications have moved away from the role of being detached observers (Coleman, 1997). Public journalism, which placed the needs of the community before other news criteria, gained traction on the early 1990s and has been revived by the emergence of hyperlocal, non-profit news websites.

The second argument against objectivity is that people are no longer limited geographically to news sources. Objectivity is no longer necessary because there are so many online news sources, every opinion will be represented. The proliferation of news online has made objectivity "outdated and pointless," (Sullivan, 2013). There is no longer the expectation that journalists should have no opinion about issues (Hare, 2013; Berman, 2004). Transparency about their beliefs is what matters. It is debatable whether it is even possible for journalists to be objective, or if they should try.

The simple journalistic role of seeking truth and telling stories that are otherwise unknown is in some ways activism (Brewer, n.d.).

We need to be honest with ourselves about our motives and reasons for covering a story. The key is to ask searching questions to all sides, particularly those who hold public office, and, in doing so, provide the basis for a healthy and robust public debate. (Brewer, n.d.)

When people read about suffering, they could be motivated to act upon it, regardless of the reporter's intention. Journalists do not have to allow their ideology to seep into their writing for activism to result. Some in the industry consider themselves advocates for certain issues, such as Connie Schultz, a columnist at the Cleveland Plain Dealer. She made clear her activism for workers' rights (Schultz, 2011), and presented a unique news frame for her coverage. Frames such as the one Schultz chose partially dictate how readers perceive information (Olesen, 2008). Journalists who actively frame their stories as advocacy help keep the public sphere alive and shine light on wrongdoing (Olesen, 2008). Online news has strengthened the potential impact non-objective media have by extending their reach.

Reciprocity

Advocating for a community, whether geographic, like-minded, or connection socially online, represents opportunities for journalists to expand their reach and audience. Meyer and Carey (2014) found that journalists can have the greatest impact on online community formation by maintaining an active presence in online forums. An active presence on social media helps as well because many of these digital tools exist to bring journalists "closer to readers and readers closer to journalism by removing barriers to a more networked conversation" (Briggs, 2008). In fact, journalism as a conversation (Gillmor, 2006) should be the ultimate goal of a journalist in the digital age, both to engage the audience and advance journalism's democratic mission.

Social media enhances this mission immeasurably. Its very structure is designed to facilitate discussion and increase the relevance of news within a person's social network (de Zuniga, 2012). Increased discussion leads to additional elaboration and reflection, which in turn can lead to more action, de Zuniga (2012) adds; both are key components of the formation of social capital. Social networks also make users feel more connected to the community and more likely to reciprocate and trust other community members (de Zuniga, 2012). "After all, learning through social media may indeed contribute to not only the proliferation of a networked society, but also it may facilitate a healthier democracy. Or at least, a more participatory one" (p. 332).

Local news organizations are often either the only sources of information about the local community or the authority on what the community needs most, and Fleming and Thorson (2008) found that local media can make the biggest difference in building relationships and developing social norms among individuals. Journalists, by extension, need to encourage citizens to "exchange information, get connected for common causes, and effectively discuss issues that are important to their communities" (p. 415). The Internet and social media are vital cogs that, Fleming and Thorson emphasize, have the potential to help citizens become connected with civic life.

Encouraging participation cannot be a one-way street, Lewis, Holton and Coddington (2014) write, where journalists simply share information, advocate for causes, and expect the audience to act. They call for "reciprocal journalism" in which journalists engage with the audience and foster lasting conversations with them. This reciprocity is a key component of social capital, Putnam (2000) suggests, and a vital step toward fulfilling the public service mission of journalism.

Reciprocal journalism suggests seeing journalists in a new light: as community builders who can forge connections with and among community members by establishing patterns of reciprocal exchange. "By more readily acknowledging and reciprocating the input of audiences, and by fostering spaces for audiences to reciprocate with each other, journalists can begin to fulfill the normative purpose as stewards of the communities they serve" (p.236-237).

Social media plays a central role in reciprocity because it embodies the easy access to audiences and the two-way discussion spaces reciprocity needs. Hashtags, for example, allow users and journalists to actively seek topics that interest them and build conversations with others who share interests. Social media also involve other users within each other's networks and expand the shared experience (Lewis, Holton & Coddington, 2014).

Within three local markets practicing a form of reciprocal journalism, Richards (2012) found local news contributed to social capital primarily by providing information that spurs increased cooperation. Social media was especially adept because it is the most authentic. "Social media are providing a form of communication which is helping community members maintain personal relationships as well as encouraging them to participate in community dialogue which extends to local media" (p. 637).

What powers reciprocal journalism is the expectation of future interaction, not just a one-and-done interplay (Lewis, Holton & Coddington, 2014). In this area, journalists need improvement. Too often they approach social media as either a place to promote their stories to an audience or to find a quick source for a story they are working on. Rarely do they seek conversation in online forums (Meyer & Carey, 2014). Hermida (2013) found that even when journalists used social media for reporting, traditional voices and sources remain the loudest. Tensions also emerged between real-time publication on social media and verification, a key element of journalism. "Conceiving of the social media platform as a networked space where news is filtered, discussed, contested, and verified in the open in collaborations with the public appears to be inconceivable for the profession as a whole" (p. 304).

However, this needs to happen for journalism to become the bridge between social media and social capital formation. The kinds of open dialogs the research suggest can take place through social media that lead to reciprocity need a guide throughout the process (Meyer & Carey, 2014).

EXAMPLES FROM SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGNS

The role of journalism as a facilitator of social media activism needs further research. However, a few examples exist that underscore its potential. Many of those focus only on how journalists use the tools to further their work. Journalists who used Twitter to cover the 2011 riots in the United Kingdon found it a rich source for leads (Vis, 2012). What made their social media use most effective is they went beyond the basic one-way relationship to help new journalism conventions emerge, ones that blurred the lines between journalist and audience member. In fact, it may be helpful to examine several other real world examples to understand how journalism can serve as the facilitator of social capital formation through social media.

Arab Spring

This chapter began with a discussion of the Arab Spring because it is one of the best-known examples of those outside the media using social media as a way to organize protests and civil disobedience and to create political change (Matyasik, 2014; Frangonikolopoulos & Chapsos, 2012). But Carvin's work also highlights the important magnification a journalist working to create discussion and reciprocity, even to the point of advocating a cause, can have on applying social capital to political action.

The Arab Spring was a series of political activities in the Middle East that ranged from political protests to Civil War. Social media accelerated a push for democratic change in the Middle East (Frangonikolopoulos & Chapsos, 2012). Furthermore, social media efforts allowed journalists to provide coverage that might not have otherwise been possible (Frangonikolopoulos & Chapsos, 2012; Galal & Spielhaus, 2012). "Social media filled the vacuum where a strong press should be ... When traditional news coverage was blocked, Twitter and Facebook carried the news, though the standards were spotty," (Donnelly, 2012). During the Arab Spring, social media emerged as a vital tool for reporters attempting to cover the situation because government crackdowns made traditional on-the-ground reporting nearly impossible (Galal & Spielhaus, 2012).

Carefully analyzing Carvin's coverage, including the sources he cited most often, demonstrates the impact journalism had on fostering the movement (Hermida, Lewis & Zamith, 2014). Carvin's Twitter coverage cited more alternative voices than any other medium. In fact, much of his coverage focused on "messages from citizens who were expressing their demands for social change" (p. 493). Outside of the traditional role of journalist as "gatekeeper," Carvin operated more as "gatewatcher" (Bruns, 2005), a journalist who relies on and publicizes a more diverse and extensive set of sources from social media (Hermida, Lewis & Zamith, 2014).

Even after the Arab Spring, disagreement remains about whether social media alone is a tool for change or if others factors must be combined with social media efforts (Matyasik, 2014). Despite a proliferation of new media sources, affected governments responded by cracking down on traditional press freedom (Donnelly, 2012). This could indicate the government's acknowledgement of the vital role press coverage played, or it could suggest the government was merely attacking the sources it found easiest to control.

While journalists cannot control government's reaction to social media campaigns, they have the greatest effect when they connect their audiences. Carvin suggested they can even support movements from afar. This is especially true when the movements themselves are promoted through social media without the context necessary for the audience to fully understand the matter and make a difference beyond slacktivism as the next two examples suggest.

#Kony2012

The #Kony2012 campaign has generated the most criticism of any of the popular social media movements based on its simplicity and the deceptive nature of its content. However, simplicity is precisely why it was successful (Keating, 2014). Joseph Kony was the leader of the guerilla group the Lord's Resistance Army, which was estimated to have forced thousands of children to serve as soldiers and killed or abducted thousands more. The campaign made Kony an enemy and was able to generate action, at least initially, after becoming viral (Keating, 2014). The awareness was high among the young with 58% of young adults who said they heard a lot about the Kony video (Rainie, Hitlin, Jurkowitz, Dimock, & Neidorf, 2012). More than a quarter of young adults said they learned about the video through social media (Rainie, Hitlin, Jurkowitz, Dimock, & Neidorf, 2012). But the goal of this campaign was to prompt people to take action outside of social media by using social media to change the way people interacted (Briones, Madden, & Janoske, 2013).

However, the video that started the campaign was inaccurate (Muneer, 2012; Rainie, Hitlin, Jurkowitz, Dimock, & Neidorf, 2012). The quick nature of social media is a "double edged sword" in that it allows information to spread quickly, but also allowed questions about the Kony video to appear just as quickly (Muneer, 2012; Rainie, Hitlin, Jurkowitz, Dimock, & Neidorf, 2012). Several tweets, posts, and videos questioned how accurate and fair the video was. Without the efforts of journalists to clarify the Kony2012 video, audiences would have largely been duped by the simplistic and deceptive nature of the campaign (Curtis & McCarthy, 2014). The Guardian collected messages from social media and working journalists on the ground to clarify many of the myths of the campaign, including Kony's real power in Uganda. The newspaper also urged its audience to direct their political activity toward the real "villain" per se, not the U.S. but the Ugandan government. However, the follow up coverage did not have the same impact socially and materially as the initial video (Muneer, 2012). A lack of support in Uganda for grassroots efforts prevented any real effect on the ground (Cohen, 2012).

#BringBackOurGirls

A similar media campaign shed light on a well-meaning social movement that highlighted failings in Western coverage of African countries (John, 2014). The #BringBackOurGirls campaign began after a group of more than 100 schoolgirls were kidnapped by Boko Haram insurgents in Nigeria. Those behind the social media effort were upset with the way that the Nigerian government was handling the investigation (Ojigho, 2014). In terms of the raw figures of the effort's reach, #bringbackourgirls was retweeted more than 2 million times (Youngblood, 2014). The effort caught the attention of celebrities, global leaders, and the media (Ojigho, 2014). The exposure combined with media coverage resulted in protests around the world. In this instance the social media campaign was a response to a lack of initial coverage of the incident in the international press (Youngblood, 2014).

Initially, it had important effects. "The #BringBackOurGirls campaign has helped to proliferate worldwide awareness of Boko Haram's ideals, and in turn forced the UN to take action against the group to avoid losing face and appearing impotent," (Wren, 2014). Coverage of the campaign seems to have influenced the U.S. into sending troops into Nigeria (Ojigho, 2014; Wren, 2014). This engagement and action may not have occurred otherwise (Campbell, 2014).

The issue was staying power. People lost interest far before any crisis was solved (Anderson, 2014). People want stories that need action, but lose interest if a resolution does not come quickly (Anderson, 2014). It also highlighted the "white savior" motif that "Americans are slightly more likely to care about something is there is a Twitter hashtag associated with it" (John, 2014). A lot of the publicity surrounding #bringbackourgirls supported a for-profit documentary about Boko Haram, whose director took credit for creating a hashtag she didn't actually create.

#bringbackourgirls demonstrates both the power to create and to dethrone social media campaigns. At first Western media gleefully embraced the idea of a "Los Angeles Mother of Two who created a viral hashtag" but ended up having to correct their headlines when other media highlighted the real causes of the movement (John, 2014). Without news coverage, audiences would not have known the true motives of the movement, but then again, they might not have known about the movement in the first place.

Ice Bucket Challenge

Along the same lines, news media efforts to determine the true genesis of the Ice Bucket Challenge viral campaign and ensure that efforts and donations went to the right place made a significant difference. "The Ice Bucket Challenge may soon have run its course, but the lesson it provides about the nature of 21st Century charity will love on," Townsend (2014) wrote for the BBC. Despite criticism, it is hard to dispute the results of the campaign. Success can be measured through both fundraising and exposure for Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis. The worldwide effort that began on social media raised $98.2 million for A.L.S. between July 29 and Aug. 28 of 2014. The fundraising portion of the Ice Bucket Challenge was successful enough that those within the medical community are thinking about additional ways to use social media as a fundraising effort (Koohy, Koohy, & Watson, 2014). The lesson learned from the Ice Bucket Challenge is social media promotion should be interactive and engage directly with the public (Koohy, Koohy, & Watson, 2014).

There was widespread media criticism of the large number of people who participated online by dumping ice water on their heads without donating to A.L.S. (Herman, 2014). "I hope that most of the folks capturing their Ice Bucket Challenge on video and then posting it on Facebook aren't doing it for the publicity, but I'm disheartened by the way this has become donation-as-self-promotion," (Payne, 2014). This writer's concern was that people were overlooking local organizations that might be more deserving (Payne, 2014). Further she believed that while A.L.S. was a good organization the success of the challenge would bring similar efforts from less scrupulous groups (Payne, 2014). Dishonorable charitable groups are a legitimate concern, but one that has not occurred on a widespread level. Those involved with the A.L.S. Foundation considered the effort successful because of the newfound awareness of ALS, even online promotion from those who did not donate (Steel, 2014). Only half of Americans were aware of A.L.S. in the month prior to the challenge (Steel, 2014). Now it seems difficult to believe there are many adults in the United States who are not familiar with A.L.S.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In the current media environment nearly every event has some type of hashtag activism component. While success varies, it is clear that social media activism can result in engagement beyond slacktivism. Activity will range from the individual who simply likes or retweets something as a way to bolster her self-image to those who become involved actively in the cause outside of cyberspace. However this varying level of engagement does not differ from what people have experienced with more traditional causes.

What sets social media activism apart is the vast amount of publicity it can generate thanks to the very nature of the media themselves. The role journalists can play in whether social media efforts lead to social capital, which in turns creates sustained activity is a vital research question to ask and consider. This chapter provides a start in defining social capital in the traditional sense and extending that definition to social media. It catalogs a wealth of research that suggests both the positive and negative effects social media, such as Twitter and Facebook, can have on social capital creation.

Most importantly, it applies the traditional roles and values of journalism to both social capital and social media and suggests a synthesis that helps define journalism's role in the 21st century. No longer does the news simply report on what happened. Journalists are becoming more connected to communities by necessity just to know what is going on. Through these community connections, journalists can re-establish themselves as trusted information providers, but they need to get their hands dirty in social media, sometimes even becoming advocates for causes their community needs. This new relationship asks a lot of journalists to apply the essence of verification to a vast network of tweets, posts, blogs and comments. But if done correctly, the research cataloged here suggests that journalism can have an even greater impact than ever before.

Future Research Direction

Questions remain about the connection between journalism, social media and social capital, which Hermida (2014) suggest researchers need new approaches to tackle. Several different areas could be researched within these questions. This chapter focuses on three particular areas that seem logical for future research: examining specifically social media, activism and journalism. First, longitudinal studies may be required to really explain the real world impact social media and journalistic campaigns can have. Several of the examples this chapter cited showed broad immediate impact for social media activism, but little lasting difference. For a charity such as ALS that might not mean a lot, but it could have great meaning for citizens of oppressive government regimes in Egypt or Nigeria. Each case helps researchers and professionals understand the others.

In fact, greater attention to case study research with a focus on triangulating methods could greatly benefit the academy's understanding of how social capital can be created online and what ultimately journalism's role can be. The next step is attempting to quantify activism. There are several potential research tools that could be used. The first would be to review the financial statements provided by charitable organizations such as A.L.S. that have experienced a social media campaign. It would be possible through these reports to compare donations prior to the campaign, after the campaign became popular on social media, and finally when it received coverage by mainstream media. This type of examination would show how much real world activism is experienced financially when an organization generates buzz through social media. It would also provide insight about hashtag activism's impact. Is press coverage necessary for offline success? The goal is to test the role of, and importance of journalism, as an industry in making hashtag activism into something more tangible.

Activism could also be quantified by reviewing how many people liked a cause or made a comment during a social media campaign. Then it would be necessary to evaluate later posts to determine how many of those who posted later made a statement about giving a donation, or taking some other action to further the cause. In turn, researchers could ask if they noticed media coverage of the event and what impact it had on their decisions. Of course it is expected that not everyone who acted in the offline world would post about it; however, it is expected a large enough sample would enable researchers to determine how online activism translates to offline activism.

There is also potential for content analysis of social media. It is possible to track campaigns by looking at tweets or posts to determine how frequently those running the campaign interact with their audience. Interactivity theory would argue that the most successful campaigns would help not only to start the conversation in social media, but interact with the audience to keep it moving forward (Ha & James, 1998; Rafaeli & Sudweeks, 1998). The content analysis of social media could then be compared to media coverage in the same mold as agenda setting research.

Furthermore social media could be examined in a qualitative manner by conducting interviews with those who comment on something like the Ice Bucket Challenge about why they commented online, what made them want to participate, and if they frequently are involved with causes either online or offline. This would provide perspective on what makes a social media campaign successful and if those who become involved online are those who will engage in activism offline.

There is also the possibility to examine how the journalism industry covers social media. Where and how do members of the media learn about social media campaigns? Are there certain types of social media efforts that are more likely than others to receive coverage in the mainstream media? For example it would be expected members of the media would find Twitter campaigns more easily because of the inherently open nature of the medium. A content analysis could look at stories about social media campaigns and look at what type of sources do the journalists select. For efforts that start on social media, do journalists use online sources for their coverage or do they the same type of offline sources they would use when covering local charity event?

Despite changes in the industry and challenges adapting to technology, journalism retains its central role in a democracy. It remains the fifth estate tasked with holding those in power accountable and giving a voice to the voiceless (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007). That will not change. Much needs to change in how journalists approach their jobs. They need to get past the cynicism about whether the ephemeral nature of the Internet leads to lasting important change and learn to embrace the responsiveness the Internet gives them to their audiences. Through reciprocity (Lewis, Holton & Coddington, 2014) journalism can regain some of its audience and educate everyone on how to be free and self-governing. Whether it is called social capital, activism, advocacy, or slacktism, action is required, and journalism has the power to spur those actions forward.

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Chapter 31
Mobile Journalism and Innovation:
A Study on Content Formats of Autochthonous News Apps for Tablets

Marcos Palacios
Federal University of Bahia, Brazil

Suzana Barbosa
Federal University of Bahia, Brazil

Fernando Firmino da Silva
State University of Paraiba, Brazil

Rodrigo da Cunha
Federal University of Pernambuco, Brazil

ABSTRACT

Using a qualitative methodological approach, this chapter brings to bear a theoretical and conceptual framework with particular consideration to the notions of innovation, journalistic convergence, design and the theory of affordances, as well as mobile communication and mobile journalism. This analysis covers the period 2010-2014 and seeks to examine the specific affordances, the structure, organization and types of narratives produced; the design and use of multimedia features as well as the level of integration with other products in the same news organization. The empirical corpus consists of products selected for their representativeness within a broader sample: O Globo a Mais, Estadão Noite, and Diário do Nordeste Plus (Brazil), La Repubblica Sera (Italy), La Presse+ (Canada) and El Mundo de la Tarde (Spain). The study concludes that - although timid - experimentation continues to prevail regarding formats, content, language and narratives based on the features of mobile devices, the continuous evolution of operating systems and changes in hardware platforms.

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INTRODUCTION

Four years after the creation of the first journalistic products for tablets, and the iPad in particular, how have autochthonous – and specially evening news apps – contributed to the evolution and innovation of content formats? This is the central question of this chapter, which is part of the research developed at the Convergent Journalism Laboratory Project[1] hosted at the Faculty of Communication, Federal University of Bahia, Brazil.

The aim of this chapter is to take a step forward in the systematization (with previously cataloged experiences as background and context) of a specific type of innovative journalistic product, namely autochthonous news app, with special attention to evening news apps, and a focus on identifying their contribution to the complexification and differentiation of the mobile information ecosystem in an environment of convergent multi-platform journalism.

As elements of the new mobile ecosystem, evening newspaper apps for tablets are specially designed products that form part of the multiplatform information landscape. They are newcomers to the contemporary media ecosystem, characterized by fluid, horizontalized production, resulting in a multimedia continuum (Barbosa, 2013) and they constitute a rich field for the identification and observation of innovative features in journalistic production.

The premise to be explored in this text is that 'autochthonous' apps – *i.e.*, created by specialized teams, producing exclusive materials for mobile platforms, with distinct treatment of contents (Barbosa, Firmino da Silva, & Nogueira, 2014; Barbosa, Firmino da Silva, Nogueira, & Almeida, 2013) – are products which exist and compete in a new innovation cycle with regards to the editorial line, treatment of information, design, formats, and use of multimedia language. As such, they may be considered as prime spaces for experimentation with new affordances such as tactility (Palacios & Da Cunha, 2012) personalization and geolocation, as well as a breeding ground for new business models, consumer dynamics, circulation, recirculation and response to journalistic content.

Brazil has been one of the leading countries in the production of evening news apps. Their emergence, marked by a convergent and multi-platform logic, has been designed to take advantage of the way content is consumed on tablets during the evening period, *i.e.*, in what is known as 'lean-back' mode, when the user is usually at home, more relaxed and with a (pre)disposition to explore longer, more complex/sophisticated textual constructions and/or HD/multimedia content.

The emergence of these journalistic apps for tablets can also be associated with a general boost in the consumption of content on tablets and smartphones, thereby opening new horizons to business models directed towards a mobile ecosystem. Prospects of economic sustainability seem to be rising, based on the innovation and creation of narrative forms more aligned to audiences who have already identified with the platform's potentialities, particularities and distinctions, *vis-a-vis* other media formats.

The basic parameters of analysis were defined in our research project and will be applied to systematize the data collected through structured observation of a *corpus* comprising Brazilian and international evening news apps, namely: *O Globo a Mais, Estadão Noite*, *Diário do Nordeste Plus* (Brazil), *La Repubblica Sera* (Italy), and *El Mundo de la Tarde* (Spain). These apps were selected from a larger universe which have been mapped in our earlier studies and constitute a representative sample for the purposes of the proposed investigation. We have also included *La Presse+* (Canada) in our *corpus;* although not characterized as an evening newspaper, in contrast to the other apps analysed in this chapter, it is an autochthonous tablet product, with distinctive innovative and advanced features that justify its inclusion as a relevant object for our case study.

The methodological approach is qualitative and employs theoretical constructs created by researchers at the Convergent Journalism Laboratory Project, especially the notion of innovation gradients as a derivation of Gartner's Hype Cycle (Palacios, Barbosa, Firmino da Silva, & Da Cunha, 2014). The theoretical and conceptual framework of journalistic convergence, developed by a large contingent of the authors in several countries, will also be central to situate the phenomenon of evening news apps.

INNOVATION: A PREAMBLE

Since the 90s of the previous century, the discourse on innovation as an essential dimension to the survival of news organizations in contemporary society has become more firmly embedded. This is due mainly to the emergence of the digital as a major factor to mobilize the efforts of media companies around strategies, operations, processes and products able to ensure them a place in the complex ecosystem that took shape around communication and specifically journalism. During the 70s and 80s, some innovation was contemplated in the strategic plans of such corporations; however, the scene was more stable and changes were processed at a gentler pace (Machado, 2000).

To define and quantify 'innovation' and 'innovativeness' in media products poses problems that, in some respects, are similar do those one faces in the field of 'quality assessment' in media product studies. One has to confront the crucial questions of "what is to be measured" and "how to measure" whatever one decides to measure. In both cases the researcher faces a maze of definitions, typologies and indicators and an awesome volume of literature, in different areas of knowledge and investigation, which tended to grow considerably in recent decades (Fagerberg, 2005; Cohen, 2010; Crossan & Apaydin, 2010).

Garcia and Calantone (2002) in a critical review of academic literature dealing with innovation and innovativeness indicated that:

No less than fifteen constructs and at least 51 distinct scale items have been used in just 21 empirical studies in the new product development (NPD) literature that model product innovativeness (…) This lack of consistency is operationalizing 'innovativeness' has resulted in the interchangeable use of the constructs 'innovation' and 'innovativeness' to define innovation types. Although this may seem to be an insignificant point, this has led to incongruent categorizations of innovation typology and widespread confusion as to what empirical studies are actually reporting.

Even without a consistent and uniform definition of innovation, academic works dealing with innovation in journalism have tended to cluster around the theme of technological innovation. Grubenmann (2013), in a critical review of 60 English language academic articles dealing with innovation in journalism, concluded that "[E]ven though research in journalism is not limited to technological innovations, around 70% of the identified literature deals with this topic. About 9% of the research goes into design innovation in journalism and the remaining 21% investigates different forms of journalistic innovation" (p.16).

It is also fair to state that although the area of innovation research has a long academic tradition, specific studies on media innovation is a relatively new field, which accelerated with the emergence, diffusion and generalization of digital technologies and received a new boost with de universalization of mobile devices. Available material on media innovation is mainly based on case studies, tends to be descriptive and is poor in comparative analyses.

On the other hand, ‘measuring innovation’ constitutes yet another battlefield in academic research. The discussion goes at least as far back as Schumpeter´s divergences with his econometrician colleagues as to the possibility of creation of comprehensive models capable of fully accounting for the “little devil” of innovation, in a dispute marked by irreconcilable contrapositions of organic and mechanical metaphors (Louçã, 2014). The subject is open to dispute and qualitative analyses and measurements of ‘degrees of innovation’ are to this date confined to very specific areas of innovation research (Van der Pannen, 2007).

There seems to be some consensus among academics that measurement of the process of innovation “is critical for both practitioners and academics [but also that] the literature is characterized by a diversity of approaches, prescriptions and practices that can be confusing and contradictory” (Adams, Bessant, & Phelps, 2006). If this is so for the innovation studies field in general, it is even more so for the area of media innovation studies. In this chapter we adopted a qualitative approach without any attempt to suggest quantification models.

As Machado (2010) pointed out, innovation programs that are now being implemented from the 90s of last century began with the assumption that innovation was essential for progress and social change.

(…) Innovation in journalism is a phenomenon that faces journalism as an industry and focuses on finding conceptual or technological solutions capable of, at the same time, maximizing production and meeting social demands for quality, instantaneous information at the lowest possible cost, in keeping with the rigor of the highest professional conduct and accessible by all available means. (Machado, 2010, p. 67)

Therefore, innovation may be understood as a process that provides successive upgrades that can ensure continual improvement of product and production methods, as well as the emergence of new procedures to shape new products, modes of distribution, consumption and business models.

For Machado (2010), the notion of innovation in journalism is related to any change in techniques, technologies, processes, languages, formats, teams, devices and applications, values or business models designed to streamline and enhance the production and consumption of journalistic information. The author asserts that innovation endeavors to maximize production to meet social demands for quality and instantaneous information at the lowest possible cost, in keeping with the rigors of the highest professional conduct and accessible by all available means.

Franciscato (2010) stresses the need to also consider the interwoven aspects of technology and its social use in situations of innovation. Journalistic institutions, in feeding society each day with a stream of news about the world, build, reinforce and modify social and cultural processes. “Beyond its presence in the market, each news product presented to society brings, even implicitly, these sociocultural elements, which alter or add substance to habits, knowledge and social values in the short or long term” (p. 16).

Rossetti (2013) is one more voice to make chorus to the assertion that there is no unified definition for innovation. One is faced with a multiplicity of terms related to the notion of innovation, e.g. new, novelty and change; creation, invention, evolution and rupture; growth and experimentation, renovation, redesign and metamorphosis; unique, differentiated, different, original and unrevised; innovative subject and innovated object. In the field of communication, the innovative act refers to actions present in communicative processes that generate new and innovative communicative products, or that introduce changes in communication theory or language. And additionally: formats, narratives, and the process of their reception and formation of new consumers’ habits are also aspects to consider when one searches for innovation indicators.

To build a framework of categories of innovation, in which the various meanings of innovation are classified based on the notion of change (considered central because change brings the new), Rossetti uses the Aristotelian categories of substance, quality, quantity, relation, place, time, action and affection. Based on these, she organizes the terms relating to change in categories of innovation in a matrix which illuminates the amplitude of possible areas of investigation. The problem, once again, is the inevitable multiplication of similar and possibly juxtaposed terms and classifications in the matrix. According to Rossetti´s categories, innovations in design, for instance, could constitute elements of 'substantial innovation', 'qualitative innovation', 'relative innovation' or even 'active and affective innovation', as major changes in design may also mobilize actions and affections of the user of a product.

In a more restrained way, David Nordfors (2003) distinguishes the concept of innovative journalism as the process of creating and introducing new values, having such components as a brand, a definition, a business model, a narrative, along with other key elements: a technology, a platform, a device, a format, a product, a concept.

A summary of distinct approaches to innovation in journalism in academic literature, with an indication that "the emerging consensus is to reject deterministic explanations and instead propose that technological innovations are mediated and shaped by initial conditions and contextual characteristics" can be found in Michelstein and Boczkowski (2009).

Based on this outline, it is evident that innovation processes in journalism are continuous and to be found in many different areas of product development: design, production processes, content, formats, genres, languages, narratives, business models, circulation and consumption targets etc. From time to time major ruptures do happen, as illustrated by the invention of smartphones, iPad and similar devices. Transposition and remediation of already existing models and formulas constitutes a first movement of occupation of new spaces/platforms; autochthonous solutions come next.

AUTOCHTHONY AND INNOVATION

Amid the tactics employed by news organizations for the distribution of contents for tablets and smartphones, the implementation of autochthonous applications is one of the current trends. In breaking with the initial pattern of simple replication of print editions (transposition), these applications defined themselves by inroads to the platform with more systematic usage of a wide range of features.

At the same time, practices were established that required more from the standpoint of design, programming and thinking about the narrative while taking into account the specificities of the device, especially as it relates to the operation of the tablet, with its surface tactility and 'lean back' mode of usage (García, 2012). The return of the 'evening edition' is in itself an innovation, as the format had been abandoned decades ago. This confirms the assertion that the newness "may be a recombination of old ideas challenging the present order in such a way that it is new to the people involved" (Van de Ven, 1986; Åkesson, 2009).

Thus, 'autochthony' was selected as a promising indicator of innovativeness in journalistic practices and was adopted as the main criterion for inclusion in the constitution of a *corpus* for this chapter, formed by a selected set of 'autochthonous' news apps produced between 2010 and early 2014.

Once established the notion of autochthony as filter and once selected the cases for study, one still confronts the inevitable need to choose which elements to highlight and analyze in the search for innovative features of the products. To aim at 'holistic approaches' may sound like an instigating challenge, but in practice such attempts may prove wild goose chases. Our aim, therefore, was less ambitious, examining some selected traits which we consider as possible indicators of innovation:

1. Novel use or enhancement of specific affordances (such as tactility, personalization, interactivity, geolocation and augmented reality);
2. On-board functions;
3. Structure, organization and types of narratives produced;
4. Design and use of multimedia resources (video, audio, photography and infographics);
5. Level of integration with other journalistic products from the same media company and their respective social networking sites as such integration may result in new, economically sustainable business opportunities.

CONVERGENCE, MOBILITY, AND AUTOCHTHONY

Journalism is going through two main processes of restructuring of its operations, due to digitization and the complexification of data communication networks. The first one refers to the process of journalistic convergence (Quinn, 2005; Salaverría & Negredo, 2008; Salaverría, García Avilés, & Masip, 2010;) and to editorial transformations in aspects of integration or multi-platform distribution and, consequently, in the production process characterized by the horizontal and dynamic flow of the multimedia continuum (Barbosa, 2013). Convergence has been an important element in the process of organizational innovation in digital media production and has "challenged two pervasive notions of traditional and digital media scholarship: the one newsroom–one medium assumption and the trend toward product homogenization in media convergence" (Boczkowski & Ferris, 2005).

A second process refers to mobile communication (Castells et al, 2006; Silva, 2008; Pellanda, 2009; Canavilhas & Santana, 2011; Peters, 2012; Westlund, 2013) – smartphones, tablets, e-readers, gaming consoles, ultrabooks etc. – through the development and ownership of mobile devices within the notion of multi-platform distribution and publication. In order to participate in this space, newspaper companies are repositioning themselves in terms of products, journalistic routines, content production, circulation, consumption and business models.

These twin processes of convergence and mobility are seen in this chapter as triggers for the creation of new products composing the informational supply of newspaper companies, as well as the production of new narratives that employ specific affordances for the shaping of content that follows different formats. Content production and delivery take place in a mobile domain in a heterogeneous and fragmented digital ecosystem:

(…) and the resulting mobile content space can be better categorized, then, into four broad classes not mutually exclusive: "adapted" for existing information (coming from different media) that has been adjusted for display and use in a mobile environment, "repurposed", for creative content that has been re-used and adapted to mobility, "original" or "specific", for creative content that has been designed with mobility in mind, and augmented", for content (of any type) that uses the additional and specific properties of mobile systems (such as location-awareness, for instance) to increase its value and interest for users ". (Feijóo, C. et al., 2009)

With the introduction of iPad and other tablets with different screen-sizes, the media ecosystem became even more complex, as those devices demanded that new specificities and new affordances had to be taken into account in the process of production and circulation of contents. Mobile devices become potential boosters of a new cycle of innovation, because they tend to reconfigure production, publication, circulation and recirculation, modes of consumption and reception of news content, as well as business models in multiple platforms. They may also very likely entail changes in the editorial cycle (routines) and foster new skills for professionals operating in this ecosystem. Consequently, new journalistic applications (apps) emerge, especially autochthonous products designed and produced specifically for mobile platforms with a large percentage of exclusive materials and differentiated treatment (Barbosa et al, 2013). These apps can be targeted equally well for smartphones and tablets.

Scolari, Aguado and Feijóo (2012) suggest that all classes of content ("adapted", "repurposed", "augmented" and "original or specific") are observable in news apps, as autochthonous mobile products increasingly become part of the contemporary media ecosystem.

In this chapter we focus on autochthonous apps for tablets, exclusively for the Apple iPad, because we identified these products as more innovative regarding the use of specific properties for developing narratives and content formats.

In general, the composition of the journalistic material posted on these apps gives precedence to reports produced exclusively by their teams, with longer narratives enriched by the resources cited above, analyses by columnists/writers, slideshows as well as summarized news highlights of the day, in a mix of curated content from the print edition, supplemented by editorial and copy material produced exclusively by their teams.

Moreover, autochthonous apps incorporate the strategies for diversification of media companies' business models, which, based on both internal and external research and as suggested by trends, began to value digital products and the 'digital first' operational strategy. In doing so, they purport to strengthen and expand the power of their respective brands in a much more complex environment and in direct competition with new content producers, as underscored by *The Full New York Times Innovation Report* (2014).

According to numbers released by the Pew Research Center (2014, p.6):

The vast majority of Americans now get news in some digital format. In 2013, 82% of Americans said they got news on a desktop or laptop and 54% said they got news on a mobile device. Beyond that, 35% reported that they get news in this way "frequently" on their desktop or laptop, and 21% on a mobile device (cell phone or tablet).

The growth in the consumption of news through multiple platforms has been indicated and monitored, for example, by surveys conducted by the *Reuters Institute* at Oxford University (Newman & Levy, 2014), which began to include urban Brazil in their studies as of 2013. The results show that mobile devices occupy a prominent position. Whereas in 2013, Brazil ranked third in the frequency of news consumption on different platforms (radio, TV, newspaper or online, with 88%)[2] in 2014, the *Digital News Report* by the *Reuters Institute* revealed that Brazilian digital news readers (6 out of 10) are the most likely to pay for content[3].

As a whole, 41% of users consume news content through digital platforms: 18% said that mobile phone is their primary means of reading online news, while 8% of users consulted replied they read it on a tablet. Distinct types of digital payment were identified: "single payment", 36%; "digital subscription", 31%; and "digital and print subscription package", 15%.

Meanwhile, data collected by the *Brazilian National Newspaper Association* (Associação Nacional de Jornais) indicated (2012) that digital subscriptions to newspaper websites grew 128% over the previous year and showed that digital platforms are used by 120 million people to seek information. Between January 2013 and June 2014, the use of smartphones to read content from the four major Brazilian newspapers grew by 430%[4]. In the first half of 2014, the increase was 88.3% compared to the corresponding average from 2013.

Broader surveys that measure the usage rates of mobile devices also show that smartphones and tablets are ascending rapidly in Brazil (Banks, 2014). The rate of increase was registered as 132%, even higher than that found in the United States.

These surveys confirm the increasing consumption of news on digital platforms, and also indicate that the diversification of products and launching of apps for smartphones and especially tablets, encounters users who are indeed interested and willing to pay for access to differentiated content. Moreover, they detected a clear preference among users for the evening hours to consume journalistic information. Directed towards this potentially new audience group, one would also expect new 'communication contracts' to emerge concerning the framing of news and structure of narratives (Satuf Rezende, 2013) in innovative journalistic mobile products.

Evening news applications were launched in Brazil and in Europe as new products of an informational galaxy (Macri, 2011) redefined by recent developments. They sought to meet convergent strategies: to diversify operations, to fulfill specific demands of audience and to attract new consumers of news on tablets and smartphones. Barsotti (2014), for example, points out that production for evening applications has changed the journalistic routine in newsrooms. Thus, a robotic editing environment turns into a manual one with the formation of dedicated (exclusive) teams to handle the production of content and the new journalistic language to tablets, such as the Brazilian app *O Globo a Mais.*

Tablets have been a driving force for change in production routines, business models, and journalistic language. Products launched for these devices have pushed integration boundaries in newsrooms. They require their own teams and impose limits on the logic of unceasing, 24-hour content production. Tablets have also restored the faith of journalistic companies in the viability of their business, giving new life to the model underpinned by subscription and advertising income. This device has been the engine for a new journalistic language, which draws on the intensification of sensations. The strategy relies on the reception of news by appealing to three senses simultaneously: sight, hearing, and touch (Barsotti, 2014, p.128).

As Barsotti points out, changes to journalistic language indicate aspects of innovation related to what can be considered a grammar specific to journalism for tablets due to the properties that characterize and distinguish such devices. Referring specifically to smartphohes, Feldman (2005, p.30-32) stressed the importance of taking advantage of new possibilities in interactivity an personalization which could "tie media audiences closer to their media brands" and suggested that selection of contents could be improved by the use of 'collaborative filters'. Batiston and Bello Neto (2013) emphasize the importance in news production for tablets of using elements in various formats (photography, video, sound, etc.) applied to the possibilities of touch interaction."The ways in which content is presented are important to keep the reader's attention in any medium and in tablets there are many features to be employed." (Batiston & Bello Neto, 2013, p.106).

NEWS DESIGN AND AFFORDANCES

Newsrooms were slow to understand the importance of the visual aspect of journalistic information. Only since the Modernist Movement of the early twentieth century, when Ben Sherbow developed his first experiments to recast the appearance of American newspapers and John E. Allen created the first manual on news design, did the appearance of the information gain some relevance to journalism. Over three hundred years after the first periodical was created, information was typed out with no thought to graphic design, and all work focused on fitting the news somewhere on the page, sometimes sacrificing a picture or reducing the size of typography (Barnhurst & Nerone, 2001; Díez & Cuadrado, 2001).

Coates and Ellison (2014, p. 10th) define information by the equation between semantic and pragmatic aspects involving information systems, with the objective to incorporate more essential data, interpret them and communicate them in the most fluid manner possible through the graphical interface[5]. This is done, for example, through the production of schematic diagrams, maps, instruction manuals, outdoor signage and in the case of journalism, infographics. A few landmarks were important for the development of information design such as isotype pictograms developed by Otto Neurath, between 1920 and 1940; the schematic plan of the London Underground, by Henry C. Beck, 1933; and the graphical user interface of the Macintosh, from 1984.

The design of news, as per Larequi's definition (1994, p. 26), may be summarized as a technique that enables the organization of a set of printed (text and graphics) and non-printed (white space) elements on the surface of a graphical space (page) in order to structure, prioritize and facilitate the readability of journalistic information. Still focused on traditional means of communication, the concept of design presented by Larequi underscored the importance of diagramming, which ceased to be haphazard and became a defining element of the personality of the publication.

The internet, and more recently, mobile devices have stressed the role of interactivity, considered as one of the defining characteristics of online journalism. Cameron (1998, p. 7) states that the voice of design in this regard is displaced, so that the professional merely furnishes the language and its syntax and the users create their own voices based on these signs. It is the end of the sequential narrative, with the emergence and growing hegemony of a model in which the user navigates freely for information, thereby modifying the relationship between author and reader (Julier, 2010, p. 218).

It is fair to say that mobile devices have forced designers to seek new ways of organizing elements and graphical resources, not only as a result of the interactive factor, but also due to the limited space on a smartphone or tablet screen. Whereas before the reader scanned the news distributed across large pages and was drawn to other stories by peripheral vision, (s)he now accesses the information in a single take which appears momentarily on a small screen. The presentation format, by means of applications, has become another distinct factor in the visual interface, with the addition of new features and programming languages such as HTML5 and Objective-C.

To enhance the understanding of each of these visual transformations of journalistic language and their respective relationships with the reader, it is worth going back to ideas and concepts presented in *The Theory of Affordances*, an article by James J. Gibson (1979).

The idea of affordance may help to explain the phenomenon of interfaces in which the user deals directly with basic commands for navigating and reading the pages of a digital journal from movements executed directly on the screen's surface, which is conventionally called tact-reading (*tactoleitura*) (Salaverria, 2012) or tactility (Palacios & Da Cunha, 2013). Also significant among affordances to be found in news apps are the increased use of multimedia (videos, photos, picture galleries in 3D or 360 degrees), animated infographics, higher degrees of interactivity, non-linear navigation through internal dynamic links and navigation via hidden text. They may also include features to view internal images or infographics with the touch of a finger, as well as details for data, numbers, and geolocation features, among others.

The theory, based on the nominalization of the verb to afford, was presented in the late 1970s by psychologist James J. Gibson (1979) to describe the interrelation between the properties of the environment, with its particular characteristics, and the animal during the process of perception. Gibson formulated these ideas in the previous decade, when he had contact with concepts from Gestalt psychology and functionalism (Santaella, 2012, p. 49th).

Almost ten years later, Donald A. Norman brought the term into the field of design with his book *The Design of Everyday Things.* The relationship between environment and animal is replaced by object, user and action. In this book, Norman explains that "affordance refers to the perceived and actual properties of the thing, primarily those fundamental properties that determine just how the thing could possibly be used" (1988, p. 9). For the author, the objects provide clues that determine their use, even if they are not uses originally intended by the developer.

Murray (2012) states that digital devices provide four affordances or properties that are useful for their representation: procedural, participatory, encyclopedic, and spatial. One digital work may employ any of these properties better than another. In the context of interaction design as a cultural practice, which is the focus of the author, a digital artifact is able to refine or create conventions that best exploit each of these four affordances.

The following is a quick description of each affordance referenced by Murray (2012) to characterize new media:

1. The *procedural property* of new media refers to the ability to represent and perform conditional behaviors. Programmers can write lines of code able to create abstractions, as well as anticipate behaviors from the negotiation of interaction with the user. Design is an important part of this process as a way to create more flexible systems within the range of possible anticipated responses;
2. The *participatory property* is related to the reciprocal relationship between any digital device and the party interacting with it. The design should provide for significant actions by both sides, as well as selecting appropriate conventions to communicate to the user what actions are possible for the interaction to be understood and carried out;
3. With higher processing capacity and transmission of information than any other media previously created, the *encyclopedic property* refers to unmatched computer storage potential, an infinite library that inherits the same time-old traditions of human culture, with the possibility to collect, preserve and transmit knowledge;
4. The *spatial property* refers to the ability of new media to represent, in the graphical interface, physical spaces – a classic example is the WIMP (Windows, Icons, Menus and Pointing Devices). According to Murray, this space is not restricted to a mere literal reproduction of commonplace elements, but may incorporate abstractions that reinforce their roles as fragments of information or programming of codes. Such abstractions need to be easily learned and should be transparent to the user.

In practice, these affordances are mainly represented by icons that refer to each action within the application, whether to guide reading or clarify items of audiovisual content (video, audio, photo galleries, interactive infographics). These icons, also known by the term 'coach marks,' educate the reader in a new, previously unknown device and incorporate themselves in a grammar already defined by the familiar editorial design of printed newspapers and magazines.

Westlund (2013) discussed current trends in production of mobile news for smartphones and proposed a model of analysis focusing on the roles of humans and technology in activities characterised by customising or repurposing. He believed that the tendency was towards treating journalistic content as 'plataform agnostic' with mobile news intertwined with news publishers' cross-media news work and publishing becoming "increasingly synonymous with excelling in technological customisation, harnessing technological assets that enhance the perceived affordances of mobile devices" (p.21). His conclusion was that "despite exceptions (...) this marks a potentially important shift away from established and normative conceptions, suggesting that for any emerging medium journalism must be shaped in a distinct way. However, this obviously depends on the importance given to humans *vis-à-vis* technology when we speak of journalism." (ibid).

By the end of 2011, the emergence of evening newspaper apps reopened the discussion on 'repurposed x original content' as the new apps became a novel space for potential experimentation relating to a set of interactions, in which the design tries to encourage readers' participation through tactility on the screen surface, the activation of the multimedia elements and other device-specific properties/gimmicks. As products created exclusively for smartphones and tablets, their characteristics should express affordances relating to inherent features of mobile devices; or so one could expect.

JOURNALISTIC APPLICATIONS: CASE STUDIES

The analysis of the six journalistic applications selected as the empirical *corpus* – *O Globo a Mais*, *Estadão Noite*, and *Diário do Nordeste Plus* (Brazil), *La Repubblica Sera* (Italy), *La Presse+* (Canada) and *El Mundo de la Tarde* (Spain) – includes observations regarding affordances employed in the narratives in terms of features that characterize the production of content for tablets and smartphones, as well as aspects of innovation and product evolution identified in the period between 2010 and 2014 (Table 2).

The choice of this *corpus* comprises five evening news applications which were identified as innovative products designed specifically for a new platform. As explained before, La Presse+ which is *not* an evening newspaper was also included in the corpus as it is an autochthonous tablet product, with distinctive and advanced features that justify its inclusion as a relevant object for our case study.

We sought to characterize apps according to the process of innovation and how they currently position themselves after the maturity period. The year 2010 was taken as a point of reference, as it marks the emergence of the Apple iPad tablet and its first dedicated products, although it was only in 2011 that the first evening news apps were created: *La Repubblica Sera* (Italy), released on November 23rd of that year with the introduction of audio, video, photo galleries and animation in HTML5.

In Brazil, the trailblazer was *O Globo a Mais.* Its first edition was published on January 21, 2012, initially offering such features as audio and video, page zoom, HTML5 animation, thumbnail navigation, photo galleries, horizontal and vertical layout, and 360° panoramas. Subsequently, there appeared *Estadão Noite* (April 2012), *Diário do Nordeste Plus* (January 2013), *La Presse+* (April 2013) and *El Mundo de La Tarde* (October 2013).

The first half of 2014 comprises the final period for observation and case analysis, so as to better understand the stages of evolution and development of apps selected for the empirical study. The key question that guided our observation and analysis was: how have these applications evolved since their launch and what innovations have they made?

Following this perspective, we observed the collection of applications identifying changes and aspects that stood out. Initially, we systematized a generic timeline of the features introduced in these applications and kept track of the emergence of evening newspaper apps as of 2011 (See Table 1).

Systematic observation of evening news applications permitted the characterization of the current state of each one of the products in terms of affordances, design, content formats, construction of narratives, sections, business models and integration between platforms in the same media group such as web and mobile (See Table 2). Data collected revealed that there was limited progress in the implementation of new features since the release of the respective autochthonous evening journalistic products. These native apps designed specifically for tablets were timid in exploiting the potential of the platform for the construction of longer and more complex narratives and in experimenting with new content formats.

In most cases there was little concern with innovating and some applications were launched as a finished version, as is the case of *La Repubblica Sera* and *Estadão Noite.* They kept virtually the same structure of design and features suitable to the language of *tablets,* but without adding innovative features afterwards.

La Repubblica Sera

The pioneering evening news application, *La Repubblica Sera,* released few updates since its creation and some of these updates were limited to bug fixes, schematic changes or changes in subscription or price. It offers the same basic features as the first news apps (as detailed in Table 1): audio and video, HTML5 animation, and a map of international correspondents with audio and weather forecasts (See Figure 1).

Aspects such as horizontal viewing are limited to image galleries, but other features adopted by other applications were not introduced, such as navigation by thumbnails of pages (there is only a vertical menu on the left side), printing, page zoom and the ability to change the typographic font. The sharing system is still based on static pages and the layout is similar to the design in print. The print version of *La Repubblica* received a recent make over to its graphic design, but this did not extend to the application.

We could obtain no data concerning the size and/or composition of *La Repubblica Sera´*s staff.

Table 1. Development of features in applications for tablets, 2010-2014

2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
• Use of audio and video features; • Sharing of content via e-mail and social networks; • Screen adaptability for reading on various devices; • Use of panoramic images and HTML5 animation.	• Creation of newsstand feature, with the ability to purchase single editions or subscribe within an application; • Use of augmented reality features; • Printing pages over wifi in capable printers.	• Screen adaptability to also read on smartphones; • Use of video galleries; • Automatic archiving of back issues; • Previews of some internal pages of each edition before having to pay (*paywall*).	• Use of banner ads within applications; • Simplified layout, with the adoption of *flat design* style, to be implemented with the interface for iOS7; • Integration with other device hardware, such as camera and accelerometer.	• Ability to stream audio and video; • Insertion of reader commentary within the pages of a publication; • Sharing of content with external services such as *LinkedIn* and *Evernote.*

Table 2. The corpus: a general view

	O Globo a Mais	Estadão Noite	Diário Plus	La Repubblica Sera	El Mundo de la Tarde	La Presse+
Affordances	360 degrees Interactive infographics Image galleries Video Newsgames Hidden text Image carousel Tactile narratives Hyperlinks Pop-up menus	Image galleries Video Audio Hyperlinks	360 degrees Interactive infographics Image galleries Videos Newsgames Hidden text Image carousel Tactile narratives Hyperlinks Pop-up menus	Audio Video Animation Image galleries	Audio Video Hyperlinks	360 degrees Interactive infographics Image galleries Videos Newsgames Zoom Image carousel Tactile narratives Hyperlinks Pop-up menus
Narratives	Narratives based on photos, videos, infographics and interactive elements with magazine-style coverage	Analytical articles. Doesn't offer reporting.	Narratives based on photos and videos with magazine-style coverage	Narratives based on photos and videos with magazine-style coverage	Narratives based on photos and videos with newspaper-style coverage	Narratives based on photos, videos, infographics and interactive elements with magazine-style coverage
Design	Emulates a print magazine (layout and positioning), but with interactive and dynamic features	Similar design to the columnar print edition.	Emulates a print magazine (layout and positioning), but with interactive features, audio, video, infographics, image galleries	Emulates a print newspaper (layout and positioning) with static elements	Emulates a print newspaper (layout and positioning) with static elements	The design is like an app for tablet with horizontal orientation
Media formats	Audio, video, infographics, image galleries	Audio, video, image galleries	Audio, video, infographics, image galleries	Audio, video, image galleries	Audio, video, image galleries	Audio, video, image galleries, infographics
Sections	Giro, Fotos do Dia, Gente do Globo (Colunistas), Artigo, Dicas a Mais, Imagens a Mais	Artigos, Colunistas, Cenas do Dia, NaTV Estadão & na Rádio Estadão, Amanhã no jornal O Estado de S. Paulo	Panorama, Colunistas, Diário em Fotos, Teenagers, Roteiro Cinema, Roteiro Cultural, Reportagens	Primo Piano, Politica, In Redazione, La Giornata in immagini, Esteri, Lo Scatto, Pollole, Intanto net Mondo, Sport, Cultura, Spettacoli, Commenti, La Memoria, Le Scelte di Rsera, Il Libro, Il Film, Stori ai Fornelli, Web Circus	Opinión, España, Mundo, Economia, Deportes, EM2, Perspectivas, Última, Pasatiempos, Videos e Imágens	Actualités, Débats, Arts, Sports, Affairres, Pause Beauté, Pause Repas, Reportagens, Le Monde en Images
Business models	Distribution for tablets and smartphones (iOS and Android). Sold in the Tablet and web catalogs. Single purchase, subscription or digital package.	Distribution for iOS tablets. For single purchase or paired with subscription to other digital or print products.	Distribution for iOS tablets. Sale paired with subscription to the print edition.	Distribution for iOS tablets. Sale paired with the digital print edition.	Distribution for tablets (iOS and Android). Monthly subscription.	Distribution for tablets (iOS and Android). Free, ad-supported distribution

Figure 1. La Repubblica Sera offers the same basic features as the first news apps

Estadão Noite

As in the case of *La Repubblica Sera,* the Brazilian *Estadão Noite* has maintained almost unchanged its initial design structure (a black, static background) and features (audio, video and image galleries), vertical and horizontal navigation, and content based on columnists and political and economic analysis. The audio format predominates since it has appeared on the cover of each issue, as well as videos. The application, in the end, delivers the print newspaper headlines from the following day and the "Latest News" section, which links to a page on the website. In this way, there is an attempt to connect the app with the platforms of print, web and radio. The app staff consists of five professionals: an executive editor, an editor, an art director, a designer and a photo editor, besides the contributions of *Estadão Group* columnists (See Figure 2).

The parent application, *Estadão,* encompasses *Estadão Noite, Estadão Premium* (reproduction of the print edition with some multimedia elements added), *Estadão Light* (version based on iPad features) and

Figure 2. Estadão Noite emphasizes analytical content. Audio is the predominant feature.

Olhar Estadão (which circulates on the weekend with pictures from *The New York Times,* photo essays and Instagram pictures sent in by readers). This strategy coincides with the recommendation of García (2012) on three ways to distribute content for tablet[6]: "curated edition", "continuous news aggregator" and "PDF of the print version." *Estadão* offers a combination of these three forms with applications available on its platform. For Garcia, the "curated edition" would be the best suited for customization and the use of audio, video and images. However, in the case of *Estadão Noite,* the object of our analysis, there were no new features added based on innovative journalism.

Diário do Nordeste Plus

The *Diário do Nordeste Plus* (https://flic.kr/p/wdGipj) was the third application to be launched in Brazil and followed the model of *O Globo a Mais.* In this context, the app has implemented practically the same features as *O Globo a Mais* and the design itself is similar with sections and features approximating those used in *the O Globo a Mais* app. The application is navigated vertically and changes to horizontal for the image gallery. The team consists of 10 people (plus columnists): a tablet editor and subeditor, a reporter, a photo editor, an art editor, a designer, an infographic designer and three interns.

One attempt to create a unique identity is seen on the app cover, which besides the main photo and caption, delivers three more headlines of internal content. The app shows infographics, reports with photo galleries, plus videos, audio and images in 360°. During the Confederations Cup in Brazil, *DN Plus* offered a virtual tour of the Arena Castelão (a World Cup stadium in Fortaleza, Northeast Brazil). From the point of view of innovation, it offers little novelty compared to other evening news apps.

El Mundo de La Tarde

This app has a different logic to the others regarding access. It is limited to offer the download of editions to access on mobile devices. The content is primarily online, therefore the interface connects to a website. The application (especially the top bar with the logo and access to the menu) is a skin-type interface to access the content. It is reminiscent of the first journalistic applications for tablet, like the initial release from the Brazilian magazine *Epoca*, in 2010. The ability to "download content" allows the edition to be read offline (See Figure 3).

In spite of having a website-like appearance, the content of *El Mundo de la Tarde* has some of the resources that are implemented with greater complexity in other autochthonous applications: sharing to social networks (a link is also accessible from the desktop, as with a website), shrink/enlarge the

Figure 3. With website-like characteristics, El Mundo app is reminiscent of the first products for tablet

font size (accessibility), electronic library (archive of content and search by date of publication), fluid adaptation to any type of screen (responsive design).As with the other applications, it features audio and video, hyperlinks, and photo galleries. However, it is limited to a vertical format, even for images.

There are no animations. It has been on the App Store since October 21, 2013. The few updates have included the ability to sign up for the publication on a monthly basis (version 1.1.0 of 05/11/2013), since access was previously limited to subscribers of *Orbyt,* their system for managing access and subscriptions; as well as push notifications, customized ordering of the sections by the user, and the ability to see marks on the calendar of the electronic library in downloaded copies (version 1.1.2 of 10/06/2014).

The app staff consists of a chief editor and seven writers/sub-editors. This same team is also responsible for additional copy material produced for *El Mundo* in its digital version in the group´s Orbyt platform. Concerning the app, the main task for the team is the edition of journalistic material produced by the staff in the newsroom.

O Globo a Mais

The application (https://flic.kr/p/vWJoCJ) from the media company *O Globo* made considerable progress with initiatives in several directions. They invested from the start in a dedicated team composed of 13 people: an editor-in-chief, an editor, an assistant editor, six reporters, three visual designers and a coordinator of multimedia images. The formation of a larger team may have contributed to the approach of continual change, as observed since its launch in 2012.

The application strove for its own business model, breaking away from the parent application (web, *O Globo, O Globo a Mais)* and began to form a product sold separately in the Apple catalog. They have also expanded into other operating systems[7] and devices such as a version for Android OS and customized versions for smartphones of both operating systems. Another relevant aspect of *O Globo a Mais* is having been made available also on the web, although without the features that characterize tactility (Palacios & Da Cunha, 2012). This reinforces the notion of a multimedia continuum and the web as the apex of the convergent processes (Barbosa, 2013.

The *O Globo a Mais* application makes use of hypertext capability starting at the cover, with a table of contents superimposed on photos, leading the reader directly to internal content through the link. There are several pictograms indicating features (tactility and affordances) including the touch screen to interact with content such as images, video or hidden text (which are frequently used at the beginning, as in the Giro section). These pictograms demarcate from the outset the distinctive territory inherent to the tablet and its tactile interface. Accordingly, the interaction is established through touch, based on the design of gestural interfaces for applications. The attributes of narratives in the *O Globo a Mais* application are listed according to the characteristics of interaction based on the touch screen or tactility. Navigation may descend without limit in the vertical orientation. There are signals indicating the presence of further content lower down, such as a scroll bar on a web browser.

La Presse+

The *La Presse+* app (https://flic.kr/p/wemaPB), although not an evening publication, given that it distributes content in the morning (5:30 am in the Eastern Time Zone), was included in our sample as a relevant complement to an analysis of apps that were generated with elements of innovation. Similar to *O Globo a Mais*, *La Presse+* is another example of an application developed specifically for tablets which offers the greatest amount of affordances. The edition is the most robust among applications, with high density of information, covering a wider range of topics in its sections. Since July 17, 2014, the application has also been available for the Android operating system in tablet format, following the example of *O Globo a Mais,* which was the first among the applications analyzed to also distribute for Android.

As regards features which exploit the nature of mobile devices, it uses tactility to zoom in on videos as a convenient way to view full screen in the application. It allows sections to be customized by significance in order of appearance (*Actualités, Sports, Techno, International, Météo, Blogs, Affaires, Le plus populaire sur la Presse*) and alerts (notifications). The content includes infographics and charts. Image galleries and videos gain particular attention on the app and are used frequently. Regarding the videos, *La Presse+* uses a transparency feature, overlaying a video player on images, so that the user can click to watch in a complementary way. The application's navigation also offers a simplified (horizontal) logic to the user, with sufficient indicators. At the end of the application there is also an "*en direct*" (live feed) section with continuous updates.

The application appears as a confluence between the features of print, web and video, incorporating tactility and interaction with the information presented, which makes it quite appealing.

La Presse+ is produced by a staff of over 300 journalists in the newsroom – jointly producing the print edition, web version and app version – and around 100 professionals in areas of design, informatics and product development.

CONCLUSION

This chapter on autochthonous journalistic applications and, in particular, evening news apps has contextualized the emergence of such products as innovative journalism and as a new business initiative. Even considering their newness (from 2011), it is possible to characterize some aspects of the development and evolution of these applications within strategies of convergence and distribution of multi-platform media companies. In the present case, the prospects for mobility and expansion of the number of tablets and smartphones in the market also bear consideration, in addition to the increasing propensity to pay for information consumption on tablets.

During the interval between 2010 and 2014, journalism geared towards tablets experimented with new formats and interactive features applied to narratives, creating unique products, identified here as autochthonous, to employ the novel affordances that tablets make possible, like tactility, movement via the system's accelerometer, among other factors related to the portability and practicality of the device to consume (multimedia) content in a more interactive and intimate way. The narrative format was also object of some – if limited - experimentation as the new products were launched aiming at a 'lean-back' type of audience more likely to accept 'in-depth', longer narratives, side by side with 'summaries' of the main news of the day.

The results of the study undertaken upon the defined *corpus – O Globo a Mais, Estadão Noite, Diário do Nordeste Plus* (Brazil), *La Repubblica Sera* (Italy), *La Presse+* (Canada) and *El Mundo de la Tarde* (Spain) – enabled the innovations introduced in these applications to be mapped and systematically organized in order to make comparisons with respect to the degree of innovation made by each application. With respect to this grading, we found that for some applications the innovations were meager or non-existent after the release of their respective evening news apps (for example *La Repubblica Sera, Estadão Noite* and *El Mundo de la Tarde),* while others were continually adding features integrated with the narratives and business models (adding availability for Android OS or sale from the App store catalog), as in the cases of *O Globo a Mais* and *La Presse+*. *O Diário do Nordeste Plus* occupies an intermediate point, with modest innovations.

O Globo a Mais[8] comes forth as the application that uses strategies with more focus on innovation and the development of a sustainable business model with regard to smartphones. It is the only one so far in our *corpus* that adapted the application to Android and iOS smartphones, thus meeting demand from a greater pool of users. We can infer from this strategic decision that: 1. Availability for smartphones expands the market for the product in view of the larger quantity of smartphones available for Android OS; 2.The strategy is within the scope of multi-screen, multi-platform and responsive design (or liquid design) as there is a challenge to adapt content to be viewed on mobile devices with an adequate experience of "fit", in different screen sizes. We should also consider that smartphones are undergoing a process of metamorphosis in terms of screen size, with the market opening up for devices with screens larger than 4 inches, or even 5 inches as with the so-called *phablets* (a cross between smartphones and tablets). Therefore, a smartphone with a 5-inch screen is an intermediary which can handle the content of a digital magazine almost as well as a tablet, both in terms of facilitating reading as per its readability and in adapting features that are more apt to the tablet.

Based on these observations and analyses, the result is that one set of autochthonous apps are in transition and may be thought of as occupying a basic stage of development[9]. These products were launched for iPad and seek to add some value to the brand of the news organization and its multi-platform strategy. However most of the effort was focused on launching the product as a way of marking territory from competitors in the competition for "innovation," thus generating marketing and attempting to gain the loyalty of readers/customers.

After the release, it is evident that few made improvements, keeping the app in its "beta" version for a long time, with occasional updates pertaining to system errors or to "add items" related to purchasing subscriptions or one-off sales. Meanwhile, these applications have remained languid without progressing to the addition of new features, aggregators of narratives, or the exploitation of features distinctive to tablets. Both *El Mundo de la Tarde* and *Estadão Noite* are examples of this relative stagnation, with low levels of innovation, as indicated above. It is worth remembering that in the case of *El Mundo de La Tarde,* the application was launched in October 2013, when many of the features and affordances of tablets were already employed in several products available at the time.

The research undertaken with the given indicators of innovation in journalism for tablets demonstrates the need to face challenges to develop a suitable language that increasingly incorporates into the narratives those affordances which tablet interfaces make available in terms of innovation and tactile interaction. The present discussion resembles, excepting particular circumstances, the first moments of digital journalism when it sought to implement its own characteristics applied to the web platform, but still making considerable use of 'transposed' models from former platforms. Amid the process that we witnessed, it is not yet clear what will be the future of autochthonous news applications in journalistic organizations, keeping in mind differences in the degree of innovation and even the quantity of apps – especially for evening news – in the market, equally for Brazil, Europe and in North America.

We believe that affordances as inducers of innovation in journalistic products may be further explored in future research. In this chapter (Table 2) they were only mobilized at a basic descriptive level. Feldman (2005, p. 42) differentiates innovations in general according to two dimensions: means-induced (new means for existing purposes) and purpose-induced (new purposes that need to be served). We suggest that for the specific case of innovations in mobile journalism a third dimension could be added: affordances-induced (new interface properties that need to be put to use). The refinement of this approach and the strengthening of the bridge between affordances and innovation may be a fruitful development in future texts to be produced by our research group.

Finally, from what we observed, there is still much to be done concerning experimentation in formats, content, language and narratives based on the features of mobile devices, the constant evolution of operating systems and changes in hardware platforms. Of course innovation is also dependent and limited by financial capacity to invest in new - and sometimes costly - resources, both human and material. Economic crises have direct effects on R&D expenditure, risk taking investments and experimentation and the "2008 economic crisis has severely reduced the short-term willingness of firms to invest in innovation", although the negative effects were not uniform across the economic spectrum (Archibugi, Filipetti, & Frenz, 2013). The expected European economic recovery, in the near future, may be a decisive factor in defining the shape of things to come in the field of mobility and new journalistic formats.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Affordance: The concept was defined by psychologist James Gibson to represent the properties and potential of objects. With respect to graphical interfaces, it refers to design features that induce intuitive navigation and usage of elements of the device content.

Autochthonous News App: Application created by a specialized team, producing exclusive material for mobile platforms, with distinct handling of content. Autochthonous news apps incorporate the strategies for diversification of media companies business models, which, based on both internal and external research and as suggested by trends, began to value digital products and the 'digital first' operational strategy.

Convergent Journalism: A non-consensual concept that for the purpose of this article is defined as "a multidimensional process that, fueled by the widespread deployment of digital telecommunication technologies, affects the technological, business, professional and editorial spheres of the media, providing an integration of previously separated tools, spaces, working methods and languages, allowing (...)

content to be distributed across multiple platforms using their specific languages/codes" (Salaverría R.; García Avilés. J.A.; Masip P.M., 2010).

Evening News App: Application for a mobile device characterized by autochthonous products (originals) and the concept of 'lean back'. It is developed exclusively for tablets, with its own business model and differentiated narratives.

Innovation in Journalism: A concept based on Machado (2010, p. 67), "Innovation in journalism is a phenomenon that faces journalism as an industry and focuses on finding social demands for quality, instantaneous information at the lowest possible cost, in keeping with the rigor of the highest professional conduct and accessible by all available means."

Mobile Journalism: The production, editing, distribution and consumption of journalistic content to and from connected mobile devices such as tablets, and smartphones.

Mobility: State of displacement, of motion. In mobile communication, mobility is expressed as physical and informational displacement through the portability of devices and the ubiquity of wireless connections that enable information mobility.

Multimedia Continuum: Processes and products with streams for production, editing and distribution of content in horizontal and dynamic forms and with multi-platform characteristics.

Tactility: A significant feature of a mobile device interface employing touch and the sensorial to facilitate tactile interaction with the content.

END NOTES

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2 Second place went to Denmark, with 89%, and first was Japan with 92%.

3 In 2014, the survey was conducted in ten countries: Germany, urban Brazil, Denmark, Spain, USA, Finland, France, Italy, Japan and the UK, using populations *samples.* Finland was included for the first time in 2013,

4 Data from the IVC in June 2014 showed the *Folha de S. Paulo* (São Paulo) as leading in circulation and audience on different platforms, putting *O Globo* (Rio de Janeiro) in second and, in third place, *O Estadão* (São Paulo). In fourth, is *Zero Hora* (Porto Alegre).

5 The popularization of audiovisual communication, computerization of newsrooms and the development of the GUI (graphical user interface) in the 1980s, promoted a new impulse in the visual formatting of journalistic products. The competition with television encouraged color printing of newspapers, as well as better distribution of texts in notebooks and sections, with the support of features from design to attract readers and help them visualize the news. At least two subareas received evidence of design in this period, whether in the professional or academic field: information design, shown mainly in the use of infographics and news design, which is reflected in the visual organization of pages as a whole.

6 To Garcia (2012) there are different classifications to delimit tablet apps as native applications (which we call autochthonous), HTML5 application, in addition to sites for tablets (“native app”, “HTML5 app”, “web app”, ” Tablet-optimized website”).

7 The adoption of the Adobe Publishing Suite Design – DPS, the main tool for production applications for tablets and smartphones, contributes to the production platform adapted to the specificity of each screen. The DPS remains the primary tool for implementing innovations in production applications.

8 *O Globo a Mais* app has been discontinued. The final version was published on May 15, 2015. In a “Letter to readers”, editor Pedro Doria announced that “very shortly a new product for tablets and smartphones will go live”.

9 Applications like *Folha10*, the *Folha de S. Paulo*, Brazil, also belong in this stage. This application, although not part of the empirical corpus for analysis, took part in the research sample of the Project Convergent Journalism Lab in his first stage.

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Chapter 32
The Politicization of Selfie Journalism: An Empirical Study to Parliamentary Elections

Theodora Maniou
Frederick University, Cyprus

Kosmas Panagiotidis
Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece

Andreas Veglis
Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece

ABSTRACT

While the phenomenon of selfie photographs in the media has been extensively analysed by academics, Selfie Journalism was recently introduced and constitutes one of the most notable phenomena within the digital media environment, raising a number of issues relating to notions of infotainment and impartial reporting, especially in 'difficult' sectors, such as politics. This paper identifies the specific characteristics of Selfie Journalism in political reporting. Based on both quantitative and qualitative research, the study analyses these characteristics in the period of parliamentary elections of 2016 in Cyprus. The aim of the study is dual: first, to examine the extensive use of Selfie Journalism by candidates themselves in political campaigning and, secondly, to examine the impact of this phenomenon upon the media and, in turn, media engagement in such political tactics. The greater scope of this study evolves around the argument that Selfie Journalism, as a new species of participatory journalism, has penetrated the media in an effort to attract larger audiences.

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INTRODUCTION

While the phenomenon of selfie photographs has been extensively analysed by academics in recent years – not only in the area of Cultural Studies but also in the Visual Studies sector and the media, Selfie Journalism was recently introduced (Omar, 2015; Maniou & Veglis, 2016) and constitutes one of the most notable phenomena within the current digital media environment, linking its outspread to the use of smart digital devices (phones, tablets, etc.). This digital revolution seems to have converted citizens into potential creators of images for newsworthy events; as such, Selfie Journalism can be viewed as a form of participatory and citizen journalism.

In this perspective, it was only a matter of time for this new phenomenon to be incorporated in the current journalistic practices, raising – at the same time – a number of issues, relating to notions of infotainment and impartial reporting, especially in 'difficult' sectors of reporting, such as politics. In fact, as the engagement of selfies in politics grows more and more every day that goes by, following the fast-growing tendency to involve microblogging and social networking in order to increase political participation, issues of reliability and trustworthiness of Selfie Journalism emerge, especially in relation to the specific characteristics of this new tendency in citizen/participatory journalism.

This article attempts to investigate the specific characteristics of Selfie Journalism in politics and political reporting. Based on both quantitative and qualitative research, the study analyses these characteristics in the period of parliamentary elections of 2016 in the Republic of Cyprus. The greater scope of this study evolves around the argument that Selfie Journalism, as a new species of participatory journalism, has penetrated the media in an effort to attract larger audience, especially in 'difficult' sectors of reporting, such as politics. In this perspective, the aim of the research is dual: first, to examine the extensive use of Selfie Journalism in political campaigning and, secondly, to examine the impact of this phenomenon upon the media and, in turn, media engagement in such political tactics.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Definition and Characteristics of Selfie Journalism

From 'life-streaming' (Freeman, 1997; Marwick, 2013) to selfies, the rhetorical art of 'streaming' visuals, photographs, audio and/or video, to curate a self-identity has become a common everyday practice (Wargo, 2015). With their origins in the areas of Art and Photography, today selfies are perceived as 'gestural images' (Frosh, 2015) and, as such, their aesthetics cannot be purely understood and interpreted through Visual Studies but we need to engage in the analysis of communication and media theories, in order to fully understand their performativity in journalistic practices.

The basic criterion that made selfies become the new 'journalistic tool' in the digital media environment is the practice of sharing and, thus, distributing to a wide audience highly personalized 'stories' (moments, events, etc.), following the fast-growing tendency for people to broadcast themselves ('life-streaming'). The practice of sharing digital content seems to be the fundamental and constitutive activity of Web 2.0, describing both the processes of distribution and communication within the digital environment (John, 2012). Selfies are analogous to 'the communication situation of broadcasting, which displays reporters in various locations and where experiences are mediated to an audience which has no first-hand acquaintance with them' (Peters, 2001, p.717). Banita (2012) describes this phenomenon as ‘media witnessing’ (see also, Koliska & Roberts, 2015, p.1674). Reading (2009, p.72), also, calls images taken with mobile devices as ‘mobile witnessing’ and describes this procedure as data exchange via global networks.

It is not the selfie itself that changes the current journalistic practices, but the technology evolved around and beyond it. Smart technology, deployed through portable devices – such as smartphones and tablets - has eliminated issues of time in the process of sharing and globally distributing witnessing tokens. Additionally, HD cameras incorporated in this infrastructure allow the up-to-the-minute disclosure of witnessing tokens, deescalating - most of the times - the reportage itself: once shared a video or a photograph, there is no need for instant description, since a title (usually in the form of a hashtag) is simply enough (Maniou & Veglis, 2016). In this perspective, the news (information/reportage) does not derive from the photograph but it rather is itself the photograph, while the journalistic analysis and interpretation follows and does not precede the story.

In fact, selfies go way further beyond than reflecting personal moments; as Koliska amd Roberts (2015) argue, they are also communal experiences of modern life, while creating a constant flow of visual artefacts of personally witnessed events. As such, the practice of sharing selfies can be viewed as a form of participatory journalism and understood in fact as ‘the combination of citizen journalism with multiple personal points of view (selfies provided by different people)’ (p.1677). In essence, digital revolution seems to have converted citizens into potential creators of images of newsworthy events, since there is a growing tendency during recent years for media to invite citizens to participate, by sending in photographs and/or videos of such events (Guerrero-Garcia & Palomo, 2015).

In the early years of social media development, journalists tended to be more selective concerning the material they imported from the social media into their news stories (Chen, 2013, p.87). But, as technology evolves and alternative modes of digital story-telling arise, this newly formed digital public sphere tends to overwhelm the agenda setting process of the media, bringing forward issues, events and/or individual people previously highlighted by the social media. The rapid rise of Instagram and Snapchat, for example, is the solid proof for this argument: politicians, actors, singers and various ‘celebrities’ prevail the current public sphere almost solely based on their selfie portraits in the digital world. They operate according to a kind of ‘attention economy’ (Goldhaber, 1997; Lanham, 1994; Lankshear and Knobel, 2002), in which users attempt to attract the attention of other users and then display that attention as part of their own displays (Jones, 2009, p.118). Even the ‘paparazzi’ techniques today seem meaningless, since celebrities themselves choose to publicize their most private moments, using the most popular social networks[1].

The semiotics and functions of such pictures are perplexed. Like conventional portraiture, these displays are multifunctional, operating as aesthetic objects: as representations of individuals’ characters or histories, as documents of identity or of particular physical traits and as communicative gestures in the ongoing interaction among users (Jones, 2010).

In this perspective, engagement is now the key and Selfie Journalism constitutes the new trend bringing Mobile Journalism a step forward: counting how many Facebook likes our stories get or tallying YouTube views for a video, is the previous social media strategy. Nowadays we want to know how people are commenting, starting conversations, and more importantly, how are they sharing journalistic content (Omar, 2015); in example, what kind of hashtags are accompanying the selfies or whether these hashtags are preserved or changed, when the selfie is reposted by different users in the digital media.

As such, a huge issue arises concerning the content itself of Selfie Journalism. Selfies’ main value tends to be more emotional than aesthetic, since they are based on rather amateur than professional techniques (i.e., see analysis at Tifentale & Manovich, 2015). However, even these techniques have been changing lately and selfie photographs posted in the digital media environment are being edited in more professional ways with the use of digital tools, like Photoshop or Instagram filters, before being posted on the Web. In fact, the smart element of all portable devices refers to its ability to be reconfigured and repurposed by users through downloadable apps of their choice (Watkins, Hjorth & Koskinen, 2012), that can edit and re-shape content (i.e., edit a photograph, amend possible undesired elements, etc.). In this way, individuals can re-create their own identity by broadcasting themselves as they would like to be and not as they actually are.

In any case, selfies used to reproduce journalistic content do not depict isolated objects, but they are proven records of events, since they include background information and/or items/activities/other people/gestures framing the 'author' of the photograph. In this way, it is this exact 'framing' that becomes today's news, putting the author into the story; for example, by pinpointing an object or premises of the background scenery, the author automatically draws attention to it, placing this object in the centre of the viewers' interest and, thus, brings the frame forward as the main issue of the news story.

As such, elections can offer a unique example of how individuals and politicians can participate in an important media event as co-creators via multiplatform reality formats (Hammelburg, 2015, p.92); as Berry (2011, p.143) puts it, since the restructuring of the web and web-based social media into streams, the user, with his responsibility to act, 'is expected to desire the real-time stream, both to be in it, to follow it and to participate in it'. With the growing importance of user-generated content, it is more and more the case that an event does not exist as such, but is being co-created as it is being reported through media, (Hammelburg, 2015, p.93) and this is how content published in the media for an event can influence the event itself. As such, Selfie Journalism seems to be affecting the way history is now documented. To this perspective, are the events of timeliness documented via Selfie Journalism as they are happening or as we (or others) want to see and interpret them? If the latter is the case, the question that arises is up to which extend can Selfie Journalism be trustworthy.

Additionally, digital platforms offer a variety of categorised or uncategorised personal data that can be analysed algorithmically, creating in this way a digital profile for each individual. Most scholars are concerned with privacy issues around media use of personal data (Goggin, Martin & Dwyer, 2014). However, in the case of parliamentary candidates during the pre-election period, as the following analysis will show, it is the politicians themselves that seem to be embedding elements of direct infotainment characteristics in matters of political and social life (such as personal moments with family and friends). As Gomez-Cruz and Thornham (2015) argue, the issue here is how the combination of visual, material and digital elements of selfies create new forms of surveillance and 'sousveillance', reshape what privacy, public and intimacy are and can, in this perspective, generate softer and more effective forms of power.

Based on the above analysis, Selfie Journalism could be described as a new tendency in participatory and citizens journalism, exercised via mobile devices and based on the practice of posting self-photographs (and/or videos) in social media and - in this way - reproducing content, not based on isolated objects/people/images, etc., but on artefacts framing the 'author' of the photograph; most of the times, these artefacts (either objects/premises or other people) constitute elements of the author's private life, which, thus, becomes intentionally public, aiming to attract other people's attention and provoke (positive) reactions in public. For the purposes of this study a clear distinction should be made between Selfie Journalism exercised by citizens and relevant practices used within political campaigns by political candidates performing in this way; the latter is the case-study of this research.

Infotainment, Politics, Reporting, and Selfie Journalism

Among others, selfies demonstrate the discursive connection between creative practice and individual subjectivity (Wargo, 2015). As such, their engagement in the process of political campaigning was only a matter of time, following the growing tendency to involve microblogging services and social networking in order to increase political participation in favour of the acting politician and/or political group. Obama's presidential campaign in 2008 led the way, while dozens of others followed since then, either in national or local political level globally.

It is not in the immediate goals of this study to analyse the tools of political campaigning; thus, the uses and gratification of social media in such practices have been extensively analysed the last decade by several scholars, mainly, of the political communication sector. In any case, there is one point upon which all these analyses agree: microblogging and social networking considerably contribute in approaching 'difficult' groups of the society, such as young citizens, and engage them in the voting process (Chen et al, 2009; Wattal et al, 2010; Bond et al, 2012; Hobbs, 2015). Undoubtedly, this is partly due to reasons related to infotainment tactics of presenting political issues and candidates, which can easier attract these 'difficult' groups of voters. Even decades before the development of social networks, tabloid media exercising infotainment tactics, were more likely to approach this category of voters; for example, in UK almost every candidate since 1979 supported by THE SUN has won the elections (Worall, 2015).

But although tabloid journalism can undoubtedly attract large audiences, it was never known to be related to impartial reporting. In this perspective, the issue here is whether Selfie Journalism can be acknowledged as a form of tabloid journalism or it only includes some forms of tabloid and whether or not it can be trustworthy. These questions have already been raised since 2014, concerning the accuracy and reliability of selfie photographs in regards to other aspects of public information, i.e. health issues (Chadwick, 2015). In the case of politicians, it is well established that they tend to use selfies as a strategic self-promotion tool and take advantage of their wide dissemination through social media, which proves how the practice of self-portraits facilitates new forms of 'performative politics' (Farci & Orefice, 2015). Performativity theories focus on debating relationships between theory and practice and encourage practical interventions in every aspect of life (Cabantous, Gond, Harding & Learmonth, 2016). Performative politics foregrounds the politician as an actor, whose performance on the public stage is continuously judged in terms of authenticity, honesty and 'character' (Corner and Pels, 2003) and, in this way, proves the growing convergence between popular culture and the political system (van Zoonen, 2005), while opens the way for a paradigmatic shift from deliberative democracy rooted in civil society to 'audience democracy' (Manin, 2010) based on the conversion of politicians in media narratives.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SCOPE OF STUDY

The greater scope of this study evolves around the argument that Selfie Journalism, as a new species of journalism, has penetrated the media in an effort to attract larger audience, especially in 'difficult' sectors of reporting, such as politics. The aim of the study is dual: first, to examine the extensive use of Selfie Journalism in political campaigning and, secondly, to examine the impact of this phenomenon upon the media and, in turn, media engagement in such political tactics.

In this perspective, four primary questions guided this work:

RQ1: Which are the basic characteristics of Selfie Journalism that are most evident in political reporting?
RQ2: Up to which extend and in which ways Selfie Journalism is exercised by politicians?
RQ3: Up to which extend the media engage in such political tactics by promoting and publicising selfie photographs in an election period?
RQ4: Based on which criteria the media select and promote specific selfies?

Research Methodology

The research is deployed in two levels; first, a quantitative content analysis was conducted regarding the amount of selfie photographs posted in the social media profiles (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) of the parliamentary candidates. The unit of the analysis was the selfie photograph. For the Content Analysis, classification systems were devised to identify different features of the photographs; all photographs that were located and extracted through the candidates' profiles were examined and categorised via a code book that included variables based on the specific characteristics of Selfie Journalism (as analysed above). Specific criteria on the form and visual presentation of each photograph were not set a-priori, as the intention was to include as many units of analysis as possible in the research (Maniou, Photiou & Ketteni, 2016). In the course of the study, three researchers were trained in the implementation process of the particular codebook, while a pre-test and a post-test were conducted to ensure that the researchers comprehended in a similar manner the additional variables (Mellado & Lagos, 2014, pp. 2095-2096). The tests yielded overall inter-coder reliability 0.71 (pre-test) and 0.69 (post-test), employing the KRIPPENDORFF's ALPHA test.

Second, a qualitative analysis of the photographs was conducted in order to reach safe conclusions regarding the selection criteria upon which, the media are based in order to publicize specific selfie photographs. In this perspective, the visual social semiotics approach of Kress and van Leeuwen (1996; 2001) was employed and all photographs comprising the final sample were examined in terms of representational, interactive and compositional meaning (see also van Leeuwen, 2005). For Kress and van Leeuwen, pictures, like language, do not only represent the material reality but also the interpersonal interaction of social reality - such as the relation between viewers and the people represented in the pictures (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996). Taking the analysis one step forward, the approach of Kress (2010) was undertaken, in order to reach safe conclusions regarding the interactive dimension of selfies that were published in the media, since the semiotic potential of signifiers, action and objects is drawn upon by people, when communicating with each other (Rose, 2016). Although Kress and van Leeuwen's approach presents several disadvantages concerning the sociological interpretation of images, it was deemed appropriate in this study, since it can provide a descriptive framework and bring out hidden meanings of the images (Jewitt & Oyama, 2001, p.154).

Sample of the Research

The research was conducted in the Republic of Cyprus during the pre-election period of 2016 (April and May 2016) and the post-election period (a week after the elections); the elections took place in the 22nd of May 2016. In total, the social media profiles (Instagram, Facebook and Twitter) of 494 parliamentary candidates were investigated, coming from eight political parties: the left wing-communist AKEL, the right wing-conservative governing party DISI [Democratic Rally], the center-right DIKO [Democratic Party] (Katsourides, 2003), the right wing- newly created Solidarity, the extreme right wing-ultranationalist ELAM [National People's Front], the social-democratic EDEK [Movement of Social Democrats], Ecologists [the Green party] and the populist Citizens Alliance; 56 of these candidates were elected. The final sample consists of 85 selfies, deriving from the profiles of both female and male parliamentary candidates and all political parties, as presented in Table 1.

Cyprus: A Brief Historical Overview

An island nation in the east Mediterranean Sea, the Republic of Cyprus has memberships in the UN (since its independence in 1960), in the European Union (since 2004) and in the Eurozone (since 2008). The majority of its population is of Greek descent, with other large ethnic groups including Cypriots of Turkish, Armenian, Latin and other Christian Catholic origins[2], as well as large communities of European and non-European citizens. The Greek-Cypriot community is frequently affected by the social, political and financial changes in Greece, due to their affiliation with the Greek language and their shared history and religion (Maniou, 2017).

The island was divided in 1974 following a coup against the President, which led to its invasion by Turkish military forces, their occupation of the northern half of the island and the splitting of the population with most Turkish-Cypriots in the north and the Greek-Cypriots in the south. Historically, in Cyprus there exists a long and noteworthy political juxtaposition between the two main political parties, the right-wing DISI and the left-wing communist AKEL, which occurred in the mid-1940s (Chrysanthou, 2008); this is evident in every aspect of social, political and economic life, while the national issue of the occupation of Northern Cyprus and the division of the country in two separate areas prevails every aspect of political news and debates from 1974 and onwards.

Table 1. The sample of the research

	Total Number of Selfie Photos	**Male Candidates' Selfie Photos**	**Female Candidates' Selfie Photos**	**Selfie Photos Publicized in the Media**
AKEL	19	9	10	3
DIKO	17	16	1	2
DISY	43	16	27	1
EDEK	0	0	0	0
ELAM	1	1	0	0
Ecologists	4	4	0	0
Citizens Alliance	1	1	0	1
Solidarity	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	**n=85**	47	38	7

FINDINGS

Quantitative Research

The Characteristics of Selfie Journalism

From the total number of selfies examined in the parliamentary candidates' social media profiles, only 38,8% included a title or a hashtag, while 98,8% of them were reflecting a positive mode (style), in terms of depicting happy, informal moments/events/initiatives. As Table 2 shows, 98,8% of them included other people, while 51,8% of them included objects (signs, premises, etc.) that disclosed proof of space, time and event that the specific selfie was taken.

Concerning the identity of other people depicted in the politicians' selfies, Table 3 shows that 67,1% of them are family and friends and another 18,8% were voters or citizens. In matters of selfies' content, 62,4% of them depicted family or personal moments, while only 28,2% depicted social or political events.

The majority of the selfies examined received up to 100 'likes'/reactions (64,7%) and no reports/ retweets (88,2%), while only 34,1% of them received more than 101 'likes'/reactions and 1,2% of them were reposted/retweeted more than ten times, as Table 4 shows.

Table 2. Depiction of other people and objects

	Depiction of Other People	Depiction of Objects
Yes	98,8%	51,8%
No	1,2%	48,2%
Total	100%	100%

Table 3. Identity of others and content of the selfies

	Identity of Others	Selfie's Content
No other people	1,2%	-
Celebrities/ social & political events	12,9%	28,2%
Family & friends/personal & family moments	67,1%	62,4%
Voters, citizens /political activities	18,8%	9,4%
Total	100%	100%

Table 4. Number of 'likes' and reposts/retweets

	Numbers of 'Likes'	Number of Reports/Retweets
None	1,2%	88,2%
Up to 100 'likes'/ 10 reposts	64,7%	10,6%
Above 101 'likes'/11 reposts	34,1%	1,2%
Total	100%	100%

All these characteristics mentioned above were examined in relation to the politicians' age, electoral district, electoral order[3] and gender. As the Pearson chi square tests show in Table 5, the only significant dependence found was between the politicians' gender and the depiction of objects in the selfies, the politicians' electoral district and the content of the selfies', and finally, the politicians' electoral district and the number of 'likes'/reactions these selfies acquired.

Politicians and Selfie Journalism

A number of variables were examined concerning the politicians' characteristics when posting a selfie in the social media. Specifically, these variables describe the way(s) politicians manage their social media profile, as far as selfies' posts are concerned. We found that 89,4% of all selfies examined were posted before the elections, while 96,5% of them were posted via a mobile phone. The most popular social network remains Facebook, since 82,4% of all selfies were initially posted there, while 11,8% were initially posted on Instagram and 5,9% on Twitter. 71,8% of all politicians preserve more than one accounts in the same social medium while only 61,2% of them have active accounts in all three social media.

As the Pearson chi square tests have shown, there is statistical significant relation between the age of the politician and his/her active presence in the social media. Other important factors concerning the way they manage their social media profile, as far as selfies' posts are concerned, are the politician's electoral order and electoral district, since candidates in the capital district, that got elected with the higher number of votes, tended to post more selfies than those coming from smaller electoral district and either didn't get elected or got elected with lower number of votes. These findings suggest that Selfie Journalism - exercised within political campaigns - tends to follow traditional patterns of performativity regarding the use of social media (Usher, 2016). Finally, as Table 6 shows, the politician's gender is important only in matters of active presence in all social media, with female candidates tending to be more active than their male colleagues.

It has to be noted that there seems to be no statistical relation between politicians' characteristics and the number of selfies posted in the traditional (print) media. Towards this direction, a qualitative research was undertaken in the selfies' sample, in order to distinguish the specific characteristics these photographs need to have, in order to be published by the media.

Table 5. Crosstabs of all variables with age, electoral district, electoral order and gender

	Age	Electoral District	Electoral Order	Gender
Depiction of others	p=0.575 x^2=2.898, df=4	p=0.462 x^2=2.572, df=3	p=0.193 x^2=4.722, df=3	p=0.366 x^2=0.818, df=1
Depiction of objects	p=0.575 x^2=2.898, df=4	p=0.594 x^2=1.896, df=3	p=0.084 x^2=6.647, df=3	**p=0.004** x^2=8.841, df=1
Identity of others	p=0.705 x^2=12.549, df=16	p=0.007 x^2=27.095, df=12	p=0.156 x^2=16.835, df=12	p=0.160 x^2=6.578, df=4
Content	p=0.054 x^2=20.737, df=12	**p=0.000** x^2=52.445, df=9	p=0.006 x^2=23.178 df=9	p=0.161 x^2=5.145, df=3
Number of 'likes'	p=050 x^2=31.385, df=20	**p=0.000** x^2=120.128, df=15	p=0.060 x^2=24.318, df=15	p=0.148 x^2=8.159, df=5
Numbers of reposts	p=0.067 x^2=10.602, df=8	p=0.040 x^2=13.174, df=6	p=0.228 x^2=8.142, df=6	p=0.226 x^2=2.978, df=2

Table 6. Pearson x^2 tests concerning age, electoral district, electoral order and gender

	Age	Electoral District	Electoral Order	Gender
Initial social medium of post	p=0.087 x^2=13.805, df=8	**p=0.000** x^2=38.866, df=6	**p=0.001** x^2=24.004, df=6	p=0.020 x^2=7.792, df=2
Number of politicians' accounts in the same medium	**p=0.001** x^2=19.540, df=4	**p=0.000** x^2=49.230, df=3	**p=0.000** x^2=30.099, df=3	p=0.186 x^2=1.750, df=1
Active presence in all three social media	**p=0.000** x^2=79.644, df=8	**p=0.000** x^2=37.594, df=6	**p=0.001** x^2=22.868, df=6	**p=0.000** x^2=21.208, df=2
Publicization of selfies in the media	p=0.617 x^2=2.657, df=4	p=0.357 x^2=3.231, df=3	p=0.014 x^2=10.564, df=3	p=0.054 x^2=3.705, df=1
Device used for post	p=0.500 x^2=3.359, df=4	p=0.484 x^2=2.453, df=3	p=0.039 x^2=8.383, df=3	p=0.113 x^2=2.514, df=1

Qualitative Research: Media's Engagement in Selfie Journalism

From the total number of 85 selfies extracted out of the parliamentary candidates' profiles (following methods analysed previously in the Methodology Section), only 7 of them (9,4%) were publicised in the traditional media (both print and web). In this study, all selfies were examined within the context of their use (the social media page or/and the web/printed media page published) in terms of representational, interactive and compositional meaning, as earlier mentioned. Sites of display were also used in order to examine the interaction between the display and those who react to it ('followers'/'friends'), since these sites work to organize the social relationships between and among those using them (Jones, 2009).

The most noticeable one was a selfie taken by a candidate (named here Candidate A, for the purposes of this study) of the right-wing party DISI – who got elected first in his electoral district - inside the surgery room, immediately after his wife had given birth to their son. Both him and his wife are depicted happy, although slightly tired, in hospital robes; in the background, specific sites of display, such as medicine and surgery infrastructure, state clearly that the selfie was taken immediately after the birth of the baby. At the same time, Candidate A is conveniently located by his wife's side, as all responsible husbands are expected to stand by their wives, in the eyes of his political party conservative voters. Representing what could be described as, maybe, the most private moment in one's family life, the photograph was initially posted in Tweeter and shared via Facebook and Instagram, receiving hundreds of 'likes' and dozens of re-posts, while all the traditional media immediately published it. What was even more noticeable was the fact that the candidate had put the hashtag #Candidate'sName#DevelopmentPower#Bythecitizen#son'sBirth, directly connecting his electoral campaign to his son's birth. As Jerslev & Mortensen (2016) argue, the performativity of such image itself can create a sense of immediacy, by putting on public display its own coming into being, adhering in this way in Selfie Journalism practices.

Another noticeable example in Facebook, depicted a parliamentary candidate of the left wing party AKEL (named Candidate B, for the purposes of the study) with his daughter, in the occasion of her name day celebration, under the title "today is the name day celebration of my beloved daughter E. (name deleted for the purposes of this study) and I wish to everybody celebrating today happy name day, with health, prosperity for soul and critical thinking". Both of them are well prepared and dressed. Their faces lean towards each other while touching, revealing this way the family intimacy between father and daughter and the love for each other. Again, the selfie acquired dozens of likes and re-posts, while the title was directly linking the candidate's family life with his electoral campaign, wishing to voters critical thinking for the elections, which were taking place the next day. The performativity of such practice emphasizes on a specific paradox Selfie Journalism can create in political campaigns: although selfies (perceived as news/information) can narrow the gap between politicians and their followers, at the same time they can maintain the differences across this gap (Jerslev & Mortensen, 2016), in order to build fame through self-display (Usher, 2016).

Moreover, selfies with friends and 'celebrities' also found their way into the traditional media, such as the one posted by a parliamentary candidate of the left-wing party AKEL (named Candidate C, for the purposes of this study), under the title "We continue… with strength deriving from our history". This selfie depicted the candidate with her co-candidates in the same electoral district and a famous sport player of the team OMONOIA (translated as Concord in English), while the words 'strength' and 'history' directly connected the left political party's electoral campaign to young voters. The closeness among people depicted, directly refers to values of unity and concord, which happens to be the name of the team. The photograph was published mainly in sports media pages, targeting specific audiences, such as sports fans and younger citizens, also adhering - in this way - to Selfie Journalism practices.

Overall, selfies published in the media were mainly depicting either private moments of the candidates' lives or celebrities joining candidates in several events. The more private the moment depicted in the photograph, the higher was the interaction among users regarding this photograph. Furthermore, the more 'informal' the candidate was depicted in the selfie, the more intense were the reactions of users, thus, most likely was to be published by the traditional media.

On the other hand, selfies that received average or low number of reactions by social media users but were not published by the traditional media, tended to depict candidates in rather 'self-directed' portraits, intentionally orchestrated to promote his/her image. Following practices of Selfie Journalism in this case indicates that these kind of selfies, in their projection as casuals, seem to be hiding a more deliberatively performative disposition (Baishya, 2015). A characteristic example of such a case, was the photograph posted by a candidate, supported by the right wing governing party of DISI (named Candidate D, for the purposes of this study), who got elected second in her electoral district. In the selfie, the politician is depicted in a happy moment with a young girl by her side, probably either a voter/citizen or a member of her staff - in any case, posing in a (self)directed casual way to express slightly friendly affiliation, although not very intimate; both of them are smiling, while they are well dressed and prepared. Hints of premises in the background reveal that the selfie was taken while entering a specific building for a social event. The selfie presented no hashtag or title, while it received an average number of reactions. See Figure 1.

As Papacharissi (2010) argues, politicians' selfies, to a certain extent, constitute examples of civic 'narcissism': released from its pathological sense, narcissism in a social network is the ability to use political thoughts not always with the explicit intention of increasing 'civic engagement', but as a mode to 'express yourself '(see also, analysis in Farci & Orefice, 2015). Finally, all candidates tended to look directly into the camera, in an effort to send the message that they have transparent and straightforward relation with the citizens.

Figure 1. Candidates' selfie [caption added for the purposes of the study] (Adapted from Facebook, Instagram and Twitter candidates' social profiles)

a. *Candidate's A selfie inside the surgery room.*

d. *Candidate's D selfie*

b. *Candidate's B selfie with his daughter.*

c. *Candidate's C selfie.*

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The main device via which politicians administer their self-profile is the mobile phone and the prevailing social network remains Facebook, although Instagram is rapidly rising when it comes to selfies, since it is a social network created for this purpose. As the research has shown, the vast majority of selfies posted in the political candidates' social media profiles included other people, mainly people with personal/family ties to the candidate. This category of selfies depicted the candidates pleasantly engaging and having fun with friends and/or family members. Half of these photographs included objects or premises that offered to the public a hint of the candidate's home and/or private space, creating the illusion of sharing personal experiences, through Selfie Journalism practices.

Towards this direction, another category of selfies included people and objects/premises that represented significant personal moments for the candidate, i.e., the birth of his/her child, the celebration party of a family member, etc. This category of selfies were most likely to be published by the media, since they received the higher number of positives reactions and re-posts by the candidates 'followers'/'friends', creating in this way the illusion of participation in the candidate's very important personal experience. Additionally, all these show that politicians can use selfies in order to create the sense of 'the person beyond the role' (Goffman, 1974; see also, Farci & Orefice, 2015), and, as such, adhere to Selfie Journalism practices.

Another category of selfies included the depiction of the candidate with celebrity personalities, well known to the local society, such as athletes (celebrities). These selfies included depictions of objects/premises that revealed the selfie was taken either in an event related to those celebrities or that the candidate had met them in their own professional space (i.e., the offices of a sports team). Again, this seems to be another popular category of selfies that receive high number of positive reactions and are published in the traditional media, while the politician uses 'celebrification' (West & Orman 2003; Dakhlia 2010) or 'entertainmentization' (Karvonen 2009), in order to reach specific target groups. As such, Selfie Journalism practices seem to be emphasizing on phatic communicative functions performed by politicians framed with celebrities in the media in order to keep fans (potential voters, in this case) updated (Jerslev & Mortensen, 2016) and connect the politicians to the celebrity notion.

Finally, the study showed that self-directed selfies depicting candidates with citizens/voters, either with hints of premises/objects that reveal the place and time or not, are not that popular, neither to the candidate's followers nor to the traditional media. Most of the times these selfies seem deliberately orchestrated by the candidate in order to promote a specific self-portrait, by displaying a more casual and colloquial image (Savoulescou & Vitelar, 2012); however, this kind of selfies were most likely to receive negative or/and neutral reactions/comments by the audience, although again initiating a discussion about the candidate in the social media sphere. In this case, Selfie Journalism performativity strives for balance between authority and authenticity, using the political self as a spectacle to direct voters towards specific actions (Usher, 2016).

There are three important factors that seem to affect the way politicians administer their self-profile in the social networks. First, the politician's gender, since women tend to be more active in self-promotion than men. Second, the politician's electoral district seems to play a significant role, especially when it comes to the content of the selfies posted and the amount of reactions these selfies receive; it is deemed logical that the nearest to the capital of the country the district is, the most populated they are and, in this way, the higher the number of followers and, consequently, their reactions will be. On the other hand, the more distant from the capital of the country the district is, the most likely is for its citizens to deal more with their local issues/problems and least with national and/or metropolitan centred affairs.

It has to be taken under consideration, as this study showed, that there seems to be significant correlation between the candidate's electoral success and the number of selfies he/she posts[4]; additionally, there is significant correlation between the candidate's electoral success and the number of reactions, either positive or neutral/negative, these selfies acquire. This finding is supported by previous studies concerning social media metrics (number of comments/reactions), which show that users tend to get affected by these metrics in shaping an opinion (Antonopoulos, Giomelakis, Veglis, Gardikiotis & Dimoulas, 2016) about the person posting the message, either in the form of text or/and photo, video. In this perspective, selfies resonate wider socio-cultural and political practices and the way we approach them has political and ideological significance (Gomez-Cruz & Thornham, 2015); subsequently, Selfie Journalism can be highly politicised and adheres to the candidates' main target: to penetrate various groups of voters, interact with them and increase the level of political participation via infotainment tactics.

CONCLUSION

This study has shown that selfie photographs posted in a pre-election period by politicians themselves can act as a journalistic tool and, therefore, can lead to a new tendency in journalism; Selfie journalism, as a part of participatory and citizens (politicians - in this study, but in no case professional journalists) journalism, presents specific characteristics, the most noticeable ones being the depiction of others in the selfie, especially family and friends in personal moments. In this way, political selfies reproduce and promote infotainment trends in political campaigning, distracting citizens' attention from the political debate to 'lighter' issues. Furthermore, by engaging in such tactics, the politician 'allows' voters/citizens to take a snapshot of their private life, creating in this way the illusion of participation in it.

As this analysis has shown, the success of the candidate in the elections (electoral order) is directly connected to his/her presence in the social media and the way he/she administer their self-profile via them; for example, candidates with the higher number of votes were the ones that posted the more selfies and, especially, the more personal ones. Additionally, the more 'active' the candidate is in more social networks, the more popular seems to become and the most likely he/she is to penetrate large groups of voters, thus, by exercising Selfie Journalism practices.

As expected, selfies that received the higher number of reactions seem to be finding their way into the traditional media, since they can attract larger audience. In fact, the most private the selfie is, the most likely gets to be published by the traditional media, although these media tend to be rather selective in terms of publicising politicians' selfies; although dozens of politicians' selfies are posted in the social media, only a limited number of those can in fact become 'news' via the traditional media, namely the most personal ones and/or the ones depicting celebrities.

Although this study has shown the extend up to which, the ways politicians can engage in Selfie Journalism and the way traditional media comprehend with this phenomenon, there is one limitation: the reactions of the audience in such tactics. This research has shown a direct affiliation of Selfie Journalism tactics to electoral success, which could be perceived as the politicians' ultimate goal. However, further research could be based on the audience's reactions to Selfie Journalism exercised by political candidates, in order to examine the effects of this new tendency in journalism and the extend up to which it can be considered trustworthy and reliable. Towards this direction, an audience survey could offer significant data concerning the reactions of specific target groups in relation to their specific characteristics.

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ENDNOTES

[1] We do not imply that the ‘paparazzi practices’ are nowadays vanished; however, social networks seem to offer a way to the ‘celebrities’ to please their fans by ‘posting’ more casual/personal/intimate moments.

[2] Although statistics regarding the ethnicity of the population in Cyprus have been a bit sketchy since 1974, at that time it was estimated that 85% of the population was of Greek-Cypriot origin, 12% were Turkish-Cypriots, and the Armenian, Latin and other Catholic groups comprised the remaining 3% of the population (PRIO, 2010).

[3] We use the term ‘electoral order’ in our study to state the ranking position in which every politician was elected in his/her district (i.e., first, second, third, etc.).

[4] Undoubtedly, there are a number of other parameters and dimensions that play significant role in the electoral success for every politician (such as his/her position within the political party, the years of active political presence, his/her broader socio-political network, etc.); all these parameters are taken under consideration, although not included in the immediate goal of this study.

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Chapter 33
Journalistic Professionalism and User Motivations for Snapchat Video

Eun Jeong Lee
Texas State University, USA

Kelly Kaufhold
Texas State University, USA

ABSTRACT

This article applied uses and gratifications to investigate motivations for posting Snapchat videos to identify whether journalistic norms inform Snapchat behavior. This study revealed that information sharing, entertainment, recognition, and self-expression motives were related to Snapchat video use; professional journalistic practices were not. Findings suggest that Snapchat video is used primarily for entertainment, rather than journalism among users. Given the robust increase by legacy news outlets in Snapchat Discover, the findings are timely and relevant.

INTRODUCTION

Instant messaging (IM) apps are increasingly ubiquitous in today's world and are an increasingly salient media source for some 200 million users but also for legacy news outlets interested in reaching those users. Particularly, Snapchat has become an important feature of instant communication offering real-time exchange of images and videos between users. As of September 2016, Snapchat reached 200 million users, placing it among the most active social network sites such as Facebook (1.7 billion users) and WhatsApp (1 billion users) (Statista, 2016). In the previous year, a report by Pew Research Center announced that nearly half of smartphone owners aged between 18 and 29 use messaging apps such as WhatsApp, while 41% use apps that automatically delete sent messages such as Snapchat (Duggan, 2015). The youth orientation of Snapchat makes it an especially, and increasingly, desirable platform for legacy news outlets interested in reaching young consumers (Lichterman, 2015; Spangler, 2017).

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The generational disparity in traditional news consumption, which first appeared in the 1960s, continues apace, with the oldest Americans six times more likely to watch TV news, for example, as those under age 30 (Pew, 2018). Yet, the generational gap in online news consumption, including news via social media, is closing rapidly, with the Internet set to replace television as the dominant source for news (Bialik & Eva Matsa, 2017; Gottfried & Shearer, 2017; Lomas, 2017). More Americans of all ages are using social media but the youngest adults, 18 to 24, are, by far, the least likely to read newspapers or watch TV news and most likely to use Snapchat (Smith & Anderson, 2018). With this in mind, many legacy news outlets are increasing their presence in Snapchat Discover (Lichterman, 2015; Southern, 2016).

Media companies including The Wall Street Journal, The Verge, The Huffington Post, NPR, BuzzFeed, CNN, and Mashable are now turning to Snapchat as a form of promoting their work as well as engaging and reaching more and new audiences (Lichterman, 2015). In 2015, The Verge announced that the company receives more than 700 million snaps daily and gets approximately 10,000 views from the Snapchat users (Lichterman, 2015). Recently, Snapchat decided to bring two more media partners, Entertainment Weekly and Essence, to its Discover service to cover topics spanning entertainment, lifestyle and politics (Spangler, 2017). Today, video is not only the dominant type of media in terms of content generation and sharing, but also one of the fastest-growing components to the Internet (Molla, 2017). News media organizations are adopting non-professional journalism practices and are encouraging the audiences to share their work, such as videos, through social media to incorporate user-generated content in their news presentation and dissemination processes (Mitchelstein and Boczkowski, 2009).

In light of the growth of instant messaging apps and the media companies' attempts to incorporate their interactions with the Snapchat users, this study aims to provide theoretical explanations for why young adults use Snapchat, what type of interest predicts Snapchat video, and how their motivations are associated with journalistic professionalism. This study surveyed students at a large public university (N=120) in March of 2017 about their use of Snapchat. Average age of respondents was 21.9; 50.8% were white, 26.7% were Hispanic; three in four (75.8%) report using Snapchat daily. The present study was interested in identifying what benefits (gratifications) users identified for using Snapchat, and whether the increase in the presence of legacy new outlets on Snapchat influenced the journalistic mores of Snapchat video. This study applied uses and gratifications theory (Katz, Blumler & Gurevitch, 1974) to examine Snapchat users' use of videos and their association with journalistic professionalism.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Instant Video

The proliferation of Internet-connected, camera-equipped "smart" mobile devices is reshaping the way video content is generated, searched, consumed, and shared. It also influences how frequently people consume video content. Technological development of wireless networking and mobile devices has made data readily accessible to users anytime, anywhere. Mobile video has quickly become a mass consumer phenomenon. More and more people are using their mobile devices to create, watch, and share video content (Jarboe, 2016).

Previous scholars have identified three stages of Internet video, describing unique characteristics in each time dimension over the past two decades (Li, et al., 2013; Zhang, Wang, & Liu, 2014). The users of the first-generation video sharing services simply uploaded, searched, and watched video content directly on online video sharing websites such as YouTube (Zhang, Wang, & Liu, 2014). Next, the emergence of online social networking sites such as Twitter and Facebook changed the ways people share information efficiently and thus, dramatically changed people's video viewing and sharing patterns among those who have common interests. For instance, unlike traditional ways of discovering information online such as searching or browsing, those users watched web content by following shared links or recommended content posted by their friends or other users (Haridakis & Hanson, 2009; Ma et al., 2014). Finally, today, the ubiquity of mobile devices providing instant access to both cameras and the internet has inspired the emergence of a new generation of video sharing services or instant messaging apps, such as Snapchat, Facebook Live, and Instagram, allowing people to capture, view, and share short video clips, which can be short as one second, much more frequently and easily from their mobile devices (Piwek & Joinson, 2016; Yang & Wang, 2015).

These ever-changing social media platforms have made people's video clips shorter and more frequent. The mobile users can now simply scroll through multiple instant video clips and skip or watch the specific clips they choose. Among many mobile photo and video applications, Snapchat is quickly growing and becoming pervasive. Launched in 2011, Snapchat requires the users be connected to each other to see shared visual cues and lets the user to decide how long the receiver can view the received images or videos, between 1 and 10 seconds (Madrigal, 2013). While stories expire after 24 hours, Snaps sent to friends automatically vanish from the receiver's device after the content is viewed. The sender is notified when the receiver makes a screen capture of the image on their device (Metz, 2013). Recording 8 billion video views every day, Snapchat users can quickly capture a few seconds of what they are watching and instantly share the video with other Snapchat users. Unlike other instant messaging tools, Snapchat allows users to send videos, only visible for a maximum of 10 seconds, to other Snapchat users which will disappear after being viewed by the receiver (Metz, 2013). When a user signs in to one's account on Snapchat, they can simply hold the round button down at the bottom of the screen to record a video, see how much recording time they have left, release the camera button, name the video, and tap on the arrow icon at the bottom right of the screen to send it to other Snapchat users from their contact list. If the users do not want to send the video immediately, they can save it to the gallery by tapping on the down arrow button (Thiek, 2016).

Motivations for Media Use

News media use has long been shown to influence public awareness of issues made prominent by journalists (McCombs & Shaw, 1972; McCombs, 1977). This important role of establishing issue salience and, more recently, issue valence, suggests an important role for journalism in informed democracy; and while the social media agenda is more complex and diverse than that of the traditional media, its ability to drive issue salience among the public still holds (McCombs, Shaw & Weaver, 2014). Media scholarship has also found affective motivations for media use, including emotional investment in reality television and impacts on morality in video games (Lewis & Weaver, 2015; Weaver & Lewis, 2012).

Uses and gratifications is a theoretical framework explaining why individuals use media and how those psychological needs motivate them to engage in media usage behaviors (Katz et al., 1974). This theoretical framework assumes that the audience is goal-oriented and actively seeks and selects media content to satisfy needs and wants (Katz et al., 1974). With this in mind, uses and gratifications scholars have long argued that individuals' psychological needs shape their motives for media use (Rubin, 2009).

Prior studies using this theoretical framework have helped scholars find various motivations for media use in traditional media and new media, such as telephones, newspapers, radio, blogs, and social media (Kim et al., 2010; Lee & Ma, 2011; Liu, Liao, and Zeng, 2007; Mendelsohn, 1964; Papacharissi & Mendelson, 2011; Ross et al., 2009; Rubin, 1984; Rubin and Perse, 1987). Papacharissi and Rubin (2000), who examined motivations for using the internet, reported that entertainment, self-expression, professional advancement, information, passing time, and social interaction are key elements of motivations. The same motivations appeared among web blog users': entertainment, self-expression, professional advancement, passing time, and communication with family and friends (Jung, Youn, & McClung, 2007). Additionally, studies have found that goal-oriented individuals spent more time on social media, such as Facebook and Twitter, by choosing to frequently visit the site (Johnson and Yang, 2009; Stanley, 2015). For instance, Joinson (2008), who examined the uses of Facebook, found that entertainment-related content motivated Facebook users to spend more time on the site.

Uses and gratifications theory has already been applied to the study of media visuals. Scholars who examined motivations for sharing pictures and videos on social media suggested that visual sharing is a powerful form of communication driven more by social motives, rather than personal motives. For example, people share photographs on Facebook to build networks (Burke, Marlow, & Lent, 2009), tag photographs on social media to gain and share very large amounts of information (Nov & Ye, 2010), and share videos on YouTube for social interaction (Haridakis and Hanson, 2009).

While a number of studies examined motivations for sharing or tagging photographs and videos online, few uses and gratification studies have focused on people's motivations for sharing instant videos, particularly on Snapchat. Therefore, to fill the gap in knowledge about instant moving images and to further understand their role as social information and expression tools in the rapidly evolving communication environment, the following research questions are proposed:

RQ1: What are Snapchat users' motivations for sharing videos on Snapchat?
RQ2: To what degree do types of interest predict the frequency of Snapchat video sharing?

The phenomenon of the wider trend of user-generated content is creating new challenges and opportunities for the news media. More visual news editors in mainstream media show increasing interest in integrating user-generated content into the professional news making process (Andén-Papadopoulos & Pantti, 2013). Thus, it is important to understand professionalism as well as the traits of user-generated content for the traditional newsrooms to make use of and react to the increase in user-generated content.

Professional Journalism

Professionals are people with specialized knowledge, exclusive skills and judgment obtained through high levels of education and training, and autonomy to control their values and practices (Allison, 1986; Beam et al., 2009; Larson, 1977) and these crucial standards provide an essential service to society (Freidson, 1984). Even though journalism does not incorporate all of the characteristics of a profession (Beam, 1993), such as not holding clear boundaries to enter the occupation, journalism possesses some essential characteristics of a profession. For instance, professional journalists generally have specialized education and training and the autonomy to exercise professional news judgment, place emphasis on fact-checking, citing sources, public service, objectivity, transparency, immediacy, and ethics (Abbott, 1988; Beam, 1993). They also gather, control, process, and disseminate accurate and important information to a wider audience (Brooks et al., 2010). Journalists define themselves as professionals, maintain a professional reputation, and see themselves as skilled, autonomous, and ethical (Singer, 2003; Singer, 2011).

The purpose of journalism is to "provide citizens with accurate and reliable information they need to function in a free society" (Committee of Concerned Journalists). Traditionally, journalistic norms and values include news judgment, accuracy, and ethics (Brown, 2005; Ward, 2009). First, dating all the way back to the initial gatekeeping studies, news judgment is an ability to determine which are the most important or salient items among a wider selection of available, competing stories (Tuchman, 1972; White, 1950). Secondly, the accuracy of information perceived to be obtained through objective reporting practices is significant to professional journalism, as objectivity is closely associated with facts (Tuchman, 1972). Therefore, while non-professionals may lack the training in fact-checking and sourcing practices, professional journalists attempt to collect and disseminate accurate information. Finally, the Society of Professional Journalists (2014) created a code of ethics to distinguish professional journalists from non-professional journalists by specifically proclaiming that journalists should be honest, seek the truth and report it fairly, minimize harm, act independently, and be accountable in gathering, reporting and interpreting information.

Today, professional journalists' control over the journalistic practices, knowledge and values faces competition from digital forms and technologies which allow non-professionals to be content creators and publishers in digital journalism (Singer, 2011). Specifically, mobile technologies have made it extremely easy for non-professionals to witness, document and share their own eyewitness observations. Anyone with digital tools can have the potential to be journalists as they can perform some of the basic tasks of a professional, such as traditional journalistic functions of gathering and disseminating information, and serving the public, similarly to news people (Gillmor, 2009; Nah and Chung, 2012). Particularly, social media users may apply particular journalistic practices, knowledge or values by doing work that used to be under the command of professionals. Although the online users may lack professional training and experience, and thus process knowledge and information unsystematically, they actively participate in producing news content online, sharing links from various sources, connecting with each other through similar interests, spreading news stories around the world within minutes, and establishing their identities (Chung, 2008; Dunne et al., 2010; Goode, 2009).

In this newly emerging journalism environment, more and more news media organizations are rapidly adopting non-professional journalism practices, inviting the public to share user-generated content (e.g. photos and videos) to their news media and cooperating with social media users in their news presentation and dissemination processes (Mitchelstein and Boczkowski, 2009; Thurman, 2008). The ephemerality and simplicity of the Snapchat platform has made it a unique tool and information source for experimentation by news outlets in virtual public spheres (Moon, 2017). It allows users to share quick visual updates, connect with others multi-directionally, easily search content, tag images, "follow" or be "followed" by other users, and write comments (Eadicicco, 2017). Even though this non-professional exercise of journalistic skills may not seem to fully replace professional journalism in the way it has been practiced, it is creating blurred boundaries around reporting work as professional journalists incorporate and compete with amateur content creators.

Therefore, as more mainstream media widely publish user-generated content online and offline, it is crucial to understand what values are associated with the content creators' motivations for sharing instant videos and whether those motivations are associated with the traditional values and practices of professional journalism through instant messaging apps such as Snapchat. As a result, the study poses the following research question:

RQ3: To what extent are Snapchat users' motivations associated with the traditional practices of professional journalism?

METHOD

A total of 120 undergraduate students enrolled in communication classes in a large U.S. university were surveyed about their use of Snapchat. To answer the research questions, the data for this study were gathered from a web-based, self-administered survey of Snapchat users. The email containing a link to the online survey was sent to undergraduate students using Qualtrics. IRB approval was granted and the invitation made clear that participation in the study was voluntary. Undergraduate students were chosen because they are in the age cohort which represents, by far, the heaviest users of Snapchat. The survey ran from March 13, 2017 to March 28, 2017, resulting in 137 responses. Incomplete or partial survey responses were removed, resulting in an overall population of 120.

In order to measure young adults' motives for, and uses of, Snapchat, the type of interests they have, and how their motives are associated with journalistic professionalism, a questionnaire containing 60 items was developed for this study. Some of the items came from previous studies on motives for general Internet usage (Papacharissi, 2002; Papacharissi & Rubin, 2000). The majority of the items were created by the author to fit this study, heavily guided by Uses and Gratifications theory. Respondents' Snapchat uses and motivations for sharing videos on Snapchat were explored as independent variables, the traditional practices of professional journalism were explored as dependent variables, and demographic variables were controlled.

MEASURES

Independent Variables

Motivations

To answer RQ1, respondents were asked in a matrix question to examine their motives for sharing videos on Snapchat. Seventeen items were used to measure five motivations. Information sharing, which focuses on meeting informational needs with Snapchat, was measured with a scale of five items ($M = 2.93$, Cronbach's alpha = 0.75): I share videos on Snapchat to share news; I share videos on Snapchat to share useful information; I share videos on Snapchat to share personal information; I share videos on Snapchat to share entertaining information; I share videos on Snapchat to present information related to political issues. Entertainment, which is about using Snapchat for personal enjoyment, was measured with a scale of three items ($M = 1.94$, Cronbach's alpha = 0.70): I share videos on Snapchat because it is enjoyable; I share videos on Snapchat to pass time away when bored; I share videos on Snapchat to share information that might be entertaining to others. Recognition, which focuses on gaining attention through Snapchat, was measured with a scale of four items ($M = 2.88$, Cronbach's alpha = 0.80): I share videos on Snapchat to show off my work; I share videos on Snapchat to get feedback; I share videos on Snapchat to feel proud; I share videos on Snapchat to feel important. Sel- expression, which refers to using Snapchat to express oneself, was measured with a scale of three items (M = 2.53, Cronbach's alpha = 0.70): I share videos on Snapchat to tell other people about myself; I share videos on Snapchat to give my input; I share videos on Snapchat to express myself freely. Socialization, which refers to relationship development and maintenance with one's network on Snapchat, was measured with a scale of two items (M = 2.87, Cronbach's alpha = 0.61): I share videos on Snapchat to build and maintain friendships; I share videos on Snapchat to belong to a group. For each item, respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement on a five-point scale with reasons for sharing videos on Snapchat (1 = Strongly Agree, 5 = Strongly Disagree).

Snapchat Use

To answer RQ2, respondents were asked the following three questions to understand users' Snapchat activities and reasons behind them. The questions included: (a) How often do you use Snapchat; (b) How often do you share videos on Snapchat; (c) How important is Snapchat to you; and (d) How many seconds of video do you usually share on Snapchat? (1-10 seconds). Responses for the items (a) and (b) were rated on a 6-point scale, ranging from Never (1) to Daily (6). Responses for the item (c) were rated on a 7-point scale (1 = Not at all important and 7 = Extremely important).

Dependent Variable

The Types of Interest

To answer RQ2, respondents were asked what topics they usually share with Snapchat videos. The respondents were asked to check all that apply for responses for seven items: news, entertainment, community, feature, portraits/selfies, politics, and other.

Journalism Practices

To answer RQ3, which addressed the relationship between motives for sharing videos on Snapchat and traditional practices of professional journalism, the measure for professional journalism practices was constructed by incorporating the following five items identified in the literature: objectivity, fairness, accuracy, verification of facts, and ethics. The respondents were asked to rate the importance of these items using a seven-point scale (1 = Not at all important and 7 = Extremely important).

Control Variable

Demographic Variables

This study analyzed four demographic variables to understand respondents' identity and background information as Snapchat users: gender (1 = Female; 2 = Male), age (In years), ethnicity and number of years in college.

RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics

Table 1 displays the demographic information of all participants (N = 120). Demographic data show that more than half of the respondents are female (n = 69, 57.5%) and the mean age of the respondents was 21.9 years (SD = 3.13). 50.8% of participants (n = 61) are Caucasian, followed by Hispanic/Latino (n = 32, 26.7%). The distribution of frequencies of using Snapchat varies ranging from rarely to daily. The greatest number of participants responded that they use Snapchat daily (n = 91, 75.8%) while there were a few participants who reported using Snapchat once a week (n = 2, 1.7%); 45% of the participants rated the importance of Snapchat somewhat important while 5% rated somewhat unimportant. Two in five (39.2%) participants post videos on Snapchat 2 to 4 times weekly. The average length of videos shared was 7.5 seconds.

Motivations for Sharing Videos on Snapchat

The first research question investigated Snapchat users' motivations for sharing videos. Factor analysis of the motive statements yielded information sharing and entertainment factor ($\alpha = .85$) with three items: I share videos on Snapchat to share entertaining information; I share videos on Snapchat because it is enjoyable; I share videos on Snapchat to share information that might be entertaining to others.

Table 1. Demographics and Snapchat use (N = 120)

Categories	Variables	Scales	*n*	%
Demographics Snapchat use	Sex	Male Female	51 69	42.5 57.5
	Ethnicity	Caucasian Hispanic/Latino African-American Asian-American Other	61 32 22 3 2	50.8 26.7 18.3 2.5 1.7
	Year in school	Freshmen Sophomores Juniors Seniors Other	12 24 46 32 6	10.0 20.0 38.3 26.7 5.0
	Frequency of using Snapchat	Daily 2 to 4 times weekly Once a week Rarely	91 17 2 10	75.8 14.2 1.7 8.3
	Importance of Snapchat	Extremely important Somewhat important Neither important nor unimportant Somewhat unimportant Not at all important	15 54 33 6 12	12.5 45.0 27.5 5.0 10.0
	Frequency of posting videos on Snapchat	Daily 2 to 4 times weekly Once a week Rarely	20 47 21 32	16.7 39.2 17.5 26.7

Among the motivations, using Snapchat to enjoy (M = 4.19, SD = .99) and to share entertaining information (M = 4.03, SD = 1.03) had the highest mean scores, rendering them the most salient motives for sharing videos on Snapchat. Expressing myself freely (M = 3.97, SD = .93), passing time away when bored (M = 3.86, SD = 1.19), and sharing personal information (M = 3.77, SD = 1.08) were also fairly salient factors. Sharing news (M = 2.70, SD = 1.13) and presenting information related to political issues (M = 2.14, SD = 1.08) were the least salient motivations for sharing videos on Snapchat.

All motivation factors correlated moderately and most correlated at p = <.01. The highest correlations were between Sharing information that might be entertaining to others and Sharing entertaining information (r = .759), followed by, To feel important and To show off my work (r = .591), To express myself freely and Using Snapchat for enjoyment (r = .580), and To share news and useful information (r = .579).

Types of Interest and Frequency of Sharing Snapchat Videos

RQ2 examined the extent to which type of interest predicted an individual's frequency of sharing Snapchat videos. The factor analysis of the motive statements yielded an information sharing and entertainment factor (α = .88) with four items: How often do you share entertainment information with Snapchat videos? How often do you share videos on Snapchat because it is enjoyable? How often do you share videos on Snapchat to pass time away when bored? How often do you share videos on Snapchat because they might be entertaining to others? The factor analysis of the motive statements also yielded a recognition and self-expression factor (α = .77) with three items: How often do you share videos on Snapchat to feel proud? How often do you share videos on Snapchat to feel important? How often do you share videos on Snapchat to tell other people about yourself? The findings revealed that the dependent variable of How often users post videos on Snapchat; How often users are on Snapchat; and how important it was.

Moreover, the frequency of sharing Snapchat videos yielded positive, significant relationships with expressing oneself freely (r = .766), followed by to enjoy (r = .760), to share entertainment information (r = .733), to pass time (r = .729), and sharing personal information (r = .714). This finding demonstrated that people who are interested in expressing oneself freely shared more videos on Snapchat. A significant, low correlation was found between the frequency of sharing Snapchat videos and sharing news (r = .186). This result indicate that people do not share videos related to news on Snapchat.

Snapchat Video Motivations and the Traditional Practices of Professional Journalism

RQ3 examined to what extent are Snapchat users' motivations associated with the traditional practices of professional journalism. The factor analysis of the motive statements yielded an information sharing factor (α = .76) with three items: I share videos on Snapchat to share news; I share videos on Snapchat to share useful information; and I share videos on Snapchat to present information related to political issues. The factor analysis of the traditional practices of professional journalism yielded a professional journalism factor (α = .92) with five items: How often do you think about objectivity when you share videos on Snapchat? How often do you think about fairness when you share videos on Snapchat? How often do you think about accuracy of information when you share videos on Snapchat? How often do you think about verification of facts when you share videos on Snapchat? How often do you think about ethics when you share videos on Snapchat? These items – information sharing and professional journalism – were related. The less people share videos for sharing news, useful information, and information related to political issues, the less people had journalism practices. While the dependent variable of How often users use Snapchat had no significance, the variables of How important Snapchat is to users and How often users post videos on Snapchat had significant negative correlation with journalism practices. The more often users post videos on Snapchat, the less importance they attach to journalism practices; the more important Snapchat is to users, the less important are journalism practices.

DISCUSSION

Drawing from the uses and gratifications theory, this study investigated motives for sharing videos on Snapchat and the association between motivations and professional journalism practices on Snapchat. Consistent with previous research on uses and gratifications of social media (Jung, Youn, & McClung, 2007; Papacharissi and Rubin, 2000), the findings of this study indicated that motivations for information sharing, entertainment, recognition, and self-expression were associated with some aspects of Snapchat use. For instance, individuals who are daily Snapchat users who consider the platform somewhat important were found to share more videos on Snapchat. This is also consistent with previous studies, which indicated goal-oriented individuals are more likely to actively seek media and spend more time on social media, such as Facebook and Twitter, to fulfill their needs (Johnson and Yang, 2009; Joinson, 2008; Stanley, 2015). In this sense, motivations for sharing videos on Snapchat match motivations for sharing on other social media platforms.

On the other hand, the motivations for sharing videos on Snapchat were not associated with sharing news and presenting political issues-related information. Finding these conflicts with some prior research, which found that individuals who were more social in online platforms were also more likely to share news in social media platforms (Lee & Ma, 2011). This suggests that although active and goal-oriented individuals may utilize Snapchat as a social tool, they do not use the platform as an outlet for sharing news and political information. Snapchat is consistently making changes and updating to keep itself interesting and fresh to attract young users by expanding entertainment options, such as adding new and fun video filters (Carson, 2016). It seems logical such Snapchat tools would be a natural fit for those seeking entertainment.

Moreover, the type of interest significantly predicted an individual's frequency for sharing videos on Snapchat. Daily Snapchat users who like to share entertainment information, information about themselves, and express themselves, considered Snapchat important and are more likely to post videos on Snapchat. So, people who are active in seeking media also share more content in a ritualistic give-and-take. Also, the high Snapchat video-seeking motivation and its positive relationship with sharing various content demonstrates that users do consider the Snapchat platform an important means for feeling proud, expressing themselves, enjoying, and sharing information. Snapchat's use of geo-filters and the inherent culture of location-interacting selfies suggests that the platform itself supports social and entertainment gratifications over more substantial journalistic values. The nature of the platform, its link with the spontaneity of ubiquitous camera-enabled smartphones and the youth-oriented demographic of its users all likely contribute to the primacy of socializing and entertainment over other uses.

Lastly, and not surprisingly, the motivations of Snapchat users were not associated with the traditional practices of professional journalism. Crosstabs showed that daily Snapchat users who are the least engaged with sharing videos were also least likely to think about journalism practices and to share information. One possible explanation for this finding may be that even though social media allow individuals to create, share, and seek content, Snapchat videos are not an important means for sharing news, particularly politics, among active young users. Users may feel that they are connected to their networks through sharing videos, however, they may not view the characteristics of instant Snapchat video as a potential source for news and information sharing. This is perhaps because Snapchat only allows users to send short, self-destructing videos. Although it is debatable whether longer videos would ultimately encourage people to engage in and share news more, current users clearly view Snapchat as not a place for journalism.

This study provides several practical suggestions for media practitioners. As active Snapchat users are likely to share more videos, to seek and share information than less active users, Snapchat developers should consider incorporating news filters and features to encourage and motivate young people to participate in news sharing rather than entertainment. In doing so, Snapchat users may share more news and increase their interest and participation in news. Additionally, news media organizations should go beyond simply creating and building relationships with the young audience through Snapchat Discover and Stories but offer more diverse opportunities to incorporate the users' Snapchat videos and pictures in their news gathering process. A legitimate criticism of this approach would be the question over whether and why it seems necessary to make news more entertaining in order to increase its salience to youth but given current media economics, it's certainly an idea worthy of debate.

CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS, AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

While this study relies on a convenience sample from a single university, the findings may be more generalizable than expected, at first blush. The selected university is a highly diverse, large publish university with a student population more than 50% minority and, at a mean age of 21.9 and a bit more female, the sample is quite representative of a typical Snapchat user. Snapchat continues to be one of the fastest-growing and changing social networks among teens and young adults, with the most operational updates of any social media system over the last few years, introducing things like Snapchat Discover and Stories. As Snapchat is becoming more ubiquitous offering real-time exchanges of information and expanded opportunities for news editors to collect more information on diverse topics, it is crucial to understand why individuals use Snapchat, particularly today's most significant type of media: videos.

This study makes an important contribution to the research on motivations for using and sharing videos on social networking sites (SNSs). The findings suggest that sharing videos on Snapchat is guided by social motivations of information sharing, entertainment, recognition, and self-expression, but not the traditional practices of professional journalism and therefore, Snapchat is not for journalism. This is perhaps because, although Snapchat has been crafting stories from news events for years, the content has been largely entertainment-focused, such as news about hit shows (Carson, 2016). Because of the nature of Snapchat, users may be more drawn to fulfill their entertainment needs, rather than gratifications around news and politics.

Future research should approach video sharing on Snapchat via random sampling from a wider population. Further, the motivations of Snapchat video usage in this study were examined through only closed-ended survey questions. Therefore, the results may not yield an in-depth range of motivations for sharing videos on Snapchat. Follow-up studies might examine how individuals use Snapchat videos and what role they play in digital communication. Finally, as legacy media outlets continue to migrate into new media spaces like Snapchat, it will be interesting to see how those traditional entities negotiate the opportunities and limitations of the new social spaces in which they can operate – and perhaps where they must operate, if they hope to attract young users.

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Chapter 34
Mobile Journalism, Cellphilms, and the Use of the StoryMaker Multimedia Software at a Zimbabwean Media Training University

Nhamo Anthony Mhiripiri
Midlands State University, Zimbabwe

Oswelled Ureke
Midlands State University, Zimbabwe & University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

ABSTRACT

This chapter deals with the teaching of students in the use of a smartphone application for cellphone filming and mobile journalism at the Media and Society Studies Department Midlands State University (MSU) in Zimbabwe. The smartphone and Storymaker multimedia software application used for training was provided by a Zimbabwean non-governmental organisation – Her Zimbabwe – which is affiliated to the Netherlands-based media civil society group Free Press Unlimited. MSU is a state university. Its administrative culture is intricately linked to the ZANU PF led government of President Robert Mugabe. The training offered to media students is conducted with caution. Students make cellphone films (cellphilms) and practice mobile journalism (mojo) to produce media content. The chapter critiques students' media content, especially why it appears apolitical. Self-censorship arising from socialization and interpellation is implicated in the restrained nature of students' productions, and lecturers and the civil society organisation involved are also cited as oblique gatekeepers in the production chain.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter explores and critiques how the Department of Media and Society Studies at the Midlands State University (MSU) in Zimbabwe, with the assistance of some local and international partners, has started using mobile devices in the form of smartphones for cellphone filming (cellphilming) and mobile

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journalism (mojo) as part of their extra-curriculum, but with the future possibility of full incorporation into formal curriculum. The use and application of smartphones in media and journalism training curricula in Zimbabwean tertiary institutions is a fairly recent phenomenon. The inclusion of mobile devices in mainstream formal curricula offers new changes, challenges and opportunities. The smartphone and *Storymaker* multimedia software application used for training was provided by a Zimbabwean non-governmental organisation – Her Zimbabwe – which is affiliated to the Netherlands-based media civil society group Free Press Unlimited. MSU is a state university. Its administrative culture is intricately linked to the ZANU PF led government of President Robert Mugabe. Since its controversial land reform program starting around 1999 the country has been under sanctions and in constant diplomatic conflict with 'Western' countries such as the USA, European Union and Australia. The Zimbabwean state has traditionally been suspicious of civil society and donor agencies that have western links. The 'citizen journalism' training offered to media students at a state university is, therefore, conducted with caution. Students make cellphone film (cellphilms) and practice mobile journalism (mojo) producing media content. The chapter critiques students' media content, especially why it appears apolitical. Self-censorship arising from socialization and interpellation is implicated in the restrained nature of students' productions, and lecturers and the civil society organisation involved are also cited as oblique gatekeepers in the production chain. The latter approve or discourage openly subversive content'. On the surface students' cellphilm and mojo productions seem largely embedded in human interest stories and depoliticized, notwithstanding Zimbabwe's recent political history. Much as new media is expected to democratize communication and representation, it can also rearticulate and reproduce dominant hegemonies. Interestingly the same innocuous content has a way of critiquing both the local status quo and larger global political dynamics. The chapter observes that an epistemological vigilance is required if mojo and cellphilming are to be incorporated into the Zimbabwean media curriculum. The double bind of resisting an overbearing local regime and not playing into the hands of self-interested international capitalism cannot be ignored. The dilemma is striking but cannot be preoccupied with condemnation of ZANU PF or totally embracing the liberal human rights discourse. Much as social media is potentially a force for democracy and emancipation, it can also be used for destabilisation and the suspicions of the ZANU PF regime cannot be easily dismissed as merely self-interested given the outcomes in some countries after the Arab Spring.

The chapter's structure begins with a background of the partnerships that have led to the introduction of the devices into a department that struggles to acquire all forms of communication, media and journalism teaching and training ICT devices. Zimbabwean state universities are generally undercapitalized due to weak government investment and the flight of international donors after the controversies of the post-2000 national politics. After presenting the background of the partnerships and purpose of the research, the chapter explains the methodology, defines key concepts of cellphilming, mojo, and problematises student-producers as 'community' members involved in community media. Zimbabwean media professionals have often complained of heavy-handedness of the state machinery in media-state interactions, in short, citing the 'criminalization' of media profession, therefore it becomes pertinent to ascertain what chances students have of adopting and applying mobile devices in their training. The researchers as active trainers hence find it necessary to be reflexive so that they reveal the dynamics behind training students where government and university can be suspicious after government received a barrage of criticism about its policies and human rights records from local and international critics. After this broad contextual background with accompanying reviewing of literature, the MSU students' cellphilm and mojo productions are presented and critiqued. The organisational roles of the Zimbabwean university and its collaborative allies in training are scrutinized juxtaposed to the 'depoliticised' student cellphilm and mojo productions. The possibilities of inclusion of mobile communication devices in the Zimbabwean media institutional formal training and curriculum are discussed bearing in mind the complexities of political culture in Zimbabwe.

BACKGROUND

In 2015 the Midlands State University's (MSU) Department of Media and Society Studies (Zimbabwe), and a non-governmental media organisation Free Press Unlimited entered into collaborative work where the latter introduced to the faculty the Mobile Community Zimbabwe (MCZ) project. The MCZ project was coordinated by a local NGO, Her Zimbabwe on behalf of the Netherlands-based Free Press Unlimited. The project was meant to offer basic citizen journalism training to young Zimbabweans. It was an expansion of MCZ to university communities and possible inclusion into the curriculum. Previously, MCZ was providing smartphones with the Storymaker multimedia software to citizen journalists. Over a 12-week period, participants were required to produce 12 video, audio or picture stories on subjects of their 'choice' using provided smartphones[1]. The 2015 programme uniquely targeted both practicing journalists and tertiary institutions offering journalism training. MSU and the National University of Science and Technology were the two tertiary education institutions involved in the project.

The project began with the training of the mentors (staff members) together with other trainees from professional media houses. Subsequently, 15 students were purposively selected along the lines of performance-based expertise in one of video production, radio journalism or television journalism. MSU's Media department already offered specialised practical modules along those strands. The selected students underwent a week-long training programme which included: basics of video recording and editing, sound and still image-recording, lighting, digital security and theoretical aspects of story formats and citizen journalism. Her Zimbabwe donated 15 Motorola XT1068 devices to MSU for use in the project. Editing of recorded content was done on the Storymaker application pre-installed on these mobile devices.

This study is inspired by the rise of the use of mobile technology in multimedia content production. It seeks to examine the use of mobile devices within the Department of Media and Society Studies at MSU. The study explores how the Storymaker software has been used by Zimbabwean students to produce stories affecting their lives and the community at large. Mobile technology can be defined as the technology used for cellular communication (Mabweazara, 2010).

Free Press Unlimited alongside other organisations such as The Guardian Project, Open Technology Fund and Scal.io support the Storymaker mobile Application, designed by a U.S based company Small World News. The Storymaker open source software allows people to film, record, edit and share their (audio) visual stories using an android device[2]. The application allows for mobile journalism (Mojo) and cellphilming. The Storymaker software, just like the other editing software like iMovie for iPhone and Kinemaster Pro for Androids, is often used as preferred software for cellphilming and mobile reporting. Since Storymaker is a free open source application, there are not as many copyright restrictions, making it easily useable and accessible. Thus Storymaker is a preferred application for training citizen journalists, including university students, to tell stories and share them conveniently. Both producers and users can exchange materials freely using their mobile phones and other compatible transfer and receiving gadgets. Storymaker can democratize the communicative and entertainment public sphere, offering a cheaper alternative to the commercialized mainstream while enhancing the participation of marginalised and other citizen Journalists.

It is debatable to what extent students can freely produce materials when there is training and departmental editorial intervention which might also operate as a form and structure of censorship. Much as the training institution MSU and the participating lecturers might want to insist on their academic integrity and freedom, there are ways in which institutional structures and culture can instill forms of self-censorship amongst student content producers who are still under mentorship. This might have some traceable influences on the democratic participation of content producers. What Louis Althusser has termed ‘interpellation’ possibly best explains the ‘compliance’ of Zimbabwean lecturers and students to state and institutional norms. This was an important line of inquiry in this study.

Mobile technology using Storymaker gives ordinary citizens the chance to capture events and bring them to public attention. Mobile phones thus enable citizen journalists and sundry to produce content of considerably digital technical quality without lugging around heavy camera equipment or use exquisite and expensive editing software. For this reason, a mobile phone installed with the editing software is like a studio in one’s pocket. The polarisation in the Zimbabwean media sector has been noted in countless academic publications, including the recently published government-sanctioned IMPI Report (2014). The print media sector tends to be largely polarized in such a way that most privately owned media support the political opposition parties and personalities, while the publicly owned and state affiliated newspapers openly support the ruling ZANU PF and President Robert Mugabe. Human interest stories tend to be undermined as political interference pervades nearly all aspects of life. Although many Zimbabweans now access world news via subscriptions to DSTV and South African based channels, this leaves them with little knowledge of what is actually going on in their own country.

Since the researchers writing up this chapter are lecturers who participated in varying roles in the Free Press Unlimited MCZ project there was anticipation that the project would provide “high quality practical skills training in citizen journalism and digital literacy (and) empower… selected young people with digital storytelling techniques to effectively document and share community based stories that are often ignored or omitted by the mainstream media” (www.mobilecommunityzimbabwe.com). The training curriculum was expected to offer video composition and editing skills to media students who could in turn become peer educators or trainers of fellow media students.

The Free Press Unlimited has been running the MCZ for a while. An evaluative stakeholder meeting held in 2013 following the pilot phase suggested that the MCZ project could significantly benefit tertiary journalism training institutions that were plagued by a lack of training equipment and contemporary knowledge (www.mobilecommunityzim.com). As a result, in 2015 the MCZ project trained a further 80 individuals countrywide in mobile storytelling, out of whom 30 were students from universities, of which 15 are from the Midlands State University (MSU). The *Storymaker* application has given ordinary students an opportunity to narrate events taking place in their environment. It is of crucial importance to ascertain what type of stories the 15 MSU students decided to produce and disseminate during the period they participated in Mobile Community Zimbabwe collaborative pilot project.

Since most of Zimbabwe’s media publications and storyline are preoccupied with politics, it is worthwhile to investigate what type of content the students produced, and whether institutional intervention depoliticized them, or still if the students voluntarily decided to give alternative voices steeped in telling human interest and nearly apolitical audio-visual productions.

The purpose of the study is to:

- Explore how Zimbabwean Media Students have deployed the use of Mobile Technology for Multimedia Content Production.
- Analyse and critique the type of cellphilms made by MSU students during the duration of the 2015 pilot project and try to give an over-view of the cinematographic qualities of the projects
- Map out patterns of content production among these students while using Storymaker in a state affiliated university
- Verify the possibility and or limitations of constructing alternative public sphere and story content in an academic space with its associated institutional values, norms and ethos
- Predict whether the use of smartphones for extra-curricula studies would eventually find their way into the mainstream conventional curricular, noting the potential areas of problems and resistance to such development or progression.

It is worth noting that an MSU student, Ketty Nyoni won first prize in the MCZ 2015 competition for her documentary cellphilm *Life at Mbare's Matapi flat*, while another MSU student, Takudzwa Zuze had his video (*Street kids victims not villains*) nominated among the best five. The competition was open to professional journalists. It is such winning productions, amongst others produced by the students, that make our project worthwhile and suggestive of new potentials and talent that is not always obsessed with the political polemics and other potentially constrictive forces, notwithstanding the seemingly restrictive academic environments within which cellphilms are produced.

A NOTE ON METHODOLOGY

The study employs qualitative interpretive methodology. The researchers felt that the MSU case study was rich in data and was conveniently located for the purposes of data collection. MSU has an existing Media and Society Studies Department that already teaches both theoretical and practical modules, including film and video studies hence it was convenient to ascertain how students would adopt smartphone cellphilming and mobile journalism. Although the project involved many more sub-groups outside the university community, the MSU set-up was more academic and would present possibilities for inclusion or exclusion of smartphones into media training curriculum. Of the 15 students that participated in the project, eight were conveniently sampled for interviews to find out, among other things; the nature of stories they preferred; their opinions on the usability of the Storymaker application; their reasons for producing/not producing political stories, and their perceptions on the possibility of integrating mobile journalism into the department's curriculum. The researchers acknowledge that the study could have been richer had it incorporated other groups that took part in the programme. However, the logistical challenges posed by such methodology on both temporal and spatial grounds made it logical to delimit the study to MSU alone. The critical consideration of inclusion of mobile devices into media and journalism training curriculum indeed made this study much more university focused. Again, other universities such as the National University of Science and Technology whose students participated in the Her Zimbabwe project did so at a relatively minimal level. Their limited levels of engagement and participation in the project made it necessary to confine the study to MSU. It was also not easy to collect the films and mojo stories which students from the sister university made during the pilot project.

All the stories produced under the MCZ 2015 project were required to be at most two minutes and 30 seconds, primarily because Storymaker did not perform well when burdened with excessive data. For this study, two stories per student (from among the eight) were selected using quota sampling. The selection was purposive but meant to constitute a quota of two stories per student upon the realisation that some of the stories were aesthetically poor as a result of the Storymaker application's malfunctioning or students' attempt to meet the quantitative requirements of the project. The selected stories were archived from Youtube and Soundcloud or harvested directly from the students, whenever original copies were still available. Those stories were then subjected to critical discourse and semiotic analyses to trace the producer-society nexus and thus ascertain how the students interacted with social and political zones of power. The semiotic analysis allowed the researchers to gauge the aesthetic and 'cinematographic' characteristics of collected visual materials.

MAIN FOCUS OF THE STUDY

Cellphone Films, Cellphilming and Mobile Journalism

The practice of using cellphones to make 'films' has been studied in an African context before, mainly by Jonathan Dockney and Keyan Tomaselli (2010), Dockney, Tomaselli and Hart (2010) and Watson (2013) of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Dockney and Tomaselli and Watson use the concept and terminology *cellphilm* obviously derived from cellphones and their filming potential and capacity, albeit playing on the phonological closeness between 'phone' and 'film' and merging the two to create new reality and meaning. This study seeks to enhance the underdeveloped but emerging *cellphilming* and mobile journalism areas of study, by providing a Zimbabwean context with its own socio-cultural and political complexities and problems associated with democratization and citizen journalism. The study also seeks to complement the already existing work providing an insight on the viability of mobile phones in creating opportunity for citizen journalists.

Writing on the emergence of the *cellphilm* nomenclature, Dockney et al. (2010) note:

The complex diversity of definitions that exist with regards to cellphilms and films produced or consumed for small screens is discussed by Jan Simons (2009). He attributes the complexity of the definition to the shift of the moving image from its traditional consumption venues (the cinema and television) to other screens (such as the PC, cellphone and car TVs), which has imbued the moving image with new functions and meanings. No longer are restrictive idealist notions of 'entertainment' the sole cursor of whether a series of moving images constitutes 'film' or not (Fargier, 1980). Films (including cellphilms) entertain, document, advertise and can also provide a means of assistance in our daily lives. The criteria outlined by various cellphilm festivals around the world have also problematised what constitutes cellphilms: movies made with a cellphone, made for a cellphone, made by a cellphone for streaming (p. 83).

In their chapter published in *The Citizen in Communication*, the scholars immediately point out that their own study focused on "films that were *made with* a cellphone" (Dockney, et al., 2010, p. 83) (Emphasis as in the original). Simultaneous to the recognition of the cellphilm as a compact, independent and self-contained genre, cellphilm festivals, workshops and a critical scholarship have emerged (Dockney et al., 2010; LØtveit 2015; May & Hearn 2005). The new phenomenon of using smartphones for media and journalism is trendsetting and a logical response to the opportunities offered by new ICTs. In this chapter we opt for the use of cellphilms and mobile journalism as constructive concepts because the students' products were either realist-filmic or journalistic productions inspired through the filmmaking and journalism traditions and epistemologies. The use of smartphones for journalism can be referred to as mobile journalism. The acronymic term 'Mojo' has since been coined to represent this practice steeped in journalism traditions. The phenomenon of using mobile technology to record visual images has also given birth to the term 'phoneography' (Aubert & Nicey 2015; Bowker 2013), meaning photo- or videography executed using the mobile phone.

Conferences are now hosted to feature academic presentations and workshops on Mojo as shown at the Global Investigative Conference held at Lillehammer between October 8th and 11th, 2015 (LØtveit 2015). Writing a feature article on the conference and the Mojo workshop featured there, Line LØtveit (2015) said:

Ivo Burum, Australian journalist, author, and award-winning television producer, taught the workshop in which the participants learned basic camera filming, sound recording, and editing on smartphones. Despite all the cool gadgetry today, Burum stressed that the journalism still comes first. "It's about storytelling and not about technology," he told the class.

The smartphone is obviously a multipurpose gadget capable of bringing innovations to traditional media genres such as journalism and film production when properly used. The Mobile Community Zimbabwe (MCZ) cellphilming/Mojo initiative is not purely a novel project in Zimbabwe by any means. Indeed, the MCZ has targeted players outside university communities previously as attested in their own historical accounts published online (www.mobilecommunityzim.com). Another earlier project called *Voices in Africa* reportedly invited mobile citizen journalists in Kenya, South Africa, Mozambique, Ghana, Nigeria and Zimbabwe to produce citizen videos which spoke about the realities of their localities, class, gender, ethnicity and race, as well as to re-circulate videos they found relevant to their own lives (Dockney et al., 2010)[3]. The *Voices of Africa* project aspired to present an alternative public sphere co-existing with the mainstream media run by corporations and other powerful entities.

Mobile phones have proliferated in Africa and they arguably surpass the use of internet among both the rural and urban populations (International Telecommunications Union, 2002; Mutula, 2005). Since the first decade of the twenty-first century, new information and communications technologies (ICTs), especially internet compliant mobile phone technology, have increasingly become striking features of global development projects. Zimbabwe is not lagging behind in terms of use of mobile phones, smartphones included. The Information and Media Panel of Inquiry (IMPI) Report published by the Zimbabwe Government's Ministry of Information, Media and Broadcasting Services in 2014 notes that since 2009 there have been a number of notable entries into the Zimbabwean media and ICT space, and by August 2012 mobile phone companies had launched 3G services. The country registered just over 100 percent mobile phone penetration by December 2013 (IMPI, 2014). The report further captures how mobile phone technology was now a force to reckon with in the media sector, at times out-competing traditional media:

Mobile phone technology is driving media innovation in Zimbabwe, surpassing internet and transforming communication. The increased access to mobile technology has led to a rise in citizen journalism while putting pressure on conventional media to adapt, as a new platform exists where anybody can get information and news at any time on their mobile devices. Mobile users can create and receive content *on their own platform, a device they own, and it is now possible to transfer money or get critical information about agriculture, education and health issues in remote places. Mobile companies no longer see themselves as telephone companies but as media platforms and this is disrupting traditional media, particularly as Zimbabweans convert to the mobile web. Total mobile subscribers reached 13.9 million at the end of June 2014, raising the mobile penetration rate to 106.4 percent, as many individuals have more than one mobile phone. The survey reveals that the most preferred media platform by the public is still radio at 23 percent, followed by mobile phones (16 percent), and newspapers (13 percent) (IMPI, 2014, p. 17).*

Student-Producers as 'Community' Members

Much as students produced the audio-visuals, it is not accurate to locate their productions within the rather nebulous constituency of 'community media'. Community media can address knowledge-power imbalances and permits the voiceless and marginalized access to media (Tamminga, 1989; Teer-Tomaselli, 2002). Media scholarship contends that the ownership and control of community media must rest squarely, and unquestionably, with the community it claims to serve. The intricate dynamics of participation and ownership are seen as indicators of social change and development and they correlate with progressive social transformation within the community (Solenvicens & Plauher, 2007, p. 46). Community media scholar Wambui Wanyeki (2000) puts this succinctly:

The ownership and management patterns are diverse, even though they can be broadly defined as non-governmental and non-corporate. The levels of community participation are equally diverse. And the aims are quite specifically different… Ideally, community media are media produced, managed and owned by, for and about the community they serve (p. 30) (emphasis added).

The definitional requirements stated here exclude the type of production arrangements and content emanating from MSU students in the MSU-Free Press Unlimited scheme.

The MSU students who participated in the Mobile Community Zimbabwe project ranged from the ages of 20 to 24 years. They all came from diverse regional, ethnic and social class backgrounds. Seven of the participating students were male and eight were female. The current researchers tried to establish a correlation through infusing and considering some of these demographics' influences on the narratives made by the students. This means the audio-visual content could easily be influenced by where a student resided during the semester vacation, a domicile most probably indicative of the class, community and residential status of the student-producer. The problematique of 'community' immediately appears since these students produced these Mojo cellphilms partly when they were members of their original home communities, and also as members of the student community upon returning to college for the second semester starting in August 2015.

The involvement of youth in media production and consumption continues to be chronicled in scholarship (Buckingham, 2003). The interactive uses of youth and media over the decades show that youths are not mere consumers of media content. Several researches have since been conducted investigating the participation of youths in media production in Western nations (Carlsson, 1999). In these media saturated countries, young people are active and proficient media users, and this is largely attributed to interactive media technologies (Drotner, 2001). Youth have also been shown to participate in adult initiated and institutionally sanctioned projects. For example, in Sweden, Christian youths were tasked to produce digital media content that is compatible with Christian education and proselytising (Kaare, 2008). There is also a developing literature on how African youths are active consumers and producers of filmic media content (Dockney, et al 2010; Chiwade 2015; Watson 2013). The MSU-Free Press Unlimited initiative has such adult and institutional overall coordination, notwithstanding that the youth ultimately chose the stories and narratives to work on. The latter project is essentially secular although students were free to choose religious subject matter.

The identity of students as both community members and trainee practitioners remains liminal and slippery. On one level they constitute a community of young people residing in a specific area or experiencing campus culture and it is expected that they articulate their concerns, wishes and ambitions if they are provided with new ICTs. On another level, they aspire to be fully groomed practitioners, hence their areas of interest can transcend their immediate geographic and cultural or spatial concerns as they attempt to tell 'other' people's stories just as professional journalists and media practitioners would ordinarily do. In the latter case, students want to tell important stories that are not necessarily confined to their own quotidian experiences so they report and narrate on what the larger communities are concerned about.

The identity of students and the educational institutions to which they belong remains ambiguous and paradoxical. Students following curricular and extra-curricular activities related to media production pose even more such problems. They remain in that territory where researchers speculate their identities asking such questions such as "are they institutionalised/capitalised/professionalised or not?" Do they constitute the community of citizen journalism which most modern media and journalism literature and research acknowledge as outside the hegemonic organisational structures of state and markets? Is their relationship with civil society totally apolitical, innocent and disinterested in socio-political transformation that might subvert the powerful hegemonic forces of the day?

Indeed, any student community by the nature of its 'voluntary' composition is an integral part of civil society. They voluntarily come together in a community of scholarship in which they are trained and mentored to attain specific life objectives. While in that 'temporary' and 'temporal' community they also have their pressing needs and wants which can be articulated through media, especially given that media serve the functions of education, information and entertainment.

While the structure and definition of community media projects can appear elusive (Banda, 2003; Kupe, 2003), such media ought to serve the interests and articulate the developmental and entertainment ambitions of the specific community. Students were not producing media materials particularly attuned or focused on the student or varsity community; nor were they confined to the needs and concerns of the youth community. Their subject matter was not limited to their geographic/territorial, demographic or community of interest. In this regard, they were like any 'professional' media producers who pick up news and entertainment content as it emerges in order to satisfy a broader 'anonymous' mass media audience. In fact, their production culture was much more attuned to the 'community' of professional media practitioners with an amorphous eye and ear for news and entertainment for a nondescript audience. The ambiguities of trainees operating as 'professionals' are ever present in the MSU students' productions. These ambiguities come to the fore when the same students' productions are made to compete for 'journalistic' accolades against their employed or self-employed (freelancers) professional counterparts from, or producing for, recognised media organisations. Ordinarily professionals are not the peers of trainees, much as open competitions can permit these diverse groups to mutually cross assess their respective products. As stated before, one of the MSU student productions to be discussed here actually won first prize in an open Free Press Unlimited Mojo cellphilm video competition in which professional journalists also competed.

Nonetheless the students' cellphilms and audio-Mojo are suitably qualified as 'alternative media' (Atton, 2002; Bailey et al., 2008), although it is debateable whether they really serve as sites of radical subalternism (Spivak, 2001) mainly because of the problems already cited, one being institutional discretionary censorship. For purposes of this article, alternative media can be defined as "a wide gamut of media forms that challenge the status quo" (Pickard, 2007, p.12). The students' productions are 'alternative media' since they are not productions from the conventional 'fourth estate' which is considerably mainstreamed and capitalised as individual media entities; they are relatively 'deprofessionalised' as the producers are still going through training. *Deprofessionalisation* here does not entail *unprofessional*; it is more to do with the structural, bureaucratic, cultural and spatial conditions within which media production occurs.

The usual observation of ethical standards of professional practice remains pertinent. Again student practitioners aspire or are motivated to produce aesthetically pleasing and technically compact work; socially responsible content packaged through diligent craftsmanship would of course earn them recognition and psychic rewards. Being at the intersection of a public institution (state university) and a non-governmental organisation (Free Press Unlimited), and producing general news and entertainment documentaries derived from ordinary societal concerns makes the identity of MSU student producers complex and sophisticated. They indeed participate as a student community strategically utilising a decentralised public service institution while no commercial or profit motives drives them to produce media content in the immediate present. Their methods of news and entertainment production and dissemination are supposed to be participatory and grass roots-based, placing the amorphous 'community' at the centre. However, the contradictions and anomalies inherent in the social, 'institutional' and professional set up of students' media productions – given that they again are expected to be 'deprofessionalised', 'decapitalised', deinstitutionalised' (Atton, 2002, p. 25) and 'deterritorialised' (Gordon, 2012) – demand new definitions and theoretical terms.

These student productions can equally be conceptualised as alternative and 'rhizomic', borrowing from Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) metaphor. According to Dockney et al. (2010, p. 82), alternative media juxtapose rhizomic (non-linear and nomadic) and arbolic (tree-like, linear, hierarchical and sedentary) thinking. The three rhizomic characteristics of alternative media in this case are:

1. "The role they play at the crossroads of civil society;
2. Their elusiveness; and
3. Their interconnectedness with the market and state."

Through their rhizomic nature, they are fluid and trans-border, emerging and disappearing when necessary, and forging similar emergent and vanishing relations with civil society, the state and the market (Dockey et al. 2010, p. 82). The student productions are also a deterritorialised spatial reality in that when posted online they are accessible to a virtual community. It still remains to be investigated and ascertained what their reach and influence is. Since their main site of dissemination is the internet, the productions have an international reach depending on the technology available to them and the presence of 'deterritorialised' audience-users (Moyo, 2012). Their audiences are potentially spatial and virtual.

ISSUES, CONTROVERSIES, PROBLEMS

Criminalisation of Film Technology in Zimbabwe

According to the Freepress Unlimited website, the *Storymaker* application was developed by Free Press Unlimited to enable Citizen Journalists in conflict areas to work without putting their safety at risk. The project's goal was to advance democratic participation and active citizenship of marginalized communities through citizen journalism (www.freepressunlimited). Since the land reform program starting around 1999 Zimbabwe has suffered notable conflict and stress and there has been a lot of literature on supposed human rights violations (Mamdani, 2009; Mhiripiri, 2015; Sachikonye, 2011; Scarnecchia et al., 2009). It is important to study how a 'secretive' multimedia tool such as a smartphone can be applied to make films in a viciously contested country such as Zimbabwe. Several photojournalists and filmmakers have got into trouble with the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) for conducting their work in public places while filming or photographing purely legal content, although Zimbabwe's Protected Areas Act is clear in its prohibition of photographing or filming of specific areas (see Zivira, 2014a; Zivira, 2014b). Such journalists and filmmakers are not successfully prosecuted or convicted under Zimbabwean law, but the arrests and harassment are clear evidence of direct censorship. *NewsDay* photojournalist Tapiwa Zivira's personal account of his experience at the hands of Zimbabwe's police reveal how both journalists and ordinary citizens are not safe from police brutality and excesses. ZRP uses extra-judiciary methods where people are arbitrarily arrested and professional gadgets and private property such as camera, tablets and smartphones are vandalised in order to conceal any damning evidence against the rogue police. After Zivira's arrest, beatings and detention he was discharged without formal prosecution (Zivira, 2014b). It is ironic that MSU campus security demands that students move around with their academic department's letters of authorisation in order to film with digital cameras on campus. The use of smartphones in such a 'conservative' or 'authoritarian' state affiliated institution such as MSU, and the paradoxical paring of the 'state' university and a nongovernmental organisation with Western affiliations is an interesting nexus which could have traceable influences on the nature of content and audio-filmic productions from students involved in the pilot project.

Researcher-Mentor Reflexivity

As researchers working within a state university environment and equally wishing to be critical and reflexive, we acknowledge that there is definite institutional censorship on what students can produce and who they can collaborate with. At the most intense period of political polarisation in Zimbabwe it was both awkward and difficult to enter into collaborative ventures with civil society organisation that were viewed by the authorities as pro-regime change or against President Mugabe and his ruling ZANU PF. The censorship might not have been direct but faculty could gauge the atmosphere and mood when proposals were submitted to higher bureaucratic offices, starting with the chairpersons of departments, the deans of faculties' right up to the Vice Chancellor. The Vice Chancellors of State Universities are appointed by the chancellor who happens to be the state president of Zimbabwe. They have direct access to the state president. They ordinarily would not want to be seen to be espousing agendas that are detrimental to the interests of their appointer and benefactor. Researchers can testify that Zimbabwean media training state universities were unable to benefit from donations such as receiving broadcasting studio equipment or OB Vans sourced through the Voluntary Media Council of Zimbabwe or Media Institute of Southern Africa as these organisations were viewed as too critical of the government. It took a lot of caution and tact to convince authorities that the Free Press Unlimited – another media civil society organisation – had no ulterior motives in starting collaborative work with the Media and Society Studies Department at MSU. It was with relief that the university authorities granted authority for collaboration before the civil society organisation had moved to other willing and non-dilly-dallying community sectors. The Media and Society Studies Department had to ascertain that there were no 'political' motives in imparting training and skills to students, thereby preparing departmental lobbyists for similar concerns and queries from the university authorities. The Zimbabwean government is always wary of the potential of social media and have keenly followed developments in the Middle East and North Africa where social media, mass smses and the internet were instrumental in rallying together anti-establishment social movements. Those who have hinted at emulating such mass mobilizing social media strategies have been arrested and prosecuted to induce fear and self-censorship, much as the prosecutions did not result in criminal convictions in the Zimbabwean courts of law (see Mhiripiri & Mutsvairo, 2013; Mhiripiri & Mutsvairo, 2014). Free Press Unlimited made reassurances that there was to be no dabbling in national politics, and the department was also willing to work with the organisation since Free Press's contact person and project manager was a former student of the MSU media and department. The context within which the collaborative work is cemented has traceable influences on how students eventually produce material, given the at times fractious contemporary history of Zimbabwe.

Both lecturer and student were subject to what Louis Althusser (1971) calls 'interpellation'. The MSU staff and students are familiar with a historical culture in which 'subjects' (read faculty and students) are 'hailed' back into order through suspensions, expulsions and dismissals. They are also familiar with the Zimbabwean socio-political culture in which 'citizens' understand and are familiar with operations of the States Repressive Apparatuses. The lecturers and students hence are socialized to take heed of the coercive and ideological systems of restraining dissent. Zimbabwe's authorities in both government and quasi-governmental institutions such as the university have their ways of interpellation so that subordinates/subjects take heed as a survival and coping mechanism. At times it is feasible, expedient and intelligent not to resist hence subordinates who find themselves in certain contexts act as if socially constituted for as long as they achieve certain goals. The Zimbabwe government continuously reprimands "agents of imperialism" and universities are also rather discrete sites of the *rearticulation* of behaviour and norms acceptable to the regime.

The 'leadership' role of lecturers as mentors cannot be without subjective influences. It is indeed affective since lecturers and mentors can operate as gatekeepers and opinion-shapers, much as they may want their influence not to be openly intrusive or obtrusive in the cellphilm and mojo production processes. Observes Birgit Kaare (2008), in a digital production project involving Norwegian youths their adult leaders could have been influenced by the project designers "on the interpretations and expectations of the leaders, concerning both how the project should be understood and how it should be run" (p. 196). Norwegian youths made digital 'mini-films' on their personal *lifeworlds*, for a project called Digital Faith Stories as part of an experiment in informal religious education. University of KwaZulu-Natal students have used cellphilms for visual anthropology while studying cultural tourism contents (Watson, 2013). While Zimbabwean lecturers operate in a secular environment their cautionary approach to political matters should not be over-looked.

Zimbabwe Student Activism in Post 2000 Era

Student activism has tended to be much more localized and parochial as compared to when tertiary education was largely funded through government grants and government subsidies. In the 1980s and 90s student politics tended to address large national political issues, and one major demonstration in 1989 was against corruption. The students could even be involved in major debates such as whether Zimbabwe could transform into a constitutional one party state or not (Mutambara, 1999). The commercialization of university education has partly de-politicised tertiary education as parents, guardians and university authorities try to make sure curricula are not disrupted through demonstrations and other activities that paradoxically might be of larger socio-political significance. In the post 2000 period student activism has largely been concerned with student amenities, accommodation and food, and demonstrations were viciously stamped out, while courageous student leaders were systematically expelled. The Midlands State University derives pride from managing students' affairs in such a way that they hardly demonstrate against any social ills, including where their own welfare is concerned.

FINDINGS FROM STUDENTS' CELLPHILM AND MOJO PRODUCTIONS

Questioning Power and Socio-Economic Injustice Through Mojo Productions

It is evident from the MSU mobile journalism productions, that the mobile phone is increasingly occupying prominent spaces in human communication. The high quality of footage and audio recordings captured by the mobile phones make it impossible to distinguish between camera filmed and cellphilm production. The videos are exported in MPEG4 format and in the 16:9 aspect ratios, making them easily playable on most light emitting diode (LED) monitors. The audio, recorded via the HD audio recorder application, when exported out of Storymaker, outputs as Wave (wav) files and can be compressed further into MPEG 3 format for faster sharing. These friendly formats make the productions universally playable and easy to upload via the internet or Whatsapp without expending too many data bundles.

The common theme in most of the stories produced by the students is that of survival. This narrative is pitched through varying language and cinematographic technique but remains evident at the core of most stories. The student productions largely mirror contemporary Zimbabwe society, in which the average citizen struggles to make a living. The most prominent characteristic of the economic difficulties in Zimbabwe is the issue of unemployment, with 85 percent of the country's "employed" population being in the informal sector (Saungweme, Matsvai & Sakuhuni, 2014). Most of the stories analysed in this paper are therefore on the "plight" or "survival" of vendors who constitute an informal sector that contributes over 20 percent of Zimbabwe's Gross Domestic Product (Rudzuna, 2014).

Aesthetically, the rich quality of footage in the video stories makes one appreciate the thin line between cellphilming and high definition videography. The cinematography is clearly influenced by Small World News'[4] *Shot composition in video storytelling*[5] training manual which stresses the use of the rule of thirds, the diagonal rule, minimalism and correct perspective, among other things. The video stories have a standard opening of wide/establishing shots, progressing to medium and close-up shots indicating a strict adherence to taught basics. MCZ trainers emphasized that these standards would be employed in judging stories entered for competition in the MCZ awards that occurred at the end of the project. For human subjects, it is significant that cellphilm-makers get up-close and personal with their subjects because the zoom function of mobile phones pixelates and destabilises images. This demands that Mojo practitioners be bold enough to close the ideological and physical space between themselves and the subjects of their stories. This closure of distance is one whose link with the metaphorical zoom into crisis ridden trouble spots cannot be ignored. As much as the optical function of zooming is not encouraged in Storymaker, citizen journalists have to be close to, and among their communities for their realities to be vivid enough.

The stories are subtly critical of authority, metaphorically "zooming" into the activities of local and national leaders and exposing their abrogation of key responsibilities. The key issues tackled include poor service provision by local authorities, lack of employment among the youths and harsh economic conditions affecting the nation. Ketty Nyoni's award-winning story *Life at Mbare's Matapi flats* is about the plight of residents of Mbare/ Matapi flats which were built in the colonial era to temporarily accommodate black male workers. Nyoni uses voice-over narration and interviews to drive her story. Interviewees testify that they are living under crowded conditions, in some cases in-laws sharing a single room. Nyoni also explores the health hazards that come as a result of the crowding in these flats. Her question is *where are the responsible authorities, and what are they doing to better the lives of these citizens?* In a way, Nyoni suggests that not much has changed in the country since the colonial era. The word "authorities" is meant to disguise the subject of her criticism. It could be anything from the Harare city council to the government ministry responsible for managing local authorities.

Richmond Charumbira's video story *Banning of second hand clothing condemned* contains *vox pops* with vendors on the then pending proposal by the government to ban the sale of second hand clothing in the country. The vendors in the story voice their concern on this move in light of the already high levels of unemployment and the unaffordable prices of new clothes in shops. They say vending is their source of livelihood, with one vendor suggesting that the government could devise ways of collecting tax from the hawkers instead of banning them outright.

Another story on vending is one produced by Takudzwa Zuze, titled *Vendors riot in Harare*, which is a current affairs take on the then topical subject of "illegal" vendors' removal from the streets. In the video, a riotous, placard-wielding mob sings and marches through the streets of Harare. Zuze claims that the vendors refused to be interviewed, but pitches the presence of these vendors on the streets as a "problem" caused by high levels of unemployment. The story has a dialectical tone of concern that the vendors, who *swarm every corner and street [….] are able to feed their family and earn a living and take their kids to school with what they earn from vending,* ***but are however*** [emphasis added] *causing congestion and dirt in the cities across Zimbabwe.* He ends the story with an ominous question: *is it justifiable to remove these vendors from the streets?* His question is obviously directed to the government, which through the Ministry of Finance announced the motion to bar vendors from the streets. Like Nyoni above, Zuze avoids placing the blame directly on government, preferring to sign off with that ominous rhetoric question. He says he did not want to use provocative language for *fear of unknown consequences* (Zuze 2015 interview) although he felt that from the way he framed the story, *those who are meant to get the message* would have gotten it. The above cases bring into question the abilities of mobile journalism to democratize communication. The problematique is made more visible when such journalism is produced under the auspices of state affiliated institutions. The students are conscious of their belonging to this national institution first, and then the implications of antagonizing it.

Daniel Chigunwe, who filed most of his stories from the commercial/farming area of Mazowe, seems to celebrate authority as evidenced by his stories on rural electrification and heroes' day celebrations. In the audio story *Heroes' day remembered*, Chigunwe together with his interviewees, who include a

ZANU (PF) youth leader, celebrate the day set aside to *remember the gallant sons and daughters who fought and died in the liberation struggle* (Chigunwe 2015). The interviewee and the student echo the now familiar rhetoric built around the liberation struggle. This production is part of a continuum of narratives that Terrence Ranger (2004, p. 215) calls 'patriotic' journalism "intended to proclaim the continuity of the Zimbabwean revolutionary tradition." Although sharply contrasting, Chigunwe, Nyoni and Zuze's respective stories, disclose students' identification with an imagined nation they are entitled to question or celebrate. Chigunwe is a self-confessed ZANU (PF) supporter who has benefitted from the party's land reform programme which appropriated land from white commercial farmers and redistributed it to mostly black Zimbabweans who were historically disenfranchised during the colonial era. Chigunwe says his choice of stories was informed by an attempt to "avoid negativity and concentrate on positive things." However, he says given the political dominance of ZANU (PF) in the area, it was dangerous to dabble in political stories since "there is no legal protection in the absence of accreditation" (Chigunwe 2015 interview).

Advocacy Journalism and Subaltern Voices

Students' stories reveal both empathy and sympathy for society's poor and marginalised. In some cases, the students appoint themselves spokespersons for subaltern groups such as street kids and commercial sex workers. Their sympathy may stem from the fact that they identify with these subalterns, either as members of their immediate home-town communities or as compatriots in the gender struggle (in the case of females). We use the term advocacy journalism to describe the activist-type of language and images deployed by the students to stir sympathy for particular subaltern groups. Richmond Charumbira's video story, *Street kids of Gweru* portrays his worry about increasing numbers of street kids in Gweru. He conducts interviews with several children living on the streets of Gweru. Some of the children are orphaned and earn a living by washing cars or scrounging in rubbish bins for food.

In a similar story, *Street kids victims not villains,* Zuze positions himself as a champion of the "plight" of street kids. He interviews several "street kids" of Bulawayo, focusing on their biographies and the reasons why they have ended up as street children. The story was nominated among the best five videos for the entire MCZ 2015 project. Through a voice over narration introducing the story, Zuze worries that *often at times, people are too judgemental before they get inside on how these kids got to land on the streets*. One of the "kids" complains that some unidentified people assault them and rob them of their little money and food. Another interviewee says *We do everything it takes to survive. We lack a lot but we try to end each day with a meal. It feels like we are now going mental* [going mad]. Zuze ends on an advocacy note that the kids are "victims of circumstances" who need society's sympathy.

While the male students worry about the stereotyping and ill-treatment of street kids, females are concerned over the same about commercial sex workers. They cast prostitution as an act of survival and also present the prostitutes as victims of circumstances. Sheron Mawoni's audio story *Survival through prostitution* profiles the "ladies of the night" or "bats" in Mutare. Some of the self-confessed prostitutes say that they were "victims of circumstances" who were either orphaned or sexually abused earlier in life. One of the "prostitutes" says she is *better off than graduates whose employment prospects are as vendors.* Some male interviewees also offer their opinions on the subject, with one saying prostitutes offer sexual convenience compared to formal relationships as *girlfriends are more expensive than prostitutes.* However, others condemn the practice and warn about the dangers of sexually transmitted infections. Mawoni asks the questions:

Are prostitutes justified for what they do? Is it now better to be a prostitute because people do not have jobs and are getting retrenched every day? Is prostitution the solution? What happened to morals? What happened to contracting HIV and Aids, and sexually transmitted diseases? Are people not afraid of such?

What Mawoni asks are the obvious moral questions. There is identification at a gender and possible class level of the female student philmmaker with the lumpen-proletariat prostitutes. Men representing patriarchy are implicated in the historical unequal transaction between service provider and client. From the voice-over's perspective men initiate the exchange for self-gratification. There is apparent revulsion or disdain of male power and female-prostitute vulnerability because of "circumstances". The student's identification with class and gender hegemonies does not necessarily translate to an effort to transform the structure of the questioned social relations. The relations are forced by circumstances, hence not mutual or wholesome, but inherently pathetic and unjust. While *naming* and critiquing similar skewed but non-transforming gender relations in other contexts Judith Butler (1995) poignantly notes,

These hegemonies operate, as Gramsci insisted, through rearticulation, but here is where the accumulated force of a historically entrenched and entrenching rearticulation overwhelms the more fragile effort to build an alternative cultural configuration from or against that more powerful regime. Importantly, however, that prior hegemony also works through as its "resistance" so that the relation between the marginalized community and the dominative is not, strictly speaking, oppositional. The citing of the dominant norm does not, in this instance, displace that norm; rather, it becomes the means by which that dominant norm is most painfully reiterated as the very desire and the performance of those it subjects (p. 175).

Prudence Ntabeni's *Community sex workers,* is another story about prostitutes. It debunks societal stereotypes about commercial sex workers. In the video, Bulawayo-based sex workers take turns to talk about their activities, including the prices they charge for their "services", with one insisting that they do not prostitute for fun, but due to circumstances. Ntabeni closes her story with a piece-to-"camera" report parading the sex workers in the background, arguing: *it should be noted that these young ladies don't force anyone to sleep with them, neither do they take advantage of anyone. Rather, they sleep with men that are willing to pay for their services; men that actually approach them first.* Ntabeni's story is clearly sympathetic of the prostitutes on humanitarian grounds. It is clearly a feminist narrative that casts prostitution as a voluntary act between men and women. The phrase *men that actually approach them first* in fact shifts the blame of prostitution from women to men as initiators of this practice. Until a 2015 court ruling, prostitution was deemed illegal in Zimbabwe.

Youths and Unemployment

The subject of livelihoods and unemployment runs through most of the student produced stories. In this way, the stories can be regarded as mirroring the reality obtaining in the country. The lack of employment opportunities has seen citizens devising many unorthodox ways to eke out a living. Leila Chipswa's video story titled *Man selling mice for a living* is about people that "make ends meet" by digging urban farmers' fields for a fee. One enterprising individual, Mr Chimuka Tembo digs in the fields for mice that he sells at R1 or R2 each[6]. Cornfield mice – *not rats* - are a delicacy in most parts of Zimbabwe. In the story, Mr Tembo testifies that he is looking after his family, which includes his late brother's children, through selling mice at the local beerhall. He says he can make between US$3 and $15 a day. Chipswa's story is not opinionated but through the interviewee's testimonial, manages to give a riveting account of how desperate the story of "livelihoods" and "survival" has become in Zimbabwe.

Rutendo Muqaga's audio story *Extensive drug abuse among Norton youths* bemoans the rise of alcohol and drug abuse among the youths of Norton. The interviewees say they are taking illicit drugs and alcohol due to "stress" caused by unemployment. One of the interviewees says she graduated from college in 2012 but has not yet secured a job, so she takes *Bronco* (bronclear cough syrup) and listens to Zimbabwe dancehall (Zimdancehall) music just to relieve stress. Zimdancehall is a popular fusion of Jamaican ragga with local Zimbabwean lyrics and flavour. The music genre's origins are traced in Zimbabwe's poor working class residential areas. The music is part of popular youth subculture. Its lyrics and performance is presumed to be subaltern and anti-hegemonic, but research shows ZANU PF politicians quickly appropriate Zimbabwe's leading artistic exponents (Ndau, 2015).

Another interviewee says he finds the prices of 'bronco' (US$3) and marijuana (R5) quite affordable. Bronco and marijuana are rated low class leisure intoxicants in Zimbabwe. Muqaga ends on a pessimistic note saying, "*Zimbabwe is said to have the highest youth unemployment rate in Southern Africa. Companies continue to close down, sending thousands onto the streets."* The last interview and voice link are punctuated by a Zimdancehall soundtrack that openly advocates for the taking of marijuana. Far from advocating for drug use, Muqaga's story is a colourful imagery of the plight of Zimbabwe's youths caused by high levels of unemployment. The escapist properties of drugs, in that situation prove too enticing to ignore.

In a similar story *Norton artists*, Muqaga profiles the growth of music in the country, as a result of unemployment. She argues that youths are using music and vending as windows to escape from the problem of unemployment. At the same time, she argues that *music is seen as a mirror of society. It also gives a voice to those who are not recognised.* One of the artists says the common theme in their music is *to encourage people in society to live a better life, to encourage them to uplift their talents.* The artists however, bemoan piracy and the lack of promoters to support music in Norton. One of the interviewees calls on the government to license community radio stations to give upcoming artists more opportunities of airplay. The Broadcasting Services Act of Zimbabwe allows the existence of a three tier broadcasting system, but the regulatory authority is reluctant to issue out community broadcasting licenses (Mhiripiri, 2011). In view of these realities, these stories are good examples of youths airing out their concerns. One cannot miss the point that, as a prospective graduate, Muqaga is worried about the current lack of employment as it will directly affect her in the near future. The student producer hence takes the opportunity to obliquely lobby for the licensing of community broadcasting stations to enhance her employment opportunities in future.

In the audio story *VID corruption,* Mawoni bemoans rampant corruption at the Vehicle Inspectorate Department (VID). She talks to interviewees who claim that they have had to pay bribes of between $150 and $250 to get a driver's license. One of the interviewees needed to secure a job that required a license, so she had to pay $150. A VID official interviewed in the story rejects the allegations, saying *bribery is a serious offence.*

In one of her stories, *Parents, youths on unemployment*, Ntabeni conducts vox-pops interviews with several Bulawayo-based people on the issue of unemployment and how it is affecting the youths. Her advocacy-type report urges viewers to *let's not be quick to judge these young people*. The youths and parents interviewed in the story complain about the lack of employment opportunities in the country. As a result, the youths are regarded as "prime suspects" in any misdemeanours that occur in their communities. Ntabeni says the youths that mill around street corners, do so as a way of *escaping realities and* *dilemmas at home and to relieve unemployment stress.* The word "survival" features again in Ntabeni's story, in defence of the youths, indicating that the story of survival is a common one in Zimbabwe.

The pitched alternative media stories try to enunciate certain realities known to the student-producers. However, the stories are never reflexive in such a way as to reveal the student-producer's own class or gender identity or why they identify with specific subject-matter.

Gatekeeping, Self-Censorship, and Institutional Influences on Productions

The MCZ training was decidedly anchored on a critical ideology of questioning the centres of power and impressing the narrative of "survival". These innuendos stand out clearly in all the stories analysed in this study. The MCZ trainers emphasised that trainees speak back to power by exploring "issue-based" stories exposing maladministration, highlighting the socio-political and economic plight of ordinary citizens and identifying and profiling community "heroes/heroines". The curriculum was designed following a Free Press Unlimited template and notes embedded within the Storymaker application. Participants were discouraged from pursuing "breaking news" or news conference stories that were common in the main-stream media. In that regard, the MCZ project positioned itself as an 'alternative media' project "set up explicitly to fill gaps left by the mass media" (Atton, 2002, p. 82). In Atton's analysis, such projects are part of a Western "New Protest" 'do-it-yourself politics' concept of movements that "come together for specific actions (Atton, 2002, p. 81). This is the reason why the Zimbabwean government has traditionally regarded civic bodies and the privately-owned media as extensions of Western-sponsored left-wing agents pursuing a regime change agenda (Mhiripiri & Mutsvairo 2013).

Although the MCZ project coordinators did not oblige participants to pursue any particular story, a newsroom-type gatekeeping structure was enforced to oversee the pitching of story ideas and (online) submission of completed stories before they could be posted on YouTube for public consumption. In the case of the participating universities, the first line of discretion on story choices was vested in the resident mentors, who were the students' lecturers. It was felt that there was need for a separate gatekeeping process sensitive to the positioning of the universities as quasi-state institutions. In MSU's case, due diligence was exercised to ensure that students did not publish stories that conflicted with the respective universities' own corporate and political interests. The dialectical tensions manifesting in this political economy cannot be missed. On one hand, the MCZ project could be seen as an example of "free" and "alternative" media, in-as-much as it did not pander to the "whims and market demands which constrain traditional media" (Hindman, 2008, p. 2). On the other hand, the gatekeeping imposed on the storytelling processes are reminiscent of the formal structures of professional media- complete with line editors [resident mentors] and editors [MCZ staff].

As a result of the above, political critique in the student productions was hardly direct, indicating that they regarded politics as a sensitive subject which had to be covered cautiously. The openly political story supports the status quo. This self-censorship was not without foundation since, during training, students had listened to harrowing accounts told by Her Zimbabwe trainers of some citizen journalists' encounters with law enforcement agencies. It is against this background that lengthy sections of the training were dedicated to digital security, including techniques of concealing audio-visuals within the mobile phones using sophisticated software. Prudence Ntabeni aptly captured the subtle nature of the 'political' stories covered by the students. She said: *I can simply say that all my stories had an element of politics in them because any discussion on corruption, unemployment connects to politics, so I was* *looking at how the people in the community are being affected by the political issues in the country* (Ntabeni 2015 interview). Rutendo Muqaga was more pragmatic on the lack of direct political critique in her stories, arguing that *there is no story worth dying for so for me political stories are more controversial* (Muqaga 2015 interview).

The theory of social control in the newsroom (Breed, 1955 & 1995) which has previously been employed in studying policy constraints in controlling journalists (Ureke, 2016) can provide useful analytical lenses here. In this regard students did not merely use their discretion in deciding the subjects of their cellphilm productions. They were conscious of the unwritten editorial policy that guided the stories they could and could not do as evidenced by one of the students' observation that: *Mobile Community Zimbabwe was not interested in political stories but community stories* (Masiyiwa 2015 interview). Another student, Sheron Mawoni said she did not dwell on political stories because *politics is a dirty game* (Mawoni 2015 interview).

On a weekly basis, for 12 consecutive weeks, students would pitch stories to the resident mentor and a Her Zimbabwe-appointed supervisor. These mentors would offer feedback to the students, sensitising them on key aspects to include in the stories. Most stories were accepted on condition that they improved on certain aspects, but some stories were rejected on feasibility grounds. This set-up represented a gatekeeping structure typical of newsrooms. At the same time, it made students critically reflect on their own stories before pitching them. As a result, some stories of a political nature could have died as ideas as students self-censored.

To some extent the organisational set up of student productions simulates conventional newsroom cultures; there are some similarities in the sociology of news production which exist in traditional newsrooms (Tuchman, 1978). A remarkable difference is that students are cultivating 'new' informants as 'new' practitioners. They also did not rely on legitimised opinion leaders or 'authorities' to pass commentary. In fact, the students were the embedded commentators assuming voices of authority mainly through the voice-over. The best of student productions using smartphones such as Ketty Nyoni's prize-winning story and Takudzwa Zuze's story that received special commendation from Her Zimbabwe managed to produce appealing stories that satisfied both journalism standards and film and video production cinematography. The stories displayed Midlands State University students' adeptness at using smartphone technologies in new contexts, skills which can be attributed to students' prior training in general film and video production using relatively bigger cameras, notwithstanding Her Zimbabwe's inductive training.

SOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Prospects of Mobile Journalism Becoming a Formal Component of the Curriculum at MSU

At the time of writing, the teaching and training of the use of smartphones in both radio and film production remains part of the extra-curriculum activities. The selected students who participated in the pilot project did not receive any recognised credits and were not formally examined for work accomplished. A fair possibility however remains that cellphilming and cell production for radio and online publication can be incorporated into the formal curriculum and students get properly examined and awarded certifiable credits from the department and university. One way is to simply incorporate the use of smartphones and their related media products into existing modules such as those on Film and Video Studies, Film and Video Production 1 and 2, Principles of Advertising, Radio Production and The Internet and Practice of Cyberpublishing. At post-graduate level there are modules such as Visual Anthropology and Documentary Studies. Such an approach is therefore lecturer-based as the lecturer can simply include the study and training on smartphone uses into their respective media modules.

The students themselves differed on whether mobile journalism should be incorporated into their curriculum. Some were of the opinion that it should be incorporated *because it will empower students in terms of boosting their confidence as they interview people around their communities* (Chipswa 2015 interview), or because *it covers most of the practical modules that we are doing in the department* (Nyoni 2015 interview). Over the years some students have proposed to produce films and television news stories using their cellphones but the lecturers in charge of the modules have routinely rejected such proposals mainly because they were concerned about maintaining bearable minimum production and quality standards. There was no assurance that students would use smartphones with the minimum quality standards. Affluent students with access to exquisite smartphones would have an unfair edge over their less resourced mates. Again, in a developing country university where equipment is scant and students compete for the few digital cameras available to both undergraduate and post graduate students at a ratio of roughly 1 camera to 30 students, proposing to use cellphones could be a way of opting for a convenient way out while simultaneously gaining academic credits. However, the current situation where the smartphones used in the MCZ project have been retained as university property, and with future possible opportunities of similar donations and collaborations between the department and Freepress Unlimited, it is now possible for students to use uniform smartphones with standard quality and capacity; this can in turn be examined and judged using standardized guidelines, expectations and reference terms. Indeed students were not directly preoccupied with the dominant stories about politics in Zimbabwe but shifted to more human interest stories although central government and state politics inevitably or peripherally influenced these stories too.

CONCLUSION

Critical Caveat and Epistemological Vigilance

From a critical perspective, the subject-matter that the student-producers deal with are nearly all desirable, acceptable and far from subversive for a ZANU PF ruling regime and its surrogate quasi-state university authorities at MSU. A discursive consideration of the Zimbabwe crisis can actually find ZANU PF and its allies smugly benefiting from the revelation of hardships in Zimbabwe. They are vindicated that the hardships the country and its most vulnerable citizens experience are a direct result of the inhuman sanctions imposed on the country from Western countries (read the USA, UK and EU, Canada, Australia and Nordic states). The Western countries are vindictive because they saw their white Zimbabwean kith and kin – descendants of land grabbing racist colonialists – lose land in a ZANU PF initiated land redistribution program meant to redress colonial injustices. The West thus imposed punitive sanctions as a racist capitalist agenda in order to trigger regime change and reverse the gains of the liberation movement whose main purpose it is to uplift the standards of life for the historical suffering black Zimbabwean majority. The ‘critical’ human interest stories are therefore testimony and confirmation of insidious consequences of sanctions. Students’ Mojo and cellphilm productions are implicitly revealing how an innocent justice seeking African nation suffers for its democratic and redistributive policies. Black Zimbabweans were indeed victims of a brutal racial colonial order akin to apartheid. A bitter armed struggle was waged to dismantle that system and ZANU PF and Robert Mugabe often argue they are fulfilling the emancipator objectives of that humanist struggle. However, in the postcolony there are discursive contestations and the erstwhile liberators are often represented as authoritarian, dictatorial and brutal. ZANU PF and Mugabe are criticised for systematically stifling human rights of Zimbabweans, especially white farmers and political opponents. They are cast as corrupt, over-grasping, and hiding behind the rhetoric of emancipation (Lutz & Lutz, 2004; Mhiripiri, 2015; Sachikonye, 2011).

Contemporary complexities of Zimbabwe are such that the two discourses are interlinked and can conveniently evoke redemptive revolutionary nationalism on one hand and global capitalism and its respect for human rights and private property regardless of previous historical dilemmas. That civil society organisations from the North like Free Press Unlimited are in the forefront of providing resources for communicative action in countries of the South cannot be taken with political naivety. Elsewhere, Mhiripiri and Mhiripiri (2014) have espoused for an epistemological vigilance when dealing with any topic entailing normative and social justice. The current researchers would not want to over-look the possibility of the proliferation of gadgets for informational and communicative purposes that can eventually be used to destabilize the country or region in the guise of pro-democracy activities or myopic regime change. Developing countries such as Zimbabwe are in a double bind; it is true there is an authoritarian regime that justifies its excesses through arguing that it wants to bar international capitalism and imperialism that does not want an equitable redistribution of resources after the injustices of colonialism. Black Zimbabweans lost out during colonialism and redistribution of resources such as land and other productive enterprises is only reasonable. Nonetheless, the same 'revolutionary nationalists' can perpetrate human rights abuses in the guise of fighting for the bigger emancipative project. Contradictions are inevitable when international civil society is viewed to align themselves with the colonial capitalist forces and their descendants. Most Western governments and civil society organisations are suspected to have sympathies with the white descendants of colonialists who stand to lose when redistributive programs are started by postcolonial governments. This observation of insidious potentials of counter-revolution is noted elsewhere as follows, with regards to the provision and use of new ICTs amongst Zimbabweans:

Eyebrows are similarly raised when countries of the global North initiate and support social media sites and activities that are Zimbabwean focused ostensibly for the protection of human rights of ordinary Zimbabwean citizens, yet the ulterior motive might be about rapacious access to local resources preceded by removal of a "protective" and "vigilant" regime (Mhiripiri & Mutsvairo, 2014, p. 1290).

That in the meantime the Her Zimbabwe trainers dissuaded cellphilming and Mojo students from openly political content does not mean in future dynamics will remain the same. It might be expedient to restrain social media communicators until a critical mass of activists are groomed; thereafter developments such as the one associated with the Arab Spring can be possible.

Smartphones and their software are technologies used to create discursive spaces with the potential to democratize communication and representation. These instruments provide new opportunities for debate and discussion and are equally useable in the conventional forth estate or the emergent fifth estate (social media) (Boyd, 2008). The emancipator role of materials produced through cellphilming or Mojo is not guaranteed that it will enhance the social justice transformation agenda. Social media is capable of reproducing or rearticulating old hegemonies and power relations, and interpellation can still ensure that authorities and subordinates interact in ways where authorities are for now assured of stability and non-subversion. In the Zimbabwean context social media currently does not offer an optimistic platform for structural transformation, although it still manages to operate as an oblique way of speaking to local and global forces that are seen as constrictive of local efforts towards economic and cultural liberation.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Advocacy Journalism: A type of journalism that lobbies for specific issues or interests.

Cellphilming: This is filming using a cellphone, and the word combines both the semantic and phonological signification of the filming activity.

Epistemological Vigilance: This is an attempt to produce scholarship that is critical and capable of discerning and avoiding over-grasping or manipulative socio-political or cultural forces.

Interpellation: This is a concept popularised by Louis Althusser to explain the process through which subjects are hailed by those in authority in order for subjects to comply with authority or be subjective.

Mojo: Mobile journalism.

Reflexivity: The scholarly activity of revealing the background and context of a researcher or producer in order to best understand the circumstances and dynamics around a produced text.

Smartphone: A mobile cellular phone with the capacity to record sound, still and motion pictures.

StoryMaker: A multimedia software accessed at no cost as part of the culture of creative commons, and it can be used for editing print, audio and audio-visual stories.

Subaltern: A marginalised or disadvantaged social group.

ENDNOTES

1. A special acknowledgement is extended to Yvonne Chiwade, an Honours student who administered questionnaires to students who participated in the MCZ project.
2. https://www.freepressunlimited.org/files/annex_a._storymaker_trainers_guide.pdf
3. Also http://voicesofafrica.africanews.com/site/page/511:south_africa
4. Small World News is an organisation that capacitates citizen journalism by providing digital technologies and professional training particularly to citizens in "crisis areas and conflict zones" (http://smallworldnews.tv/about/).
5. http://smallworldnews.tv/blog/teaching-composition-in-storymaker/
6. After the hyper-inflation that resulted in the collapse of the Zimbabwe dollar in late 2009, the country now uses several currencies, but in that order the US dollar and South African Rand are the most ubiquitous and most preferred for transactions.

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Chapter 35
The Gamification of Journalism

Raul Ferrer Conill
Karlstad University, Sweden

Michael Karlsson
Karlstad University, Sweden

ABSTRACT

Traditional news outlets are on the decline and journalism has embraced digital media in its struggle to survive. New models of delivering news to the public are being explored in order to increase the levels of readership and user engagement.The narrative of this chapter focuses on the future of journalism and media, and the potential benefits and dangers of gamifying journalism. Since gamification is a new trend, a thorough look at the intersection between the enhancements of public mobility, the digitalization of news services, and the engagement of gamified systems can bring better understanding of future channels of reading news to the users, to researchers, and to the industry. This chapter aims to bridge the gap between gamification as an emerging practice in news distribution and yet a vastly uncharted area or research.

INTRODUCTION

No group of young people has ever had more choices to make regarding — or more control over — its own information, amusement and politics. Rock spawned one culture; TV, another; movies, hip-hop, computers, video games, still more. (Katz, 1993)

The previous quote is as relevant now as it was more than two decades ago. What Katz probably did not foresee is the converging use of media that has led to an entanglement of information, amusement, and politics. In the current media landscape the processes of mediatization, commercialization, and individualization (Lundby, 2009), spurred by the ubiquity of mobile technologies and pervasive connectivity (Dimmick, Feaster, & Hoplamazian, 2010; Van Dijck, 2013), have derived in a myriad of news services competing for the audience's attention.

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As newspapers' sales plunge and traditional news outlets decline, new models of delivering news to the public are being explored in order to increase levels of readership and user engagement. Gamification is one of these new models news outlets have adopted to engage young audiences, sparking the need for a new strand of research on the intersection of journalism and gamification (Ferrer Conill, 2014).

The narrative of this chapter focuses on the future of journalism and media, and the potential benefits and dangers of gamifying journalism. Since gamification is a new trend, a thorough look at the intersection between the enhancements of public mobility, the digitalization of news services, and the engagement of gamified systems can bring better understanding of future channels of reading news to the users, to researchers, and to the industry. This text aims to bridge the gap between gamification as an emerging practice in news distribution and yet a vastly uncharted area or research.

This chapter departs by discussing two of the conflicting logics of the journalistic field: the professional logic, which regards audiences as citizens; and the commercial logic, which regards audiences as consumers. Based on these tensions, it continues addressing the aims of applying gamification to news services, offering an account of potential benefits and pitfalls of using game-mechanics in order to engage young audiences. We aim to provide a nuanced view of the gamification of news beyond the commercial determinism and the democratic functionalism of journalism (Schudson, 1997). Next, we discuss how these new configurations of game-like news fit within the current context of media convergence, new journalism formats, audience reconfigurations, setting the context on which digital game elements can be formally applied to news. For this reason we analyze how game elements are currently implemented in journalism, to then discuss other ways to create gamified interfaces that have the potential of enhancing the democratic and civic purposes of journalism while engaging younger users, or center the news experience about the games, and not the news. The chapter concludes providing a set of challenges and needs for research, intending to propose an agenda for future research on gamification's place within journalism.

THE CONFLICTING LOGICS OF THE JOURNALISTIC FIELD

Journalism and the production of news is not any odd work, in fact it is not even any odd information or media work. To properly understand and relate to how and why journalism is produced in a meaningful theoretical and practical way, one must consider its place within society and democracy. Journalism's *raison d'être* is, in short, to serve the public with qualified information so that people can make informed decisions in their capacity as citizens holding those in power accountable (Cushion, 2012; McNair, 2000). This is the ideal and the high ground journalists and their protagonists claim when news media and journalism are under attack. But it is also, more importantly, an established empirical fact that the media environment and the contents of news have effect on how informed and engaged people are in society (Aalberg & Curran, 2011; Scheufele, Shanahan, & Kim, 2002; Shaker, 2014). In short, media matters and contributes to the quality of democracy. Journalism's status in society is also recognized formally as countries such as United States and Sweden regulate it, as the only commercial operation, in their constitutions.

Another equally important and conflicting dimension in the discourse about journalism, news media, and their function in society, is that they regularly fall short of their own standards and deliver false, irrelevant or inaccurate information. This is due to a number of different factors and obstacles such as influence from consumer demands, advertisers, owners, sources, trade and industry, as well as technological developments and the overall ideology of any given society (McManus, 1994; Schudson, 2003; Shoemaker & Reese, 1996).

This part of the chapter sets up and describes two, often conflicting, logics or regimes – one being a professional logic and the other a commercial logic – that saturate journalism practice and, subsequently, journalism studies (Croteau & Hoynes, 2001; McManus, 2009; Schudson, 2003). Any introduction of new ideas, practices or technologies, such as gamification, will be appropriated within the framework of these logics. Although there are other ways to describe and deal with tensions and different forces in journalism, these logics are adequate for the purpose of this chapter as they pinpoint the relationship between journalism and users. The tensions between these two actors, journalists and users, and the two logics, professional and commercial, sets the context for gamified news articles and systems.

Professional Logic

Earlier incarnations of journalism were far from the objective enterprise we take for granted today. Instead, journalism was expected to be strongly partial and sensationalistic (Barnhurst & Nerone, 2009; Hartley, 2009; Schudson, 1978). However, since then, standards and protocols have been developed to promote journalism as a, broadly speaking, merchant of truth seeking. That is – journalists must seek and have much higher standards than other information workers (Kovach & Rosenstiehl, 2001; Zelizer, 2004). This must also be communicated to the audience, making journalism a, to paraphrase Tuchman (1972), strategic ritual, which the public can discern and evaluate. In practice, this is manifested by journalists when they are employing techniques such as verifying information before publishing, relying on more than one source, and being able to answer questions of when, who, what, where, why and how an event unfolded (Kovach & Rosenstiehl, 2001; Singer, 2008). In addition to be true, it is of immense importance that the information is *relevant* to the audience in the role of citizens. Thus, true but irrelevant information about celebrities, sports and entertainment is less useful to people in their capacity as citizens, than true but relevant information about politics, society and economics (Reinemann, Stanyer, Scherr, & Legnante, 2011).

Overall, journalism is to a large extent understood as process of verifying, refining, and upgrading mere 'information' to useful and unbiased facts and analysis. This process contains several steps where first raw information of various origins and shifting quality is gathered by journalists, then selected/disregarded by editors and transformed to 'facts and truth' through journalistic scrutiny, standardized routines and procedures. As a final step the finished product is distributed to the willing and able audience (Karlsson, 2011; Kovach & Rosenstiehl, 2001; Seib, 2001). Should journalists produce misleading, inaccurate or irrelevant news, it does not only have results for peoples' capacity to keep themselves informed, but also pose a serious threat to the existence of journalism as it undermines its very foundations.

In short, the professional logic addresses audiences and readers primarily as citizens. True and relevant news have constituted the backbone of journalism for close to a century, but journalism has also been embedded in a commercial logic for an even longer time period.

Commercial Logic

Not only is news and journalism important for democracy but they also represent a billion dollar industry (Croteau & Hoynes, 2001; McManus, 1994). Journalism, and especially its printed incarnations, has operated within a mass-market framework since at least the mid nineteenth century due to, for instance, increased printing capacity, urbanization, and literacy. Thus, as Hartley (2009) has pointed out, modern journalism has always had, in one way or another, to relate and adjust to popular taste. The professional logic above is in essence an ideal construct on how journalism should operate, while journalism in practice is urged to follow or influence market demand to be able to support its operations. This information market is driven within other parameters than the idealistic notion of journalism, and there is evidence that this, implicitly and explicitly, shapes news content (Hamilton, 2004; Shoemaker & Reese, 1996).

Since *news is a commodity, not a mirror of reality* (Hamilton, 2004, p.7) it is essential to point out how consumer preferences, among other things, drive news coverage. Hamilton (2004) has, inspired by the 'why, where, who, what, when' dimensions of the professional logic, put together a particularly useful set of corresponding questions viable in the market context: *Who cares about a particular piece of information? What are they willing to pay to find it, or what are others willing to pay to reach them? Where can media outlets or advertisers reach these people? When it is profitable to provide the information? Why is it profitable?* As evident, only the first two questions relate explicitly to the taste of the audience while the rest regard the audience as a commodity, logistics, pricing structure and production costs that needs to be taken into consideration. Accordingly, the relationship between these questions is intrinsically complex, demonstrated, for instance, by the fact that advertisers traditionally have provided the lion's share of media corporations income while not being too interested in reaching every citizen since their products are niched to target audiences (Schudson, 2003). Additionally, it becomes lucrative for media corporations to provide content that enables the tailoring of audiences to advertisers (Hamilton, 2004; Shoemaker & Reese, 1996). Further, in contrast to the professional logic, the five questions posed by Hamilton have, in themselves, absolutely nothing to do with what kind of information will be produced or the quality of that information. Yet, these parameters set up the boundaries of the competitive marketplace in which journalism and the media industry have to work. Of course, it is still plausible that people will request information that makes it easier for them to participate in society, but there are other information demands as well – information that makes it easier to work, or consume for pure entertainment reasons (Hamilton, 2004). Thus, if professional logic regards audiences and readers as citizens, the commercial logic addresses them primarily as consumers.

Conflicting Logics and the Future of Journalism

Ideally, these logics, professional and commercial, would work in tandem: readers would prefer qualified information over other types of information available, journalists would only produce true and relevant news, advertisers would not care about ratings or which audiences they reach, media corporations would not prioritize profit, and different actors would not try to spin the news. However, this is not and has never been the case. On the contrary, it is widely understood that the commercial logic is gaining ground at the expense of the professional logic, as journalism and news media are increasingly anchored in the digital environment. For instance, digital publishing allows live readings of ratings that shape what news are being published and how those news are being framed (Anderson, 2011; Karlsson & Clerwall, 2013; MacGregor, 2007). Previous research convincingly shows a slow, and sometimes faster, shift from harder to softer news, indicating that journalists are being forced to digress from the professional logic in favor of the commercial logic (Bird, 2009; Connell, 1998; Currah, 2009; Cushion, 2012; Sparks &

Tulloch, 2000; Uribe & Gunter, 2004). Karlsson, (in press), took stock on how news have developed in the digital environment, finding that the process is even more accelerated there.

Furthermore, faced with this abundance of choices in the information environment more people are decreasing their news consumption or are checking out from journalism completely (De Waal & Schoenbach, 2010; Prior, 2007; Stromback, Djerf-Pierre, & Shehata, 2012). This is due to the fact that the digital era presents consumers with more opportunities to choose what they want, no longer being restrained to what a few media outlets chose to publish. In the digital world, journalism has to work within these premises instead of the near monopoly situation in the analogue media system, adjusting even more to audience demands, or find ways to increase motivation for news consumption. Something that can prove very difficult as a telling study by Boczkowski and Mitchelstein (2013) illustrates, where journalists and users have diverging priorities as the former promotes public affair stories but the latter, to a larger extent opt for useful, bizarre or controversial bits of information.

It is against this background and in this setting and framework that the gamification of journalism needs to be analyzed. On the one hand as a tool to increase interest in and engagement with news, on the other hand as a tool to further transform and adjust journalism to the demands of the audience.

THE AIMS OF GAMIFYING JOURNALISM

The future of journalism seems to be attached to popular demands. However, as Martin Conboy (2010) suggests, it needs to maintain certain distance from the mainstream discourses of general entertainment while reclaiming the attention of audiences and readers, and their drive to learn about what happens in the world. Literature about youth and news consumption usually points to the issue of engagement (Tufte & Enghel, 2009). The narratives that aim to explain the lack of engagement take various departing points: a reconfiguration of social structures and generational change on media habits (Bimber, 2012; Bennet et al., 2012; Van Dijck, 2013); a disconnect between current content and formats of news distribution (Reese & Lee, 2012); lack of entertainment or even entertainment media becoming a source of distraction (Delli Carpini, 2012). Particularly incisive is Robert Putman's (2000) suggestion that the amount of time used consuming popular and entertainment media is using up the limited time from citizens and users, time they could be using engaging in public and civic activities or *quality media*. Admittedly, Putman's argument has underlying speculative tones, as the logics of causality do not lead to believe that stopping consuming entertainment would necessarily lead to civic activities. However, in the age of multipurpose devices, it is worth considering that media services must strive for the users' attention, competing with several other affordances such devices have to offer, and depending on the amount of hours the device is being used.

While gamification is already being used in real life journalism context, the ideal implementation with the applied system does not always match. As it has been mentioned earlier, the notion of journalism is rather unspecific in digital settings. There are several *flavors* of journalism, and so, we feel compelled to constrain our narrative to the transition of legacy news media (specifically newspapers) to their digital counterparts, in the most idealist type of journalism, watchdog, investigative, and informative journalism. This section tackles the potential usefulness and dangers of introducing gamification techniques to journalism. If there are surely proponents of gamifying the news, there are for sure reasons to not gamify the news.

Engaging With Games

Historically, the use of games in traditional newspapers had been relegated to the use of simple game-like pastimes such as quizzes, crosswords, or even *sudokus*, in order to attract certain demographics (Shortz, 2006). Other approaches used by legacy media to engage and create habit are programs like The Washington Post's Points, which is an analogue loyalty program tied to annual subscriptions with the possibility of redeeming accumulated points for physical presents.

However, adapting to the rise of new media, news organizations have tried to generate internal structures that aim to approach and engage with the public in their own terms, through the new channels established by social media and games (Kwak et al., 2010; Gil de Zúñiga, Jung, & Valenzuela, 2012). Newsrooms started introducing editors and employees with new skills and competencies. At the same time, interfaces have provided room for users to interact with.

While those traditional game-like pastime features such as quizzes have been successfully translated into the digital arena (Schultz, 1999), it is videogames to their full extent the type of new media that is reported to be majorly engaging younger audiences, and on its turn, as Putman would suggest, *distracting* teens from civic media use. A Pew (2008) study reports that 97% of American teens play videogames on a regular basis and do so in a variety of devices. Gaming has become a pervasive form of media consumption that transcends all layers of the socioeconomic fabric of Western societies. Furthermore, 72% of players use their mobile phones to play, which adds the option of mobility and communication through the same medium for play. Beyond the basic outcome of entertainment, gaming, especially multiplayer gaming, provides sources for participatory action, social interaction, and often simulates civic action.

New behaviors are embedded within the interactions of the social and the technical, but also depend on the media and news environment available. This taps into the reasoning of engagement or lack of it. According to the OMA Framework (Strömbäck, Djerf-Pierre, & Shehata, 2012), any behavior such as media choice or civic engagement is contingent upon a combination of opportunity, motivation, and ability. Motivation and ability are individual-level factors, but opportunity, in news consumption, refers to the availability and accessibility to different types of news and non-news media. Coincidentally, this behavioral framework is strikingly similar to Fogg's (2009) behavioral model for persuasive design, which is composed of motivation, ability, and triggers. Thus, these two frameworks are equal with the exception that one takes the reference from the media system (opportunity), and the other one takes the focus from what the technology itself interacts with the user (triggers). It is not that surprising that, games themselves use a similar triadic model to engage users by fostering autonomy, mastery, and relatedness.

There is an ambivalent set of results on the effects of playing video games and the level of engagement of youth with news media and civic activities (Williams, 2006). Studies show that hard core gamers have lower social capital, however, it is difficult to discern whether those who turn to games are disengaged, or the other way around. What it is clear is that gaming is in part a media-centric activity embedded in the daily habits of young citizens' everyday life, and that the media literacy achieved during early years is carried throughout later stages in life. As we mentioned before, the habits and traditions of media consumption are fundamentally linked to a generational context. If new generations do not read news, but are extremely engaged in playing games, the trend is only going to increase as one generation replaces the other.

Hence, if Coleman and Blumber (2012) are right, and one of the basic norms of democracy requires informed, balanced, and consequential citizens, then media needs to find methods that engage users to be informed. So why not games? To the question of '*why gamify the news?*' the basic response is to engage users to be informed, to be balanced, and to be consequential. In other words, to use the nature of games to empower users, and to cement one of the pillars of democracy. At least this is why we think news could expand the already ongoing experimentation with game elements, and why researchers need to investigate the feasibility of news and games. This is, we argue, the ideal scenario. Of course, as we will see later in this section, the reasons and consequences of gamifying the news might be different for those who have the power to implement these strategies.

The Potential Benefits of Gamifying the News

As it tends to happen with new approaches to old problems, there are proponents and opponents. Gamification is no exception and sustains a large group of enthusiasts and equally large group of skeptics. The champions of gamification (McGonigal, 2011; Zichermann & Linder, 2013; Herger, 2014) are convinced that gamification is the cure to many ailments, especially if they are customer engagement ailments. But McGonigal in particular makes a rather compelling argument that by using game elements into everyday environments, we can turn those environments into an equally fun and engaging environment as games themselves. Reality is too slow, too boring to keep individuals who grew up playing videogames engaged. And in a way, we have seen that this is true, at least in the realm of journalism. If McGonigal's assertion is right, youth have adopted games as their means of entertainment and have left news behind because it is not an engaging environment.

So how does the application of game elements in non-engaging environments work? In its most basic form, the introduction of gamified applications to a wide range of users and audiences provides a new way to develop new heuristics, design patterns, and dynamics of games, with the aim of improving user experience and user engagement (Deterding et al. 2011:a; Deterding et al., 2011:b). And while there has been a considerable degree of hype in the industry, gamification has shown to be an effective method to attract the attention and engagement of users in various domains such as marketing and business oriented applicability (Zichermann & Linder, 2010; Huotari & Hamari, 2012; Paharia, 2013), technology (Fujikawa & Manki, 2013), education (Prensky, 2010; Sheldon, 2011; Muntean, 2011; Kapp, 2012), and health (McCallum, 2012).

Certainly, gamification is a by-product of other meta-process such as mediatization (Lundby, 2009), individualization, and commercialization, but the gamification of everything (Rolland & Eastman, 2011) responds to a generational shift into *digital natives* (Bennet, Maton, & Kervin, 2008) that not only have grown with the omnipresence of the Internet and networked technologies, but that are the first generation to have been born into a world filled with digital games within the context of home and everyday life.

Alas, the implementation rush during the first years of gamification seemed to follow the old method of throwing badges to everything and see where they stuck. And while old (analogue) loyalty programs are still used in several industries, the digitalization of services, such as newspapers, unveils new pathways for experimentation with gamified systems. The reasoning behind the application of gamification in web-based system, or a mobile app, is to enhance engagement, grant choices, reaffirm progression, and provoke social habit (Werbach & Hunter, 2012). Applied to news consumption, there is a vast opportunity to introduce game elements in systems that aim to create experiences that foster a sense of autonomy, mastery, and relatedness, as users become more informed about the world. Coincidentally, these three concepts are what motivational theories, such as Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan 1985; Pink, 2009), propose as the igniters of intrinsic motivation. In addition, gamification gives the tools for users to participate and engage with other users, broadening the network of consumers to a particular service. The aim is to create a user experience that is more attractive and enticing to the new mobile lifestyle of today's consumers, especially youth, who have slowly discarded news from the mix of their media consumption.

Thus, a gamified news service has the potential to engage users (and particularly youth) to read news, to inform themselves, and most importantly, to foster an intrinsic motivation to consume news while creating a habit out of it. Whether this leads to a more democratic and civic society willing to participate in public debate is a discussion that escapes the ambitions of this chapter, but that should be central to the gamification of news research. Additionally, introducing game mechanics to news websites could very well become a profitable business model. This assumption is done twofold: on the one hand, a more engaged community of users remains longer in the site, visits more often, and interacts more with the service, making it a service much more attractive to advertisers; on the other hand, games (and specifically mobile games) have achieved incredible profit figures with services that are free to play while offering virtual goods (Quah, 2003) that can be purchased by the player. Such a monetizing model allows for dynamic pricing that can be encompassed to carefully timed events. If games have achieved such successful business models by offering their main content for free, it should be also at the grasp of the news industry to do so. Another benefit of gamifying journalism is no other than avoiding the *tabloidization* effect (Bird, 2009; Reese & Lee, 2012). The shift towards *entertainment* content could very well be due to the fact that the format is not entertaining. If newspapers focus on crafting a packaging that is interesting and that offers a truly entertaining news experience in itself, then content could be delivered intact, thus reducing tabloidization. The final benefit to be discussed here is the one attempted by one of the examples briefly discussed in the following section, Bleacher Report, which introduced gamification in order to engage their news producers and contributors, instead of the audience. This last benefit is much harder to achieve but it could certainly make the production of news a more engaging experience.

The Potential Pitfalls of Gamifying the News

As we mentioned earlier, there are also critics and opponents that offer a less optimistic view of gamification. The critical voices usually come from the field of game studies, digital labor, and surveillance studies. The rationale for critique is different, with varying degrees of emotional involvement. Ian Bogost (2011), famed researcher in game design puts it this way:

Gamification is bullshit. More specifically, gamification is marketing bullshit, invented by consultants as a means to capture the wild, coveted beast that is videogames and to domesticate it for use in the grey, hopeless wasteland of big business. It takes games – a mysterious, magical, powerful medium that has captured the attention of millions of people – and it makes them accessible in the context of contemporary business.

Bogost's livid statement represents a line of thought that considers gamification a bastardization of gaming, instrumentalizing Game Design Theory for commercial purposes only. As a newsgames proponent, Bogost does not find value in the whole range of purposes of gamification, and only focuses in the commercialization perspective. However, this line of critique can easily apply to news if the gamified layer does not suit the experience that news wants to convey, being a completely gratuitous set of game elements poorly implemented. A corresponding caveat can emerge from the other end, and it is to generate a game so powerful that users forget that the goal of the experience is being informed about current events. There is a line of journalists that would see the use of games in journalism as a threat to creative journalism, selling the core values of journalism to entertainment media.

A similar strand of thought but oriented directly to the idea of digital labor or exploitation has been gaining traction. Gamification benefits from new technological advances to automatically generate content based on the users' actions. On the one hand, this user-generated content is packaged and offered to the user (sometimes even at a price!) while being owned by the service provider. On the other hand, using the power of games, gamification can be used to manipulate and exploit people behind the veil of fun and leisure. This line of thought is best exemplified by PJ Rey's (2012) statement:

"Gamification is a mechanism for de-coupling alienation from capitalist production. By masking work as play, capitalist production moves exploitation out of the work places and infiltrates our leisure time. Play loses its innocence. It is no longer an escape from the system, it is just another branch of it. Waste is no longer wasted. Playbour is part of capitalism´s effort to colonize every last moment in the waking day"

The pervasive and ubiquitous tracking and measuring techniques embedded in gamification systems, result in the third line of criticism of gamification, which has to do with the ethical questions of continuously being surveilled. In the majority of cases, the user is not only complacent with monitoring, but it is often the initiator. This notion of self-surveillance challenges the traditional ideas behind surveillance, but as Whitson (2013) points out, when the gamified systems are promoted in working environments, the quantification of everyday life could lead to ethical questions in the relations of power of those measured and those who have access to the data. Thus, news outlets could indeed use a gamified experience to exploit their users, either by manipulating their reading choices through game mechanics, or by only monetizing the content and data they generate while they interact with the system. This could become a serious privacy risk involved with tracking the users' every move, while owning such data. It is at least ethically dubious (O'Donnell, 2014).

Furthermore, there is the implication that journalism, in the aim to compete with a wider range of digital services, gives in completely to the commercial logic by enticing users with game elements to engage users with news, but also catering news to the demand of popularized content, disregarding the professional logic. Even though gamification has the potential to abstract format from content, an excessive stress on the gratifications of the system offers an equally strong potential to forgetting or altering the reasons why such gamified format is there in the first place. If the goal of gamifying the news is to engage youth and creating the habit of consuming news by providing a service that taps into their format expectations, the effect can counter this goal and turning the game mechanics and the interface into the central aspect, relegating news to a secondary role. In a similar note, there could be serious conflicts of editorial choice when hard news of disturbing nature is channeled through a gamified format. The dissonance of news that aims to inform citizens about injustices and challenges of our times disseminated through a lighthearted gaming environment can diminish the gravitas of the issues being covered.

It is a matter of balance between the core of journalism and the engaging factors of games. With this in mind, Gamification can also be seen from a more neutral perspective. As Werbach (2014) redefines it, gamification could simply be *the process of making activities game-like.* This is in fact a much more useful standpoint for research, as gamification is not the tool that will either save or enslave journalism (or any other industry for that matter). Borrowing from behavioral economics scholar Dan Ariely (2011), gamification is a perfect example of reward substitution, which is *doing the right thing for the* *wrong reasons.* If by using game mechanics news outlets could trigger extrinsic and intrinsic motivators that engage youth to consume news, it is worth a try to implement, and subsequently researching on it.

The ever-present tensions between the professional and commercial logic is now played under new and different conditions. Before analyzing concrete examples of the application of gamification within journalism contexts we need to outline how journalism has been fundamentally changed by digitalization and how journalists, the media industry, and the audience relate to this change.

NEWS IN TRANSITION: DIGITALIZATION, SHIFTING AUDIENCES, NEWS PATHS, AND USER ENGAGEMENT

The introduction of the Internet and the process of digitalization of news did nothing but exacerbate the conflict of logics outlined above. It would be an oversimplification to assume that the complex phenomenon in which society adopted digital technologies to consume media is reduced to pure economic and technological reasons. The new wave of commercial and technological advances, based on computing, convergence, and digitalization, is merely an amplified account of similar historical instances based on printing culture, audiovisual culture, and broadcasting media, such as the telegraph, the radio, or the television (Schudson, 1978; Briggs & Burke, 2002; Bondebjerg, 2002; Ekström & Djerf-Pierre, 2013).

However, while the decline of journalism in terms of quality is a matter of debate, the decline of the news industry in commercial terms is undeniable. The transition to digital journalism was majorly done following a free-for-all strategy, hoping that newspapers' subscriptions and online advertising would provide a sustainable business model (Meyer, 2009). After several years, newspaper sales keep dropping and advertising revenues have shifted to other digital services that attract more users (Picard, 2008; Gallaugher, Auger, & BarNir, 2001).

This part of the chapter aims to map the adoption and evolution of digital news both by its producers and its consumers. The idea is to provide a clear image of where the news industry is now: *what are the formats provided by the producers? what are the media habits of consumers?,* and finally *how does the introduction of gamification fit within the industry*?

New Channels, New Formats, and News Consumption

Journalism, as many other forms of audiovisual communication, is in the midst of a process of convergence. Technologically, various types of media are mixed and integrated in unified digital distribution points that can be accessed and consumed via a single medium, such as smartphones, tablets, or computers (Mitchell, Rosenstiel, & Christian, 2012). Culturally, news conglomerates that used to operate in departmentalized structures face arduous challenges as the increasing importance of multimedia and technical aspects to the craft of journalism (Deuze, 2004, Deuze, 2005; Thurman & Lupton, 2008). The new media landscape amalgamates several content providers, expanding competition in all shapes of entertainment and communication sources, spurring a change of habits in media consumption. New efforts have been introduced in order to capture the emerging individual structures of the self, through engagement with technological systems that turn life towards short-term, fragmented information, *on the go* life styles (Elliott & Urry, 2010; Urry, 2002), transforming media interaction into a prominently social experience (Jenkins, 2006). It is not technology *per se* that matters, but the way technology is used.

The concept of traditional news is a blurred. What constitutes news is contested. The integration of digital network technologies enable and encourage social participation (Lewis, 2012), shaking the barriers between producers and consumers. The public has the ability to be everywhere, all the time, thus having the advantage on immediacy to organized journalism (Peters, 2012). This results in users decreasing their attention to mainstream media and increasing interaction within social networks, collecting atomized information from source to destination in different forms, forging a reconfigured model of news medium (Baresch, Hsu, & Reese, 2010)

The need to adapt to the new *milieu* and embrace technology (Singer, 2004; Deuze, 2009; Westlund, 2012) has opened doors to a myriad of new channels and formats. New forms of storytelling that depart from print formats including audio, video, slide shows, and interactive features have steadily been incorporated in the digital editions of news outlets (Kleis Nielsen, 2012; Karlsson & Clerwall, 2012; Thurman & Walters, 2013). Traditional game-like pastimes like knowledge quizzes as well as unconventional formats like newsgames (Bogost, Ferrari, & Schweizer, 2010; Gómez García & Navarro Sierra, 2013) and gamification (Jacobson, 2012) have found a place in digital journalism. The interface becomes a proxy for automated interaction, by introducing technology as a persuasive actor (Fogg, 2002). The triggers and experiences that digital games have embedded in our new digital culture, help explain why media choice is much more prone towards games than news in younger generations. Games provide specific gratifications, but most importantly feed back to the users experiences that fulfill psychological needs that intrinsically motivates them to seek more interactions with the medium (Przybylski, Ryan, and Rigby, 2010; Tamborini et al., 2010). However, it is widely accepted that the new forms of expression multimedia has to offer have been massively underused by mainstream news organizations (Lillie, 2011).

Thus, the extremely varied type of news media use poses a threat to major legacy news outlets. News consumption fluctuates according to the users' everyday life (Jansson & Lindell, 2014), and it becomes a less immersive form of news acquisition, embedded in brief exchanges of media content afforded by the multimodality of the medium (Schroder, 2014). News aggregators, social media, and services like *Summly* or *BuzzFeed* offer an innovative model of news consumption, allowing personalization, and adapting to new users' personal contexts. Audiences evolve, and traditional news must evolve with them or eventually they will be replaced by a newer breed of news services (Carey & Elton, 2010).

Transforming Audiences, User Agency, and Crisis of Engagement

The effects of convergence seem to have a tighter grip on audiences. Media consumers used to be regarded as *publics*, *audiences,* or even *readers*. The common connotative aspect of these terms is an apparent passivity (Humphreys & Grayson, 2008). But new media and the multiple services available to media consumers have ignited a debate on the role of consumers, from a passive approach to a much more active role as media users (Rosen, 2006). We adopt the word *user* as our unit of study, particularly because it keeps us from dwelling in the bipolar notion of producer and consumer (Van Dijck, 2009), and most importantly, it provides a much wider potentiality of media interaction. Personal, contextual, and experiential factors are combined to define the interaction between the user, the choice of media, and the news service (Hartmann, 2009). And while activities within the spectrum of consumption and production are always developed to a certain degree, one of the important additions to the users' roles is that of the data provider. Metadata and digital behaviors are automatically logged and become, regardless of the content, a main feature of the digital cultural practice (Murray, 2012). In an increasingly mechanized and automated news production process (Clerwall, 2014), user-generated content (Örnebring

& Jönsson, 2011, Holt & Karlsson, 2011), and most importantly, user-generated data have introduced new drives for economic development. The conceptual debate around the commodification of audience labor, *playbor* (Kücklich, 2005), and the subdued exploitation has sparked ambivalent reactions within the scientific community.

The addition of digital news sites has derived into a change of habits that are connected to a generational bias. Older generations have adopted digital media as a complementary source of news. In younger generations, the trend has been of displacement, as digital news has replaced traditional newspapers (Westlund & Färdigh, 2011). However, it is the younger users, the *DotNet* generation, the so called *millennials* who show a growing disregard for news both in paper and digital. This generation of users is the only one that significantly consumes less news both in paper and online (Wadbring & Bergström, 2014). While actual figures and definitions tend to shift from source to source, we name "young news users" to those under 30-35 years of age.

The current trend in online news distributors is to offer paywall models that combine subscription models with only certain amount of content for free (Myllylahti, 2014). This move is not particularly well received among a generation of internet users who are used to access a service for free, and in most cases, receive and consume their news through entertainment media instead of the traditional news media.

The shift from traditional news consumption to more "soft news" is often viewed as an indicator of a decline in democratic and civic engagement of media users (Macedo, 2005; Bennet, 2008). However, younger generations are engaged in media in different ways than what traditional media regard as valid (Westlund & Bjur, 2014). Thus, if being informed is a serious indicative of human and social capital that enhances democratic values (and we believe it is so), traditional news might need to expand their methods to engage younger audiences with even bolder and faster approaches that grasp the millennial ideals of what is worth their time.

GAMIFIED INTERFACES IN DIGITAL JOURNALISM

The first mention on the use of gamification and the news industry in a scholarly publication is 2012 Susan Jacobson's analysis of multimedia journalism published on nytimes.com. While discussing new storytelling techniques in news websites, Jacobson addresses the rising research interest on the impact of digital games on digital news. The stress is placed on serious games as a storytelling technique and their ability to provide the audience with a medium to explore news stories on their own terms. Currently there are various projects that are studying the intersection of journalism and gamification, such as *The Impact of Gamification on Journalism* at the University of Jyväskylä, Finnland, and the *Going Mobile* project at Karlstad University, Sweden (Ferrer Conill, 2014). Admittedly, research on serious games (Stapleton, 2004) and the so-called newsgames (Burton, 2005; Bogost et al., 2010; Siitonen & Varsaluoma, 2013) has gained more traction than the gamification of news, and that might be because game studies scholars feel more at home with the study of newsgames than with gamification, which has received a more controversial attention from the game design community. The difference, as Sicart (2008) explains, is that newsgames are *computer games used to participate in the public sphere with the intention of explaining or commenting on current news*, while, as we mentioned, gamification does not attempt to create a full-fledged game, but simply apply game elements to a digital service.

To simplify this, it could be argued that newsgames bring news to games, and the gamification of journalism brings games to news. However, newsgames and gamification of news share a similar mission, which is majorly considered to convey current events in an engaging manner to an audience that responds and is engaged by the language of video games (Ruffino, 2014). What differs both approaches is the procedural rhetoric (Treanor & Mateas, 2009), as newsgames carry along a self-contained narrative that is to be explored by the users. Gamification on the other hand intends to maintain the original news piece narrative and offer a game-like experience that can relate to that particular piece, or extend to the overall interaction with the news service as a whole. Interestingly, while newsgames sparked a great scholarly debate, it is gamification the one that has managed to contribute with more varied applications in real life journalism settings, which in no doubt is responsible for the current rise for interest in the gamification of news, both in the bloggosphere, but also in media studies. The reason for this could be explained by the higher resource demands of newsgames against a limited impact. On the one hand newsgames require a game design and implementation process for each story while making a serious impact only on that particular story. The results, attention span, and most important of all, information acquisition might be powerful, but as a change of habit and general news consumption impact is still limited. On the other hand, gamification still requires the game design and implementation process, but it is normally on a website or service level, which reduces resources per piece, and at the same time attempts to have an effect on the overall news consumption habits of readers in the long term, creating long-standing adherence to news services.

This section aims to reroute the previous section by detailing some of the game elements that are more recurrent in gamified news services. As a trend in the industry and for the sake of brevity, we take a look at the *triforce* of gamification, the omnipresent PBLs (points, badges, and leaderboards), and discuss the way they have been introduced in news websites and how they intend to engage with the users.

Points, Badges, and Leaderboards

As it has been pointed out, PBLs are the main game components that gamification initiatives include in their systems. Journalism and news services are not an exception.

Points aim to provide a sense of progress. Earning points for performing actions or achieving milestones becomes an automatic feedback mechanism that prompts the user to keep using the system. Journalism is no stranger to the points craze. As mentioned above, there are existing analogue approaches, like the *PostPoints* loyalty program from The Washington Post. This program offers a seemingly crude approximation of a game system where points are exchanged for gifts and discounts. The points are earned in a rather unclear way by reading the paper but also by shopping at third party establishments. The instant feedback loop is lost as a reward here. A completely different type of interaction occurs in a gamified digital system like the one over at Bleacher Report, a sports news website. B/R turns journalists into users by awarding them with points according to their writing career statistics regarding their contribution to the site. Number of reads, number of comments, number of lead stories, and other metrics keep adding points defining each author's reputation level. Almost immediately, journalists can evaluate the impact of their work in the organization and compels them to keep contributing to the site.

Badges function as a graphical representation of a one-time achievement or a cumulative achievement of other metrics (Antin & Churchill, 2011). One of the infamous use of badges in news gamified systems is that of Google News Badges. Google News, launched in September 2002, is a news aggregator gathering news from 25,000 publishers and offering a country-specific version for international users in 27 languages. As most news aggregators, they provide a personalized news experience, allowing the user to select the type of news they want to appear in their news feed, as well as which news publishers they want the content to be pulled from (Galbraith, 2008). In 2011 Google introduced Google News Badges with a set of 500 theme badges that could be leveled up. The new gamified layer intended to allow the user to track reading habits, create a more personalized news experience, and find articles on favorite topics. One year later, the system was phased out due to lack of impact. What Google missed here is that the system relied on providing vague feedback on what users already did. There was no real outcome for advancing in the game other than leveling up the badges. On top of that, there was very limited focus on persuading users to expand their content types, which would lead to broaden the variety of badges earned. Instead, Google News Badges resulted in users narrowing the number of chosen topics and providers, reinforcing users' selective exposure. A much more elegant use of badges was crafted by the football news-oriented NFL.com network in their system NFL Fan Rewards, rolled out in 2012. The badges in this gamified layer resembled patches on a football jersey and represented the user's rank in a team, from *Rookie* to *Hall of Fame*. Each patch was awarded by cumulative points and by completing *drives* of news and videos the user would have to read or view. The NFL Fan Rewards system excelled in its design because it managed to mimic American Football culture. The digital patches, just like the real ones in the game, served to show the status of each user within the community.

Leaderboards are a more ambivalent and complex game component. Leaderboards include the social aspect to the gamified system, as they represent the user's performance when compared to other users. On the one hand, they are great motivators as they show how much more progress is needed to increase a position in the ranking. On the other hand, assessing a very large gap between the higher-ranked users can demotivate a user and provoked leaving the system. To enhance the motivating effects and alleviate the demotivating ones, the Times Points program by media conglomerate Times Internet Limited, India's largest internet network, integrated two different leaderboards. This gamified system is integrated across 12 different media sites that offer a wide and eclectic range of content, including traditional news, real state, music streaming, feminine entertainment, masculine entertainment, and car deals. Thus, each website participant in the program offers both a site specific leaderboard and a global leaderboard that combines all users across websites. Finally, one of the most publicized gamified initiatives was a very simple system implemented by The Guardian, which implemented an investigative journalism crowdsourcing campaign to sieve through a large set of leaked documents that would trigger a major political scandal anchored in the UK's parliamentary expenses and the misuse of allowances by Members of Parliament. The Guardian created a specific page where all the documents could be openly accessed by their readers. Each user had the possibility to flag documents as "Not interesting", "Interesting but known", "Interesting", and "Investigate this!". Additionally, a progress bar showing the amount of data covered was implemented, as well as a leaderboard that displayed the top users and the number of items reviewed. The gamified crowdsourcing campaign had 20,000 readers review 170,000 in the first 80 hours harnessing the willpower of users to do a joint investigative journalism initiative. The engagement of users was driven by a combination of a shared goal by the community, a clear sensation of progress, and a sense of status as they mentioned in the leaderboards. In further iterations of the system, they allowed users to focus on the documents that tackled their own MPs in order to make the experience more relevant to their personal context (Daniel & Flew, 2010). Interestingly, The Guardian managed to create an article-level gamified news which does not extend to the whole website, which opens horizons for small scale approaches to gamifying the news.

Another great example of a gamified news article that incorporates PBLs is Al Jazeera's *Pirate Fishing: An Interactive Investigation*. This particular piece transforms viewers into players, aiming to "come up with an original, interactive, investigative story that would transform viewers into players and capture their attention" (Ruhfus, 2014). Juliana Ruhfus and her team created a storytelling interface including videos, maps, photos, and other documents to submerge the reader into the process of reporting, with the reference of illegal fishing in Sierra Leone. Here the user is prompted to view videos and read documents to collect *Investigation Points*, which in turn take the view from a *Junior Researcher* position up to *Senior Reporter*. As the user advances stages, by accessing to different notebooks, identifying evidence, and exploring maps, it is possible to acquire badges such as *Activist*, *City Explorer*, or *Corruption Investigation*. This is a particularly insightful approach as how to expand the boundaries of digital news storytelling, attempting to engage users with game mechanics and other elements.

CRAFTING THE EXPERIENCE: BEYOND THE PBLs

The examples discussed above have different ways to approach users, but it is important to note the game mechanics they use do not affect the actual news pieces' content. This is probably the main reason to experiment with the gamification of news as a way to engage users to consume news. The strategies and tools to use in a gamified layer need to enrich the news experience by adapting the interface and user interaction to the users' needs while keeping the content a matter of editorial choice. If journalism is to continue to uphold certain democratic and civic function, then on the one hand, the gap between news and entertainment must remain open when it comes to content, and on the other hand, it should slowly disappear when it comes to format. The aim is to keep content and format as independent as possible.

We have discussed the possible reasons for gamifying the news. This section aims to connect the dots in the attempt to motivate for news consumption. For that reason we try to conceptualize young news readers as game players to understand what they crave. Consequently, we analyze the strategies and game mechanics that could be persuasive and engaging while remaining as little intrusive to the news experience as possible.

Expanding Gamification to News Consumption

According to Diddi and LaRose (2006) habit strength is the most powerful predictor of news consumption. That is a great place to start analyzing the gamification of news. The narrative of a gamified system should lead to the creation of new habits for the users. Accordingly, there needs to be a clear description of what the target behaviors that would derive into new habits are. Tracking behaviors during the interaction with the interface and setting success metrics is key to the system. Metrics can range in terms of engagement (news accessed, unique visits, time on the site), loyalty (users return, engaging other users), virality (sharing, social media, and social connections), and monetization (conversion rates and virtual goods) (Meloni & Gruener, 2012).

At this point the users/gamers need to be defined. Who are the players that will interact with the interface? There is a tradition in the gamification literature to use Bartle's (1996) player type model, however, the model was developed for Massively Multiplayer Online Games (MMOGs) and Bartle himself has mentioned his concerns about using the model for other type of "games". Bartle's original taxonomy divided players into four categories: *killers*, *achievers*, *socializers*, and *explorers*. For the purposes of a journalism gamified system, players can be typified differently by looking at what is behind the user's motives for each choice (Krcmar & Strizhakova, 2009). Most of gamified programs tend to reward killers, as those are the ones who respond to leaderboards and ranks, but killers are probably not the target of those who seek civic engagement. Thus, the key here is to find what are the type of players that want to read news. Explorers and socializers seem good news player types. The first could be engaged by finding new content and unveiling stories. The latter could be engaged by interacting with other users. Additional player types for journalism could be contributors, those who are engaged by providing content, and watchdogs, those who could be engaged by pointing out misleading information that has been published.

In the next step, the *activity loops* as well as the *progression loops* have to be defined. What is to be considered an activity, whether it is reading an entire article, watching a video, writing a comment in the forum, exploring new news sections, providing with content for news or even reporting wrong information. Each activity loop is composed of an action conducted by the user, upon which the system offers feedback, creating engagement and motivation to keep performing the action. Progression loops aim to make visible the improvement of each user, from the onboarding stage to an eventual mastering of the system.

Finally, the actual elements that will be placed in the interface to produce the feedback need to be chosen. Points, badges, and leaderboards are only the tip of the iceberg, but certainly they could be viable in a news website for different purposes. Leaderboards for general readers seem to be problematic, but certainly for investigative crowdsourcing (as previously mentioned in The Guardian example) could be particularly enticing. Achievements for different reads, content unlocking, social graphs, collections, and virtual goods are other game components that could easily fit the needs of the users. As it has been discussed, there are a wide range of game elements that can be included in the interface to enhance user experience (Zichermann & Cunningham, 2011; Witt, Scheiner, & Robra-Bissantz, 2011;), and they need to be applied on a case to case basis, both for desktop and mobile devices (Crowley et al., 2012) with adaptable and personalized experiences.

In sum, there are four main areas that new to be closely planned from a multidiscipline perspective with game designers, journalists, and business strategists. The first one is the progress paths. The notion of progress is a very powerful motivator (see Amabile & Kramer, 2011). The journey from novice to mastery needs to be something acknowledged. Challenges and current affairs knowledge tests presented as in system games can be a way to go. Secondly, timely feedback and rewards are necessary to keep the users informed of their progress. Once again, the rewards need to be appealing to the users and have to be related to the activities. A comment is an activity a socializer is most plausible to do. Similarly, explorers would appreciate rewards for curiosity, but not reading more than others. Hence being rewarded with status for such a feat is a reward that does not motivate a socializer. Status might resonate more with a watchdog user type, for example. Getting such reward for uncovering wrong doing publicly might be a better match. Third, the social connection. The transition to digital news have turned the news experience a social one, especially with the new role of social media when disseminating the news (Hermida, 2010; Moe, 2013). Harnessing social networks, both internally and externally in order to control the path of news, but also to create competition, camaraderie, and support is hugely important. The social aspect is usually what provides the notion of relatedness. Finally, the interface and user experience. Gamification is a persuasive technology (Llagostera, 2012), thus the aesthetics, design, and sophistication of the system has to entice the user to keep using it. These four areas must be taken into consideration as a whole, blending them into one functioning news experience, while keeping the balance that would appeal to all user types. It is not an easy feat, but failing to get each part right or deal with them as isolated components of a system might lead to failure (Palmer, Lunceford & Patton, 2012).

Ultimately, the goal is to generate a feeling of competence, autonomy, and relatedness to generate the intrinsic motivation of consuming news in the user (Przybylski, Rigby & Ryan, 2010). Simultaneously, it is vital to keep news content out of the equation. Maintaining the news untouched is key to this process if the notion of democratic values is to be upheld. The gamification process is meant to provide new value to the user, personalizing the news experience with relevant, targeted news, embedded in a social environment, while keeping the quality of the news intact, and always aiming for a broadening of views, avoiding selective exposure, and emphasizing improvement of the users' knowledge.

CHALLENGES AND NEEDS FOR RESEARCH

In media studies, every ground breaking technological innovation and every new medium have been accepted with the widespread fear that scientific paradigms as we know them might be shattered. The idea that the effects of new technology might be detrimental to society, and might aid those in power to control and exploit users has been a recurrent one since the dawn of this discipline (Jensen & Rosengren, 1990; Scannell, 2007). Interestingly, when the dust settles, research and life moves on, waiting for the next ground-shaking innovation.

Journalism is a long and well-established research tradition and paradoxically, as the actual news industry is immersed in a world-wide crisis, the academic field of journalism is thriving. Gamification, on the other hand, is a rather new field of study, and while Hamari, Koivisto and Pakkanen (2014) demonstrate that research on gamification has been extremely prolific since 2011, much still needs to be done. Furthermore, gamification is a profoundly multidisciplinary field, which allows for comparative research, but also for research projects that combine different approaches and traditions that could lead to a better understanding of such a complex phenomenon. However, the focus so far has been on the practice and implementation of gamification, and particularly on the technologies used to apply game mechanics in user interfaces. This means that focus on media research on gamification has only started. There is a an apparent disregard for an inclusive approach that attempts to introduce a multiplicity of factors, such as the medium, the effects game elements have on users, but also on the perspective of how non-game media is affected by those game elements. Similarly, a look into the effects that pervasive, continuous, and ubiquitous games have on media consumption and creation is still merely on its infancy. The issues of time and space have been not been optimally researched.

It is exciting to think that at this stage, research on the gamification of journalism has a lot to conquer. We need more studies that cover how to effectively apply games to journalism without breaking the essence of what journalism should be. Newsgames cover parts of this, but there are a lot of new formats that do not require creating a full-fledged game to convey a message. We need to understand how new rituals and habits of youth and their new mobile lifestyles affect their perception of the role of news (Bolin & Westlund, 2009). We should certainly look into what are the main motivators that could lead to change those rituals in order to create a habit of news consumption. Additionally, we need to know how gamifying the interface of a news website could affect news producers and journalism practice. Equally important is to study if the premise of leaving the content of news untouched is true or if, as some suspect, gamifying the news would necessarily change the content of news, trivializing the news experience.

Some of the challenges linked to the research of gamified news carry methodological challenges that should be confronted. Longitudinal studies, multidisciplinary approaches, and mix-methods designs are hard to conduct, normally requiring more than one team of researchers. However, it is essential to conduct multifaceted research including as many factors as possible to fully understand the effects of game elements in news environments.

Finally, other challenges must be bridged. Disentangling studies from time and space is a particularly difficult thing to do, especially when it is connected use of media that happens everywhere, all the time. There is a need looking into the context of news consumption as a whole, and not only as an interface to exploit. We need to understand what are the contextual factors that require a unique set of *affordances of fun, motivation, and learning* that journalism could offer to its users (Deterding, 2014).

Thus, we call for experimental design including aspects of mobility and habits, looking for ecological validity, thinking on the setting and context first in order to grasp much more nuanced results from empirical research. Surveys, focus groups, and ethnographic and participatory observation are methods that can help complement studies that deepen in all aspects of each study conducted.

We encourage researchers to cross boundaries and engage colleagues from other disciplines to join them conduct their studies. Mixing perspectives and theoretical frameworks from journalism studies with different traditions, expanding both the current body of knowledge in journalism research and gamification. If adding game elements to news is crossing certain boundaries, studying this particular phenomenon should invite to cross boundaries of conventional research too.

CONCLUSION: GAMIFICATION'S FUTURE PLACE WITHIN JOURNALISM AND JOURNALISM RESEARCH

The current tensions of the journalistic field, from a professional logic to a commercial logic, combined with the expansion of the internet and mobile technologies have led to a decline of news industry. Similarly, the apparition of new channels of media, the reconfiguration of audiences, and decreasing engagement of youth with news consumption has derived in the experimentation with new formats and models designed to make the consumption of news a much more engaging experience.

At the same time, gamification, by applying game mechanics to non-gaming environments, has proven to be capable of engaging users and leading to the creation of habits and social change in several disciplines.

There is an undeniable theoretical benefit from applying gamification into digital news outlets. Motivating younger generations to adopt new media rituals while providing them with agency (van Dijck, 2009), could lead to enhancing the democratic aims of journalism (Schudson, 1997). It offers the potential to generate the stimuli to amplify small wins generating engagement, user habit, and finally feeding a progress loop that leads to social change. However, there is risk of centering the news experience on the game rather than the content or even worse, perverting the gamified system for sole purpose of commercialization. There is also skepticism and resistance from the news industry. Surely, there is a whole lot to learn.

Concerning gamification's place within journalism research one is tempted to ask, "What place?" since there is so little written about it. Much more theoretical and empirical research is needed in the intersection between journalism and gamification. From this chapter we can see that much is at stake and that gamification is already in practice in some news outlets, but that there is a serious lack of research in the area. Future research projects could include, but not be limited to, explorations on how journalists view and appropriate gamification elements in the production of news; how gamification is being implemented on various platforms – computer, tablet, smartphone – and in different publishing contexts – countries, traditions; how users view and relate to gamification features; how does mobility and gamification shape news consumption; if and how gamification affects what news is being published and how users are affected by it. Obviously, answering these research questions is a gigantic task that would need collaborations and many different methodological approaches. But it is a task that is needed since only systematic, comparative and empirical research can shed a light on what gamification, for better or for worse, will do with journalism.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Gamification: The use of game mechanics and game elements within environments that are normally not considered games themselves.

Journalism: The activity of surveying and interpreting matters of public interest and then delivering such information through a wide variety of channels and formats to a community or society at large.

Media Convergence: The process of integration and amalgamation of different types of media content and media technologies affecting the creating, dissemination, and consumption of media.

News: The principal output of journalism, based on information derived from recent or previously unknown events, often embedded with opinion and editorial content.

Newsgames: A broad genre of digital games that incorporate journalistic principles, content and narratives to full-fledged games.

User Agency: The activities, capacities, status, and motivations of users exerted while interacting with a system and that are embedded in the multifaceted nature of their role as facilitators, producers, consumers, and data providers.

User Engagement: A psychological state where users are either cognitively or emotionally involved with the system they are interacting with.

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Chapter 36
Games and Quizzes in Online Journalism:
Reaching Users via Interactivity and Customization

Bartosz W. Wojdynski
University of Georgia, USA

ABSTRACT

The competition for online news page views increasingly involves strategies designed to promote the "viral" nature of content, and to capitalize on the content's spread by ensuring that the content does not quickly lose timeliness or relevance. As a result of the pressure for these stories, news experiences which can be revisited by consumers are at a premium. In this ecosystem, interactive games and quizzes which can be played to receive different feedback or reach a different ending offer promise for news organizations to receive ongoing and widespread reward for their efforts. This chapter provides an overview of the state of gamification in journalism, challenges and opportunities for the growth of games in online news, and discusses evidence for the impact of increasingly gamified news content on how users process and perceive news information.

INTRODUCTION

The most-viewed news story in 2013 was not really a news story at all.

Published on December 21st, "How Y'All, Youse, and You Guys Talk," the most-viewed story on the *New York Times'* site was an online quiz based on linguistic research from a Harvard student, as seen from the point of view of a former North Carolina State statistics student who was working at the *Times* as an intern. In the last 11 days of the year, the story managed to receive the most traffic of any *Times* story all year (New York Times Co., 2014).

The premise for the quiz was simple: users were served 25 multiple-choice questions, each of which asked about a specific example of word choice or pronunciation (for example, "What do you call the long sandwich that contains cold cuts, lettuce, and so on?"). Once users answered all 25 questions,

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they received a result that matched their answers to the part of the country – often a small region – that matched their specific diction and pronunciation the best.

How did this story top coverage of news in a year filled with the Boston Marathon bombing and the rollout of new federal healthcare legislation? The answer lies in the increasingly socially mediated landscape of online news, in which content that offers users an emotional payoff, a novelty, and a chance to discover and share something about themselves is at a premium. The increased incentivization of these content aspects provides opportunities for news organizations to use news games and quizzes to not only deliver news value to audiences, but to drive traffic to their Websites. Increasingly, news organizations are providing audiences with interactive games and quizzes that provide users with an interactive experience that maybe highly related to a current news topic, or may just provide a diversion to users and traffic to the news organizations' Web servers. The integration of online news and online games has received attention as part of a broader rise of "gamification" across a variety of industries (see [*introductory chapter, this volume*]; Deterding, Dixon, Khaled, & Nacke, 2011). Although motivating individuals to learn or act by using game-like elements has been hailed for its potential when done well (e.g., Kapp, 2012; Deterding, Björk, Nacke, Dixon, & Lawley, 2013), the adoption of news games by news organization has, to date, focused on creating discrete news consumption experiences, only some of which seem to incentivize learning or news consumption.

This chapter provides an overview of the role of games and quizzes in the journalism industry. It begins by discussing the state of the online journalism industry today, including changes in how audiences reach news content, how such content is consumed, and how news organizations seek to monetize content. The following section discusses the role of games and quizzes within this landscape, and discusses their contribution to news organizations and audiences from a functional perspective. This is followed by a section on best practices in the design of online news games and quizzes. This section is followed by descriptions of four types of news games and quizzes: identity quizzes, knowledge quizzes, simulations, and topical play. The final section of the chapter outlines challenges to and opportunities for the growth of news games and quizzes, and suggests necessary research for understanding how these formats change the relationships between audiences and the news.

THE ONLINE NEWS LANDSCAPE

Although Internet adoption in the United States has leveled off in recent years, consumption of news via the Web continues to grow by all metrics. Digital advertising revenue continues to grow (Holcomb & Mitchell, 2014), and new digital-first news organizations have emerged on to the scene, fueled by venture capital (Pew, 2014). Online news video consumption continues to slowly increase (Pew, 2014). As news consumers receive a growing portion of their news online, the market for news content grows less localized; news producers have found themselves in competition with national and global outlets. The competition for news consumers – whether measured in digital subscriptions, unique page views, minutes spent on the site, Facebook "Likes" – has never been more fierce. As famed journalist Glen Greenwald told the *New York Times* in 2014:

No one, not The New York Times, no one, is entitled to an audience. The ability to thrive is directly dependent upon your ability to convince people that you're providing something valuable and unique (Carr, 2014)."

The growth of online news consumption has been partially fueled by the increase in traffic from social networking sites to news content. Individuals browsing their customized social media feeds encounter links to news content shared by friends, often with commentary by friend who posted it, and a thread of responses by others. The rise of user-distributed content (Villi, 2012; Villi, Matikainen, & Khaldarova, 2014) not only influences the exposure of others to news, but also the practice of news production. In recent years, as time spent on social networking services has skyrocketed (Short, 2013, p. 39), consumers get more of their news from posts by members of their social network, and less of it by choosing from a news organization homepage or aggregator (Thompson, 2014). Posted outbound links from Facebook to content publishers grew from 62 million in 2012 to 161 million in 2013 (Thompson, 2014). Half of U.S. Facebook users get news there (Mitchell, 2014) and nearly a third say that keeping up with news and current events is a major reason why they use Facebook (Smith, 2014). This growth in link sharing is important to news publishers, given that their audience is likely to spend a much larger portion of its time visiting social network sites than news Web sites. The average American aged 18-64 spends 3.2 hours per day using social media (Ipsos, 2013), while spending only 70 minutes consuming news across all platforms (Heimlich, 2010).

In this new ecosystem of socially-mediated news consumption, the stories that get the most traffic are the ones that are shared the most often. Although the propensity of a given news story to be shared depends on the interplay of a number of factors and concurrent situational events, researchers have begun to examine factors that increase sharing of content. A study by Berger and Milkman (2012) showed that emotionally-laden content is shared more often than other content, and that high-arousal emotions are the ones more likely to fuel sharing. The notion that effective news reaches its viewers on a emotional level is not a new one, but it may be enhanced in an era in which users increasingly access stories directly and not via an interface. This behavior has found to influence sharing and speed of sharing news stories on Twitter (Stieglitz & Dang-Xuan, 2013). Differences between individual users play a key role as well; to receive news through social media, individuals must have friends who pass on news articles. They also must be willing to potentially interrupt their social media browsing by opening a link to the news content. Enduring differences between individuals including personality type (Kim, Kim, & Seo, 2014), and situational differences in factors such as availability of attention, device, bandwidth, and others.

In addition to shareability, a second characteristic of news stories that lends them currency in the economy of the viral is staying power. Editors have long known that evergreen stories have their value not just for filling in the news hole on a slow news day, but also for taking a longer time to become stale. On the Web, this allows a piece a larger window of time in which to gather page views and draw unique visitors, two metrics of success important to publishers and their advertisers (Cherubini, 2014). Staying power also allows the online word-of-mouth process that takes place through social networks to reach users that may be more on the periphery of their networks, those who have fewer connections, or those who utilize the network less frequently. A review of top traffic published by BuzzFeed, a provider of news and entertainment content that both hosts its own stories and partners with other news organizations to display them, illustrates the evergreen nature of frequently shared stories (Thompson, 2014). Much of the list is populated by "listicles," or list articles, which break content down into simple chunks (e.g., "30 Signs You're Almost 30").

Not every news story is well-suited to trade in either emotional impact or staying power, and most online news organizations have to dedicate much of their resources to covering time-sensitive, newly developing events. Such stories necessarily have a short shelf life, and are often more focused on efficiently presenting the available information than making an emotional impression. This creates a juxtaposition between the kinds of stories that last and those who are only viewed within the first 12 hours of publication. Publishers strive for a mix of the two – longer, evergreen pieces that may continue to pull in new readers to the site over a period of months, or longer.

Scholars have noted that the increased competition for audience may have a negative effect on its quality. “Tabloidization” describes the process of producing stories and story-promoting elements (such as links and headlines) in a manner that is “designed to be stimulating and exciting (McLachlan & Golding, 2000). A perceived rise in tabloidization is not unique to online media (e.g., Tulloch, 2000; Bek, 2004), an era of increasing tabloidization has seen a shift toward more coverage of “soft news” rather than “hard news” (Kurtz, 1993), or scenarios in which “the cheap, easy, and popular story often wins out over the expensive, difficult, and less popular one (Bird, 2009).” Research has shown that presenting stories in a tabloidized or sensationalized style leads to lower perceptions of news organization credibility (Mackay & Bailey, 2012), although conflicting effects have been found on participants’ enjoyment of news consumption (Johansson, 2008; Mackay & Bailey, 2012).

A key shift in the way online news is consumed has been driven by the increased portion of news traffic that occurs via SNSes. Because social media recommendations take the form of a link to a specific page, users recommending a news feature will post a link directly to that feature, bypassing the news organization’s home page. However, a particular component of a multimedia packages can serve as the entry point to accessing the rest of package content – when a user lands at the first component, the interior navigation of the package can guide the user to the other content nodes. News games are often presented as part of a larger multimedia package (George-Palilonis and Spillman, 2011). Socially shared news games may also help facilitate incidental news exposure (see Tewksbury, Weaver, & Maddex, 2001) to headlines and “top stories” on the site.

Metrics for digital news success – directly tied to the ability to monetize the viewing of news content by selling advertising – have also seen a shift over recent years. Contemporary Web news rooms, aided by analytics software from companies like Chartbeat and Outbrain, pay granular attention to how content performs in terms of page views, video starts, and time on pages, and use this information to negotiate rates with advertisers, as well as to position and promote content (Tandoc, 2014). One aspect of the increased social mediation of news exposure is that engagement on the news site tends to be much lower for users arriving via social media than for users who access the site directly. A recent study showed that direct visitors to a specific site spend an average of nearly three times longer per visit, visit a specific site three times as often, and view five times as many pages over the course of a month than visitors who access the content through social media (Mitchell, Olmstead, & Jurkowitz, 2014).

An additional consideration for news organizations with regard to investment in games is the rapid growth in news consumption on mobile platforms. News consumers across the world are increasingly getting their online news via smartphone or tablet, although computers still remain slightly more popular (Reuters, 2013). Although mobile gaming is a booming industry overall, Web-based mobile news consumption poses several challenges to news organizations seeking to use news games to present and promote their content. While many legacy-based online news providers have been slow to adapt their delivery methods to an increasingly mobile-based audience (Nel & Westlund, 2012), the promise of news games in attracting mobile audience (through the promise of play, geographical awareness, and other factors) is counterbalanced by several challenges.

First, a number of technological constraints make it difficult for developers to ensure a consistent experience across platforms. A number of interactive games still utilize Adobe Flash technology to handle animation, interactivity and video streaming, but certain mobile devices (such as Apple’s iPhone) have refused to support Flash's platform. Games which contain high-resolution images or video require a lot of bandwidth, which poses two potential barriers: users who do not have fast data coverage my get a sub-optimal experience with a lot of waiting, and users who do not pay for unlimited data access may choose to spend their data on more necessary or efficient content.

A second, but potentially related problem is news consumers' own preferences: they are much more likely to prefer mobile devices for consuming quick news, but not for in-depth experiences (Reuters, 2013); and they consume traditional journalistic content far more often than online-specific content (Wolf & Schnauber, 2014) Users access news via mobile in different settings and scenarios than they do from computers, often accessing content in gaps between their routines (Dimmick, Feaster, & Hoplamazian, 2011). As a result, they may be less likely to choose a game that requires attention and immersion over text content, which can be downloaded and consumed quickly.

On the other hand, mobile devices offer several benefits that game devices can harness to make news gamers' experience more customized to the situation in which users may play them. Perhaps chief among these is the potential of geolocation. Smartphone hardware has made it easy for application to access a user's precise geographical location, and a variety of general online games and applications have harnessed this ability to serve users unique features based on where they are, or to allow user to compete or interact with others in the same area. This feature also allows games to integrate other smartphone applications, such as maps or recommendation services, to add situationally relevant content. One could imagine an update to the *New York Times'* distracted driving simulation that replaces the background with satellite pictures from the users' surroundings. The ability for games to offer different user experiences based on user location may also add to the likelihood of repeat play.

GAMES AND QUIZZES AS NEWS CONTENT

The need for emotion-laden, sharable content with staying power highlights the role that non-traditional, interactive news features like games and quizzes can play in driving traffic to news sites and drawing attention to news stories. News games (often stylized as "newsgames") use unique properties of digital media to merge some of the functions of news with the ability of the user to interact with content and compete with herself or others. Relative to other digital games, games tied to news events need to be easy to play to have an appeal beyond frequent gamers (Bogost, Ferrari, & Schweitzer, 2010, p. 18). Sicart (2008) positions news games as a narrower subset of serious games (see Michael & Chen, 2005; Ritterfeld, Cody, & Vorderer, 2009) that use the notion of play and/or game mechanics for purposes that go beyond leisure. Proponents of serious games have argued that games can be used not only to provide recreation or diversion, but also to educate and help identify solutions to complex problems (McGonigal, 2011).

The inclusion of news-related games and quizzes as journalism is relatively new, and not without controversy. Some of the controversy stems from the function these games fulfill for their users and producers. Simon Ferrari has argued that "that most games called "newsgames" don't have the same intentions or goals as traditional reporting, or "the news," but rather those of the op-ed piece: to persuade; therefore, we should label these digital opinion pieces as "editorial" rather than "news. (Ferrari, 2009). The relationship between gameplay experience and news events also manifests itself in the creation of video games that are based on news. As noted by George-Palilonis & Spillman (2011), the 2005 video documentary "Playing the News" profiled the story of a company that developed a video game based on the United States' siege of Fallujah during the Iraq conflict in 2004. Other examples include PRISM the game and Eddy's Run: The Prism Prison, both based on the whistleblower Edward Snowden's revelations about government surveillance. These games, usually distributed freely online, are not developed by news organizations, and may often play a role that is more critical or persuasive than informative. For example, Eddy's Run, which puts the game player in the character of Snowden trying to evade government officials, was created by German development studio Binji as an "artistic game-homage" to Snowden (Pitcher, 2013).

Journalism is often described in terms of the functions it fulfills for its consumers, which vary across individuals and situations. These functions evolve over time with changes to the journalism industry and to audience expectations. Kovach and Rosenstiel, in their book "Blur: How to Know What's True in the Age of Information Overload," propose eight contemporary functions, that of authenticator, investigator, witness bearer, smart aggregator, forum organizer, and role model, empowerer, and sense-maker (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2010, pp. 176-180). News games are well suited to play the latter two of these roles. News games can help empower the user by giving her a perspective she hasn't had before, by giving her the power to explore relationships between sets of data, or by allowing her to test or discover an aspect of her ability, or her personality. They can also help the user make sense of dimensions of a news story that other news forms do not present as well. Through the use of animation and simulation, games can certainly convey a sense of elapsed time and physical space that does not come across in still images and text, though may still be there in video. The added element of interactivity, which gives the user control over elements of the content or of the experience, can give users of news games an enhanced ability to discover, explore, and understand.

An important step in mapping out the landscape for a particular news form involves defining its boundaries and inclusion criteria. Beyond merely facilitating interaction between a user and content the interaction needs to be linked to a particular goal, score, or outcome (Bogost et al, 2010). The increased presence of games in the news landscape may be viewed in relation to a broaderrise in interest in and use of gamification across a wide variety of disciplines (Hamari, Koivisto, & Sarsa, 2014; Hanus & Fox, 2015; Lister, West, Canon, Sax, & Brodegard, 2014; Snyder & Hartig, 2013). Gamification, which has been defined as "the use of game design elements principles in non-game contexts (Deterding et al, 2013)," seeks to give the user intrinsic or extrinsic motivation for engaging with content, often by giving the user a task linked to a scoring system, timer or other gauge of performance. Gamification often seeks to motivate users to improve their knowledge or change their behavior, and reviews of gamification studies show some evidence that game-like elements can shape desired outcomes (Hamari et al., 2014). News games and quizzes may gamify current events and information by testing users' existing knowledge or ability or by providing users with an evaluation of their selves based on user interaction,

Gamification, however, is not a necessary component of news games; news organizations also deploy games that are very much traditional games, but which bring attention to a news topic through their subject matter or links to additional content. Additionally, organizations publish news graphics and documentary features allow the user to interact with content, but do not seek to "gamify" this interaction. Framing these types of user interactions as games connotes the idea that users voluntarily choose to engage with the content for the purpose of entertainment. However, such a simplistic causal explanation can also be inverted; as Deterding (2014) has argued, because gameplay involves voluntary decisions to start and stop playing, it fulfills a need for autonomy.

A second necessary element in any definition of news games is that the content of the game needs be related to an issue of contemporary interest. However, the nature of this relationship can vary widely. News games close to the subject matter can include knowledge quizzes pertaining to a breaking or ongoing news topic. However, games, quizzes, and simulations can also be relevant to news based on only the overall topic domain, on the inclusion of characters from current events, or on the release of data related to a news topic. To illustrate the breadth of news games, the Knight News Game Award presented by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation includes the following in its scope: current events, infographic news games, puzzle news games, literacy games, community news games, and news game platforms. Much as the format can vary, the relationship of the gameplay to the news topic itself may be central or tangential.

The news games discussed in this chapter are games that are used for the purpose of conveying or promoting news information online, thus intentionally excluding commercial and recreational games that may also refer to current events. Other scholars have defined news games more broadly, such as "computer games used to participate in the public sphere with the intention of explaining or commenting on current news (Sicart, 2008)." The above definition duly notes that news games can fulfill the role of informational content or editorial content, explaining the news with an objective veneer or with a specific persuasive intent.

Key Variables in News Game Design

Although the ultimate success of a news game owes a lot to timing and competition, there are a number of design considerations that increase the odds of success, either by maximizing user engagement with the content or by increasing the ease with which the game's popularity can spread. These factors may underlie a news organization's decision to deploy an interactive game or quiz, even though its creation might require greater time and personnel resources than creating a text or video story. While these factors may not be unique to news games in comparison to other game formats, they constitute a set of relatively new criteria for news producers and publishers to consider when making content production decisions, and a set of characteristics that may be used to classify and manipulate characteristics of news for empirical research into their effects.

1. Level and Type of Interactivity

At the heart of successful gameplay is the user's ability to submit information and receive information based on what was transmitted. This type of affordance of digital media forms is usually referred to as "interactivity," and it has been viewed as a hallmark of a variety of digital media types for decades. Specific definitions of user-system interactivity tend to focus either on the relatedness of the messages being transmitted between the user and the interface (e.g., Rafaeli & Ariel, 2007), or on the amount and type of content control afforded to the user (Kalyanaraman & Wojdynski, 2015). Message-contingency definitions of interactivity focus on how interrelated the information submitted by the user and the information returned by the system are, with the assumption that perceived message contingency drives beneficial effects of interactivity (Sundar, Bellur, Oh, Jia, & Kim, 2014).

News games are predicated on interactivity; in order to have the outcome of the game not be randomly generated, the game needs to collect input from the user, and the input needs to affect the result accordingly. Interactivity influences both the outcomes of news consumption and the nature of the news consumption itself. The nature of the news consumption is fundamentally shifted to an experience that is tailored, in real-time, to suit characteristics of the user and the situation in which she is consuming the feature. Maximizing user interaction is not the same as maximizing users' control over the content or increasing their satisfaction; certain calls to interact with content may be too demanding vis-à-vis the reward obtained (e.g., Sundar, Kalyanaraman, & Brown, 2003). Likewise, the interface features that maximize user interaction may not be the same as those that facilitate the best perception. One study of six interaction modalities found that allowing users to access content by sliding it across the screen led to greater memory, while access via mouse-over or cover-flow led to greater user interaction (Sundar, Xu, Bellur, Oh, & Jia, 2011).

In general, research that has compared non-interactive content to interactive content, as well as that which has compared less interactive content to more interactive content, has found that greater interactivity tends to lead to more positive attitudes toward the content. This has carried across to attitude toward brands (Lee, Park, & Wise, 2013). For news organization, the presence of interactive games and quizzes may contribute to users perceiving the news site itself as interactive, which for some users can improve quality of information processing and preference for the site (Broekhuizen & Hoffmann, 2012).

Individual differences between news consumers also affect the degree to which they are likely to seek out interactive content, how they engage with it, and the outcomes of the interaction. One overarching difference is that of user experience and self-efficacy with interactive content. These concepts have often been studied together, as "power usage" (Sundar & Marathe, 2010). Interactive graphics may increase users' motivation to process the content (Burmester, Mast, Tille, & Weber, 2010), but they may only do so for users who come to the content with low levels of involvement in the topic (Wojdynski, 2014).

Within the context of gaming, several aspects of the user interaction may influence perceptions. Successful design of interaction for news games manifests itself in a low bar to entry for less-experienced users. The interface must be intuitive to use, and the headline and other introductory text must explain the purpose or goal of the feature. While innovation certainly can give cachet, the level and type of interactivity should be somewhat in line with user expections for that particular content domain or gameplay type (Sohn, Ci, & Lee, 2007), or users may be disappointed or confused. Interactivity within videos games brings with it a set of dimensions that do not apply to other digital media, including character customization and perceptual persuasiveness and thus ought to be studied using distinct measures and classification criteria (Weber, Behr, & DeMartino, 2014). The level of technological advancement of a game has been shown to increase players' involvement, excitement, and physiological arousal in the context of the game (Ivory & Kalyanaraman, 2007).

2. Design for Repeated Use

Another factor influencing the appeal and longevity of news games is the extent to which users are inclined to play the game more than once. While a singular experience may be rewarding enough for a player to decide to recommend the game to friends, repeated visits to an online feature provide chances for the player to play experience the game in different settings in his own life, some of which may more conducive than others to triggering the desire to share. Players may first access the game on a device on which they don't access their social networks, or through an Internet connection on which social network services are restricted.

The nature of play involved in the news game is one determinant of the likelihood for repeated play. Simulations and other games in which the objective is to reach a particular stage, play for as long as possible without error, or set a high score are designed to entice the user to improve her performance. However, incentivizing the reaching of certain scores, levels, times with the promise of additional features or content is a hallmark of digital gaming, and can be a powerful motivator (Richter, Raban, & Rafaeli, 2015), steering users to keep playing to reach higher levels of success. Interactive games in educational contexts have been shown to influence users' intrinsic motivation for achievement (Kang & Tan, 2014; Miller, Shell, Khandaker, & Soh, 2010).

With quizzes and question-based games, users may want to see if they can beat their initial score. However, if question-specific feedback is provided, in many games this becomes a matter of rote memorization. However, one way of adding variety to users' gameplay is by varying elements of the presentation of the quiz question and answers. This can include simply varying the order in which questions or answer choices are presented, or it can include varying the questions or answers themselves. Dynamic loading of content from a database (for example, using random number generation to load a different subset from a list of possible content each time) introduces a notion of repeated serendipity and discovery to the user experience: Each time the quiz is opened, the user doesn't know which questions she is going to receive. If the content is humorous or otherwise engaging, users may revisit the content several times to make sure that they have viewed all the possible questions or content nodes. The ability to compare one's score to others may also motivate users to continue playing (Yee, 2006).

Repeated use of a game also may enhance effects of the game on how users perceive the content. One mechanism through which repetition may shape effects is that of desensitization; exposure to serious news content in the context of a game may lead to desensitize users to the serious consequences of those issues. For example, repeated play of video games has been shown to lead to desensitization toward violence (Breuer, Scharkow, & Quandt, 2014; Brockmyer, 2015). However, studies have also shown that exposure to prosocial behavior and characters that act counter to stereotypes can lead to positive short-term and long-term effects on players' attitudes and behavior (see Greitemeyer & Mügge, 2014 for a meta-analysis). Both of these outcomes might be less likely in online news games than the broader video game world due to the differences in content; news games more typically do not have the depth of character development and game play afforded by console games.

3. The Ability to Acquire New Knowledge

News games take place in the domain of informational content. While the opportunity for play may serve as an initial driver to the news game, the opportunity to learn something new in the process may enhance user's motivations. Games that are tied to current issues in the news can offer users an engaging way to learn details about the topic while in pursuit of gaming goals. Quizzes are more directly designed to not only measure players' knowledge, but to identify gaps and provide the information therein. Quizzes published alongside informational content can also serve to reinforce the key points, dates, or individuals in a news story, likely increasing the likelihood of the user remembering this information at a future date

Some news games can offer specific context to a news story that is difficult for journalists to provide through another form. Simulation games (see the discussion of "Battle of the Bags" in the following section) can position the viewer in the role of a particular character in the news story, and give the user gaming tasks to recreate a particular moment or test a virtual skill. First-person video clips or animations can let the game player "see" what the character in the news story might see. In the role of the story character, the users can make decisions on the fly that shape the outcome. Through this process, the user obtains not factual knowledge, but a simulated experiential knowledge. This knowledge may not only create empathy for the specific participants in a story, but can help provide a context for the factual information contained in the game or in adjacent story content.

A TYPOLOGY OF GAMES AND QUIZZES IN ONLINE NEWS

News games vary widely in their interface design, purpose, subject matter, and mode of game play. Because novelty is a key element in the attention a game might receive, and thus its potential for viral spread, developers of news games and quizzes are often looking to re-invent the proverbial wheel in terms of presentation and opportunities for user interaction. This relative premium on uniqueness poses a challenge to creating an exhaustive and exclusive typology of news games. However, sorting games on the basis of the type and purpose of user interaction involved in game play allows for the creation of categories that have meaning to both producers and consumers.

Other typologies for interactive news content have placed an emphasis on a different scope. George-Palilonis and Spillman (2011) created a five-category typology of interactive graphics, drawing on earlier work by Nichani and Rajamanickam (2003), which included *serious games* as one broad category, but separate categories for *simulations* and *instructives* that could also include gamified elements. They suggest several criteria that serious games must include, including use of game strategies (such as having a story line that pulls users through the game), featuring some form of winning and losing or other payoff at the end, have an explanation of the rules of play, and involve tasks that can be achieved via a computer interface (George-Palilonis & Spillman, 2011, p. 173). Bogost et al (2010) developed a news-game-specific categorization scheme on the basis of their content and intent, although different categories refer to either content topic or presentation format, rendering the categories not exclusive. Their typology, which includes games about current events, infographic news games, documentary news games, puzzle, literacy news games, and community news games, provides useful labels for analyzing a broad set of games created by different parties that relate to news events.

Although the previous taxonomies have much value in providing some labels that can be used to differentiate some examples of interactive content from others, this chapter proposes a streamlined classification for games and quizzes used by news organizations based on the functions these games fulfill for both the news organization and the news audience. These classifications draw on the work of the authors above, based primarily on the nature of the user interaction involved in the game, the information necessary to develop the game, and the news values the game format can convey to its players.

There may be many reasons why a news organization would choose to devote resources to the development and promotion of game content. Games are a vehicle for technological innovation that may be rewarded by accolades from journalistic peers and increased public attention to a specific reporting project, new Web site, or new publication. Games may lure a player by providing a diversion, but spark that player's interest in consuming additional content on that topic. Games can even serve as a digital beta test of interface elements and formats that can be later applied to more serious content. However, it's also important to consider the ways in which games shape users' interaction with the news information itself – their interest in engaging with the content, their knowledge, their ability to understand complex processes or ideas, and their attitudes toward the issues raised in the content.

Games can also provide consumers of online news with an experience that other news content cannot match. One of the strongest ways that online games provide users with an experience that analog media cannot match is through their ability to provide customization of information. Kalyanaraman and Sundar (2006) define customization as matching aspects of the content to aspects of the self. The agency model of customization (Sundar, 2008) suggests that customization influences information processing chiefly by making the user a gatekeeper for his own information. Web-based technologies allow scalable and rapid customization of content, either through actively collecting data from the user, or through passive means of determining user interest and preferences. While news organizations often use these forms (see Thurman, 2011), the ability of users to choose their own paths and answers in online news games brings the notion of active control into the news environment. Research has shown that users have higher satisfaction with news content that is personalized based on their interest (Sela, Lavie, Inbar, Oppenheim, & Meyer, 2014).

Games created by online news organizations can take many forms, although the classifications below are designed to encompass the breadth in scope, gameplay, and news function represented by existing news games, and provide a framework for journalists and scholars that aids in the creation and study of future games as well.

Type 1: Identity Quiz

One type of news game that saw a spike in popularity with the growth of BuzzFeed in 2013 was the customizable quiz or identity quiz. Identity quizzes allow users to answer a series of questions, typically in a multiple choice format, to find out the answer to an overarching question, which is usually framed as providing information about the user. BuzzFeed's many quizzes show the breadth, and often lighthearted tone, of this genre, ranging from topics such as "Which children's book character are you?" and "Which pop star should be your best friend?" to "Which state do you actually belong in" and "What career should you actually have?" These questions arouse potential players' curiosity, and they complete the quiz as a means of interacting with an online oracle – seeking a dose of self-knowledge in addition to amusement. While BuzzFeed may be strongly associated with these quizzes, other publishers such as Bitecharge, Zimbio, and Playbuzz have found a large audience for similar content.

The gameplay experience for identity quizzes is straightforward. The user is presented with a series of questions, either in a single vertical scrolling page or spread across consecutive pages. The number of answer choices for each question typically varies from four to nine. Once the user has answered all questions, the user receives the answer to her question. Sometimes this is presented in the form of a numerical score, but more often, the user receives a categorical response, along with an explanation. For example, upon completing BuzzFeed's quiz about pop-star best friends, one might receive the following response:

You got: Beyoncé. Beyoncé has a lot going on in her life and might not always be available, but go out of her way to make you feel loved. She's endlessly inspirational, and would always be fun and interesting to talk to. (Perpetua, 2014).

The compelling draw of identity quizzes to players is the same characteristic that makes them spread with relative ease: At the end of the quiz, the user receives customized payoff in the form of information about himself. Sharing information about one's self has been shown to be intrinsically more rewarding than sharing other information (Tamir & Mitchell, 2012), and so consumers who are steered toward a customized result should be more likely to broadcast the information. Researchers have found that individuals place a high value on being able to communicate information about themselves, including forgoing payment to answer more questions about themselves than others (Tamir & Mitchell, 2012). Self-disclosure from others also leads individuals to disclose information about themselves (Dindia, 2002; Sprecher, Treger, Wondraw, Hilaire, & Wallpe, 2013). While the propensity to share information may be moderated by personality differences such as extraversion (Wang, 2013), social media users in general disclose information in a way that allows them to demonstrate their tastes and optimized self-image (Qiu, Lin, Leung, & Tov, 2012; Wang, 2013).

While many widely-disseminated identity quizzes are frivolous in nature, their popularity and share-ability provides opportunities for news organizations to capitalize on their appeal. One such opportunity is the launch of such quizzes to coincide with the release of large data sets. By actually allowing the real-time processing and accessing of data, online news sites have an advantage over traditional media forms in handling data stories. Top news organizations have already capitalized on these abilities by publishing interactive interfaces which allow users to view subsets of data based on demographic (e.g., the *New York Times'* "American Time Use Survey") or geographic variables (e.g., the *Seattle Times'* "What Your Seattle Address Says About You") by allowing users to click on or hover over a map, or delimit data using radio buttons and drop-down menus. Pairing a data front-end with an interactive quiz allows the user to see how she compares to the individuals whose data make up the data set. In some cases, the quizzes may also collect and store user-submitted data and integrate aggregate user data into future iterations of the content; such practices raise the privacy risks to the individual consumer considerably, particularly in combination with cookies, log-ins, or other forms users tracking (for a broader discussion, see the "User Data and Privacy Concerns" section of this chapter). Content generated by users within online games is likely to be in line with other user-generated content in online news, which typically does not involve users in the news production process, but rather promotes news consumption (Jönsson & Örnebring, 2011).

Identity quizzes lack some traditional elements of gamification. They have no storyline, and motivation for play comes in the form of self-discovery rather than attaining a level or score. However, these games appeal to users on the basis of the result they offer, and users complete the quiz in order to view this result. This may take the form of honestly answering questions for an accurate outcome, or of trying to frame one's answers to reach a specific desired outcome. Either way, they seem tailor-made for self-disclosure through social media sharing.

Example: "How Millennial Are You?"

Title: "How Millennial Are You?"
Publisher: Pew Research Center
Date Published: February 23, 2010
Created by: Leah Melani Christian, Russell Heimlich, Michael Keegan, Scott Keeter, Alicia Parlapiano, Michael Piccorossi and Paul Taylor, an Courtney Kennedy, Pew Resarch Center.
Available at: www.pewresearch.org/quiz/how-millennial-are-you/
Description: The Pew Research Center, a U.S.-based organization that releases social science survey data on a variety of topics, has published identity quizzes with some of their data sets. Their 2010 report, "The Millennials: Confident. Connected. Open to Change" consisted of the following components: An executive summary, written much like a news story announcing the release of a data set; the full report containing questions, results, and graphs; videos from a day-long conference timed with the release of the data set; and a 14-item quiz titled "How Millennial Are You?" The quiz consisted of multiple-choice and yes-or-no questions about users' recent media consumption and beliefs, with the final question asking participants to select their age-range for the purposes of

collecting how people of different ages do on the quiz. The response page assigned participants a "Millennial score" between 0 and 100, and showed the score on an axis which anchored average scores for various generational cohorts. Beneath this axis, users were shown how respondents of various age groups responded to each question, and were allowed to modify their original response to see its effect on their overall score. The interface also included buttons which allowed users to share the quiz and their results through social media channels; users who clicked one of these buttons while signed in to their social network received a pop-up window with a pre-written message, "How Millennial Are You? I scored (score)," along with a link to the quiz. To capitalize on this as a potential entry point to the rest of the package, the quiz homepage included a description of and link to the Millennial report itself. Thus not only can Pew use the quiz as a means of increasing the audience for its report, but it also gains a tool for collecting expanded data beyond the original phone survey on which the report was based.

Type 2: Knowledge Quiz

Unlike identity quizzes, knowledge quizzes require players to submit information that is much less personal. Although the nature of the interaction is similar, the success of knowledge quizzes is based in part on the degree of challenge they offer to users. Much like classroom assessements, these games gauge users' ability to correctly answer a series of questions that measure their knowledge, usually by selecting the correct choice from a series of options. Knowledge quizzes are likely to have a shorter shelf life than identity quizzes, as the both the newsworthiness of the topic and the accuracy of the answers may change with time. These quizzes can be news story specific, or very general (e.g., Huffington Post's "How Well Do You Know Your Geography?"). *The Daily Mirror* celebrated the return to television of the cult classic "Danger Mouse" with a 15-item quiz measuring participants' recall of the original television series. *The New York Times*, long renowned for challenging print readers with its crossword puzzle, added an online Weekly News Quiz as part of its education outreach blog, "The Learning Network."

Although knowledge quizzes can consist solely of text-based questions, the possibility to incorporate graphic elements allows the ability to test other forms of knowledge; interfaces can also move beyond the school-quiz approach by including rich media and gestural interactions. Users can be challenged with their ability to recognize the faces of key players in the news, or by testing their ability to identify geographic locations on a map. *The Guardian's* "The Toughest Maps Quiz… In the World" challenged users to decode the topic of six interactive data visualizations embedded from Google charts. *The Telegraph's* "Name that Tennis Player's Grunt" quiz combines Soundcloud audio clips with a drag-and-drop interface that allows users to match player names and faces to each audio clip. Like identity quizzes, knowledge quizzes provide user with an end results that may facilitate viral sharing: in this case, a performance score.

The effects of online quiz use on news learning have not been well established, although there is some support for interactive quizzes stimulating learning. The inclusion of game-like elements has been shown toincrease learner motivation and performance in educational courses (Barata, Gama, Jorge, & Goncalves, 2012; Moreno, 2012; Squire, 2006), although much of this research focuses on process-based learning. Interactive quizzes in museum kiosks have been shown to lead to improved knowledge compared to paper materials (Mikalef, Giannakos, Chorianopoulos, & Jaccheri, 2013). Knowledge quizzes in a news context might also demonstrate these effects, although whether and how users complete quizzes in relation to consuming other content on the topic is likely to play a role.

Example: "Staying in Bounds"

Title: "Staying in Bounds"
Publisher: Raleigh News & Observer
Date Published: December 16, 2010
Created by: Kristen Long, Pressley Baird, and Seth Wright, RFDN
Available at: http://reesenews.org/2010/12/16/staying-in-bounds/7929
Description: One example of thinking beyond the confines of text-based knowledge quizzes is "Staying in Bounds," an interactive knowledge quiz gamecreated by the student-led Reese Felts Digital Newsroom at UNC-Chapel Hill and later published by the Raleigh *News & Observer*. Published in the aftermath of a National Collegiate Athletics Association (NCAA) investigation into the eligibility of several UNC football players, the game puts the user in the role of a lauded collegiate athlete negotiating the tricky line between acceptable benefits and NCAA eligibility violations. Players are asked to input their first name, and then taken on a ten-question odyssey of potential pitfalls, which were developed with the aid of the director of compliance for UNC's athletic department. Each scenario consists of a slide containing an image of a potential benefit provider – an assistant coach, a sorority sister at your college, etc. – a benefit scenario, and two options from which the user can complete the narrative.

In one scenario, a car dealer in the player's college town asks to use the player's name to promote the dealership in a trivia contest. In another, a local lawyer offers to field inquiries from agents on behalf of the player, to avoid improper contact. After the user accepts or declines each offer, a short message pops up offering brief feedback without revealing whether the choice was correct. After ten questions, the user receives a message describing whether the actions taken violated NCAA regulations, and whether the player missed any opportunities to receive permissible benefits. The user can roll over each question number to see question-specific information, including excerpts from the relevant section of the NCAA compliance guide.

"Staying in Bounds" has several features that make it a successful example of a knowledge quiz. First, although the material is based on knowledge of the NCAA rules, the quiz is presented in the form of a narrative, pulling the user into a storyline. Each scenario within the game relates to a specific section of the NCAA policy, and the user gets to see the actual policy wording at the end. Secondly, the game draws its ten questions from a database containing more than 20, so the user gets a novel experience on subsequent visits, increasing the odds that a single user will play multiple times. Finally, this quiz straddles the line between timely and evergreen news events – while its initial deployment coincided with the NCAA's investigation of UNC, its content is valid for as long as the current NCAA rules stay on the books; thus, the quiz is well-positioned for future spikes of popularity when other athletes run afoul of the rules.

Type 3: Simulation

While identity and knowledge quizzes trade primarily in information, online simulations can provide players with a realistic vicarious experience that takes greater advantage of the technologies available via the Web. Simulation-based games allow the user to engage in virtual actions that mirror, with some degree of accuracy, actions that take place in the real world. Virtual simulations In the context of news, simulations can be used to increase the degree of empathy between the news consumer and the subjects of the news story. Often, this is done using animation, first-person perspective, and some sort of virtual experience. In most cases, the simulation ends after a set amount of time has elapsed, or a specific goal has been reached, and the player receives a grade based on their performance in the virtual task.

Simulations typically allow the user to act in the role of one of the subjects in a news story. Examples such as MSNBC.com's "Battle of the Bags" and "Can You Spot the Threat?" allow the user to view realistic approximations of baggage scanners and grocery store check-out counters, and engage in tasks that approximate real-world interactions with the equipment. Similarly, The *New York Times'* "Gauging Your Distraction" typifies the value of simulation in the context of a news story. Published to coincide with a news story about the hazards of distracted driving, the game simulates driving while trying to receive, type, and send text messages. Although the demands on the user to successfully complete the driving task consist only of pushing a single button every two or three seconds to enter the appropriate lane, the interface also includes a virtual smartphone which requires interaction to read messages and type responses. The split visual interface and concurrent demands on attention effectively convey the difficulties involved in task switching while driving safely.

Another category of simulations focuses less on approximating behavior than on giving users an interface which allows them to make decisions in the role of another party. Features such as *Washington Post's* "Oscars Ballot Builder," *New York Times'* "You Fix the Budget" allow users to view the world from the perspective of Academy voters and legislators, respectively. Although these game Over the course of the 2008 and 2012 U.S. Presidential Election, a number of organizations created graphical map-based calculators that allowed users to view election scenarios by assigning a winner to each state. Another professional simulation, PBS's "Decisions on Deadline," may hit closer to home for journalists. Launched by PBS's Independent Lens documentary series to coincide with a video documentary about plagiarism, the game puts the player in the role of a journalist in a fictional town trying to report and publish salient details about a series of news topics while working against deadline pressure and a budget

In both "Gauging Your Distraction" and "Can You Spot the Threats" (see box below), the game does not achieve its news value by providing the user with additional factual information. While the accompanying news stories provide the timeliness and the facts, the simulations allow the user an approximate understanding of the issue being discussed. This affords the users a different facet of understanding, one that is rooted in the simulated experience rather than information processing. The ultimate effects of playing such simulations on how users perceive and remember the news is unclear. Classroom studies of whether interactive simulations improve learning outcomes vis-à-vis traditional learning methods show higher cognitive gains for simulations, although user preferences may vary by gender, with females being more likely to prefer simulations (Vogel et al, 2006). However, while most classroom learning simulations are developed with specific cognitive, skill-based, or affective learning outcomes (Krieger, 1993; Wilson et al, 2009) in mind, news simulations are more likely to be geared toward engaging the user in the subject matter and perhaps drawing the user to other site content.

Simulation games are only as effective as the gameplay is engaging and relevant to the task being simulated. Because both engagement and verisimilitude are task-specific, every simulation game will generally require unique design and development. While such games can provide an inimitable contribution to news packages covering a current event, the time and planning required to create a successful simulation makes this a difficult format for time-sensitive events.

Simulation games pose another challenge when the simulation involves actual events. Such games, by their nature, offer users a multitude of scenarios rather than offering a specific path through evidence like an article or video might (see Bogost et al, 2010, p.70). Empowering the user with the ability to make events unfold in a different manner than they did historically has the potential to shape viewers' perceptions of the actual event, though there is little evidence to show such effects. How the gameplay occurs and the manner in which the factual events are presented may play a role. Immersive online games demand sizable cognitive resources and task working memory, which may leave the player with fewer resources to allocate to information presented separately (Kalyuga & Plass, 2009; Schrader & Bastiaens, 2012).

Example: "Can You Spot the Threats?"

Title: Baggage Screening: Can You Spot the Threats?
Publisher: NBCNews.com
Date Published: 2002
Created By: Alex Johnson, Ashley Wells, Fred Birchman, Asim Khan
Available At: http://www.nbcnews.com/id/34623505/ns/us_news-security/t/can-you-spot-threats/

Although this game is now over a decade old, it still serves as a benchmark for using simulations to add value to an online news story. Published in the aftermath of the attacks on the United States on September 11th, this game allows users a chance to step into the role of an airport baggage screener. The timed game features a scrolling series of cross-sectional x-ray photographs of luggage. The player can choose to flag each piece of luggage as containing an explosive, gun, or knife, or let the luggage pass through unflagged. The user is allowed to stop and start the scrolling as if it were a real conveyor belt, to adjust the level of zoom of the images, and to toggle between color and black-and-white views of the luggage. At the end of the two-minute timer, the player views a results screen listing the percentage of threats correctly identified, the number of threats missed, and the number of false alarms. In addition, a sentence provides summary feedback, such as "Letting even one threat by would get a fully trained screener fired." When the scrolling images are stopped, the user is serenaded by audio clips of impatient passengers ("Hey buddy, can you get this operation moving a little bit faster here?"), adding a sense of pressure and realism.

"Can You Spot the Threats?" has a somewhat dated feel due to the game's size and audio quality. Although it's Flash based, most of the graphics are bitmaps, and stretching the window beyond its 525-by-400-pixel size decreases the quality of the graphics. The game's narration, by MSNBC's Natalie Morales, is tough to understand at times. While these factors may limit the games telepresence, they don't detract from the game's ultimate "message," if there is one: that expediently and effectively locating threats by looking at x-rayed baggage is difficult.

Type 4: Topical Play

Classifying content into the fourth category of news games is easiest to define by the absence of inclusion in the first three. Topical play focuses on games that do not substantially engage the user in content-related issues, but nonetheless provide a gaming experience that is topically related to the news content. In other words, these games may attract users to a news organization's site on the basis of the gameplay experience, but only relate to a news topic by virtue of the characters, the setting, or the objective. Such games, therefore, are similar to multitudes of other digital games, but have ties to a news organization and a news topic.

Topical play games often involve a re-skinning or repurposing of existing, familiar digital or analog games. The Guardian's "Beat the Bard," offers a head-to-head matchup of character attributes, similar to card-based roleplaying games such as Magic the Gathering and Pokemon. Users compete against a computer-controlled "Bard" to pick the traits for which the card in their hand may be superior. Published to coincide with Shakespeare's 450th birthday, the game may provide a treat for Shakespeare devotees who know the characters, their traits, and their words well, but the simple nature of the gameplay makes such knowledge unnecessary for enjoyment. Other examples of topical play have included online memory challenges published to coincide with a feature about a competitive memory champion (*New York Times*), or a game that allows users to seat members of the Supreme Court by seniority (*Washington Post*). These games foster interaction with elements of a news story in ways that do not rely on specific knowledge, but rather usually some dimension of skill or luck.

Simply playing a game that relates to a news topic or persons in the news may influence the way game players feel toward those issues and individuals, particularly if the game serves as a first exposure. Much research has demonstrated that individuals view information that seems familiar more positively (Zajonc, 1968). Moreover, this mere exposure effect is greater for information that is not consciously perceived (Bornstein & D'Agostino, 1992). These effects have demonstrated in studies of online advertising games, with participants' accessibility of favorable attitudes (Glass, 2007). Advergaming research also suggests that the congruity between the game play and the subject matter itself may be an important moderator of effects; games in which game and product have been congruent lead to greater recall of the product (Gross, 2010), more positive attitudes toward the product (Huang & Yang, 2012), and a greater carryover effects from liking the game to liking the product (Wise, Bolls, Kim, Venkataraman, & Meyer, 2008). While the broad

In sum, topical play games involve little gamification of news consumption, and instead rely more the incorporation of games into the topic and setting of news content.

Example: "Rock-Paper-Scissors"

Title: "Rock-Paper-Scissors: You Vs. The Computer"
Publisher: *New York Times*
Date Published: October 7, 2010
Created by: Gabriel Dance and Tom Jackson
Available at: http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/science/rock-paper-scissors.html
Description: Topical play can take a wide variety of forms. In October 2010, as part of a months-long series of features on developments in artificial intelligence, the *New York Times* published this quiz as a feature that could be accessed from various story pages in the series. The nature of the gameplay is simple. After selecting a skill-level ("novice" or "veteran"), the user gets to play an infinite number of rounds of the classic choice game Rock-Paper-Scissors against a virtual opponent. The user indicates her choice of throws for each round by clicking one of three buttons, and then sees a brief animation of two hands, each throwing one the hand-gestures. When the throws are shown, the screen automatically updates with feedback about who won the hand. Additionally, on the computer-player's side of the screen, the user views a stream of feedback about what information the computer is using to learn how the game works, what logic rules the computer used to determine which hand to throw. A linked feature at the bottom of the screen allows the user to share her score after a minimum of 20 rounds played.

This game is a typical example of topical play. While the feature is promoted as sheds a little bit of light into basic operations related to computer intelligence, most of the screen interface is dedicated to simply keeping track of the competition between user and virtual agent. The other stories in the series are not linked here, although one later Times article about computer intelligence is linked at the bottom. Nonetheless, the cheap virtual game allows the user a level of competition that is tied to the other content in the series, and may serve as both an entry point to users seeking more information about the broader topic and a way to prolong the time readers of the articles in the series spend on the *Times'* site.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES IN THE STUDY OF NEWS GAMES

Although news games may play an increasingly important role in the creation of online multimedia packages, the design and creation of news games poses a number of challenges that will likely keep the deployment of such games to special features. First and foremost, the creation of news games is relatively time-consuming and expensive in comparison to other formats. The design of news games requires the development of a storyline and game mechanics (Wei, 2013), and usually necessitates the work of personnel with varied skillsets – a reporter for the information and content, a graphic designer for the visual appearance, and a programmer to create a functional, interactive product, not to mention an individual to design (and refine) the gameplay and user experience.

The time and budget costs associated with production can be diminished with an attention to platform. Just as BuzzFeed's integration of a quiz-builder into their publishing system enabled mass production of quizzes, organizations' investment in the building of reusable code and interfaces can pay off in the economy of scale, and lead to the widespread of dissemination of a particular game format or design. A second issue is whether the mere act of playing a game triggers users to apply a different schema than they might to traditionally presented news content, and whether this affects persuasive and cognitive outcomes of playing news games.

User Data and Privacy Concerns

Playing a news game or quiz requires user interaction of some sort, and often requires users to submit information about themselves. The same characteristics of identity quizzes that make the compelling to complete and to share may also keep certain users away. One aspect of identity quizzes that may curb their steep rise in popularity is their potential role in gathering data about the player and using that data for advertising purposes. While black market personal info about customers may be relatively inexpensive for cyber-thieves to procure (Hill & Greenburg, 2010), data sets that include answers about viewers' preferences and desires can be useful for online marketers. While popular-press outlets have begun to raise awareness that these data may be collected, the average user may still be unlikely to be dissuaded from the fun of completing and sharing quiz results. Blogger Dan Barker highlighted some of the data that BuzzFeed sends along with quiz responses, including participants' gender, age, country, whether they've connected via Facebook, and how often they've shared BuzzFeed stories. This data is transmitted alongside quiz answers, which can range from the benign to the highly personal, as Barker highlighted with selections from the quiz "How Privileged Are You," which asked about participants' race, comfort with their gender, and history of sexual abuse, among other questions. Barring a substantial privacy-fueled backlash, however, identity quizzes allow users a personal entry point to the news that allows them to learn and share information about themselves and their friends.

The Ethics of Playing With the News

News is rooted in real events that often have a profound physical, emotional, or economic impact on real human beings. Presenting those issues in a way that treats the subjects and the audience ethically is a challenge in any platform. Games such as simulations or topical play construct a representational world in which complex realities are often simplified or misrepresented. In video games, such worlds often include stereotypical representations of others based on race (Burgess, Dill, Stermer, Burgess, & Brown, 2011; Chan, 2005) and gender (Fox & Tang, 2014). While many news games are not very character-driven, the use of images or drawings to represent real individuals leaves a lot in the hands of the designer. While the representations within games may perpetuate stereotypes, simulation games that place the reader in the role of an out-group member may also be capable of reducing negative stereotypes (Alhabash & Wise, 2014).

A second ethical issue that is specific to journalistic games involves the presentation of fact or truth in the game. Because news games are deliberately released to capitalize on current events, users may encounter them while searching for factual information. While designers may assume a certain level of media literacy on the part of their intended audience, the potential impact of the information in news games on how users perceive the issues warrants discussion of ethical standards in issue presentation. Games that address military conflicts, serious medical issues, and other sensitive issues should be subject to the same close editing that traditional news stories on these issues receive. Professional guidelines and ethical standards should be updated to include ethics in content design.

Future Research Directions in News Games

News games, especially presented in the context of news by news organizations, are relatively recent addition to consumer choices in browsing online news. The content domain of news games changes monthly to include new manners of user interaction, and the development of platform-based changes can lead to the proliferation of a specific type of content (recall BuzzFeed's addition of a quiz-builder to their CMS, which allowed staff members without programming skills to build quizzes). As these formats and their uses evolve, the role these quizzes play in explaining, augmenting, or advertising the news may become clearer. Because of this rapid evolution, content analyses of news games that valuable insight into news game topics, types, interface elements, scoring and results systems, characters, and other attributes are needed to help practitioners and researchers understand the playing field.

Several streams of research into processes and effects of video games warrant extension and re-examination in the context of news games. One of these focuses on the role of individual differences in shaping selective exposure to and outcomes of news games. Much is known about individual characteristics that pre-dispose individuals to play games and play heavily (Seounmi, Lee, & Doyle, 2003; Westwood & Griffiths, 2010), although the average age of gamers has increased as kids who grew up playing video games turned into adults. Individual differences may intervene at several stages in the process of news game consumption: certain users may be more likely to select or search for news games, more capable of playing advanced games or processing complex information; more likely to be inspired by game play to seek additional content; or more likely to be persuaded based on gaming experience.

In order to fully understand the potential of news games, more robust empirical research is needed examining how presenting news content in the form of a game, rather than a linear format, affects users' attention, understanding, and recall of the content. While some studies have shown positive relationships between playing of certain video games and cognitive performance, the evidence is mixed, and often clouded by methodological problems (see Boot, Blakely, and Simons, 2011). The challenge for the study of format in news involves the difficulty of creating stimulus materials that include the same content presented in multiple formats; game design requires time and expertise, trying to hold and trying to holding the content constant between a simulation game and a text story requires much subjective decision making. While these challenges make such research time-consuming and cost-intensive, they also potentially heighten the value of the findings. In addition, because such games are often meant to complement more informative stories, more research is needed examining the effects of link structure and positioning within such news story packages on selection and engagement. Finally, the continued growth in mobile news consumption also signals a need for examining how devices may shape news game interaction through screen size, input modality, or a number of other characteristics.

CONCLUSION

This chapter began with the premise that the rise in digital and mobile news consumption and the increased role of social media in driving traffic posed an opportunity for news organizations to leverage interactive games and quizzes to attract attention and build their audience. The desire for news organizations to have their content stand out from the clutter in their consumers' social media streams means that content should be accessible and engaging, two strengths of news games. While research has shown that users respond to effective interactive content with favorable attitudes toward the content and its source, findings regarding the impact of interactivity on cognitive processing vary greatly by content domain, situation, and individual differences. Due to the resources involved in the production of news games, they are not likely to represent a large portion of the content published by news organizations any time soon, or perhaps ever. However, the ability to publish content in these novel forms gives producers additional tools that can be used – effectively or poorly – to convey a news story to an audience, or to seek to draw a larger and different audience than conventional story forms.

While games and quizzes may hold a lot of potential, the rush of news organizations into the world of game creation is not without its drawbacks. For one, games and quizzes may be viewed by audience members already skeptical of tabloidized news content that the publishing organization prioritizes diversion over covering serious issues. Conversely, audience members may view certain news stories or their consequences as less serious when those news stories become fodder for a game. In addition to changing the relationship between news and consumer, games that allow users to submit information about their preferences, behavior, or knowledge may invite exploitive use of collected data by the news organization. At the very least, they introduce potential privacy risks that do not exist in more traditional news formats.

While identity quizzes, knowledge quizzes, simulations and topical play are likely to continue to represent only a sliver of content published by news organizations, their potential effects in helping spread information and recruit new consumers to news make them a promising development in the competition for online audiences. As the utilization of these formats continues to grow, we will better be able to examine how consuming news by playing shapes the way we perceive the world around us.

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Section 6

Social Media and Social Networking

Chapter 37
Spreading the News:
Spreadable Media, Social Networking, and the Future of News Production

Robert J. Baron
Austin Peay State University, USA

ABSTRACT

This chapter is concerned with the process of "spreading the news" through social media. It suggests a method of rhetorical analysis that focuses less attention on the content of news productions and more attention on analyzing how audience members might make use of the news. This transition of focus from content to audience use should lead news producers to see the value of content that engages with audiences and enables audience members to engage in the sharing and spreading of news content. The purpose of this chapter is twofold: 1) to help journalists design content that engages their audiences in the process of spreading the news in ways that can go far beyond the reach of traditional news formats and 2) to provide journalism scholars with a means of understanding the ways in which audiences and the news media interact in social media-rich communication environments.

INTRODUCTION

More people are getting their news from social networking sites (SNSs) such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram, while more traditional news formats like newspapers and TV broadcasts decline. The Pew Center's 2012 study of trends in news consumption finds an overall decrease in the percentage of people getting their news from television (55%), radio (33%), and newspapers (29%). The same report noted that amid all of these decreases in traditional news formats, the number of people *regularly* getting news from social networks rose from 7% to 20% (Pew Research Center, 2012, September 27). The Pew Center's 2013 *Social Media Update* cites "73% of online adults now use a social networking site of some kind" (Duggan & Smith, 2013, p. 1). A more recent report by the Pew Center highlights the role that news content plays in social media use and finds that 30% of adults use Facebook and 8% of adults use *Twitter* to get news (Matsa & Mitchell, 2014, March 26). Social media provides many opportunities for news producers to reach new audiences, but it also provides its own set of unique challenges. On

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social media platforms, photos from last night's party, status updates from far-flung family members, and "hard news" all wage battle for a user's attention. When journalism, as a discipline, discusses new and emerging trends in news production and news research, it must account for these new means of accessing "the news." At the same time it must also examine how these new ways of accessing news content affect news production, distribution, and analysis.

The modern social media user is not *only* a passive consumer of information. He or she is engaged in a constant blur of activity: creating, consuming, repurposing, and sharing content from a variety of sources to tell his or her own social media story within a community of other social media users. In light of this, it's important for journalists and journalism scholars to recognize that today's social media users can, and often do, play an active and important role in spreading media content among their social networked peers.

Journalists need to be cognizant of this new second-hand, socially-mediated flow of content and must actively engage with their audiences as a part of the digital media information economy. Journalism scholars must account for this new means of "spreading the news" when trying to understand the impact of a story, or trying to make sense of how news audiences encounter and work content into their social media interactions and daily lives. This shift, from a passively consuming audience to an actively sharing audience, requires journalism to place a greater emphasis on user experience and search for new analytics that can explain the role that sharing can play in spreading the news.

With all of this in mind, this chapter is concerned with the process of "spreading the news" through social media communities. It looks at the rhetorical dynamics of sharing and offers a way of analyzing the news that focuses less attention on the content of news productions and more attention on analyzing how audience members might make use of the news. This change of focus, from content to audience use, should help lead journalists and other news producers to see the value of content that both engages audiences and allows opportunities for audience members to assist in the process of sharing and spreading news content. The goal of this chapter is to help journalism scholars gain a deeper understanding of the ways in which the news media operate in a social media-rich communication environment. At the same time, journalists can use this information to design content that engages audiences in the process of "spreading the news" in ways that go far beyond the reach and scope of traditional news formats. In doing so, it provides a new analytic lens with which to view news content.

In order to understand the ways in which social media is changing journalism, and the powerful role that audiences can play in this larger process of "spreading the news" through social media platforms, this chapter proceeds in three sections. The first section examines the role of what Jenkins (2008) terms "convergence culture" in creating the current media landscape. It looks at how media convergence has shaped the modern media economy and the key role that social media plays in an increasingly converged media culture. The second section draws upon Kenneth Burke's rhetorical concept of "identification" as a means for understanding how social media communities function rhetorically, the rhetorical aspects of sharing, and the role that community plays in social media interactions. It also draws on the recent work of Jenkins, Ford, and Green (2013) and examines their concept of "spreadable media" as a model for understanding the flow of media messages in converged, social media communities. It looks at the question of how one analyzes and understands media content (including news content) in this new spreadable, socially-mediated media environment. The third section asks the important question: how does one create content that will succeed in a spreadable social media environment? In doing so, this chapter seeks to equip future journalists with tools and concepts they can use to succeed in the current, social media moment.

BACKGROUND: CONVERGENCE CULTURE, COMPETITION, AND THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

In order to understand the importance of "spreadability" for future news analysis and production, one must first understand the current media context. At the risk of stating the overly obvious, the rise of digital media technologies has drastically altered the global media landscape. Media industries, including journalism, have been changed at every level by the introduction of what is collectively referred to as "new media." News production, distribution, and consumption are all drastically different today than they were even ten years ago. One could easily fill several pages listing the myriad changes enabled by the increased distribution of digital technology. However, perhaps the most important change for this chapter's discussion of social media, community, and news media use is the rise of what media scholar Henry Jenkins labels as "convergence culture."

In describing convergence culture Jenkins (2008) notes that the rise of "new media technologies enabled the same content to flow through many different channels and assume many different forms at the point of reception" (p. 11). At the core of convergence culture is the breaking down of barriers between formerly divergent media formats. Today journalists live and work in a highly converged media environment. For younger media consumers, raised within this convergence culture, it is increasingly difficult to imagine a world where one would experience a "newspaper article" as only a page of newsprint, or experience a local newscast as only a discreet 30-minute television broadcast. Instead, modern media consumers expect to be able to access the content they want, when they want it, and in whatever format best suits their particular media needs. Convergence culture's emphasis on "different channels" and "different forms" has drastic consequences for media producers. The journalist that only works in a "single format" has already lost his or her audience.

The need for journalists, like all media producers, to embrace challenges of convergence is not a new concept. Students in the earliest stages of journalism training are being increasingly told to develop multimedia skills. For example, Roschke's (2009) survey of high school journalism educators finds a growing recognition of the importance of media convergence-related skills:

This research found that high school journalism educators are also creating convergence programs in an attempt to keep up with university programs and the professional media industry. Survey respondents recognize the importance of providing a curriculum that will adequately prepare students for a journalism-related job, which means teaching convergence topics alongside traditional reporting and writing skills. (p. 63)

Quinn (2005) notes that both journalists and publishers "need to find a way to gather and fund news for different platforms without compromising the needs of their audiences, and while maintaining ethical business practices. In essence they need to find ways to blend the twin aims of telling the truth and making money" (p. 37). The need to create multimedia content that addresses a converged media market is clearly on the minds of news producers and journalism scholars at all levels.

This cultural shift makes it is easy to find value in offering multimedia content to an audience that craves it, but convergence culture also brings its own host of challenges. The shift to a convergence culture encourages producers to be flexible and cross traditional formatting boundaries. This means that in a converged media environment everyone is, practically, everyone else's competition. Long gone are the days when the *New York Times* and *The Washington Post* were one another's main rivals. News producers find themselves competing against an increasing number of media creators, all offering converged media content. The rise of media convergence and digital media technologies have drastically changed the ways in which journalists and journalism scholars need to think about several, formerly unrelated, media formats. Content creators across the full spectrum of media formats now find themselves in direct competition with one another. Today, a writer for *The New York Times* must be equally concerned with competition from national television news sources such as *CNN* or *Fox News* and vice versa. Additionally, these national news organizations must also consider competition from: local news sources, a multitude of international news sources, amateur citizen journalists, and the ever-present lure of non-news related content.

In addition to these new sources of inter-media competition, it's important to note the "disruptive" aspects of convergence culture that comes with audience empowerment. Jenkins notes "convergence doesn't just involve commercially produced materials and services traveling along well-regulated and predictable circuits… It also occurs when people take the media into their own hands" (Jenkins, 2008, p. 17). The shift to a convergence culture means that media consumers find themselves increasingly empowered by the media technologies they use and can, as a result, do more with the media they access. Jenkins further elaborates that, because of this empowerment, audiences find themselves in a more powerful position in relation to media producers than they do in a non-converged media culture:

The advent of new production tools and distribution channels has lowered barriers of entry into the marketplace of ideas. These shifts place resources for activism and social commentary into the hands of everyday citizens, resources which were once the exclusive domain of the candidates, the parties, and the mass media. (Jenkins, 2008, p. 293)

Thus far this chapter has discussed the increased competition and need for diverse multimedia skills among professional media producers that come with convergence culture, but journalists and journalism scholars must also consider the ways in which audiences themselves become a new source of "competition."

As an example of this, consider the rise of amateur journalism content provided by independent blogs and citizen journalists armed with social media. While these amateur news producers cannot compete logistically with larger, more established, national news producers, both amateur and professional news increasingly circulates in the same converged media channels like social media platforms. This new source of amateur competition is forcing media scholars to reconsider how they understand journalism. For example, Christian Fuchs (2014) discusses the changes brought about by the increase in competition and the fragmentation of news production in his review of citizen journalism on social media. Fuchs cites changes in McQuail's definition of journalism, which shifted from 2000's definition: "'paid writing (and the audiovisual equivalent) for public media with reference to actual and ongoing events of public relevance'" to 2010's definition: "a person who creates 'informational reports of recent or current event of interest to the public'" (Fuchs, 2014, p. 225). Such a transition in framing highlights the ways in which this new wave of empowered amateurism is forcing media scholars to reconsider some of the basic questions inherent to journalism as a profession.

Reactions to this new wave of digitally-enabled audience empowerment have been mixed. Back in the early stages of the rise of convergence culture, Tapscott and Williams (2006) celebrated audience empowerment and highlighted the important communal aspect at play in link-sharing news aggregator websites like *Slashdot* and *digg*. They suggest part of why digitally empowered "prosumers" flock to these social websites is because these websites' creators "have learned how to make news a social pastime. And, like all other facets of their lives, prosumers want in on the conversation" (Tapscott & Williams, 2006, p. 145). Conversely, Keen (2007) argued that the rise of sophisticated amateur media producers was leading to an increasingly crowded online media environment and, in turn, devaluing the work of media professionals in all fields. Keen argued, "Amateur journalism trivializes and corrupts serious debate. It is the greatest nightmare of political theorists through the ages, from Plato and Aristotle to Edmund Burke and Hannah Arendt—the degeneration of democracy into the rule of the mob and the rumor mill" (Keen, 2007, p. 54).

Setting aside the debate over how to value amateurism and increased audience engagement/empowerment, convergence culture has clearly changed the relationship between media producers and audiences. Rather than viewing audiences as competition, audiences should, instead, be viewed as a resource for gaining even broader audience access. Leading audience members to engage with their chosen media more deeply provides journalists and other media creators with an opportunity to enlist the audience in the process of content distribution. In this converged media reality, the most successful journalists will not necessarily be the ones that create the "best" content, but rather the ones that garner and mobilize the largest audience for their content.

While convergence culture creates a whole host of challenges for established, professional media creators, it also provides many answers to those challenges as well. In a world where all media have converged into a singular, digital marketplace of ideas, cultivating audience engagement and focusing on user experience become key skills that media producers need to develop. Media producers that want to stay current and tap into this marketing opportunity need to think about how they can engage audiences. News organizations that develop and foster these skills will find their engaged audiences to be powerful allies in the constant battle for greater attention.

Social media takes paramount importance in the process of spreading the news in a convergence-enabled media marketplace. Just as the development of digital technologies led to a convergence culture, the development of mainstream social media websites like Facebook and Twitter have created new ways for internet users to interact and have enabled new patterns of media communication. Social media codifies and reinforces social connections among individual users, and creates new media distribution channels that challenge old understandings of mainstream distribution. In doing so, social media platforms have created new opportunities for media content creators to interact with their audiences. When looking at the future of the news industry it is important to account for these new opportunities and the questions of how and why audiences choose to interact with news content.

Media convergence has created a new media reality. Convergence culture leads media creators to think about new ways of making their content accessible, and social media creates a new means of accessing an audience. These converged social media interactions put far greater emphasis on creating personal connections and "sharing" information as opposed to simply creating content. With this in mind journalists are left to consider: new ways of engaging and connecting with audience members through social media, new ways to build deeper connections between content creators and audiences, and new ways to leverage those connections to expand an audience. At the same time journalism scholars need to consider new theories and analytics methods that make sense of these new rules of engagement. At the core of this new media paradigm is the increased competition among media producers to provide audiences with content that best tells their own social media stories. The next section will look at how the concept of spreadable media offers a means of understanding this new media paradigm.

SPREADABLE NEWS: RHETORIC, COMMUNITY, IDENTIFICATION, AND "SPREADABLE MEDIA"

The study of rhetoric is, at its core, the study of communication, community, and interaction within a greater social context. Rhetorical actions are always situated within the greater social realities of those seeking to communicate. Even the earliest formulation of rhetorical theory focuses attention on the contextual nature of rhetoric. In Book 1, Chapter 2 of *on Rhetoric*, Aristotle clearly defines rhetoric as "an ability, in each case to see the available means of persuasion" (2007, p. 37). From this point of departure Aristotle goes on to lay out his techniques for achieving persuasion in various, particular, cases. However, at the core of Aristotle's concept of rhetoric remains this key observation of persuasion always occurring in a particular context or set of contexts. Rhetoric, then, takes on an even greater importance when looking at a community-driven communication environment such as social media.

As a way to understand how and why people appropriate, share, and spread news media messages as their own on social media, it may be helpful to consider Kenneth Burke's rhetorical concept of identification. In Burke's formulation of rhetoric, community is a powerful tool for message creators. Rather than *simply* existing, community is created, defined, and reinforced through rhetorical "identification." In *Rhetoric of Motives*, Burke explains the basis for his concept of identification:

A is not identical to his colleague, B. But insofar as their interests are joined, A is identified with B. Or he may identify himself with B even when their interests are not joined, if he assumes that they are, or is persuaded to believe so. Here are ambiguities of substance. In being identified with B, A is 'substantially one' with a person other than himself. Yet at the same time he remains unique, an individual locus of motives. Thus he is both joined and separate, at once a distinct substance and consubstantial with another. (1950, pp. 20-21)

At the core of this Burkean identification lies the concept of "consubstantiality" or the sharing of motivations and "substance": "To identify A with B is to make A 'consubstantial' with B" (1950, p. 21). Under such a theory of rhetoric, community becomes the most important consideration for understanding communication.

As for the relation between 'identification' and 'persuasion': we might well keep it in mind that a speaker persuades an audience by the use of stylistic identifications; his act of persuasion may be for the purpose of causing the audience to identify itself with the speaker's interests; and the speaker draws on identification of interests to establish rapport between himself and his audience. (Burke, 1950, p. 46)

Similar experiences provide the first step toward the creation of consubstantiality, but beyond these experiences, message creators must rely on the use of symbolic language and rhetoric to create identification and bridge the gap between message creator and audience.

Social media users share the unifying characteristic of their participation in a shared social media network. As such, a certain level of underlying "virtual consubstantiality" always exists among social media users. While the users of various social media platforms may have drastically different motives, they are all linked by the very act of being on the same social media platform. Put another way, people join social media networks because other people are already there. At the same time, while all social media users may share certain universal experiences, they are also separated from one another and subject to their own internal motivations. As Burke notes, while language enables communication and identification, it also creates division. While, "In pure identification there would be no strife. Likewise, there would be no strife in absolute separateness, since opponents can join battle only through a mediatory ground that makes the communication possible" (Burke, 1950, p. 25).

Communal action requires that individuals work together and so they must use symbolic language to overcome the inherent conflict created by differing motivations. This chapter argues that this concept of virtual consubstantiality is central to understanding how users interact within the mediated experience of social media platforms. By virtual consubstantiality, the author means the whole set of mediated experiences designed into any digital environment, from computer games to social media platforms, which all users share. These common experiences act as a kind of social glue that draws a potentially disparate group of users together and bonds them into a cohesive online virtual community. This focus on community and virtual consubstantiality drastically reframes the relationship between journalists and their audiences. Rather than consumers that simply receive content, audiences instead become collaborators that help journalists spread their story through social media sharing.

When viewed through this lens, sharing content on social media becomes a kind of rhetorical act. It creates a set of common symbols that are shared across a community of social media users. This ever growing body of symbols and social media practices lead users to see one another as virtually consubstantial. Consubstantiality and virtual consubstantiality provide a way to make sense of why people share what they share on social media. Media content is not just something to read, watch, or listen to; rather it is the material out of which users forge identification with one another.

As an example of this consider one of the author's Facebook friends, "Simon." Simon is both openly gay and very open about his political views. He frequently posts to Facebook (often several times a day) and his posts most frequently involve providing links to news stories. He pulls his shared news stories from several different news organizations, often seemingly based on what will help him articulate his views on a number of issues important to him (gay rights, American gun culture, the latest political misstep by a conservative politician, etc.). One way to look at his sharing could be a simple matter of convenience or quality of the content, but instead consider what Simon's sharing accomplishes as a part of his Facebook community of friends. Simon's posts are ideas and experiences that he and his like-minded friends can share. By sharing this content, Simon's group of friends is provided with a body of symbols that they can, in turn, share and comment on amongst themselves.

This growing collage of media content becomes the thing that makes this group of Facebook friends consubstantial with one another. For example, when Simon shares news of his state's legislature voting to legalize same sex marriage, or links to entertainment blog articles about the latest *Marvel* movie, or posts and comments on an article from an alternative weekly newspaper criticizing leading right-wing voices, he is creating identification with his friends and integrating this media content into that community identification. If this content were less accessible, for example if the only way to access a news story was in the actual weekly printed publication or access to their articles was locked away behind a paywall, then Simon would, obviously, be either less likely, or even unable, to share content. News producers need to be mindful of the rhetorical power of sharing content. When crafting news content journalists need to keep in mind the ways in which their words and stories will become the building blocks of their reader's online communities. News organizations need to make choices as to when, where, and how users can access and share content. By entering into community with their audiences journalists and other news producers not only enable their news to be a part of the process of online community creation, they also gain a powerful new means of distributing content.

As a follow up to Jenkins's work on convergence culture, Jenkins, Ford, and Green (2013) offer the idea of "spreadable media" as a way to understand these new distribution channels. The three authors define spreadable media as,

The technical recourses that make it easier to circulate some kinds of content than others, the economics structures that support or restrict circulation, the attributes of a media text that might appeal to a community's motivation for sharing material, and the social networks that link people through the exchanging of meaningful bytes. (Jenkins, Ford, & Green, 2013, p. 4)

They offer this concept as a corrective to the long-standing concept of "stickiness" in media production. As they define it, "sticky" media put a greater emphasis on demanding attention, focusing on visitor monitoring, and generating data on the visitors to specific sites on the internet (p. 5). To see examples of "sticky media," one need only look to any website that locks the majority of its content behind a paywall. Users must come to one location and access the locked-down content only in the ways in which the creators deem appropriate. This "locked-down" approach to content creation and distribution puts creators in control and limits the power of audiences.

Instead, Jenkins, Ford, and Green's spreadable media paradigm puts more emphasis on user empowerment and, in doing so,

Assumes a world where mass content is continually repositioned as it enters niche communities. When material is produced according to a one-size fits-all model, it imperfectly fits the needs of any given audience. Instead, audience members have to retrofit it to better serve their interests. As material spreads it gets remade: either literally, through various forms of sampling and remixing, or figuratively, via its insertion into ongoing conversations across various platforms. This continuous process of repurposing and recirculating is eroding the perceived divided between production and consumption. (Jenkins, Ford, and Green, 2013, p.27)

This more open approach to content creation and distribution puts greater agency in the hands of audience members. As such, the spreadable media paradigm pushes content creators to assume that empowered audience members will rework media content that doesn't fit their purposes to fit their purposes. For example, a consumer might add a comment to a story before sharing it on social media, or might extract a photo or screen-grab from a video to help give their own account of an event. By making it easier for media consumers to share, reshape, and reuse content, media producers can increase their content's spreadablity. In doing so consumers become partners in a longer chain of media distribution, carrying content to audiences that the original producer may not have ever considered and increasing the reach of the spreadable media message.

News production, as a media industry, is also highly affected by these shifts in convergence culture and empowerment of audiences. News producers find themselves struggling to capture their audience's attention when audience members are able to choose news content from a multitude of sources. As Jenkins, Ford, and Green note,

Newsrooms are still struggling to figure out what their roles may be in an environment where the demand for information can be driven by affect and shaped by what happens within online communities, where citizens may make demands on what journalists cover and may cobble together information from *a range of resources if traditional news outlets fail to provide desired information. (Jenkins, Ford, and Green, 2013, p. 42)*

In a situation of increased competition, understanding the rhetorical dynamics at play in how and why online communities share content amongst themselves is of the utmost importance. To navigate this complex web of communal action means learning the internal dynamics of social media communities and looking at what those communities do with the content they choose to access. News stories can no longer be considered in a vacuum, instead journalism scholars must look at the ways a news story tries to engage multiple audiences and the ways in which those audiences will ultimately use the provided content.

Analyzing news content through this larger rhetoric of identification, consubstantiality, and spreadablity involves asking questions that look at the user experience, media "use," and "communal value." Considering what an audience values and how they might use media content necessarily leads journalism scholars to think about a different set of analytical questions. When journalism scholars analyze an article, photo, or video they still need to ask important age-old questions such as "how does this frame the story?" However, scholars now also need to consider the following new types of questions as well:

- Who is the audience for the story?
- How might that audience interpret the way in which the story is framed?
- What will the audience do with this story?
- Does each of the multi-media elements in a news story tell the same story?
- If not, what story does each element tell individually?

These are more difficult considerations as they ask journalists to take into account questions that journalists are not always well equipped to answer. This new emphasis on user experiences, audience engagement, and social-use analytics will require both journalists and journalism scholars to engage with and learn from their audiences.

By understanding what each audience on each social media platform is looking for, one can craft content that most engages the audience where they live and best develop content with which the audience will actively engage. Journalists need to ask new audience-based questions like: how is the story told? How can text, photos, audio, video, and other "new media" tell a compelling and easily reusable story? Most importantly, considering news content from the standpoint of identification and spreadability asks journalists to consider what "added value" a news production carries with it for its audience. Does a news story perfectly encapsulate a complex issue in a single media text? Does a news story take an event that seems large and difficult to understand and make it simpler to understand? Does that same story help audiences articulate their own opinions? Is there a particular "viralness" to the story that will make someone want to share it among their peers on a social media network? Is there a single, iconic image or passage that a social media user might use to tell his or her story? Does a news piece engage an audience so as to help them tell their story?

The effect of this focus on spreadable media is a drastic reframing of the relationship between media content creators and audiences. A focus on spreadable media transforms social media users from passive consumers of content into partners that can act as a resource for news organizations and other media producers. More open, spreadable, media content creation allows messages to flow across platform boundaries. By letting audience members actively engage with content in multiple ways and share the content they find useful across their own social networks, media content becomes more spreadable.

When analyzing media content for its spreadablity, journalism scholars need to focus on media "uses" as well as the content itself. The above questions address why SNS users might help to spread a story, but this list is far from exhaustive. It is ultimately up to each scholar and analyst to engage and understand his or her selected audience. To only treat audiences as passive consumers leaves them unempowered. As journalism as a discipline looks at new ways of analyzing news content in the 21st century, it must be mindful of the ways in which community has taken center stage in the larger discussion of media consumption. While journalism has always been concerned with covering events as they happen, now journalists should also consider who will be most interested in their coverage of the event and how they might best access the largest audience for their coverage. By engaging with social media communities and working to provide the means for a group of social media users to build their identification among themselves and become an active part of the community.

Telling a Spreadable News Story

The preceding section looked at the rhetorical dynamics of sharing among social media users. It also presented a set of analytic questions meant to help journalists and journalism scholars begin thinking about the rhetorical work that sharing news content provides for social media audiences. This section offers news producers ideas to consider as they go about trying to create spreadable media stories. Jenkins, Ford, and Green offer several considerations that can make media productions more spreadable:

- News content should be available when and where audiences want it.
- Content needs to be portable.
- Content needs to be easily reusable in a variety of way.
- Content needs to be relevant to multiple audiences.
- Content needs to be part of a steady stream of material (2013, pp. 197-198).

Rather than look at each of these specific considerations individually, it is, perhaps, more helpful to consider what they actually amount to for media producers. To that end, crafting spreadable news content involves doing two specific things: 1) making content easy for audiences to access and use, and 2) engaging with and participating in audience communities. Doing both of these things should, ultimately, enable news content to be more easily and readily shared and, thereby, become more likely to be worked into the virtual consubstantiality linking together various social media communities.

Ease of access and use: Making content available, accessible, and easily usable is perhaps the most important aspect of making content more spreadable. After all, people can't share what they can't access. News producers should always seek to maintain archives of their content in perpetuity. This not only allows for content to spread when it is first released, but also increases that story's longevity. After all, it's impossible to know when an old story will find new life. Allowing users to gain easy access to content and maintaining this easy access allows content to be more easily shared. By making sure that audiences can access the stories they want, in the formats they want, and when they want, journalists can ensure that audiences will be better able to share content.

Closely related to this idea of ease of access is the concept of media portability. Here, portability does not necessarily mean creating content that media sharers can easily and quickly access on mobile devices. Rather, it refers to creating content that is easily linked to and easily shared among social media users. Simply having content available digitally is an important first step, but journalists and news producers can also increase the portability of their content by preformatting it for specific social media. For example, a local broadcast station can maintain a Facebook public profile and share links to video clips and stories on its main website. Doing so enables Facebook users to easily share the posted content. A journalist can maintain a Twitter profile and tweet short 140 character story summaries and links to her stories that her followers can then easily retweet. Doing so creates an ongoing stream of content that audience members can share and puts the journalist "in community" with her audience.

Finally, news producers can make their content easily reusable by offering different kinds of content within a single story. For example, a traditional "internet news story" can easily be linked to text-based social media like Twitter or Facebook, but that can also be supplemented with photos that could be shared on more visual social media platforms such as Instagram and Pinterest or short video loops that could be posted on *Vine*. To do so will require journalists and news producers in every medium to embrace media convergence and cross traditional media boundaries (i.e., a news writer may need to shoot video). Each of these different media add a different potential way in which the story can be reused by an audience and create a richer user experience. Enabling reusability means embracing divergent uses for the content journalists create, no matter how strange, in the interest of getting the maximum amount of audience coverage.

These suggestions may seem like common sense to someone well versed in the power of digital technology and it's easy to say that someone should do all of these things. However, it's important to note that making all media more accessible and reusable requires an important change in journalists' mindsets. News producers need to become more comfortable with working in multiple formats and in multiple media. At the same time, and on a more fundamental level, this also may require news producers to loosen the reins over who can use their content and how they can use it. This change from a mindset where exclusivity and controlled access are the norm to a mindset that embraces audience participation, cooperation, and eventual co-ownership is not something that a single media producer can enact on her own. Rather, it will require journalism, as a larger discipline and profession, to accept and embrace new kinds of relationships between media producers and audiences and, moreover, to put consideration of these relationships at the forefront.

Engaging in community participation: As noted above, social media platforms capitalize on the communities created by their users. This means that in order for content to be shared it needs to be relevant to those communities. In part this means that journalists like all media producers, need to learn who their audiences are and work to engage those audiences. At the same time audience relevance also requires media producers to leave some room for the audience to be able to make their own use of news stories. Rather than focusing on being the singular and definitive voice for a news event, spreadability encourages news content to which others can and will add their own voices. This is perhaps the most drastic shift from more traditional conceptions of journalism.

The rapid pace of digital life also means that media producers need to get into the conversation early if they want their content to be spread. Rather than focusing on long-format journalism, spreadable journalism could take the form of several smaller "reports" checking in as news happens. Rather than one-and-done projects, spreadable journalism involves keeping audiences informed and engaged with a steady stream of updates punctuated by longer stories that offer deeper coverage. For example, a more spreadable type of campaign coverage would involve a reporter following his or her subject throughout the day. During the coverage the reporter might tweet what the candidate is doing, post photos of the candidate with brief quotes, and finally end the day with a longer narrative putting the preceding content into a larger context for the social media audience. Such an approach gives audiences several possible social media texts to share. They might retweet the reporter's updates, or they might like or share the photos and add their own comments or captions to help show their support, or criticism, of the candidate being followed, and they might ultimately share and comment on the story that the journalist posts at the end of the day. In any case, this style of coverage gives the audience options for what and how they might share. Any one of these digital "breadcrumbs" might potentially lead additional social media users back to the original content, and in the end, build out the audience for this new kind of journalism. Social media rewards community membership and participation. The journalist that can insert him or herself into the community of his or her audience will be well prepared to have his or her voice heard in the new social media marketplace of ideas.

Such an approach changes the nature of the newsroom and the relationship between journalists and their audiences. Rather than acting as lone authoritative voices, this new approach emphasizes the role that journalists play as members of greater online communities. Rather than writers that can, or should, labor to create the single definitive account of who, what, where, when, why, and how, this new approach leads journalists to engage in dialogue with their audiences and deliver the news as a part of the communities they serve. Rather than news producers, this new approach transforms journalists into storytellers that give their audiences the building blocks of community identity. By offering engaging, sharable, and, ultimately, spreadable content, journalists can become partners with their audiences and thrive in today's converged, and cluttered, media environment.

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Focusing on news content's spreadability offers several new potential research directions for journalism scholars. First, one could empirically investigate the nature of news media spreadability across multiple social media platforms. One could examine which news stories spread more readily across social media platforms and survey social media users regarding specific questions of when, how, and why they share content. This chapter lays out some of the theoretical framework necessary for understanding and making more sharable and spreadable news content, but offers little in the way of examining specific user intentions. Research participants could be given a range of different content options and asked which one they would be most likely to share and how they might share them. Such a study would provide a powerful metric for *how* users integrate content into their social media engagement and give journalists clear indications of how best to encourage engagement among audience members.

One could examine spreadable media within the context of specific social media platforms. This chapter presented social media in the broadest terms possible so as to make allowances for changes in social media platforms. As such, it doesn't offer specific suggestions into exactly how news content operates on one social media platform compared to another. For example, news content designed to be spreadable on Twitter will be drastically different than news content designed to be spreadable on Instagram. By looking at examples of successfully spreadable content in each of these settings, one might be able to better define the exact nature of what spreadable media looks like on each social media platform. This would allow for deeper analysis and more targeted content.

Using the Burk's concepts of identification, consubstantiality, and rhetorical community pushes journalism scholars to look at the larger question of how news content gets woven into the fabric of various audience communities. Put another way, how do users actually make use of the news content they share? Looking at patterns in how users share content: if they pass it along as is, add their own comments, rework content into another form, etc… would provide insight into the key questions of how the news functions rhetorically. News scholars and journalists can gain new insight into the exact work that news content carries out and how users actually engage with one another through the content they link to and share. In what ways does the news become the symbolic text that makes audience members feel consubstantial with one another? Looking at exactly how communities of social media users utilize shared content, can offer insights into both social media communities and news content as a whole.

CONCLUSION

The goal of this chapter was to raise critical questions about the role that social media plays in the future of journalism. In doing so, it looks at social media as something more than a place where users post links to online content. Media convergence, convergence culture, and the rise of social media have brought about drastic changes in the relationship between audiences and media producers. Understanding these changes and the rhetorical dynamics of sharing social media content presents a way to conceptualize a larger role for the news on social media platforms. As journalists and journalism scholars consider the role that news content and news production play in a socially-mediated world it is important to keep these concepts of identification, consubstantiality, and spreadability in mind. Journalists and journalism scholars need to understand the increasingly important role that audiences play in the distribution of news content. Journalists need to look for new ways to engage audiences and empower them to help tell the stories that need to be told.

Gone are the days when a successful news story could only live in one location and only be accessed under a very particular set of circumstances. The news producer of the future needs to account for this new multitude of options and avenues for spreading news content. No longer should journalism consider the audience as the final destination. Rather, journalists and journalism scholars should consider the initial audience to be simply another step in the long process of spreading the news. To succeed in this new digitally mediated economy requires all media producers to re-evaluate their relationship with audiences. Journalists can either choose to maintain the *status quo*, not embrace audience empowerment, and watch their profession be subsumed in a sea of new media competition and lose their place, or they can embrace their role as the teller of people's stories, and use their work to help people tell their own stories. Social media makes every user an empowered media producer at some basic level. Journalism can either fight this change or embrace it. In embracing this change, journalism can gain a powerful new channel of content, and a powerful ally in social media audiences.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Consubstantiality: The rhetorical concept of shared substance and identification that links the members of a community together; formed by the sharing of common symbols.

Convergence Culture: A media culture enabled by media convergence which features, among other things, increased audience participation and increased competition among media producers.

Identification: Seeing likeness or similarity in the motives and interests of another person.

Media Convergence: The breaking down of technological barriers between several, formerly separate, media technologies due to the rise of digital technology.

Prosumer: A portmanteau of "professional" and "consumer." Media consumers that have access to, and utilize, professional-grade media tools.

Social Media Platform: A specific social media service that may encompass several different means of accessing that service; for example, an app and a website that both access the same service.

Social Media: Websites, smartphone applications (apps), and other digital services that allow users to connect with other users and share content amongst themselves. For example, MySpace, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.

Spreadable Media: Media content that enables, and encourages, audiences to share, reuse, and reshape the media message in ways that best fit their needs.

Virtual Consubstantiality: Consubstantiality built specifically upon shared digital experiences.

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Chapter 38
Abuse of the Social Media Brain:
Implications for Media Producers and Educators

Fritz Kohle
University of Edinburgh, UK

Sony Jalarajan Raj
MacEwan University, Canada

ABSTRACT

Despite the criticism in the mainstream press regarding the use and abuse of digital and social media, its use has been increasingly encouraged and supported in schools and universities. This chapter examines the social media behaviour of techy-savvy undergraduate students at NHTV, University of Applied Sciences, Breda, The Netherlands, from the perspective of an independent documentary producer and educator, to determine whether any correlation between the amount of time spent online and the use of cognitive functions exists. Media producers require an audience capable of critical thought, and teachers educate future audiences to acquire the necessary cognitive skills. Hence, the chapter analyses how the viewer's cognitive functions impaired by the use of social and digital media affects the reception of media products. This further leads to a more critical concern about the educators' response to the challenges provided by social and digital media.

INTRODUCTION

In some recent research articles, Kohle and Cuevas (Kohle, 2012; Kohle & Cuevas, 2012; 2010) demonstrated that digital natives have and continue to adapt their viewing habits to social and digital media, challenging traditional content development, production and distribution methods. Social media marketing has become a buzz word—users, companies, charities and governments, all are exploring the use of social media. As happened during previous 'information revolutions', social media users and content creators are still in the process of developing the social media narrative. They are not only learning how to access social media networks (SNS), they are increasingly developing the capability to critically process

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online information, becoming social media literate. For example, social media has become and remains instrumental in movements such as the Occupy movement and the Arab Spring. The digital and social media revolution has become a game-changer on a global scale and is the most recent in the evolution of previous 'information explosions', such as the invention of broadcasting and print technologies, the invention of the alphabet, and language itself.

Recently, the negative aspects of social media moved into the focus of the mainstream press. Surveillance of social and digital media was highlighted once more by Edward Snowden (Branigan, 2013). Agencies such as SS8 (2011) and Glimmerglass (2011) are well described regarding their data collection activities on behalf of government and private clients. Intelligence Support Systems for Lawful Interception (ISS, 2013) offer a platform for companies such as SS8 and Glimmerglass to present their latest social media tools in intelligence gathering. Conferences take place across the globe and services offered include, but are not limited to: cyber security and lawful interception of data, as well as submarine cable landing stations, offering access to submarine optical cables that support millions of voice calls and internet traffic. SS8 specializes in 'accurate reconstruction of intercepted voice, text and internet activity' and the 'correlation of intelligence from Internet Protocol Data and Call Detail Records to full communications content' (SS8, 2013). How this can be done without violating the 1st amendment of the US constitution is debatable, not to mention international and national law for the rest of the world.

The topic of social media surveillance abuse on its own requires further investigation, but this would go beyond the scope of this paper, which does not focuses on social media surveillance and security issues, but on the impact of social media on the development of cognitive skills of digital natives and place it into a historical as well as social theory context.

BACKGROUND

This paper is relevant to media producers who continue to work in their profession and who have an interest in teaching. Familiarity with Marshall Mcluhan's (1995) media theory and Briggs & Burke's (2009) history of media is recommended. Macluhan argues that the "medium is the message". It is the media system itself which transforms society. Evidence suggests that the use and abuse of social media also has a detrimental impact on the development of cognitive skills among digital natives and immigrants alike. (Spitzer, 2012) At the same time digital natives are challenged to acquire new skills to navigate social and digital media; skills needed to become literate in the use of a new media technology, which in itself is influencing user behavior and the way content is produced. Data suggests that not only behavior is affected; the brain itself also undergoes significant changes.

Social media is not only the latest 'information explosion' in a series of evolutionary steps, since the invention of language (Kohle, 2013); it differs considerably from previous information explosion events, such as print and broadcast technologies in speed of information dissemination. This was discussed by Mcluhan, though the speed with which this new technology evolves and the extent to which it encompasses previous media technologies is beyond the scope envisaged by Mcluhan. Social and digital media are a paradigm shift when compared to previous information explosions, such as the invention of writing and the alphabet.

History teaches us that the introduction of new technology also brings with it undesirable side effects. Social media is no exception to this: it not only challenges the way media productions are developed, produced and distributed – evidence suggests social media is also playing a role in the way audiences develop their cognitive skills. With regards to content for social and digital media, we take into account Mcluhan's idea on how content for new media originates from yesterday's technology. For example: content for TV is print; content for print is writing. We take a closer look at Mcluhan and examine his ideas within the context of social media. We then conclude this paper exploring uses and abuses of social media among digital natives from the perspective of a media producer and educator.

Research Methods

We critically examined the impact social and digital media has on cognitive functions among a group of digital natives and undergraduate students aged 18-22 at NHTV, University of Applied Sciences, Breda, Netherlands. A group of 77 undergraduate students was surveyed using a multiple-choice questionnaire to investigate their social media behaviour. The survey was designed to provide insight into the use of cognitive functions such as memory and orientation. All 77 students completed the survey.

We conducted a literature review of the arguments provided by critics, such as neuro-surgeon Prof. Dr. Manfred Spitzer (2012), as well as claims by South Korean researchers who have found evidence suggesting a correlation between the early onset of dementia among South Korean digital natives and the use of digital and social media. We further investigate phenomena such as cyber bullying and Facebook depression by reviewing relevant papers in the field. We then compare the outcome of our survey to arguments presented by critics, discuss the implications for documentary filmmakers within the context of Mcluhan's ideas on media theory, and summarize our findings accordingly.

Survey Results

The author of this study observed viewing habits of digital natives since 2009, following the Occupy movement, Arab Spring, describing the impact social media have had on digital natives and immigrants alike, as the ultimate information explosion. Abuse of social and digital media did not escape the authors' attention, i.e. use of social and digital media by agencies such as the NSA. In this chapter, we discuss the outcome of our survey, research into the impact of social media on cognitive functions and media theory. The classical definition of dementia is based on the loss of cognitive functions, memory and orientation (WHO ICD-10 Classification of Mental and Behavioral Disorders, 1992). Survey questions were designed to explore memory relating to literature read, news headlines noted, documentaries seen, and the ability to relate the campus location of NHTV to the Breda city centre. Our survey focused on the claims students made without judging the validity of the content of their claims. For example, it was not important for the survey outcome if students claimed they remembered the news headline: "Obama stops clandestine NSA internet surveillance", even if this news headline at the time of writing this paper was factually incorrect. The survey only captured the student's claim that they remembered something. We also added a control question, such as "What did you have for lunch yesterday?". If students were dement at the time of taking the survey, the answer to that question would more likely than not elude survey participants.

Only 4 out of 77 students participating in the survey stated that they spent less than 2 hours per day online. This small group claimed that they had the least difficulty staying focused during class and staying off-line during lectures. In stark contrast, 7 students claimed to spend 10 hours or more online per day: 6 students from this group stated that they had difficulties staying off-line during class and tutorials. 3 of the 4 of students claimed to spend less than 2 hours online and remembered the last documentary they saw. Only 4 of the 7 students claiming to spend 10 or more hours a day online remembered the last documentary they saw. Data suggests that more online time using social media does not correlate with improved memory.

However, not all results were this clear. 6 of the 7 students from the group that spent 10 hours online, stated that they remembered news headlines, compared to 3 out of 4 students who claimed to spend 2 hours or less online per day. In this case the 10-hour online group's results were similar to that of the 2-hour online group. This could be due to a number of reasons, such as size of the sample group and cultural differences within an international setting. Another reason could be that students 'skim' news headlines using various sources, meaning that they are aware of newsworthy events but without do not have deeper knowledge of them. It would be desirable to repeat this survey on a larger scale to investigate these two groups in more detail. We did not observe a statistically significant difference between sexes.

45 out of the 77 students stated that they spend between 3-5 hours online every day. 47% claim that they experience difficulties staying offline during lectures and tutorials. 35% do not remember the last documentary they saw, 88% do not remember the last day they spent without internet access, 71% do not remember the title of the last book they read, and 40% could not place the location of the university in relation to the city center of Breda. Based on the above, nearly half of the students in this group could be diagnosed with a mild form of dementia: a degree of memory loss interfering with every day activities, the main function affected being the learning of new material (WHO ICD-10 Classification of Mental and Behavioral Disorders, 1992).

Having said all that, 97% of students remembered their lunch the day before, an indication that dementia is not yet an issue for digital natives between the ages of 18-22. But it is debatable whether students are exercising and further developing their cognitive skills considering the survey outcomes. Data suggests that retention of literature recently read, daily news and events or documentaries seen, is not improving among this group of students by means of social and digital media. A small group of students who spent less than 2 hours online a day read more, are better informed, more focused and less distracted by social media in the classroom when compared to students who are online longer. Control questions indicate that students are not dement, but distraction from social media poses a real problem: the majority of students who are online between 3-5 hours a day find it difficult to remain offline during lectures, remain focused, remember news events, literature and documentaries seen, or even when they were last offline.

MAIN FOCUS OF THE CHAPTER

Cognitive Functions: Effects of Social and Digital Media on the Brain

Manufacturers of tablets and mobile devices are keen to expand their market reach, increasingly targeting children and teenagers for their products as existing markets reach saturation. Sandvik, Smordal and Osterud (2012) argue that the use of tablets improved language learning in a kindergarten setting. Their data suggests that digital tools such as iPads provide an opportunity for 'children to engage in useful language interaction', though it remains unclear how the use of tablets at such an early age influences brain development. Similar studies claim that children aged 3-5 developed considerable vocabulary and phonological awareness (Chiong & Shuler, 2010). Still, even proponents of digital tools claiming benefits in the development of language among 3-5 year olds are cautious and recommend further studies regarding this topic (Sandvik, Smordal & Osterud 2012).

Critics such as Manfred Spitzer (2012) and Psychiatrist Dr. Kim Dae-jin (Some teens are exhibiting signs of 'digital dementia', 2013) have described the early onset of dementia among social media users. They claim that digital and social media are hindering the normal development of cognitive functions in teenagers and adolescents. Similar articles have appeared in other mainstream papers, highlighting concerns over the use of social and digital media (Digital Dementia on the rise, 2013; Ryall, 2012). Social and digital media may not only hinder the physical development of the brain, if used inappropriately; researchers in the field of education examined online social aggression and abusive behavior in Australia (Burgess & Mcloughlin, 2011). They claim that the consequences of cyber-bullying can be more severe than face-to-face bullying because the physical separation of victim and aggressor does not lead to an end of bullying. The recent increase in cyber-bullying and the consequent suicide of a number of teenagers brings this issue once again into the public domain (Gadkari, 2013; Arkin, 2013; Ensor, 2013; Warren & Quigley, 2013). The psychological aspects of online social aggression warrant further investigation.

If true, a growing number of digital natives are at risk of not being able to fully develop their cognitive skills, exposing them to the onset of dementia at an early age. Society as a whole will need to bear the moral and financial costs associated with an increase of dement citizens in the future. Media producers rely on audiences equipped with well-developed cognitive skills in order to encourage and stimulate critical thought on the topic presented.

Spitzer (2012) argues that the indiscriminate introduction of mobile devices and digital media into the classroom at an early age and during adolescence has a detrimental impact on the development of cognitive functions. As a neuro-scientist and brain surgeon, he found a spot in the German public highlight as one of the more vocal critics of social and digital media. His writing style can be construed as polarizing; nevertheless, he provides a well-constructed argument, not entirely against social and digital media per se.

Instead, he advocates a more thoughtful and responsible use of social media. We know too little about the impact of social media use in the class room and in kindergarten. Media use combined (TV, music, games, computer, books and cinema) averaged at 7:38 hours per day in the US in 2009 (Rideout, 2010). Consequences of this amount of media consumption are not frequently examined by industry-funded researchers for obvious reasons. The London School of Economics surveyed 25000 9-16 year olds from 25 European countries (Livingstone, Olafsson, & Staksrund, 2013). They concluded that digital natives frequently visit sites inappropriate for their age, lacking the skills to navigate SNS's safely.

In response to these considerable threats to the safety of young people and teenagers, the industry has responded with self-imposed strategies that aim to minimize these risks, though little is known about the effectiveness of these strategies. Strasburger, Jordan and Donnerstein (2010) published similar results, making concrete recommendations to schools, the entertainment and advertising industries, as well as researchers and government bodies, on how to deal with the consequences of social and digital media 'abuse'.

The importance of well-developed cognitive functions is also highlighted by Woollett and Macguire (2006, 2011) in their investigation into the role of the hippocampus, a part of the brain associated with memory. Taxi drivers who regularly studied to memorize London street maps to pass the London taxi driver exam showed a measurable increase in the size of the hippocampus. Critics such as Spitzer claim that social and digital media makes it too easy to not practice and develop cognitive functions. Spitzer explains that the descent into dementia at a later age is very much determined by how well an individual's brain developed during early, formative years: a person with well developed cognitive functions at his or her disposal is more likely to descend into dementia later in his or her life. Data suggests that lesser developed cognitive functions result in the early onset of dementia, though clearly more research is needed in this area.

His arguments are supported by reports from South Korean psychiatrists such as Kim Dae-Jin at Seoul's St. Mary's hospital (Baek Il-Hyun & Park Eun-Jee, 2012). South Korea's mobile device penetration is among the highest in the Western world (Media Trend Watch, 2012). Practitioners such as Kim Dae-Jin have noticed an increase in cases described as 'digital dementia': the deterioration of cognitive abilities not normally associated with the age group of digital natives. According to Baek Il-Hyun and Park Eun-Jee (2012), the South Korean Health Insurance Review & Assessment service also reported a significant increase in people suffering from cognitive problems since 2008. This increase correlates with the rise of the sale and use of mobile digital devices in South Korea.

Further evidence is provided by Zhou et al (2011), who measured the effects of internet addiction on the brain. Individuals addicted to being online are shown to have a different brain structure. After 50 hours of internet gaming, Lee Seung Seop collapsed and died of heart failure. Christakis (2010) concludes that parents and teachers are too complacent in dealing with this issue, and terms the separation of digital immigrants and natives the 'digital divide'. Those who need most guidance, namely digital natives, are cared for by digital immigrants who are unaware of the negative aspects of social and digital media.

Critics argue that social media discourages digital natives from developing their cognitive skills. The impact of learning on the brain and the consequent development of the hippocampus were already described by Wollett and Mcguire (2006, 2011). Digital natives are prone to 'outsource' information into the 'cloud' (Mell & Grance, 2011), their computer, laptop or mobile device, and it is reasonable to argue that they are not training their brain. For example, London taxi drivers could use a GPS based navigation system guiding them via the most suitable route to their destination. In turn, however, their hippocampus would be less developed, which, as critics claim, increases the likelihood of developing dementia earlier rather than later.

Data from our survey suggests that social and digital media do not improve cognitive functions, memory and orientation, especially when essential information is kept in a cloud instead of the brain. Social and digital media are part of a transformation process in society, and are physically measurable: South Korean and German researchers find that abuse of social and digital media have detrimental effects on the development of the brain (Spitzer, 2012).

The Medium Is the Message: Or Is It?

Social media can be compared to Mcluhan's famous light bulb analogy: the light bulb in itself does not have any content, but at night it illuminates an otherwise dark space for social activity. The internet, social, and digital media function very much in the same way: on their own, they have no content, but they have enabled users on an unprecedented, global scale to access and participate in a virtual space. It is reasonable to argue that this new online world is evolving into a global online collective consciousness.

Society is being transformed from a non-virtual world to encompass a virtual state, providing post-modern content via the social and digital media domain, which in itself is constantly changing: a key characteristic of post-modernity. Users no longer need to study and memorize a roadmap. This is accomplished by the mobile device instead. Perhaps this is the next evolutionary step. Dunbar (2003) describes the human brain's limitation in dealing with more than 200 social contacts, when compared to the brain of other hominids. Watkins (2010) submits that it became necessary for early man to overcome this limitation by cultural means; for example, monumentalism and storytelling. The development of language also had a major impact on the brain's structure (Corbalis, 2009)—it increased in size and led to the development of episodic memory as humans developed the ability for 'mental time travel' (Tulving, 2002). Language allowed us to tell stories that required an understanding of time: past, present and future. Or in narrative terms: a beginning, middle and end.

Briggs, Burke and Mcluhan teach us that previous media technologies played a significant role in the transformation of society and culture. We also learn that with the introduction of each new technology the human brain underwent significant changes. For example learning the London roadmap results in an increased hippocampus for London taxi drivers, a significant and measurable outcome attributed to practicing memory as a cognitive skill. Critics are also quick to highlight negative aspects regarding cyber bullying, Facebook suicides, internet addiction and their observations on the development of cognitive functions and the brain. But what if that is all part of a natural evolutionary cycle? What if we are supposed to 'outsource' information onto a cloud and share it with the world? What if the next evolutionary step for Homo Sapiens Sapiens is to develop a global collective consciousness located in the cloud? On the other hand, if dementia occurs as a result of under-developed cognitive skills as Spitzer claims, what kind of society are we looking forward to? How will outsourcing crucial information to the virtual cloud world prevent the onset of early dementia?

Mcluhan (1995) argues that the 'medium is the message'. He submits that it is the medium that transforms society rather than the message it carries. It is debatable whether or not media is causing transformation, or if it correlates regarding change. His ideas describe the transformative effect of media on cultural and social aspects of society. Evidence suggests that a correlation exists between the development of the brain and the way users engage with media. Jung's (1981) ideas on synchronicity could provide another perspective on media and 'Zeitgeist'. It is therefore reasonable to argue that the "medium being the message" not only plays a role in the transformation of society, but also a causal or correlative function in the development of the brain, a topic that warrants further investigation.

Mcluhan understood very well the nature of the beast. For example, he advised his son Eric not to expose his granddaughter Emily to "hours and hours of TV", as he considered TV to be a "vile drug which permeates the nervous system, especially the young" (Morrison, 2013). Spitzer and his South Korean counterparts present evidence that suggests that not only TV but social and digital media in particular have a detrimental effect on audiences. Jacobs (2011) points out that Mcluhan was prone to make popular statements such as this, using a variety of media platforms such as print and TV – the medium he despised so much. Jacobs rightly questions Mcluhan's credibility if on the one hand he claims that media as 'the extensions of man's consciousness …. [hold] the potential for realizing the anti-christ", yet in the same discussion proposes that "we're standing on the threshold of a liberating and exhilarating new world". How could anyone take Mcluhan seriously after such a 180 degree turnabout?

Nevertheless, many of Mcluhan's assertions are visible within the social and digital media domain. There is a case to support his claim that 'yesterday's technology' provides content in the social and digital media domain. For example, Mcluhan describes the message of the moving image as a transition from lineal connections to configurations. Previous information explosions such as print transformed a feudal society into a linear and conform society, which in turn paved the way for the French Revolution. He argues that content distributed by each new technology has its origins in the previous medium, for example the content of writing is speech that of print is writing, and so on. The key difference with social and digital media though is that it encompasses all previous forms of media in a virtual space: language, writing, print, film and interactivity.

For example, Jencks (2009) concludes that ‘branded terrorism’ could be considered a post-modern pre-announcement of murder, after discussing Lyotard (1992). Lyotard describes the characteristics of modernity vs. postmodernity in graphic detail. Auschwitz as a death camp was a highly structured mass-production place of murder, well organized, a well-kept secret, the epiphany of a modern, totalitarian society. G. W. Bush’s pre-announced attack on Iraq, on the other hand, could be described as branded terrorism, the post-modern equivalent. Current events in Syria and the Obama administration’s justification to intervene also fit this category. Mcluhan also observed that the introduction of each new technology speeds up cultural and social processes in society. The speed with which social and digital media has invaded real and virtual spaces confirm this. In fact, the speed with which social media evolves is such that by the time this paper is published, it may already be outdated. It is not surprising to observe an increase of ‘old’ messages being distributed via digital and social media, such as social aggression in the form of bullying, aptly named cyber-bullying as it takes place online.

Mcluhan provides a reasonable theory explaining how previous media technologies provide content for new ones. With the arrival of electronic media he foresaw the ‘global village’. Social and digital media move beyond the scope of his vision; all pervasive content is reaching a global audience at an ever increasing speed, yet messages have remained the same. Previously, teenagers and adolescents were bullied at school and at home, either in person or by means of an anonymous note or letter.

Cyber-Bullying and Facebook Depression

The latest fashion among bullies today is to bully peers online. ‘Facebook depression’ and ‘Cyber bullying’ are known online phenomena. Moreno at al (2011) observe that out of some 200 students surveyed, 25% displayed depressive symptoms. 2.5% met the criteria for a major depressive episode (MDE).

Hannah Krasnova of the Institute of Information Systems, Berlin, surveyed 600 individuals to find that one in three felt worse after visiting a social networking site (SNS) (Krasnova et al, 2013; Sifferlin, 2013). Krasnova describes how Facebook users experience envy when visiting sites of peers and comparing their own lives accordingly. Krasnova demonstrates that users frequently perceive Facebook as a stressful environment. The post-modern online world is constantly changing and thus challenging users and content creators to continuously update and apply their social media skills.

Moreno’s group provides further insight regarding Facebook users who decide to go public with their depression, which may not be rooted in the use of a SNS alone, but other circumstances. His group comes to a positive conclusion in their evaluation of Facebook as a platform for users to express depression: social networking sites could become a tool in dealing with depression, though this would require more regulation of SNS’s. Pediatricians too have noticed the negative impact of SNS’s in the lives of children. Schergin and Clarke-Pearson (2011) investigated this problem and have made specific recommendations to pediatricians dealing with the negative effects of social and digital media. Still, cases of Facebook suicide are on the increase and make headlines, with calls from concerned parents and consumer watchdogs to review and improve existing legislation regarding social media abuse and cyber bullying.

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Social media and internet use has been a major issue as social space has been taken over by the virtual world. This research not only opens further consideration into the cognitive process of social media use, but the role of social media in the educational spectrum. The new learning curriculum incorporating digital technologies and virtual learning, pose challenges both to the students as well as the teachers. For a viable and effective teaching and learning module, understanding the (adverse) effect of social media use and student's concentration level is important. Hence this research initiates a humble step towards it. The date can be further used and explored in a wider scale for further indulgence into the social media research.

CONCLUSION

Why is this important to media producers and educators? Media producers need to be aware of the social media narrative developing among digital natives in order to develop, produce and distribute content to the appropriate target audience, using ethically justifiable methods. Social and digital media as a new medium implies that content of previous technologies provides content for it, according to Mcluhan. This is essential knowledge producers need in order to develop, produce and distribute content via social and digital media.

Educators, though working in a different environment, need to understand social and media technology equally well to meet their educational mandate. They develop a different kind of narrative for an audience consisting of students. Most of them are digital natives in the process of becoming versed in social media. Producers, educators nor society as a whole can afford to only note and apply the advantages of social and digital media, such as crowd-funding, social media marketing and self-distribution. Motivation to investigate the negative side of digital and social media is not coming from industry and remains neglected. Society as a whole will have to bear the costs of the negative effects of social and digital media regarding the development of an individual's cognitive function.

Though tempting, not all content should be marketed via social media and apps to younger audiences. The guidelines are not yet available to all stakeholders, though the calls to review and regulate social media practices are increasing. Industry funded research is not likely to accomplish this on its own. A media market based on generating revenues alone is not likely to implement anything else but voluntary guidelines regarding the use, implementation and marketing of social and digital media tools aimed at digital natives at home and in the classroom. Educators are advised to critically evaluate the benefits of social and digital media, and put in place guidelines that protect users and require them to practice their cognitive skills until more research in this field shows otherwise.

Our survey shows that social and digital media has become an integral part in the lives of digital natives; increasingly, digital immigrants find it difficult to escape this new technology as well. Students are using social and digital media to deal with the information tsunami they are faced with on a daily basis. For many, including digital immigrants, it has become impossible to process the amount of information presented online and via traditional media in any other way. As a consequence, information is no longer processed at a deeper level, but absorbed superficially instead. Critics argue that using social and digital media in this way does not improve the development of cognitive skills, making it even more difficult for students to acquire new knowledge and retain it in the long-term.

Producers need to carefully consider the means that should be used to develop, produce and distribute their programme to avoid unwitting support regarding the use of technology unsuitable for the intended target audience. There is a need to better understand the new emerging digital native culture. Understanding and critically examining Mcluhan's ideas in this area helps obtain the big picture. Reaching an audience is a challenge for the best of producers, but even more so without an understanding of the narrative unfolding among digital natives and digital immigrants alike.

Teachers are equally challenged when communicating with their students via SNS's, while producers are constantly searching for new ways to engage with their audience online. Expectations of online content and viewing behavior have changed significantly. In 2010, the average YouTube video, selected from among 2.5 million video clips, analysed was 4 minutes and 12 seconds in length (Inside YouTube Videos, 2010). Understanding this emerging narrative among digital natives provides numerous challenges to producers, such as length of programme, gamification, interaction and participation, format, i.e. short-form webisodes, and/or traditional long-form formats. The Scottish Film Institute is exploring new ways to meta-tag content, provide audience interaction and distribute their catalogue using technologies such as Popcorn and Distrify (Wistreich, 2012; Kempas, 2012).

New job descriptions are emerging, such as the Producer of Marketing and Distribution, social and digital media being one of the tools to develop, distribute, market their product and engage with audiences. Teachers are frequently challenged in the classroom, populated by students who are texting, skyping and facebooking. Almost half of the students in our survey stated that they found it difficult to stay offline during class. The negative effects of multi-tasking have been described in the literature, and educators are struggling to deal with the consequences of social and digital media in the classroom. Producers are dealing with this new reality by exploring new ways to reach audiences in the multi-screen-verse.

The unfolding social media narrative is increasingly making headlines because of tragic events, such as the death of a 17-year-old teenager in the UK (Teenager's death sparks cyber-blackmailing probe, 2013). According to Barbara Brams (2013), 75% of adolescents have a social network profile, which is accessed by more than half of them every day. They increasingly share private information online, disregarding privacy and safety concerns (Madden et al, 2013). Even though they still prefer face-to-face contact over social media, digital natives are increasingly exposed to cyber-bullying, resulting in depression, social isolation and suicidal thoughts (Hinduja & Patchin, 2010). Educators are challenged to pay more attention to social media; though for many, this technology is scary and unknown territory. Nevertheless, if parents fail to spot suicidal thoughts, the teacher may be the next in line to deal with the problem, but not if she or he disengaged from the social media narrative.

Bullying and suicide are not new to mankind; the social media phenomena has developed into a global platform, with its own culture, language, narrative and interaction that is not well understood by digital immigrants, such as parents, teachers, social workers, government bodies and media professionals themselves. While digital natives are exposed to the good and bad of social media, digital immigrants are trying to figure out how to deal with this new technology, leaving digital natives to deal with the consequences of social media with little or no guidance.

Social media has taken on its own dynamic pace and the rest of the world is lagging behind trying to work out how to react to his new global challenge. Viewing social and digital media from Mcluhan's perspective, we recognize the post-modern content in a post-post-modern technology. Constant change has become the norm, one might even argue that we are observing the death of post-modernity—whereas the pre-announced attack on Iraq based on branded terrorism was still effective, taking into account the weapons of mass destruction lie presented by the Bush administration, the current US administration is facing a great deal more resistance when applying the same kind of post-modern strategy to deal with Syria. Social media offers greater transparency to all stakeholders, though it will only have any benefits if users are still in control of their cognitive skills.

The Occupy and Wall Street movements demonstrate all too well how digital natives and immigrants alike have understood social media and its post-modern content. It shows how users of social and digital media have developed a new form of media literacy for this new medium, accelerating the transformation from a post-modern into a post-post-modern society. Mcluhan's ideas on media encompass this process; though social and digital media are not only encompassing the post-modern 'Zeitgeist', they contain all previous media technologies at an ever increasing speed.

Producers need to understand Mcluhan's ideas better to fully appreciate the transformation, social and digital media is facilitating for society and at an individual level. The world is in the midst of this process, audiences, users and producers are becoming media literate in this new technology. Institutions, organizations and governments are adapting swiftly to this new challenge and they are learning their lessons, reacting in typical post-modern fashion to the challenges online. Producers are more likely to adapt quickly in order to reach their target audience during this transformation. Small and medium-sized businesses are better suited to act and react to these challenges. Due to their size, they are able to act and react faster when compared to their large, modern and post-modern counterparts.

Educators, on the other hand, are required to work within hierarchies that managed to survive centuries of transformation, i.e. the introduction of print and broadcast technologies. This paper itself is a testament to the positive aspects of social media in such an environment: i.e. access to libraries and online sources, as well as the potential to collaborate at the research level with scholars across the globe made it possible to discuss and exchange new knowledge via this new virtual space. Educators are advised to actively become part of the social media narrative and provide clear guidelines on the use of social media in the classroom.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Cognitive Skill: It refers to the human capacity of processing the thoughts like memorizing, differentiating, learning, speaking and understanding information/data.

Cyber-Bullying: It's synonymous to digital abuse whereby anyone with the aid of digital technologies harass and threaten other users.

Dementia: Impaired intellectual faculty like lack of memory, concentration and judging power.

Digital Abuse: The use of digital technologies like social networking sites and digital gadgets (through SMSs, photographs or online messages) to bully and harass anyone.

Digital Natives: It represents a generation who are born or bought up in a digital era who are well-versed in the technological aspect and whose daily endeavor revolves around these technologies.

Social Media: It is a virtual medium through which the users can communicate, interact and share information with the fellow-users and indulge in a social networking. Facebook, YouTube, Second Life, Twitter etc. are some examples.

Virtual Space: It is a computer simulated environment where people interact.

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Chapter 39
How Social Media Offers Opportunities for Growth in the Traditional Media Industry:
The Case of Travel Journalism

Andrew Duffy
Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

ABSTRACT

Under threat from social media and interactive Web 2.0, the traditional media industry seeks new models to maintain its viability. This chapter studies both consumers and prospective producers of one genre—travel journalism—to advocate a model that could help arrest the industry's decline and return to growth. It argues that one way forward for traditional media would be a new model of curatorship, in which a professional journalist collaborates with amateur contributors. It suggests that such a hybrid arrangement will be recognisable neither as professional newsroom nor as amateur social media, but a new model with features of both. This offers a way forward so that rather than contributing to the declining fortunes of the traditional media industry, as many journalists fear, social media can instead encourage progress.

INTRODUCTION

Journalism has worked hard to build and maintain professional values. It defines itself by norms such as objectivity, accuracy, independence and neutrality (Fredriksson & Johansson, 2014; Johnstone, Slawski & Bowman, 1972; Weaver, 1998). Such ideology is intended to distinguish between journalism and other writing to "self-legitimize their position in society" (Deuze, 2005: 446). Now other forms of writing are forming a credible opposition as information and opinions are provided by social media, which includes social networks such as Facebook, user-generated content (UGC), bloggers, and online user review sites (OURS). Given the resulting crisis in the Western news media industry since the turn of the millennium, there is little confidence or consensus about what journalism should be or do (Frank-

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lin, 2012; Spyridou, Matsiola, Veglis, Kalliris & Dimoulas, 2013). While scholarly focus has been on citizen-centric hard news as a champion of democracy, this chapter considers consumer-centric lifestyle journalism—specifically about travel—and advocates a new model that could help arrest journalism's decline and return it to growth.

The media (in travel and tourism as in other areas) has been changed by Web 2.0, which "can be thought of as the technical infrastructure that enables the social phenomenon of collective media, and facilitates consumer-generated content" (Berthon, Pitt, Plangger & Shapiro, 2012: 262). The key word is 'consumer'. Travel journalism developed within a specific environment—newspapers, magazines and broadcast media directed at an audience of consumers. That environment has changed as the traditional media finds its economies, readership, professional relationships and status all undermined and altered by the rise of digital social media content distributed on the Internet (Benson & Morgan, 2015).

Crucially for this chapter, Web 2.0-enabled social media assumes some of the roles of journalism but follow different rules. It often abandons objectivity, accuracy and neutrality in favour of subjective opinion, dubious factuality and subliminal partisanship. Despite this, it has conspired to limit journalists' role as "new media technologies challenge one of the most fundamental 'truths' in journalism, namely: the professional journalist is the one who determines what publics see, hear and read about the world" (Deuze, 2005: 451). Yet it is possible that, far from challenging these professional values, social media can be integrated with them so that both are enhanced.

Journalism has its professional standards; Web 2.0 introduces social standards. This chapter argues for an integration of the two as a way forward for traditional media, suggesting that such a hybrid will be recognisable neither as professional newsroom nor as amateur social media, but a new species with features of both.

The argument is based on studies of two groups connected to travel journalism. The first study is of consumers, assessing the relative value they ascribe to professional versus amateur content, and what their attitudes towards social media might indicate for the practitioners who supply professional content. The second is of the next generation of travel journalists, and it assesses how social media influences them.

Both groups—consumers and prospective producers alike—share similar attitudes towards social media and traditional media, which offers a direction for the media to take. Yet, as it is unlikely that the practice of each can be reconciled with the values of the other, what is needed is a media model where they can merge. Looking at travel journalism, this chapter outlines how social media might be integrated with traditional media, the effect on the work practices of individuals within it, and some commercial implications.

I focus on travel journalists because they operate in a compromised area between the values of hard news reporting and the commercial values of softer, lifestyle writing. Their genre is one in which subjective experience is preferred over the expected journalistic standards of objectivity, offering a locus for an alternative to traditional professional practice.

I contend that one consequence of the changes wrought by social media and travel information freely available online will be to divide the roles of traveller and journalist, so that the traveller can deliver the subjective, credible reports-from-abroad, while the journalist packages (and sells) these under the auspices of the accepted, objectivity-based practice of the traditional media. This offers a way forward—for lifestyle and travel journalism, at least—so that rather than contributing to the declining fortunes of the industry, social media generates growth.

CHANGING JOURNALISM PRACTICES

Journalism has always been fluid. News values are shaped by a society to reflect its interests and concerns (Philips, 2005) and vary among countries (Weaver, 1998). Within the Western liberal model, time and technology have altered journalistic practice. Herbert (2004) observed a move from literary writing to the more direct style of modern news writing following the invention of the telegraph, when transmitting information became expensive so words had to be pared back. Today, too, the changing technological, social and economic environment is altering the practice of journalism (Tandoc, 2014). Four social media-led forces impact on travel journalism, and can demonstrate how the industry could adapt.

First, social media as a source of information and competition makes journalists both enthusiastic about and wary of this online newcomer (Hermida & Thurman, 2008; Nah & Chung, 2012; Paulussen & Ugille, 2008; Singer, 2003). The journalist as an observer and interpreter of society is under siege from bloggers (Carlson, 2007) and "the biggest challenge for travel journalists is the increasing number of amateur writers who generate travel information online" (Hanusch & Fürsich, 2014: 8). But as news organisations are playing catch-up with their technologically enabled audiences (Yaros, 2008), it is plausible to anticipate that social media which has precipitated a decline in the industry can equally contribute to a renaissance by supplying content which is then given the stamp of approval by media organisations.

Second, the democratic ideals of social media such as blogs and OURS—which represent the credible voice of the public untainted by commercial influence of travel companies, advertisers or the demands of a publication—alter the idea of what constitutes 'travel writing' (Volo, 2010; Xiang & Gretzel, 2010). The expert has been superseded by the amateur as the arbiter of travel information; for the former to regain lost ground, it must collaborate with the latter.

Third, the economics of commercial support for travel journalism have ebbed, which has coincided with advertisers shifting money off the printed page and onto bloggers' websites (Siles & Boczkowski, 2012). This led to less funding for travel, fewer positions for writers and a reliance on freelance contributions (Hanusch & Fürsich, 2014; Raman & Choudary, 2014). Continuing this same progression, the profession is now undermined by enthusiastic amateurs who provide content for free (Pirolli, 2014) making it harder to make a living as a travel journalist (Hanusch & Fürsich, 2014). Yet if traditional media co-opted those writers rather than being undermined by them, both could benefit. This impacts on the ideal of the travel writer as a member of a newsroom, however, and would mean delegating the time-consuming task of going overseas to outsiders—which questions the very essence of journalistic practice.

Fourth, much paid-for travel information previously supplied by traditional media has moved online for free and is increasingly used by travellers (Casaló, Flavián & Guinalíu, 2011; Hofstaetter & Egger, 2009), challenging paid travel journalists to maintain some form of value that differentiates them from the free competition. The question is, what form does that point of differentiation take? The worth of traditional media values such as expertise, accuracy and objectivity meet competition in the form of amateurs on social networking sites writing their own subjective, un-paid and unverifiable opinions un-moderated by editors (Pirolli, 2014). Travel journalism must face up to the new digital social media paradigm as it faces "an identity crisis as its gatekeeping role, much like that of travel agents, is slowly slipping into the hands of those it originally sought to serve" (Pirolli, 2014: 83). To do so requires maintaining its valuable, credible identity, but altering the work practice of the travel journalist in a media organisation. This chapter argues that one change that might be profitably made is to embrace and accept UGC and amateur travel writing as a benefit rather than a threat; and for traditional media organisations to develop ways to professionalise and monetise it as a resource.

(TRAVEL) JOURNALISTS' VALUES

This requires travel journalists to maintain their existing newsroom practice which is based on objectivity, accuracy, and reporting factual information as a detached observer rather than an active participant (Johnstone, Slawski & Bowman, 1972); and to adapt it to work with amateur UGC which may not follow any of these. This allows the credibility of both amateur and professional to flourish. To examine this, it is helpful to establish what values guide practice and how they are reflected in travel journalism. Deuze (2005) includes the following:

1. **Public Service:** Journalists provide a public service (as watchdogs or 'newshounds', active collectors and disseminators of information).
2. **Objectivity:** Journalists are impartial, neutral, objective, fair and (thus) credible.
3. **Immediacy:** Journalists have a sense of immediacy, actuality and speed (inherent in the concept of 'news').
4. **Autonomy:** Journalists must be autonomous, free and independent in their work.
5. **Ethics:** Journalists have a sense of ethics, validity and legitimacy (2005: 447).

Travel journalism conforms to some but not all of these, which raises the question of what travel journalists believe their roles are. What—if any—ideology of practice guides them? Travel journalism is distinct from both mainstream journalism and travel writing, being more subjective than the former and more factual than the latter. Compared to travel writing, which can be fictitious, "travel journalism is more closely connected to the professional notions around fact, accuracy, truthfulness and ethical conduct in journalism" (Hanusch & Fürsich, 2014: 7).

Hanusch and Fürsich offer a definition that travel journalism makes claims to be primarily factual, concerned with reporting travel and tourism from a consumer perspective, and while it operates within a broad journalism framework, it is subject to distinctive economic forces that constrain it. Practitioners may not adhere to standard journalistic norms that have grown up around hard news. Yet, if their commercially compromised standing makes them marginal in journalism scholarship, the breadth of their topic should edge them back into the limelight. Travel and tourism is by some counts the world's largest business sector, and there has been a growth in travel journalism alongside the growth in tourism figures (UNWTO, 2014).

Hanusch (2011) has done the only study of travel journalists' professional identities to date. Interviewing 85 Australian practitioners, he described their roles as entertainers first, then travellers, cultural mediators, information providers and critics last. High ethical standards common to other forms of journalism were evident. They believed it was important to declare if their trip had been sponsored, and that they should report accurately and truthfully even if it risked angering those sponsors; although Hanusch does note that self-reported ethical standards may not be reliable. Most significantly, the critic role, which is most associated with hard news, was the least valued. Additionally, subjects who had been trained as journalists were more likely to believe that sponsored travel would not affect their objectivity and neutrality; values instilled for one kind of journalism (news) seep into another (lifestyle). These can all be transferred into a new model in which the amateur and the professional collaborate.

SOCIAL MEDIA AND TRAVEL

Social media allows individuals to post and share information and opinions, pictures and videos, through blogs, virtual communities, shared endeavours such as wikis, and media sharing sites such as Flickr, Instagram and YouTube. Interactive Web 2.0 technologies which connect people (O'Reilly, 2005) include blogs, wikis, forums and online social networks (O'Connor, 2010).

Its effect on travel journalism has two components: on travel, and on journalism. To take the latter first, social media has been seen by journalists as both competition and collaboration. They have been slow to embrace it as a source of content, and while many have enthused about the democratic potential of citizen reporting, they have been more reluctant to actually engage with contributors from outside the newsroom, fearing that they would undermine journalistic norms and practices (Singer, 2010). Rebillard and Touboul (2010) found that contributions from the public were considered a 'play-ground' of news, rather than being taken seriously. Journalists have shown a desire to maintain a professional distance from social media contributions.

Second, interactive social media has become such a phenomenon in the travel industry that it has spawned the term Travel 2.0 (Xiang & Gretzel, 2010). Two effects are salient for this chapter: social media has changed the relationship between the public and the authorities, the consumer and the provider, the amateur and the expert; and it has changed the way people search for information and plan their travel. Both impact on travel journalism. Rather than turning to the experts for information, people can now use social media and aggregated knowledge from OURS (Lankes, 2008). In travel, this has led to easier planning by the individual rather than reliance on a tour operator or travel agent. Buhalis and Law (2008) suggest that the act of searching online has changed tourists' behaviour as they plan trips for themselves, making them more confident and more independent-minded travellers.

Other scholars have observed that "tourists now take a much more active and prominent role as image-formation agents than before the emergence of Web 2.0 tools, by publishing comments, advice and experiences on blogs, forums, social networks, etc" (Camprubí, Guia & Comas, 2014: 205). Much of the travel information for which readers once turned to journalists, they now turn to each other online. Amateur personal experience may have superseded the professional expert opinion as the common currency of the travel text (Author, 2014). But journalistic values are rarely in evidence. Blogs are usually written from a first-person viewpoint, reporting an individual's travels in emotional terms (Volo, 2012), while OURS report the subjective responses of individual people to a hotel: professional standards are superseded by amateur.

Historically, traditional media played a large role in travel planning. Hsu and Song (2013: 254) note that newspapers and magazines offer credible information which influences tourists: "The media, as one of the most important information sources for tourists… can affect people's cognitive and affective responses and influence their behavioral intentions." This has now been inverted by the arrival of interactive Web 2.0, so that now the tourists are considered a credible information source which may influence a journalist writing in traditional media.

To explore the distinctions between travel information based on professional journalism and that based on amateur social-media, two groups were interviewed. Taken together, they suggest that while professional travel journalism is respected, there is greater value to be found in social media travel information. For the traditional media industry to benefit from the social media revolution, therefore, it must integrate the two.

DATA GATHERING AND RESULTS

For the first study, 30 consumers who regularly use TripAdvisor were interviewed in 2012 to gauge the relative worth they ascribed to professional and amateur travel writing. They were selected for maximum variation sampling (Patton, 2002) with a broad array of professions and ages (22-60, M = 40), 16 female, 15 with/out children, and 17 Western (as distinct from Asian). Not all travellers would be expected to share their opinions, but as TripAdvisor (2015) claims 340 million unique monthly visitors, it is safe to say that these 30 users of the site are not alone. The study had two questions relevant to this chapter: Do users trust the site *because* it is an amateur source? And do they trust the site as much as friends and professionals?

They gave their opinions on the site as a shared resource with un-paid contributions by real people, and compared it with hotel reviews by professionals. Their views of the latter were dismissive, with 12 subjects offering reasons why they distrusted them, concerned that if professionals were sponsored, that would bias their reports: “It’s very difficult to write a review when you’ve been given £800-worth of free hospitality and a bottle of champagne, to say this place is ghastly, the staff are grumpy and the food is overpriced.” Others assumed that professionals would have different values from the average traveller, which made their reports less relevant: “A professional… has a specific set of criteria, probably they are taught to know what makes a five-star hotel, or a four-star hotel.” In addition, six subjects said they preferred amateur hotel reviewers because they assumed there was no agenda and they could be honest so that “whatever you get is whatever the person has experienced.”

Three said that professionals were suspect because they *were* paid: “The experts are being paid to write, and they are being fed rather large, lovely meals and given beer… so I am not sure if I can trust them”. Three said amateurs were reliable because they *have* paid: “It’s written by people who have put a value on their money.” Nine subjects also noted that amateur writers were ‘people like us’, experiencing it as a genuine traveller. Equally commonly, amateur writers were valued above professionals by nine subjects for sharing knowledge for the common good: “we live in a society where we are trying to benefit from each other; you learn from your own mistakes but nowadays you can also learn from others’ mistakes.”

Nevertheless, there was not a clear division of professional-equals-bad and amateur-equals-good, as travel journalists were considered to be accurate, know what to look out for, and have skill in writing; while amateurs might not know what is good in a hotel, have different standards from the reader, and may lack the skill to report their experiences well. In addition to the reviewers themselves, the amateurs represented the ‘wisdom of crowds’ (Surowiecki, 2005) as their individually subjective reviews could be aggregated into a practicably objective review: “if a hotel has a reasonably large amount of reviews all saying the same thing, then of course you would have the law of large numbers which would support the same conclusion.”

This implies that if travel journalists are not trusted, it is when they do *not* show professional norms of objectivity, independence and neutrality. If they accept paid hospitality, that undermines claims to impartiality. Amateurs, on the other hand, represent the public’s interest rather than any commercial interest, and while their ability to accurately report on authentic experience was questioned, their intention to do so was not. The experiences of millions of amateurs replace the musings of a few experts (Jeacle & Carter, 2011). A media model that combined the amateur traveller experience with professional journalistic expertise would thus have the best of both worlds.

In a second study in early 2014, 19 university media students were interviewed and observed for one hour as they researched online for a travel-journalism trip to Istanbul. The aim was to see which websites the next generation of prospective producers of travel journalism considered valuable and why, for an insight into the relative value they ascribed to professional, traditional media, and that of amateur-generated social media. The research questions were what kind of sources do they use when planning their trip, and how do they value them? The subjects were aged between 19 and 25 ($M = 21.79$, $SD = 1.93$); 12 were female and seven male; 13 Asian and six Western.

Two initial genres of search were observed. First, they did a background search, often from two amateur UGC sites, Wikipedia or Wikitravel: "Quite often I'll go on Wikipedia or something like that just to get a general sense of what this is. But I won't spend long there… I'm trying to sum up what this place is all about." Wikipedia and Wikitravel offered two alternative routes for additional searches. On the one hand, subjects noted the attractions appearing frequently in their research, and wanted to know more about them "After that [Wikipedia], say something catches my eye such as the Grand Bazaar, I would just Google that specifically." Alternatively, they saw themselves as independent-minded post-tourists (Urry, 1990) and wanted to identify the more popular attractions in order to stay away from them: "So this article could tell me about the stock tourist attractions I should avoid."

Their attitudes towards amateur versus professional contributors were revealing. They commonly visited sites which represent the collective wisdom of amateurs: "I use the Internet because there's crowd-sourcing involved and usually crowd-sourced stuff is better." The value of amateur UGC lay in its independence; since the writers had paid for the travel themselves and were not beholden to any commercial organisations, they could report accurately on their travel experiences: "The power of it [UGC] is in the honesty of your opinion, because you're free to say whatever you want. In a magazine, you have the editor to answer to. For a blog, you just write what you think."

Blogs were also valued for going beyond traditional tourist fare: "Blogs give you access to things that you never get anywhere else." They were particularly respected when they gave the opinions of longer-term residents of the place: "they [two expatriate bloggers] can be trusted because two months in a place is reasonably long to know something about it… And they seem to want to experience Istanbul authentically." Much as Pirolli (2014) found, bloggers are judged as being able to engage with the destination at a level different from tourists: "I can trust what she is writing, like her experience was not with a profit motive or not too touristy... An experience that is probably similar to what someone who actually lives there would see every day."

The subjects also sought out amateurs on blogs and other social media because they invited interactivity. Social media is valued for being *social*:

I got in contact with the guy who writes the blog, and he's agreed to show me around Istanbul. That's going to be great, because of all the information he's got… This has an interaction element because you actually connect with somebody in Istanbul before you get there

and

If I see a hashtag for something, I would search it on Twitter because it puts you in touch with people, and it's a very easy way of sending out tweets to 10 different people, and someone might reply and say 'Oh that's cool, let's meet up in Istanbul'.

One key to valuable information on blogs was whether the subject identified with the blogger, once again placing a social rather than professional identity at the forefront:

I find that you can quickly work out within seconds whether the person writing the blog is in some way connected to how you think and feel. So I can tell by this, if I and this blogger would probably get along, if we have similar interests, that tells me it's worth my while to read on.

So not all bloggers and UGC contributors were valued, and subjects preferred to read contributions by people who were similar to them: "if you find someone who is on the same wavelength, I find it quite likely that he or she would appreciate the same things you would." They value a report specifically when there is an observable homophily (Lazarsfeld & Merton, 1954), or social identification between the writer and the reader. This was a repeated theme: "I think wherever you go in travel, you want to connect with like-minded people." This coincided with studies of the relative value given to travel information sources which found that people were likelier to trust friends than strangers to give travel recommendations, because friends were similar to them and knew their interests; while strangers on OURS were trusted when their demographics and travelling behaviour coincided with the individual's (Author, 2015).

And yet, blogs lacked the professionalism and credibility of branded sites: "I guess when it comes to travel research, Lonely Planet is one of those places which are always at the top of your head. It's like Google for travelling." Subjects also clicked on news journalism sites, including AP and AFP, the *Huffington Post* and CNN, and *The Guardian* and the *Daily Mail*: "The *Daily Mail* is quite reputable. I'll see what they have to say." Journalists were trustworthy, possibly because the subjects themselves identified with journalism: "A journalist who has lived in Istanbul… For me, journalists are more credible writers… And she's married to a Turk. It makes the whole thing even more credible for me." Once again, a combination of amateur travelling adjudicated by professional standards offers a new media model.

DISCUSSION

Based on these two studies, I contend that readers' expectations of what constitutes valid, valuable travel writing (journalism, blogs, UGC, OURS) does not follow professional journalistic norms. As a result, traditional media organisations with a travel element should evolve to work with rather than against these new, web-influenced expectations. One implication of the suggested new model is that the role of the professional journalist is more that of an editor—'curator' is a current buzz word (Howarth, 2015)—who assesses and judges UGC for inclusion. The amateur is the traveller; the professional is the gatekeeper.

This coincides with the 'curatorial turn' in journalism studies since 2010, which some have seen as an opportunity for the industry to throw off existing practices—or fail (Picard, 2014). The institutional logics of organisation (Thornton, Ocasio & Lounsbury, 2012) must be recreated to accommodate the digital revolution, and curation is one option. It has been described in terms of "harvesting and managing contributions… finding, gathering, cleaning and formatting" and is already becoming a standard task for journalists and editors, as well as for bloggers and other collectives (Bakker, 2014: 597). It relies on a network of suppliers offering content; whereas previously the travel desk's role was to liaise with public relations for tour operators and government tourist organisations, their role would now be to grow and maintain a network of travellers. These may not be journalists; indeed, some bloggers maintain a nomadic lifestyle supported by payment for their writing.

Another expectation expressed by the interview subjects was the opportunity to identify with the writer. Both studies suggested that one benefit of social media and travel UGC is to enable the reader to interact with the writer, to some extent based on similarity of interests and purpose. This is what is valued, and it is a long way from the distant, detached and objective values of the traditional journalist (Singer, 2007). Pirolli (2014: 94) noted that the social element of Web 2.0 is powerful and that "readers connect to the bloggers like old friends". And one interview subject said, "if I and this blogger would probably get along, if we have similar interests, that tells me it's worth my while to read on." Blogs and OURS often give cues, such as descriptions of the blogger, or whether the reviewer is travelling on business, with a family, or as part of a couple, for example. These are more directly assessable than the less precise cues implicit in a newspaper, for example, which might be judged to have broadly the same values as the reader rather than a demonstrable similarity between writer and reader (Kramer, 2004).

Thus an additional task for a travel journalist as curator would be to encourage and monitor online conversations among contributors and consumers. This dramatically alters the role of the travel journalist, from one who travels to one who maintains a community of travellers (Bakker, 2014). As well as becoming a curator of travel UGC, polishing it according to professional standards and presenting it for public consumption, the travel journalist also becomes a moderator of online conversation. The idea of the audience interacting with a writer has not been considered important in traditional media. But the change has already started, and scholars have noted that journalists already anticipate greater interactivity being the future of their profession (Ramirez de la Piscina, Zablondo, Aisteran & Agirre, 2015), and interaction may be significant.

These changes have implications for growth in the industry. First, media organisations will benefit if they embrace UGC and citizen contributions, placing the reader at the centre as 'prosumers' or 'produsers' (Toffler, 1980; Bruns, 2006) who actively contribute to the information distributed through the media. Media organisations which place the reader at the forefront often make more long-term changes (Lowrey, 2011). Utterback (2003) talks in terms of symbiosis, with old and new forms of journalisms (a new term is surely called for) collaborating. One inevitable effect if this, ironically, is that travel journalists would travel less. Travel becomes a domain expertise rather than an activity; just as wine writers rarely own vineyards, music writers rarely headline at rock festivals, and science writers hardly ever take out their own patents, travel journalists would rely on someone else to do the actual travelling.

This links to the second change, which concerns the relationship between travel journalism and commerce. The traditional media model saw a close relationship between practising travel journalists and commerce before and after travel. The trip was usually sponsored by a tour operator or destination tourism office, and the pages devoted to travel were there to attract advertising revenue. The financial reward to the media organisation came at the expense of journalistic credibility; and now that the reward element is gone, the issue of credibility is once more open to negotiation.

This model of networked travel contributors and centralised editorial curators benefits consumers who get the credibility and honesty of the amateur writer, coupled with the expertise and professional standards of the curator. But the influence of commerce is still present; it just changes. In the traditional model, the professional felt beholden to the company that sponsored the trip, and wrote accordingly; in the new model, the curator is likely to leverage on the travel UGC they are delivering to readers to grow advertising revenue. Even so, the glory days of the late 20th century when advertising revenue flowed into media organisations' coffers (and onwards into the pockets of journalists) are gone; but they were, in any case, a temporary phenomenon, and journalism has historically struggled with profit (Picard, 2014). Today, commercial expectation should be more modest, particularly as any new business model is as yet not established and will take time to develop.

To observe how this division of amateur and professional may take place, it is instructive to return to Deuze's (2005) five values which make up journalists' identities, and compare them with the practice of travel bloggers, UGC and social media. This reveals competing forces that must be reconciled for the new model to emerge.

First, Deuze observed that journalism is a public service, whether treating the audience as consumers or citizens. Bloggers and travel UGC are seen as more of a public service, as the contributions are un-paid and consequently credible: “there is a sense of altruistic benefit to society” as one subject said. Commercial influence, however, brings uncertainty as to whether the interests of the tourism board or the public are central.

Second, journalistic credibility is predicated on objectivity and neutrality. Yet precisely the opposite is true for travel UGC, where a subjective report on authentic experience and engagement with the destination are the watchwords. Zelizer (2004) has observed that facts, truth, and the reality of journalism are called into question by modern conceptualisations of subjectivity. Singer (2007: 85) saw the difference between journalists and bloggers with regard to truth thus: Journalists see the providence of truth to be their duty in order to enable citizens to be free and self-govern, while bloggers “see truth as emerging from shared, collective knowledge—from an electronically enabled market place of ideas”. Offline, objectivity trumps subjectivity; online, mass subjectivity yields a form of objectivity. Journalists cannot claim the ‘expert’ last word on any subject; instead, they are credible contributors to and directors of an online conversation.

Third, while news reports benefit from immediacy, travel journalism may not, and professional guide books even less so given the long production process. Travel UGC, on the other hand, can describe the previous night’s stay in a hotel rather than one from months ago: “we can immediately know if there is a change between someone who went there five years ago, someone who went there five months ago, and someone who went there now and just came back from there,” said one subject. Traditional media which set themselves up as a central (travel) information source can benefit from fast turnaround of UGC so that they become the go-to sites for travel planning. Alternative (non-traditional) media sources such as Lonely Planet, TripAdvisor and blogging collectives such as Urban Travel Blog and A Luxury Travel Blog already do this, with searchable databases so that readers can customise their searches by destination and by how recent reports are.

Fourth and fifth, ethical behaviour, editorial autonomy, freedom from censorship and the independence to write what they like are central tenets of traditional journalism. Yet these qualities are exactly what are *not* enjoyed by travel journalists whose travel is sponsored by commercial entities leading to at best a suspicion that they are not free to write what they want: “The experts are being paid to write… so I am not sure if I can trust them,” reported one subject. And these qualities are exactly what *are* valued in travel bloggers and UGC, who are considered free to write independent accounts of their experiences: “In a magazine, you have the editor to answer to. For a blog, you just write what you think,” said one student.

CONCLUSION

This proposed hybrid form of media combining the best of amateur subjectivity and credibility with the best of journalistic professionalism and standards has potential to create new forms of employment, opens up new commercial opportunities and build stronger (and hence more marketable) relationships between media and reader. In addition, as a model it offers potential for further academic research, such as a comparative study of blogs which are already pursuing this model such as Wanderlust and Lipstick, and traditional media which rely heavily on UGC for their travel content, such as the *Times of India*. A 'distributed newsroom' (Cokley & Eeles, 2003) with a few curators and a massive network of weak-tie contributors also invites research into how such an organisational structure would work. Most studies of journalistic roles are based on the traditional, Western model of newsrooms; new research is needed into how curators and contributors see their identity, role and values (Bakker, 2014).

Further research could also counter the limitations evident in this chapter. Any study which predicts a future route for an industry stands on uncertain ground. Such exploratory research, particularly using students rather than practitioners, cannot confirm any shift in professional practice, even if it demonstrates that it is plausible. Yet, taken together, the evidence that the media industry is undergoing profound changes and the parallels between the attitudes towards social media content of the two groups studied here does suggest that the professional practice of journalists could do well to adapt to the new environment alongside and within which they must now operate. Ethnographies of the 'new' digital newsrooms would enhance the picture.

This chapter can also be critiqued for proposing a direction for traditional media by examining associated industries rather than the media itself. The counterpoint would be that while there is an argument for studying an industry itself for new directions, there is a stronger one for studying allied industries. Organisations which look to similar others for guidance can become caught in existing structures and path dependencies, and be less able to adapt to new ecosystems triggered by changing technology (Ouchi, 1998; Preston, 2008). By contrast, those which look to tangentially connected industries for innovation are likelier to thrive. Exploiting weak ties is more advantageous than relying on strong ties (Granovetter, 1973), so examining associated areas may yield ideas that consulting peers in the same area does not.

Equally, this chapter does not detail mechanisms by which the new model would ease traditional media's commercial travails. This is for two reasons: first, it is wearisome for professionals in any field to be advised by scholars on how to do business; and second, any scholar who knew a means of monetise UGC would likely be in the more lucrative field of consultancy than in impecunious academia. Traditional media are fully engaged in this task, and have suggested and tried many business models (Franklin, 2014; Kaye & Quinn, 2010). It seems likely that a combination of all of them offers the best hope. Just as the industry itself becomes disjointed and complicated by the digital revolution, so the business model solutions are similarly fragmented (Picard, 2014).

There are also other possibilities which have not been detailed here. Alongside curation as an innovative work practice in traditional media newsrooms, fragmentation of journalistic output is also emerging as a phenomenon of the post-digital shakeout as organisations service a niche area of readers, or specialise in delivering one form of content to a larger organisation (Sirkkunen & Cook, 2012), a significant move away from the industrialised, one-size-fits-all, one-price-for-all agglomeration of multiple content streams into the average daily newspaper. Pirolli (2014) has suggested that online travel information sources such as blogs might evolve more professional, standards to meet audience demands. One example would be Wanderlust and Lipstick which is helmed by a professional travel journalist, and aims to attract advertisers. While traditional media may add social media credibility to its mix, social media can equally perform the obverse by adding professional editing to its own offerings. Either way, the integration of amateur and professional credibilities and values offers a new model for existing and emerging media organisations. Travel journalists may find that, in the absence of a way to beat bloggers and social media, the future growth of their profession might be best secured by joining them.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Blogs: Online personal diaries written in reverse chronological order, often reporting on an individual's life or area of specialist interest.

Curating: A new role for journalists, similar to editing, which sees them gathering, checking, validating and presenting content provided by non-professional contributors.

Homophily: The tendency of individuals to seek out, associate and make connection with similar others.

Objective: Not biased by personal feelings or external influences, and based on verifiable facts rather than personal feelings.

OURS: Online User Review Sites in which consumers share their experiences of a product or service. Examples include TripAdvisor, Epinions, RateMyTeachers, and Zagat.

Professional Identity: An individual's self-concept in the workplace, based on their beliefs, their motives, their experiences and various attributes.

Social Identity: An individual's self-concept based on their interaction with their peers, and their desire for inclusion within a social group.

Social Media: Online tools that allow individuals to create and share content, information, images and text across virtual networks and communities. Examples include Facebook, YouTube, Youku, Wikipedia, Cyworld, Twitter, blogs, OURS, Sina Weibo, Yelp, and Flickr.

Subjective: Based on personal feelings, activities and reactions rather than verifiable facts.

Travel Journalism: Content created in relation to a trip to a destination, often foreign, which purports to be a representation of reality, and which is aimed at consumers and tourists as inspiration for future travels.

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Chapter 40
Potential Mediations of Hashtags Within Transmedia Journalism

Luciana Andrade Gomes Bicalho
Federal University of Minas Gerais, Brazil

ABSTRACT

In the last few years, sociopolitical events have been marked by the presence of hashtags on social networks, creating a direct dialogue with street protests. This chapter aims to investigate how media activism movements appropriate hashtags to expand the narrative through social engagement. In this sense, hashtags appear as signic processes that perform a mediating function. They articulate common positioning that creates hybrid and transmedia storytelling using online and offline dynamics. From the theoretical-methodological support of semiotics by Charles Sanders Peirce and the principles of transmedia, this study analyzes the news production by the Brazilian media activism group Mídia Ninja [Ninja Media]. The results point to a transmedia journalism anchored to the social use of hashtags by the association of new signs to semiosis, generating provisional action habits from collateral experience.

INTRODUCTION

In the communication processes related to the convergence culture (Jenkins, 2006), located in the connection between the transmissive dynamics of the mass media and the associative dynamics of social networks (Castells, 2012), it is possible to perceive an accumulation of records that leave various traces. With the increase in access to mobile devices, the production and sharing of contents have become a common practice by individuals. Sociopolitical events, which once gained visibility only through the traditional media agenda, are now also recorded and mainly disseminated by ordinary citizens. Records are organized in large files in programmable environments, under the influence of algorithms that design the network dynamics. This means a decentralization of communication tools, raising a controversial debate about journalistic practices.

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This new media ecosystem (Canavilhas, 2014; Scolari, 2013), which incorporates collaborative production, has offered visibility to manifestations and protests around the world (Castells, 2012). Although they are born in the streets, they find a fertile and promising soil for the expansion of the stories on the Internet, shaping an organic network of content production. There is an occupation of the public space that gains notoriety and legitimacy through the shared narratives on social networks. This scenario is also marked by the distrust of corporate media, which leads to the strengthening of the free media format. After the appropriation of cyberspace by movements that began in the Arab world and then expanded through Iceland, Spain and the United States, it is possible to notice the emergence of sociopolitically organized groups that seek the apparent democratization of information, instigating the participation of the common citizen in the processes of verification, selection and production of news (Bentes, 2015).

This propagation of sociopolitical events has used hashtags to gain engagement in social networks. It favors the emergence of a new media agenda, which passes through the Trending Topics of the digital platforms, showing the relevance of certain subjects from the volume generated by the conversation on the network within a short period of time (Groshek & Groshek, 2013). However, although hashtags were created to group and monitor content on the Internet, with Twitter as their primary platform, they have played a major role in setting boundaries in common positioning inside and outside the digital environment. Their function extrapolates the physical condition of their trail to become an important agent in the production of meaning.

Thus, in this work, hashtags are understood as signic processes that fulfill a mediating function in the creation of new meanings. For Peirce (CP 2.308), the notion of mediation is tied to the idea of semiosis, containing three elements: Sign (representamen), object and interpretant. Semiosis is a reticular process involving the determination of a preceding sign (object) and the representation of a posterior sign (interpretant). What mediates the object and the interpretant is the sign (representamen) in order to produce another triad sign and so forth. The interpretant is the formation of a new sign that guarantees the vitality of semiosis.

This happens in the hashtags case because, in social networks, they are initially linked by the sociotechnical action of their index trail. In addition, through repetition and intermedia behavior (Müller, 2010) and by expanding content across multiplatforms, they also assume a normative function that indicates the construction of the thought. The same happens when hashtags are used on T-shirts and posters in street protests. Hashtags become signs that seek the determination and representation of an object (Alzamora & Andrade, 2016), which turns to be a complex semiosis (signification) process with infinite possibilities. For this reason, hashtags are used repeatedly in news production by media activism groups, as a feature that points to transmedia storytelling (Jenkins, 2006; Scolari, 2013).

The concept of transmedia journalism still generates many inconsistencies, especially in relation to professional practices. The exercise proposed in this chapter is to find new ways to elucidate this concept from the structuration of media activism groups, which seek narrative expansion through the integration between multiplatforms and the heterogeneity of points of view (Bentes, 2015). In this sense, the object used for the discussions is the Brazilian group Mídia Ninja [Ninja Media], which gained relevance after the manifestations of the 2013 June Journeys, an important Brazilian social movement that began with students' request for a reduction in the public transportation fare and then progressed to police violence and political corruption. The event was fundamental for the strengthening of new channels of information production and distribution in the country (Malini & Antoun, 2013). The group emerged as an alternative to the coverage of established media outlets, named "coup media" by the protesters. This scenario has established a new journalistic dynamic, producing and sharing content in a reticular way.

The narrative constructed by Mídia Ninja uses hashtags as a strategy for propagating a sociopolitical positioning, becoming a reference in the public debate. Hashtags are often created by the protesters themselves and then incorporated into journalistic content. In other cases, the group creates and shares its own hashtags, which also take effect in street protests. It is an organic process of creating news that gains vitality through social engagement. By showing a predilection for left-wing sociopolitical movements, the Mídia Ninja wishes to present itself as a transparent and partial vehicle, different from the dynamics of the traditional media. During the President Dilma Rousseff impeachment process, in 2016, the group became a benchmark in the sharing of several hashtags against the president's impeachment on various digital platforms, as well as a major influencer of the hashtag #nãovaitergolpe (written with the accent signal, because the spelling makes a difference to the Twitter algorithm in the grouping of content) [#therewillbenocoup], which has become a symbol widely used in discussions generated on the Internet and on the streets (Alzamora & Andrade, 2016).

In addition to having a hypertextual nature, which groups related content, hashtags today operate in the intermedia dynamics (Müller, 2010), extrapolating to Twitter and in force on other media platforms. With this, hashtags come to encompass the peculiar characteristics of each environment, impacting the formation of new meanings. For Elleström (2010), intermedia behavior indicates the forms of production, circulation and media consumption, configuring its interpretative capacity. In this sense, the news production by Mídia Ninja takes place in the intermedia and transmedia domains. In addition to being valid in several media environments, it is a narrative that arises from the social use of hashtags and gains visibility only through collective intervention in multiplatforms, in the interface between the networks and the streets. They are stories that complement each other and gain meaning through the mediating function of hashtags. Through the collateral experience and the incompleteness of the interpretant (Colapietro, 2011), a network of mobile meanings is created from the new associations, which guarantees the transmedia character of these semiosis.

This happens because the representative capacity of the sign is limited by its impossibility of covering the whole object that determined the sign, which demands the association of other signs (collateral experience) in the formation of the interpretant. The collateral experience concerns the prior familiarity with the object denoting the sign, a necessary condition for semiosis, operating by proximity and alterity with the object. According to Bergman (2010), the Peircean notion of collateral experience describes the impossibility of any contact with the objects of representation, or references, except through signic mediations. And since this process depends on social engagement, as in the case of hashtags, the creation of the interpretants is incomplete because it always points to new signs. Semiosis is a series of successive interpretants that prevent its closure. Thus, transmedia journalism reflects this plurality of possibilities of representation contained in the semiosis of hashtags, presenting a rich variation of mediatic arrangements through intermedia dynamics.

In order to understand these relations, this study has as a theoretical-methodological contribution the Semiotics by Charles Sanders Peirce and principles of transmedia storytelling (Gambarato & Tárcia, 2017; Jenkins, 2009; Scolari, 2013). An overview of the journalism productions by Mídia Ninja in 2016 is presented through investigation of the trajectories generated by the semiosis of the hashtag #foratemer [#outtemer], used in reference to the current president of Brazil during the narrative creation by the group. Subsequently, an analysis ensues in order to identify the potential of the mediations generated by this hashtag in the composition of transmedia journalism.

NON-FICTION TRANSMEDIA

Applying the specificities of transmedia storytelling has been a complex work for journalism. Jenkins (2006) consolidated the concept around fictional narratives, which are better suited and have more freedom to work with the characteristics of transmedia storytelling. Because journalism was born in the context of transmissive dynamics, it has experienced difficulties in adapting to the dynamics of social network sharing. This difficulty is attributed to the convergence scenario (Jenkins, 2006), which brings new paradigms for the production and distribution of information. There is integration between vertical (media corporations) and horizontal (individuals and groups) communication processes in digital connections. Convergence provides for a cultural transformation that encourages consumers to search for new information and make connections from scattered media content. This determines the migratory behavior of media audiences (Jenkins, 2006).

With the expansion of the media ecosystem (Canavilhas, 2014; Scolari, 2013), the circulation of content has become reticular, comprising the use of different media systems and seeking the active participation of consumers in the production and distribution of information, mainly through the mobility and connectivity offered by mobile devices. In Jenkins's (2006) view, this means that consumption has become a collective process, which increases the degree of complexity of the relationships between old and new media. This process of convergence is a central theme for journalism at the beginning of the 21st century, which calls into question the business model of corporate media (Moloney, 2015). However, as Alzamora and Tárcia (2012) demonstrate, the concept of convergence offers multiple paths, being too comprehensive to refer to such diverse phenomena.

In this context, Jenkins (2006) uses the term transmedia storytelling to indicate the processes of language and media expansion in the narrative production. Every text that unfolds in media environments needs to contribute in a distinctive and valuable way to the whole. As Scolari (2013) states, this is not an adaptation process that happens on multiple platforms but a complementary creation that integrates communication in several environments by overlapping mediations. Each generated text becomes a fundamental piece for the construction of narrative sense. However, it is important that each text also makes sense alone. Transmedia storytelling is the sum of independent texts that refer to a determining narrative, but which also construct meanings alone. Thus, according to Alzamora and Gambarato (2014), transmedia dynamics can be taken as a pragmatic branch of semiosis in the media, as will be shown below.

This idea means rethinking the whole path already taken by traditional journalism. Transmedia storytelling is important movement, according to Scolari (2013), because although the concept of transmedia was born in the field of entertainment, the use of transmedia in a non-fiction narrative has a latent potentiality. According to Canavilhas (2014), the difficulties of translating the concept into the field of journalism lie in the complexity of professional activity and in the multiplicity of concepts that already exist, such as multimedia, cross-media, intermediality and hybrid media, among others. For Scolari (2013), all these terms are part of the same semantic galaxy, and each contributes to the illumination of specific points of transmedia storytelling.

From this, Canavilhas (2014) tries to demonstrate that Web journalism has been working with several characteristics close to the universe of these concepts, mainly for acting with multiple platforms and languages (text, image, audio, video and infographic). Similar to Scolari (2013), Canavilhas believes that the concept of transmedia absorbs all others, its distinction being the convergence of content to a single end. Alzamora and Tárcia (2012) complement this understanding by stating that the focus is not only on the use of various platforms and languages but also on content production. It is “an effort to not lose focus of what is important in this discussion, placing excessive emphasis on technology (technocentrism) or on the media” (Alzamora & Tárcia, 2012, p. 28).

Alzamora and Tárcia’s (2012) dialogue with Scolari (2011) explores the necessary resources for the sharing dynamics of transmedia storytelling. For Scolari (2011), stories need to seek the best of each medium to expand themselves. For this, they need to rely on prosumer collaboration in the development of the narrative world. This prosumer is a mix of a consumer and a producer, who take an active role in the process of expanding the narrative. “This is one of the points necessary to observe a transmedia structure: the expansion of the storytelling from the interactivity” (Renó, 2014, p. 7). In the field of journalism, this means an amalgamation of genres and formats through the integration of the communicational dynamics of transmission and sharing (Alzamora & Tárcia, 2012).

In this case, for Canavilhas (2014), the media have always stimulated social interaction, promoting discussions around themes essential to society. This participation could become strong fuel for news development, especially in a confluence with social networks. However, he asserts that not all journalistic genres are conducive to absorbing transmedia storytelling. The genres truly adapted to this dynamic are those natives of the Web and the great news stories, which present themselves as a transversal genre to all the media. In the second case, the possibility of deepening the narrative and the maturation time of the news are the factors that allow the transmediation of content.

Alzamora and Tárcia (2014) affirm that intermediality is an essential characteristic for the creation of transmedia storytelling, as the intersection between platforms favors the propagation of contents by the component of complementarity characteristic of these systems. Intermediality is the process of interweaving between different genres and media formats, resulting in differentiated aesthetic experiences (Müller, 2010). From this point of view, Alzamora and Tárcia (2014) present some types of narratives that can be configured today as transmedia journalism. The first is immersion journalism, which can put the public as the protagonist in the situations or events described in a news report. With the new media platforms, lived experience becomes more intense and can stimulate effective participation by the user. The other possibility is newsgames, experimental projects with public participation. Within this area, there are the current games, which are inspired by the daily repertoire to produce information quickly and with easy distribution. There are also interactive infographics, which allow users to change data and results in the system, proposing a collective way to update news. Finally, there are documentary genres, which facilitate the interaction and performance of the users, contributing to the construction of the narrative universe.

At the confluence of this notion, Canavilhas (2014) proposes four characteristics that must be present in the qualification of transmedia journalism. The first is interactivity, encouraging the relationship between content and between users. The second is hypertextuality, which allows linking content blocks by means of a link. This feature denotes a strong connection with the traces left during navigation, to be explained later. The third is integrated multimedia, as the organization of content seeks a specific goal in the use of multiplatforms. The last characteristic is contextualization, marking the antecedents and the conditions in which the event occurred. This characteristic facilitates the understanding of the narrative within the migratory behavior of the public. The degrees between contextualization and interactivity differentiate transmedia storytelling.

Narrative Expansion and Social Engagement

According to Canavilhas (2014), journalism's main challenge is to work with variations of time and space to encourage and deepen public participation. In this case, intermediality is fundamental for enriching the story being told. It is necessary to offer new entrances and itineraries to stimulate public interest. For Gosciola (2014), a narrative game promoted by intermediality contributes to the increase in public understanding, encouraging the public's curiosity and interest in the story narrated. This is because there is a significant change in content consumption due to increasing mobility and consequently, changes in the media textures (Jansson, 2013), that is, in the creation of communicative tissues. "Texture refers to the symbolic-material processes and arrangements through which communication and space co-constitute one another" (Jansson & Lindell, 2015, p. 81). From the transmedia dynamics, these textures become more integrated and flexible, revealing new consumption habits from certain spatiotemporal arrangements. "This is in regard to both how individuals navigate and orient themselves through representational spaces and flows, and how their media practices amalgamate with other activities in everyday life" (Jansson & Lindell, 2015, p. 79).

In Madianou and Miller's (2013) view, this scenario presupposes the concept of polymedia, articulating a complex media ecosystem that influences everyday life. In addition, it offers additional layers of meaning, creating a dynamic of overlapping mediations. This is because, for the authors, the media environment is similar to an integrated structure of possibilities. In the case of the transmedia texture, this is enhanced by the course of individual choices. This condition is decisive for news consumption, for, despite the intermedia power of multiple platforms, they are not always adapted to personal preferences. There are a variety of entry points, forming liquid consumption patterns. "These processes not only give rise to new compositions and experiences of news materials, but are also part of the ongoing texture of everyday life" (Jansson & Lindell, 2015, p. 82).

This transmedia texture is at the heart of participatory culture. For Shirky (2010), the way consumers are articulated today in media environments, especially online, presupposes a collaborative style of content production. This collaboration is a result of the desire for constant connectivity, which shapes the social use of technologies. In the field of entertainment, this participation is visible through fan culture, in which fans show interest and persistence in participating and updating content (Jenkins, 2006). However, Scolari (2013) states that it is possible to stimulate this participation in non-fiction narratives. However, it is necessary to horizontalize the creative control so that prosumers can contribute to the expansion of the narrative.

In this case, if consumption patterns are liquid, the focus may not be on the technical condition of the platform but on how the story is narrated (Scolari, 2013). This is what Scolari (2013) calls "journalism 3.0," which brings the citizen to the center of the news. If this transmedia texture also corroborates a texturing of daily life, the organic experiences on social networks are fundamental for understanding these processes. This even changes the media agenda, as it places peer-to-peer conversation at the center of social discussions. Proof of this is the constant updating of the Trending Topics on digital platforms, which show the intense flow of key terms and hashtags over a short period of time (Groshek & Groshek, 2013). These realized operations place hashtags as fundamental elements in the construction of meaning of the narratives, exploring the creative capacity of semiosis.

Groshek and Groshek (2013) note the emergence of Agenda Trending, which provides a rich scenario for thinking about the intermedia dynamics between traditional media and network conversations. Through an empirical analysis, the authors demonstrate a possible crossing between traditional and social media agendas. Despite the differences between the two, there is promising ground for thinking about how one influences the other. On one hand, this can increase the critical aspect of news production, broadening the spaces of debate. On the other, however, the authors warn that the expansion of monitoring and collective production tools can also end up homogenizing the public agendas. This homogenization reveals a decline in content diversity in news production. Thus, it is believed that a more in-depth discussion about transmedia dynamics and its potential in journalistic narrative expansion is essential, about the mediating function of hashtags.

THE MEDIATING FUNCTION OF HASHTAGS IN MEDIA ACTIVISM

At the intersection of media agendas are the guidelines for activist demonstrations, which have gained new formats through the integration of online and offline environments. If there was tension before between social manifestations and traditional media coverage, now the visibility of these events is also at the heart of the creation and production of collective information (Castells, 2012). In this way, Srivastava (2009) rethinks activism in the current media system based on participatory culture. According to the author, the transmedia dynamic offers new possibilities for movements with social change initiatives. There are decentralized actors who create entry points for issues and solutions linked to the topic across multiple platforms and languages. This favors the creation of strategies to generate social impact, influencing the perception and construction of communities.

As stated by Srivastava (2009), it is possible to notice the configuration of a "transmedia activism," which happens through the process of generating awareness, engagement, action and structuring change. For this to be achieved, a narrative goes through and encompasses the central theme. The shared contents trigger small fragments of this story from collective and collaborative work. The focus is to connect audiences and change agents with a particular worldview or specific action through local stories. This type of activism has as its main point the use of the local voice, aiming at community-centered participation. Through digital projection, these narratives gain visibility and can be expanded to a global level. Thus, activists use multiple platforms to achieve cultural appropriation in order to cross borders to promote transformation.

One of the ways to spread content quickly on social networks is through the use of hashtags. During protests, one can see the strong use of this tool. Yang (2016) signals the growth of "hashtag activism," which sets itself up as a discursive protest by the use of hashtags on social networks, carrying a social or political claim as content. This hashtag is a creative and communal narrative agency. The author argues that in the study of digital activism is neglectful of its narrative form. One way of thinking about this narrative structure is through the social use of hashtags. "I consider narrative agency in hashtag activism as the capacity to create stories on social media by using hashtags in a way that is collective and recognized by the public" (Yang, 2016, p. 14).

According to Bruns and Burgess (2015), the use of Twitter to coordinate social and political discussion has grown significantly in recent years, especially in electoral processes, activist movements and cultural, sports and television events. In this sense, hashtags have always been at the heart of the organization of these issues on the platform, operating in contexts ranging from general discussion about a topic to discussions that take place at local, state and national levels. The discussions may come as a reflection of a well-planned movement, created for a specific event, but may also be born from the spontaneity of networked conversations. For the authors, the most important thing is that hashtags are not static, as social use often changes their meaning by connecting them to other hashtags and platforms.

Although hashtags initially have the sole function of tagging and classifying tweets that are related to a specific topic through the hash (#), hashtags also enable communication between people and communities of interest. The use of hashtags was proposed in 2007 by Chris Messina, a Web developer, and was intended to gather content on Twitter to facilitate monitoring of the platform. His idea was to improve the listening experience, so that users could have more selective attention (Bruns & Burgess, 2015). At first, there was resistance to using hashtags because they were not part of the users' media habits. However, for Bruns and Burgess (2015), space for hashtags was won because it is an indexing system that imposes no rules or limits on users. They can create and share new hashtags whenever and however they want. In the view of the authors, this creates a process of "cultural generativity," since it intensifies and transforms public communication.

In this work, hashtags' capacity for connection is understood as a mediating function, capable of connecting one instance of meaning to another by sociotechnical linkage and social use outside the media environments (Alzamora & Andrade, 2016). In the first case, it has been observed that hashtags have not only permeated conversations on Twitter but have also appeared on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, blogs and other digital platforms, even without performing the role of aggregating content in some instances. For Bruns and Burgess (2015), this is the result of improving the communicational use of hashtags, which are now at the heart of social and political discussions. This sets up intermedia behavior (Müller, 2010) that influences the construction of the meaning of hashtags. In the second case, the appropriation of hashtags by street protests shows the improvement in communication by the construction of ideas and thoughts. Outside usability as a content indexing monitoring tool, hashtags become effective on signs, t-shirts and printed materials as symbols of a common positioning (Alzamora & Andrade, 2016). This creates a transmedia dynamic, as we shall see later, as the hashtag spans several platforms and environments to construct new semiosis.

Therefore, a hashtag can be seen as a sign capable of representing a positioning, creating an interface between the online dynamics of programmable environments and the offline dynamics of the streets. This is because, for Peirce (CP 2.230), a sign is, in a way, something that represents something to someone, understanding semiosis as a process of interpretation *ad infinitum*, because the meaning of a sign is always another sign, over and over again. Thus, it is possible to affirm that the process of semiosis is also a process of mediation (Peirce, CP 2.308), because a sign always produces an effect in a mind, human or not, in order to represent the object that determined the sign:

A sign, or representamen, is something which stands to somebody for something in some respect or capacity. It addresses somebody, that is, creates in the mind of that person an equivalent sign, or perhaps a more developed sign. That sign which it creates I call the interpretant of the first sign. The sign stands for something, its object. It stands for that object, not in all respects, but in reference to a sort of idea, which I have sometimes called the ground of the representamen. (Peirce, CP 2.228)

This relationship arises from the logical engendering that exists among the sign (representamen), the object, and the interpretant (Peirce, CP 2.230). In later writings, Peirce (CP 2.308) defines media as the mediating function of the sign through which the sign produces communication and cognition. However, dependent on the collateral experience to form the interpretant, a sign can only partially reveal the object. This experience anchored in the baggage and in the accumulation of knowledge of each interpreter (agent), associates new signs with semiosis, creating connection dynamics through signic approximations (Colapietro, 2011). This sets up a network that is constantly expanding, ensuring that the reference to the object is maintained without compromising the creative ability of semiosis.

For Colapietro (2011), a sign is a place that a particle occupies within a short period of time. Thus, when hashtags are considered signs, within the sharing dynamics on social networks and the interactive dynamics of the streets, it is possible to realize that they relate to the objects that determine them in different and provisional domains of representation. In the category of firstness, the sign presents itself as an icon in relation to the object, referring to a mere quality (feeling), which cannot be apprehended or described. At the level of secondness, the sign is an index that establishes a physical connection, leaving a trail that points directly to the sign's object. Finally, thirdness perceives that the sign operates by the force of a law, of a convention, becoming a symbol by indicial repetition (Peirce, CP 2.230).

Thirdness provides the mediation between firstness and secondness, establishing a purpose for action (Colapietro, 2011; Peirce, CP 2.230). This shows that one category dispenses with the other, forming Peirce's concept of mediation, which is empirically linked to his notion of sign. These processes culminate in the network of meanings of a hashtag as a sign. It presents a feeling (firstness) that determines its physical inscription through the hash # (secondness), making the production of thought (thirdness) possible. This thought constitutes an action habit, as the outcome of the mediation between the feeling and the physical inscription of the hashtag. This happens because when the hashtag is understood as a sign, its action rarely happens alone, temporally or spatially, promoting a strong connection with other hashtags. This feature summons the audience to conversations on social networks connections at the interface with offline environments. Recursively, hashtags are updated by sharing, generating a network of logical connections. This creative dynamic offered by collateral experience articulates the chain of hashtags, enhancing the process of semiosis, which lies alongside the creation of transmedia storytelling.

In this sense, it is pertinent to understand the mediating function of hashtags in two complementary ways. On the one hand, hashtags promote the mediation between a common sociopolitical positioning, which is the sign's object, and a socio-technical link effect that triggers a new communicational context, the sign's interpretant. On the other, hashtags connect one instance of meaning to another by linking hashtags, creating a dynamic that can legitimize or reconfigure the initial sense of a hashtag. This space-time trajectory, shaped by mediation processes, imposes new challenges for the creation of transmedia storytelling on social networks, in a continuous flow with offline environments.

In this logic of connections, activism media groups consolidate in Brazil. They approach the narratives generated by protesters to create a news production different from those produced by major corporate media. For Malini and Antoun (2013), the heterogeneous voices of the crowd shape the processes of self-organization (*autopoiesis*) of networks with hashtags. Without the monopoly of speech, instituted by the large media groups, new forms of narrative experience emerge in the media ecosystem. In Bentes' (2015) view, this is a kind of "multitude-media," which is strictly linked to this mass media consumption. The author points to the emergence of post-journalism, which does not rule out professional techniques and practices but opens up to an experience of collective subjectivities within a transmedia scenario.

However, as Poell and van Dijck (2015) argue, a critical look at new forms of content production on social networks is needed. Despite the characteristics of customization and instantaneous circulation of information, a power war still prevails in this scenario. Although activism is less dependent on traditional media, it does not mean that activists have more control over the media ecosystem. On social networks, technological mechanisms and algorithmic selections of new social media corporations (such as Twitter, Facebook and YouTube, among others) guide the connections between users. This can significantly alter the path traced by narrative strategies:

As social media penetrate deeply into day-to-day personal communication in ways alternative media have never been able to do, activists can reach categories of people who would otherwise not be reached by activist communication. At the same time, the interactions and interests that tie dispersed social media users together to form protest movements, generating instant moments of togetherness, inevitably dissolve when social platforms algorithmically connect users to the next wave of trending topics. (Poell & van Dijck, 2015, p. 534)

Thus, because temporal and spatial dynamics are multiple, it is possible to visualize hashtags' semiosis networks only at the moment that new interpretants are formed (sign association by collateral experience). Therefore, considering the fluidity and dynamism of the analyzed objects, the theoretical-methodological procedures of Peircean semiotics serve as an aid to verify the trajectories created by hashtags at the moment of action of human and nonhuman agents. Certeau (2004) mentions the trajectory category as a procedure capable of transmuting the temporal articulation of places into a spatial sequence of points. This means creating a rigid structure in place of a performance, which is an operation. Thus, it is a fluid and unfinished trajectory of hashtags due to the interpreter's incompleteness, which is always triggering new networks and producing new narrative entries.

NEWS PRODUCTION BY MÍDIA NINJA IN BRAZIL

The dynamics of post-journalism, as demonstrated by Bentes (2015), live at the threshold of the relationships established between human and nonhuman agents in digital environments. For the author, the prefix "post" signals the problematization of journalism as a discursive regime. It is an open field that points to heterogeneous and disparate experiences of the media activism that emerges on social networks. Bentes (2015) uses Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri's (2004) concept of multitude to discuss this "multitude-media" that builds on the synergy and cooperation between singularities and differentiations. The crowd is not an amorphous and domesticated mass but is always in motion. The free media journalist can be any subject who, unlike the professionals who live in the corporatist sphere, participates in demonstrations and protests not only to register and report. He presents himself as a body of the crowd, and communication becomes an important tool in the mobilization and expression of this crowd (Bentes, 2015).

In this scenario of activism media productions, the Brazilian group Mídia Ninja (Narrative Independent, Journalism and Action) has stood out, mainly for structuring its narrative by taking into account human (public) and nonhuman (algorithms) action, with journalistic production as one of the spheres of communication. On the group's official website, the group presents itself as a specific type of journalism on the Web, which prioritizes partiality based on the sum and accumulation of all lived experiences. "Journalism is one of the tools and languages we use to raise themes and debates, strengthening narratives that have no visibility in conventional means of communication. But in addition to journalism we do midiativism" (Mídia Ninja Site, n.d.; *translation by the author*). The group absorbs activist practices to propose a social transformation through free and distributed media. Structured in a network, Mídia Ninja is maintained by the support of employees and partner institutions. However, anyone can contribute to the creation of new narratives, becoming a "Ninja." The objective is to discuss the national political agenda while giving voice to the common citizen.

Mídia Ninja's news production began in 2013, as a result of the cultural collective Fora do Eixo [Off-Axis network]. Because the group was born in the dynamics of social network sharing and its main focus is the coverage of street protests, the group configures what Malini and Antoun (2013) refer to as cyber-mediation or cyber-activism. This type of action, according to the authors, can be seen as the hacker of narratives, disregarding the visions edited by the great media conglomerates. Furthermore, despite maintaining an online news archive, the group uses social networks as its main platform to publicize its narrative, employing hashtags as mediators.

Thus, Mídia Ninja goes beyond and reinvents the notion of breaking news by using hashtags, as the group uses the instantaneity of the media to disseminate information in real time (Malini & Antoun, 2013). This is not a journalism structured in the order determined by the academy and with regular practices but an independent news production that draws a parallel with journalistic productions, mainly in the task of verifying events that often generate videos by streaming. "This hacked narrative, when subjected to the sharing of the many-many, generates a noise whose main value is to have a multiple, conflicting, subjective, and perspective view of the past event and of the future unfolding of a fact" (Malini & Antoun, 2013, p. 23; *translation by the author*).

For this reason, in this work, the dynamics of post-journalism, as described by Bentes (2015), becomes the ideal scenario for transmedia production. It is an active audience that interacts, comments, informs, analyzes and dialogues with journalists in various media environments, mainly through hashtags. This demonstrates a collective subjective experience that opens up a particular context of meaning in an interface with street protests and social networks. As Bentes (2015) states, Mídia Ninja narratives carry possible worlds within each statement. Each "matter" brings a cause, affection, a horizon of worlds around the news. This gives vitality to the creative production of semiosis.

ANALYSIS OF MÍDIA NINJA'S TRANSMEDIA JOURNALISM

Analysis Methodology

Based on the organization of transmedia activism proposed by Srivastava (2009), it has become fundamental to create a proper methodology of analysis to understand the movement of this free journalism, which not only participates in coverage and registration but also subscribes to the internal articulation of demonstrations. Thus, this research aimed to find ways to understand the semiosis created by the hashtag #foratemer [#outtemer] within the transmedia context of Mídia Ninja's journalism. Since it is not possible to cover all the extensions generated by semiosis, the intention is to look at the trajectories that point to the formation of new interpretants. This incompleteness, which is present in the determination of new habits of action by collateral experience, is analyzed from the principles of transmedia storytelling (Gambarato & Tárcia, 2017; Jenkins, 2009; Scolari, 2013).

As Srivastava (2009) argues, the intention of transmedia activism is to follow its purposes to generate awareness, engagement, action and effective change from distribution on several platforms. This is what motivates the existence of post-journalism (Bentes, 2015). In this context, the three categories of analysis proposed by Scolari (2013)—multiplatform, engagement and narrative expansion—are used to determine the strategies performed by Mídia Ninja in the use of hashtags. From this, the principles of transmedia are used, from the vision of Jenkins (2009) and Moloney (2015), to qualify each category. As methodological procedures of analysis, the characteristics listed by Gambarato and Tárcia (2017) are appropriated. The goal is to understand the course taken in the narrative construction of Mídia Ninja based on the mediation of the hashtag #foratemer [#outtemer] during the sociopolitical main events of 2016. Therefore, the three categories of analysis contemplate the following structure:

1. Multiplatform strategy.
   a. **Guiding Principles**: Spreadable and drillable.
   b. **Methodological Procedures**: Analyze objectives and premises, structure and context, platforms and genres.
2. Narrative expansion strategy.
   a. **Guiding Principles**: Continuity and seriality, worldbuilding immersion and extractability.
   b. **Methodological Procedures:** Analyze the construction of the universe, the development of new stories, characters involved and extensions.
3. Social engagement strategy.
   a. **Guiding Principles**: Diversity of points of view and inspiration to action.
   b. **Methodological Procedure**: Analyze the engagement.

Analyzing the Strategies of Mídia Ninja Journalism

Multiplatform Strategy

Multiplicity refers to the importance of narrative enrichment through the use of multiple platforms. The stories oscillate within a single coherent narrative realm (Moloney, 2015). This principle is directly related to the concepts of spreadability and drillability. Spreadability is the ability to "viralize" content through the mediascape. However, it is not just a strategy to make something visible without planning or direction. Spreadability "encourages the movement of the media itself, for personalized engagement, remix and reuse - all ideas that send shifts to the spines of intellectual property owners, but signal very deep and long-lasting engagement for compelling media" (Moloney, 2015, p. 49).

Another principle that points to the use of multiple platforms is drillability, which refers to the deepening of content to encourage public participation. This can be stimulated from the hypertextual construction of the narrative structure (Canavilhas, 2014), which always leads to denser unfolding, encouraging the public to create its own trajectory. "In dealing with real worlds, however, journalism has the advantage of only engaging the public's natural curiosity and enabling its sleuthing" (Moloney, 2015, p. 50). In order to understand how these principles operate in Mídia Ninja's production, it is fundamental to use the context and structure of the group to determine the objectives and premises of communication planning in order to verify the use of platforms and genres in the spreadability and drillability of the narrative (Gambarato & Tárcia, 2017).

Mídia Ninja was born in the transmedia perspective of the cultural collective Fora do Eixo. Before Mídia Ninja defined itself as activist media, the group was a branch of a complex chain aimed at establishing a free communication agency. Fora do Eixo was structured on six platforms with different approaches. There was a site called "Overmundo" [Overworld], with a focus on collaborative journalism, which spelled out the roots of Mídia Ninja. Moreover, it was comprised of Post TV, a streaming channel; Meme, the front responsible for the photographic production and graphic pieces; DF5, the audiovisual content; TNB, a site that connected independent artists in the country; and social networks, the distribution system for online content.

This happened before the outbreak of the June Journeys in favor of the "Passe Livre [Free Pass] Movement," due to the problems of students' urban mobility and later, the repercussion of corruption schemes in the country (Malini & Antoun, 2013). In March 2013, Mídia Ninja began its activities in the journalistic field, becoming a partner of Fora do Eixo. By already understanding the narrative structure in the order of multiplicity, the group stood out for its coverage and effective participation in social movements. From 2014 onward, with the protests due to the FIFA World Cup held in Brazil and the dissatisfaction with the government (D'Andrea, Alzamora, & Ziller, 2015), Mídia Ninja became a reference in the production and distribution of activist information. In 2016, the group invested in an organized structure to produce spreadable and drillable content. The purpose is to stimulate the visibility of sociopolitical causes on social networks (Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, Instagram and YouTube), using the spreadability feature through hashtags. This is due to space-time appropriation of these environments, in which communication is fast and instantaneous. To create depth, the group has a collaborative site for news exploration (http://midianinja.org/) and a profile on Medium (https://medium.com/@MidiaNINJA). Additionally, through partners, the group offers other narrative lines that complement the central one, bringing in-depth information.

Narrative Expansion Strategy

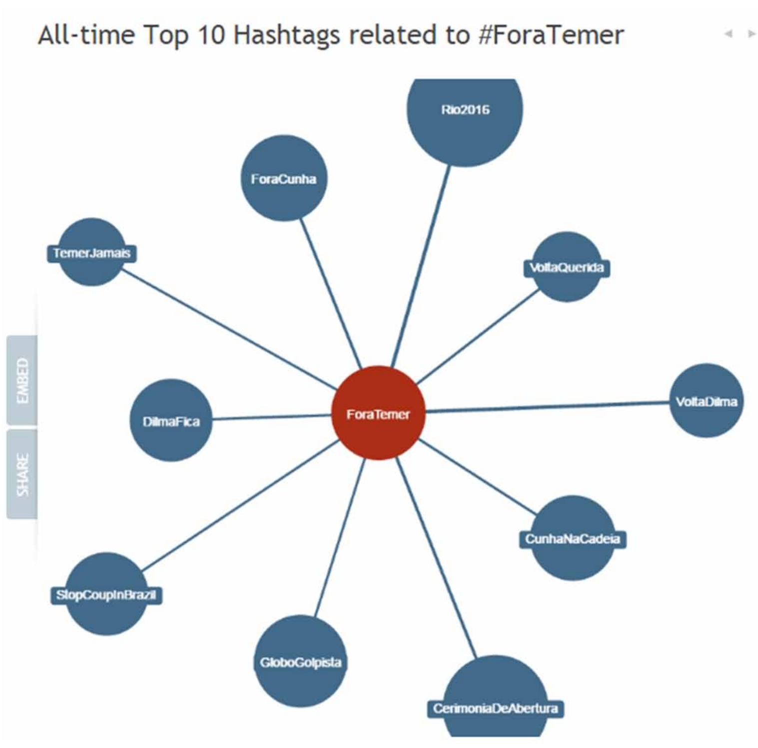
For Jenkins (2009), the creation of worlds is fundamental to the process of public immersion and engagement. There is a desire of the audience to map and dominate all the content about the narrative that was created, which would indicate an "encyclopedic impulse." Therefore, the author delineates the importance of building complex worlds using various languages and media. However, Moloney (2015) states that this creation is limited in non-fiction narratives, for they deal with real worlds. The challenge is not to expand this world but to systematize it to facilitate public understanding. This does not leave out the wealth of narrative ramifications. "This provides a rich enough tapestry on which the main story can unfold, allowing alternate stories based on different characters and circumstances" (Moloney, 2015, p. 52).

In the case of the hashtag #foratemer [#outtemer], the constructed world concerns the period of the impeachment process of ex-president Dilma Rousseff. In 2015, dissatisfaction with the government triggered the impeachment process in 2016. During this process, there was political polarization between two distinct groups: One in favor and the other against the president's removal from office. To dialogue and show their position on social networks and street protests, users created and shared several hashtags that marked the Brazilian political scene. The main ones were #foradilma [#outdilma), to express support in favor of impeachment, and #naovaitergolpe [#therewillbenocoup], created to denounce impeachment as a coup against democracy (Alzamora & Andrade, 2016). On May 11 and 12, 2016, the Senate voted to abide by the protocol for opening the impeachment process. The president was removed from office, and Vice-president Michel Temer took up the position on an interim basis until the final trial in August, when he officially became president. This generated a great uprising and intensified the protests among those who were against the process.

In this scenario, Mídia Ninja stood out by taking a position against the impeachment demand. The group was one of the main influencers of the hashtag #nãovaitergolpe (with the accent signal). In addition, the group triggered a network of mobile meanings, working with the presence of several related hashtags (Alzamora & Andrade, 2016). After this period, the hashtag #foratemer [#outtemer] became a symbol of demonstrations against the new government. On August 31, 2016, the final vote of the impeachment process, monitoring was executed with the use of the Hashtagify.me tool, which elucidates the relationship between hashtags used on Twitter, to verify the semiosis formed by #foratemer [#outtemer] (Figure 1). The tool tracks the connections that had been generated, showing which other hashtags had been triggered by it at the time. What differentiates the process of semiosis is the degree of proximity between them, marked in the tool by the line that relates to each other. The closer to the analyzed hashtag, the newer the association. The thicker the line, the greater the intensity of the connection in the context of connectivity. In this way, the only trace that can be understood of these distinct temporalities is the formation of interpretants (new signs), materialized in the form of related hashtags.

Semiosis generated dialogues directly with other activism hashtags, mainly oriented toward the request for the return of ex-president Rousseff. However, it also evokes a crossroads with other stories, highlighting the relationship of media activism with the corporate media Rede Globo [Globo Network], through the hashtag #globogolpista [#coupplotterglobe], and with the 2016 Olympic Games, which took place in Brazil during the same period, through the hashtags #rio2016 and #cerimoniadeabertura [#openingceremony]. This scenario generated reflexes in the mediation of the Olympics from the political crossings. During mega-sports events, the hashtag #foratemerRio2016 [#outtemerRio2016] was created as a semantic variation to engender an intersection between the two narrative universes. This strategy was adopted by the demonstrators themselves and incorporated into the news production of the group Mídia Ninja. Therefore, during this period, the group appears in second place on the list of influencers of the

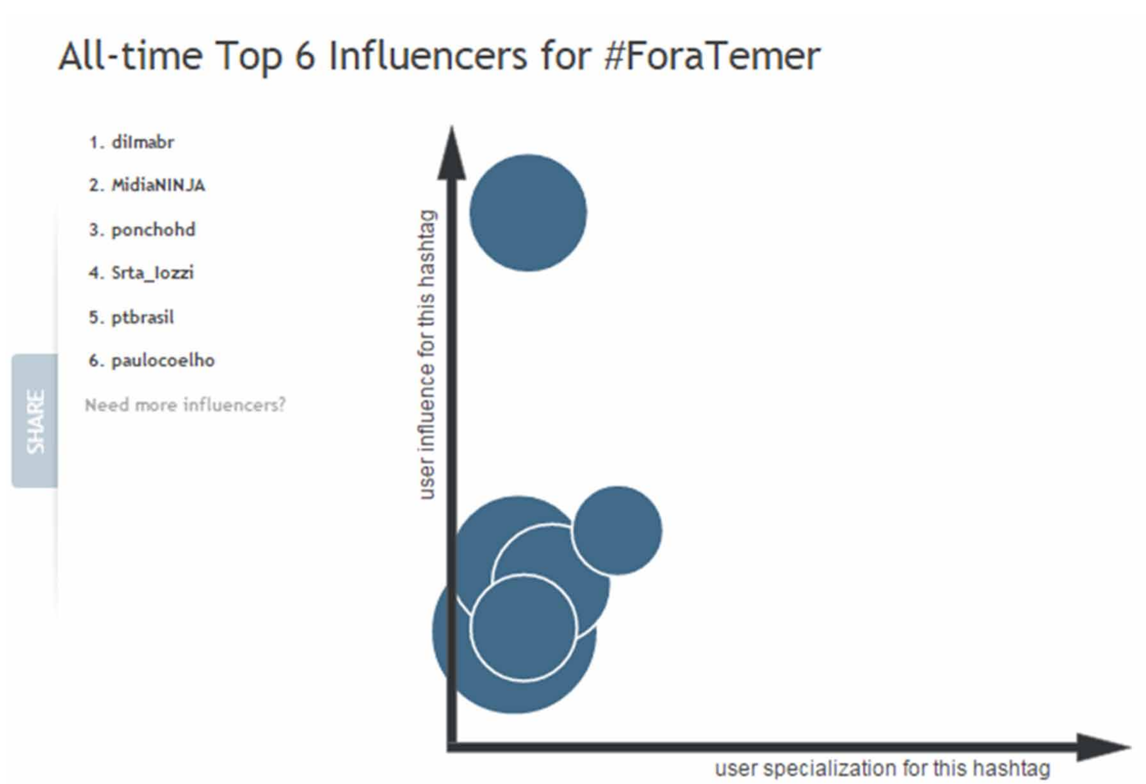
Figure 1. Relationships established by the hashtag #foratemer [#outtemer] on 08/31/2016. Source: Print screen of the analysis performed by the tool Hashtagify.me



hashtag #foratemer [#outtemer] (Figure 2), first place having been conquered by the official profile of the former president (@dilmabr).

The principle of seriality (Jenkins, 2009; Moloney, 2015) aims to transform the narrative into scattered historical fragments in various media systems, which is assembled and reassembled only with the help of the public. This concerns the non-linear nature of the transmedia concept, which coincides with the behavior of hashtags that develop in a reticular way in the formation of new interpretants. Therefore, it would be impracticable to conceive the chronological trajectory of a hashtag. Serially, languages and media behaviors are mixed in meaning processes, as in the case of the hashtag #foratemer [#outtemer] during the Olympic Games. This dimension of continuity and seriality is also visible when the hashtag is transposed into the offline environment, appearing on signs and t-shirts during the Olympic Games events. Jenkins (2006) warns that it is necessary to master communication practices and to understand well the environments to be explored. In the streets, hashtags become slogans through social use. This transition between the indicial trail of online social networks and the presence of symbols in street manifestations determines the degree of detail and exploration of the world, guaranteeing the immersion of the public (Moloney, 2015). For this reason, it is also possible to understand the principle of extractability indicated by Jenkins (2009) as the ability of the public to take aspects of the storyworld into their daily lives. When hashtags are incorporated into the offline universe as a symbol, they gain new connotations in ordinary life.

Figure 2. Main influencers of the hashtag #foratemer [#outtemer] on 08/31/2016. Source: Print screen of the analysis performed by the tool Hashtagify.me



From this perspective, it is possible to understand that the mediation potential of hashtags delineates a transmedia dynamic through collateral experience. There is a dynamic purpose of action that is formed by the process of signic association between hashtags. Each line displayed in semiosis networks represents a new sign, that is, a new interpretant in the construction of meaning of the studied hashtag. These new interpreters may be seen as provisional unfoldings of the narrative of the demonstration against the government of President Michel Temer. They are ramifications that complement the meaning of semiosis but also construct parallel narratives.

Alzamora and Gambarato (2014) argue that the creative dimension offered by collateral experience denotes vitality for the narrative. It is precisely the domain of representation of the sign that leads to the productive incompleteness of the interpretant, since it is never possible to obtain the primary meaning of the object. As semiosis does not close and the final interpretant is not reached, this incompleteness is taken as a conceptual parameter to understand how media consumption regulates habits and models the transmedia dynamics in process of sign association (Alzamora & Gambarato, 2014). This is visible in the #foratemer [#outtemer] case, because it connects instances of distinct meanings and traverses narrative paths in a serial and hypertextual way (Canavilhas, 2014).

Thus, the use of hashtags demarcates demonstrators and users of social networks as important characters for the construction of the meanings of semiosis. Another form of narrative extension is the use of columnists for content creation and sharing. In 2016, the group invited teachers, politicians, members of religious organizations, minority leaders and students to compose the front line of news production. These characters also appropriate hashtags for narrative threads that intersect with the main one, resulting in a dimension in which the content is significantly deepened.

Social Engagement Strategy

As hashtags are the fruit of social engagement, the principles of subjectivity and performance (Jenkins, 2009) are essential for analyzing their mediation processes. According to Moloney (2015), subjectivity refers to the multiple voices and dimensions that permeate the narrative. The subjective perceptions of characters within the story are used to add to the narrative complexity. “They provide an opportunity to express the complexity of views of the same world” (Moloney, 2015, p 56). For hashtags, this creative and heterogeneous dimension configures what has been defined as collateral experience. Mídia Ninja stimulates these multiple voices as it opens its production space to the audience. Moreover, incorporating protest hashtags in the group’s narrative generates visibility for local and global causes through interactivity (Canavilhas, 2014).

This interactivity is critical to the principle of performance, which gives the public the freedom to tell their bits of the story. In Moloney’s (2015) view, it is an inspiration for action, that is, the creation of strategies to achieve effective transformation. This is the last stage of the narrative purpose of activist manifestations (Srivastava, 2009). This established relationship with the public is a partnership, fueling engagement. Mídia Ninja usually does some actions on social networks to encourage the use of specific hashtags. One is a “Twittaço,” a call for a collective action to stimulate the use of a specific hashtag on Twitter with the intention of putting a hashtag among the Trending Topics, influencing the public agenda. The group seeks to use the algorithms in favor of engagement, always proposing actions to integrate humans and nonhumans. This creates an intermedia dimension between the platforms, since the dissemination of these events happens outside Twitter as well and brings about the transmedia dimension, connecting media platforms and the street environment.

CONCLUSION

This chapter aimed to discuss the relationship between transmedia and journalism from the perspective of the experiences of the Brazilian media activism group Mídia Ninja. The group is qualified as a type of immersive journalism, which promotes the participation of ordinary citizens in the investigation and creation of news. Through the intermedia behavior of hashtags, which link social networking platforms, and opening up to the transmedia dynamic in relation to street protests, Mídia Ninja stands as an alternative to corporate media, forming a kind of post-journalism. The group uses hashtags to create narratives anchored in the construction of a real world. This enhances audience participation and inspires action through the use of multiple platforms.

Because this, it was then necessary to develop a specific analysis methodology, seeking to crisscross the aspects of Peirce's semiotics and the principles of the transmedia storytelling, in order to intensify the observation of new habits of action by the interpretant's incompleteness. Peircean semiotics presumes the continuous improvement of the process of signic mediation, also called semiosis, which establishes provisional habits of action. Hashtags can operate in the mediation of a common positioning, triggering other hashtags in the creation of a complex and provisional network of meanings. Starting from this thought, the intention of this work was to understand hashtags as signic processes capable of generating symbolic dimensions from social use.

The interface between online and offline environments defines a serial and hypertextual communicative process, so that new media habits emerge from the use of hashtags. Street protests and online communication vehicles now appropriate hashtags to create an intersection with the digital environment. This mixture reinforces the expansion of the semiotic results generated by these hashtags. Because they are the product of online multiplicity, they are signs that establish new connections through the principles of transmedia storytelling. This defines the integration between vertical (media corporations) and horizontal (individuals and groups) communication processes in digital connections. Thus, this mediating process integrates differentiated communication dynamics that are part of the emergence of a transmedia journalism that is born from the provisional habits of action from the collateral experience.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Algorithm: Mathematical formula, code, or software that recognizes and generates information, the input/output.

Collateral Experience: Familiarity with the object in the construction of meanings.

Engagement: Participation in the production and sharing of contents.

Hashtag Activism: Persistent use of some hashtag that has for an objective an activist cause.

Media Activism: Independent media movement that uses social networks as the main platform for narrative production of activism.

Semiosis: Term used by Peirce to refer to the process of signification.

Sociopolitical Positioning: Process of manifestation in relation to some cause of a social and/or political nature.

Trending Topics: System offered by digital platforms to give visibility to hashtags and the most frequently commented terms for a short period of time.

Twittaço: Call for a collective action to stimulate the use of some specific hashtag on Twitter to reach the Trending Topics.

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Chapter 41
Viral News Content, Instantaneity, and Newsworthiness Criteria

Lila Luchessi
Universidad Nacional de Río Negro, Argentina

ABSTRACT

Social networks have modified the activities of the press, the actions of audiences, and the perceptions of societies. The strategies displayed to avoid losing consumers aim at fulfilling the audience's needs and the gap between the producers' and the consumers' interests tends to widen. This leads to a crisis point in news financing, affecting the traditional logic of the media industry; while advertisers are now able to reach their audiences without its mediation, viralization and instantaneity force the media to publish information incompatible with the public interest as considered by the press. In this way, traditional newsworthiness criteria are replaced by other criteria that redefine the concept of information. The aim of this chapter is to analyze the way in which instantaneity and viralization have affected not only the journalistic activity but also the information selection criteria and the audiences' input on the web.

INTRODUCTION

Digital tools have been used for the production of news since the eighties (Canavilhas, 2009). In the beginning, the editing of texts and images simplified the journalistic tasks and accelerated the speed of the construction of news. While technology progressed, the press began to publish news online. At first, they only posted the information that had been published on their print editions. In only twenty years, the possibility of combining print editions with information search and narrative experimentation tools grew in such a way that the digital media became independent of their print origins, while audiences gained ground through collaboration and participation. In the beginning of the 21st century, the gap between the producers of news and their audiences—that had relied on asymmetric knowledge, interests and information sources—started to narrow. At the same time, the thematic choices, coverages and information preferences began to diverge more and more (Boczkowski & Michelstein, 2013). The

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reduction in the price of digital devices, the widespread use of mobile phones, and the lower costs of Internet brought about a rapid increase in the number of users and opened new business opportunities for the media and the press. And although the news companies insisted on thinking the business with the same logic of before, the new consumers' habits made that situation change.

In 1995, Randy Conrad created "Classmates," a social network to find old classmates. It is considered to be the main precursor of Facebook, since it was created with the same purpose (Ponce, 2012). With this project, the idea of "digital network" took root. However, it was not until the first decade of the 21st century—with the massive inclusion of users and the incorporation of networks based on general issues—that the ideas of participation, discussion, collaboration and agenda-setting became possible. In this scenario, the press is faced with two problems. On the one hand, the digital tools have become inputs for the construction of news. On the other hand, these very same tools have been used as platforms for the media to post material and interact with their audiences. Interactivity, which is inherent to the digital platforms, subverts the languages and structures of journalistic communication. Although news companies are present in all these platforms, they end up using them as ad-blackboards, coverage channels and transmission bands that almost in no case enable vertical interactions. While the news consumers throw themselves into the digital platforms, interaction between peers becomes more frequent: Discussion, collaboration, conversation and participation among users take place on a horizontal level. However, an analysis monitoring national, regional, local and Latin American press companies, which includes in-depth interviews with the editors of such companies (Luchessi, 2016a), shows that the news companies and the journalists working for them do not give answers, correct, acknowledge or argue with the public, and keep a distance from their audiences.

Since the beginning of Twitter, in 2006, and Facebook, in 2004, an extensive mass of consumers has begun to use the social networks for different purposes. Online entertainment, ideas spreading, interactions and the consolidation of networks and communities where people socialize, have been crossed by news inputs, which always fit the media logics. In some cases, the news media even question their audiences about the news material they cannot have access to. For example, a local editorial department has created a WhatsApp line to receive inputs from the audience and to cover some events without having to leave the newsroom; also, certain news materials they use have been published in other sites or emerge from the audiences' inputs within the social networks, especially in those cases in which the witnesses of relevant events transmit live or upload photos or videos of events, which are distant from the news professionals (Luchessi, 2016b). In this regard, YouTube channels, Facebook pages, Twitter, Snapchat and Instagram accounts combine with Telegram and WhatsApp. It is through all these platforms that the media receive reports, videos, data and other inputs to generate content. Nevertheless, there are very few records of acknowledgments, mention of the sources or answers to the demands made by the audiences through these channels. In this situation, users tend to assume an unexpected role and start to produce information, breaking the logics of the traditional construction of news. As social networks became massive, the audiences' subject matters and concerns began to circulate without the mediation of the press. Furthermore, with the use of segmentation and audience identification tools based on metrics that allow to see nodes contained inside them, advertisers may also have access to their consumers without having to resource to the media. Consequently, news companies are now faced with two problematic issues: On the one hand, the financing of the contents and, on the other hand, a drastic change in the idea of information (Aguado, 2013).

As advertisers are now able to hire hosting services and community managers that skip a step between them and their potential customers, communication budgets drop and advertising investment decreases. Although the case of The New York Times might have been an innovative way of financing contents via subscription instead of advertisement (Kafka & Molla, 2017), the experience of the media analyzed show that audiences are not particularly interested in paying for information and, in those cases in which they might be willing to, subscriptions result insufficient to finance the business (Boczkowski & Michelstein, 2017). With an advertising market that remains—at its very best—stable, the growth in the supply of traditional and digital contents makes the news market stumble. The traditional sections no longer take into account the current concerns, preferences, and habits of audiences. In some cases, modifications are made to sustain the tacit agreement with the public. Even so, the lower credibility ratings of the press and the possibility of posting information without its mediation allow Internet users to remove the media from the equation.

The aim of this chapter is to analyze the impact of viral news contents and instantaneity on information quality, the decentralization of the role of information professionals and the criteria for the production of news. Also, the impact of transmedia storytelling on news production, and the media strategies to reach the reticular and segmented audiences in a context of social and cultural reorganization, which affects the media business units.

JOURNALISM, NEWS AND TRANSMEDIA STORYTELLING

The organization of societies is based on relational networks (Barnes, 1954; Bott, 1957). Anthropology, as well as Sociology, have acknowledged the importance of studying the relationships that shape social structures (Waserman & Faust, 1994) and the linkages established inside them. Despite that, studies on virtual communities' relations (Ricaurte & Ramos-Vidal, 2015) do not acknowledge the research that has studied the ties, relations and structures of social practices in different territorial communities. In the last years, research has been made, taking some elements from the Graph Theory (Harary & Norman, 1953; Storkman & Srenger, 1989), to study the relationships built in the digital networks and the matrix structures related to journalism subjects and problems. In that sense, the research that compares the constitution of virtual communities, opinion groups, virtual leaderships and structural breakdowns with the conventions that were established before the upsurge of digital platforms, tends to reach findings which are more related to the social and cultural practices that already existed before the appearance of digital platforms and specific applications. It should be observed that digital platforms enable more dynamic and fluent communication between the participants of the virtual communities. In fact, the most distinctive feature of this interactivity is its high speed. Governed by a prevailing contemporaneity, users interact instantaneously on debating topics, ideological stances and common actions. Later in this chapter, the construction of the concepts of time and space will be elaborated. However, it is important to stress that the present chapter refers to "contemporaneity" as a synchronic process that places different situations, that occur in different places, as a unique present.

The modes of social functioning within the social networks are not new. When comparing the findings of the research on interactions on digital networks—and before, on the spaces opened for debate by the media and the publications of their audiences—with the interactions that took place before the existence of the platforms, it is possible to find that the relational ties and the hierarchical clustering inside them remained stable in relation to the ones that could be found in the communities established in different territories (Luchessi, 2016b). From this point of view, the fact that the forms of interaction remained stable is a significant contribution to think the differences between the traditional and the digital audiences. Besides, it enables the consideration of new ways for the information producers to relate to audiences. Apart from that, if Jenkins (2006) is right when he says that transmedia storytelling is necessarily interactive, the narrative breaking to be analyzed in the news context is the one that leaves aside the unidirectional view of the news companies, and adds to a digital palimpsest in which participants are able to dialogue, build relationships, displace the institutional hierarchies to create new ones, and mix subjects that juxtapose with each other at high speed, without establishing hierarchies. At the same time, it will be interesting to study the relationships built by the users among themselves. When examining media forums and networks, the interventions of the audiences are usually conversational and interactive, while the exchanges take place on a horizontal level only. In most cases, users question, provoke or discredit the press—as an institution—as well as its agreements, negotiations, stands, agenda-setting strategies and explanations of social events. In the last years, several traditional media, in particular those included in the corpus of the study abovementioned, made the mistake of publishing fake news for taking material posted on the networks. Especially in Argentina, these phenomena—added to the discussion over the regulation of audiovisual media that revealed the interests of the multimedia holdings in the eyes of society (Becerra & Mastrini, 2017)—affected the image of the news companies, their most visible journalists and the credibility of the information they publish (Blaustein, 2013). The press credibility ratings, on the very top in the nineties, decrease year after year (Amado, 2016a) as audiences participate massively and create a dialogue the journalists and the press companies exclude themselves from. At this point, it is possible to make two interpretations that will put into context the journalistic practices and their relations with users. First, it may be said that a research (Amado, 2016a) on the content of publications related to news of public interest has shown that the institution of journalism, as a central actor in the news process, is being questioned, that the credibility ratings of its publications have dropped and that the cohesion and credibility of the communities people belong to strengthens, while they are considered to be sources to be taken into account. Second, when analyzing the demonstrations in public places and the claims that spring from them, the questioning of the institutions of democracy, of the hierarchy of its representatives and of the credibility of the political leaders, it will be possible to draw a correlation between the strengthening of community participation and the reticular construction of leaderships.

Regarding journalism studies, certain topics have emerged since the analysis of the press began: Routine procedures (Gans, 1979), construction of news (Tuchman, 1978), and media influence on public opinion (Lippman, 1922; Habermas, 1981; Price, 1994). Using different tools and different platforms, current studies tend to focus on the same issues (Boczkowski, 2013). What does the public need to know to make political decisions? Who should select, frame and analyze the events? How are stereotypes built to simplify the message? And finally, are the traditional techniques efficient in the news production processes and analysis? Historically, there are three stages in the production process: (1) the selection of events, (2) the hierarchy of news values, and (3) the edition of the content that will later be published in media socially recognized by the audience (Martini, 2000). This process in which news inputs arrive to the newsroom to be processed and published by professionals is known as Newsmaking. The construction of news is founded on two pillars: (1) the systematization of events through planning, and (2) the monitoring of the breakings those events cause in the everyday life, which alter the productive routine and the work of the journalists for the construction of news. Those breakings are usually organized through different criteria, which allow to manage the production of news and organize the press agenda (McCombs, 2004), according to the dispute over meaning established in society. In fact, the traditional tensions over agenda-setting had, at least, three main actors: Politicians, press media, and society. These disputes and negotiations arise the subjects and framings over which audiences had to be informed to take a stance consistent with their social, ideological, political and cultural backgrounds. Up to this point, the scheme might be the same. However, the productive acceleration of the social system and the change in the perception of the concept of time, modify the roles, functions and interactions played by the press with their news sources, their financing sources and society as a whole.

Traditionally, time regulated the periodicity of news products and the temporal pace of organization of the press industry had a direct influence on the organization of the rest of the production activities of communities the press kept informed. The acceleration of the pace of news brought about higher production speed and, therefore, higher levels of consumption. The phenomenon above mentioned does not only apply to the press industry. In capitalist systems, acceleration and speed are key to generate competition and productivity (Gitlin, 2005). However, the acceleration resulting from the digitization of platforms completely changed the way time is assessed. Although the production techniques are not new, the possibility of synchronizing the occurrence of the event with its publication destroys the concept of periodicity (Luchessi, 2013). This process, which Paula Sibilia calls "detemporalization" (2012, p. 133) is one of the elements which constitute the *omnipresence of the present*. Despite the descriptive coincidence, this chapter will refer to "contemporaneity," since the term enables the study of this temporal synchronicity and, at the same time, the processes of spatial simultaneity. This temporal synchronicity does not only influence the historical contemporaneity process. The decontextualized idea of a permanent "here and now" has a direct impact on the cultural conceptions, social production assessments and news interests of the online communities.

Oscar Landi (1992) studied the cultural changes resulting from the consumption of audiovisual products at home and the spread of the pay-per-view system. To Landi' studies, it should be added that the use of digital platforms generates the possibility of interacting with others. The audiences Landi referred to still had an asymmetric relation with the information producers. However, in the era of technological platforms, leaderships and reputations are built by numbers of followers, amounts of clicks and digital omnipresence. Consequently, people who are unknown to the media and the non-virtual communities might be summoned by them because of the popularity of their posts, becoming instant celebrities or opinion leaders. In order to understand these changes, it will be necessary to take into account that nowadays there is direct access—through easily available technology—to events that occur in remote, unknown and culturally different places. Almost half of the world population uses smartphones; while in periphery countries the mobile phone market share represents around 30% of the population, in the central countries that share represents 75% (Infobae, 2015). This direct access breaks with the traditional idea of distance expressed in miles or kilometers, enabling a spatial synchronicity within an also synchronic time. It is in this scenario that periodicity, scoop and topicality lose their traditional places in the set of news values known up to date. The predominance of the producers, eroded by the strong participation of the online audiences, was characterized by stable newsworthiness criteria; when that asymmetry breaks down and the users leave their passive role to interact online, those criteria, as well as the methods of news production, are bound to change (Amado, 2016b).

The change in the habits of consumers and the direct marketing strategies carried out by the advertisers and the social actors, who had historically acted as sources of information, cause the news companies many problems. Asymmetry, which characterized the news tradition and placed journalism as a mediator between power and society, is broken down by the possibility of having direct contact with sources and advertisers in accordance with very specific interests. Thus, the users of platforms and news applications have access to direct sources that, in many cases, provide information before the media outlets. Politicians, social leaders, prominent figures new referents confront the concept of exclusive news and leave the media professionals on a situation of temporal delay when it comes to covering events. The users see instantaneity as a strong news selection criterion. Their eagerness to know the events on real time brings about an anxiety in the consumption of news that affect the newsmaking process, the routines known by the journalists and the news companies financing. In that sense, the time of news production shortens, with a direct impact on the quality of news. At the same time, society becomes immersed in an idea of constant contemporaneity in which the political, cultural and economic contexts are left behind in a career against time that, to be successful, must equal the moment of the event with the moment of its publication. Even so, there are old informational pieces circulating on the Web, which keep being updated for the number of interested users. In these cases, many members of a given community are interested in this kind of contents based on shared criteria, such as spectacularity, entertainment or ideological stance, and the moment of the occurrence of the event becomes less important. These consumption practices off-center the work of journalists (Luchessi, 2016b). Time is no longer a linear construction (Sibilia, 2012): Time is now the moment in which the event is published. News coverage, considered in traditional contexts as a professional way of managing and presenting information, is put at a disadvantage by the compulsive publication of erroneous, incomplete or utterly false data. Furthermore, the contents circulating online mix together relevant and irrelevant news, privacy and entertainment, rumor and information.

In this scenario, audiences tend to draw together in communities, which share their same interests (Calvo, 2015). Within them, prejudices, beliefs and stands become stronger. Thus, it is the stand that the media and the journalists might take on a certain subject that is being questioned, and not the truth of information. This reorganization of the way social events are published, which is managed directly by the communication teams of the sources, has direct consequences on the news production routines. Transformed into mere reproducers of the things *everybody knows*, journalists no longer tell the facts but hide behind their desks, stay online and do not have enough time to carry out a professional work that would allow them to check the information. The newsmaking process, which begins when data arrive to the newsroom, suffers modifications since the access of the journalists to those data usually coincides with the access of the audience. In relation to that, the difference between the two groups would lie on the organization into a hierarchy that characterizes the traditional news criteria. Even though some criteria remain stable, the new forms of consumption destroy others and create new conceptions when it comes to selecting news. As a matter of fact, some news values such as magnitude, topicality and level of impact on society are still operational to select news, but values such as proximity and relevance of the major figures should be revised (Luchessi, 2007). For instance, the value of proximity, linked to a strong territorial conception and the idea of a nation-state regulating social relations, has been affected by a community construction of a different kind: Now, the community does not necessarily identify itself with territorial borders or national mythologies. In the online social media networks, the community identity is built by cultural agreements linked to certain interests, expressions and reticular forms of consumption. However, the use of algorithms to organize the informational volume that circulates on the Web allows people to have access to certain subjects, sources and publications, which coincide with their own interests; a tighter sense of belonging and a common perception is developed, which closes the circle built around that information. There is an idea of "wholeness" generated around this knowledge, since the "everybody" of every community shows no cracks. Each community takes homogeneous stands which show no contradictions and that "everybody" seems to accept. Nevertheless, when analyzing the information flow and the interactions within it, it is possible to see that there are many "everybody."

Isolated by its own prejudices, each community strengthens its own convictions, undermining or demonizing the others. Therefore, interaction calls for uniformity, since it does not tolerate nuances.

When studying the value of celebrity as a newsworthiness rule, it may be seen that, despite the construction of alternative ways of becoming famous, the criterion remains relatively stable. The circle feeds itself with the traditionally famous people, who reinforce their public presence by participating on the online social media networks, and those who are not famous but achieve popularity through their digital activism. The relevance of the events and their assessment as information input are also subverted by the appearance of a gap (Boczkowski & Michelstein, 2013), showing that the editorial and personal interests of the journalists diverge from those constructed by audiences. In the midst of a constant information flow related to personal, sectorial and community interests, audiences move away from the concerns of bigger sectors of society. In that sense, the information supply, dealing with specific issues, works better than the traditional general press. Therefore, the balance of the negotiation needed to maintain the public's interest (Luchessi & Cetkovich, 2007) is tipped in the audience's favor, creating a newsworthiness criterion. In this way, the news companies make concessions with their audiences, as their customers, distorting and conditioning the role and the practice of those professionals, who are attached to their ethics, aesthetic and job methodology.

The concept of viral news, which is the kind of news that goes from the social networks to the newsroom and sets a disruptive agenda, is key to understand the industry and the social practices around it. Viralization, which seems to hold together the interests of different communities of users, ends up falling within the contents of the traditional press: The use of analytical tools enables an instantaneous quantification of consumption by numbering the amount of "clicks" of each content, and these data decide its inclusion (or exclusion). Then, the "when," the "where" or the "who" are no longer important, but how many clicks, shares and views support the popularity of a content; this is what decides whether an event is newsworthy. If the preferences of digital media audiences are followed (Boczkowski & Michelstein, 2013) and compared with the social networks posts, an unavoidable question arises that reorganizes the journalists' routines and the analysis related to the news industry: What do producers and consumers understand when talking about information?

For around twenty years, advertising campaigns, entertainment material, sports and "soft" sections have been the preferred contents of traditional press audiences (Luchessi, 2006). Boczkowski and Michelstein (2013) add that these preferences remain stable as long as there is no need for hard section information. The cases the authors take into account are electoral processes or crisis situations. In these circumstances, the gap tends to narrow. These consumption practices, that are common to different press media in Argentina, coexist, in the beginning of the 21st century, with a constant supply from the social networks. There, thousands of cybernauts share material consistent with their preferences. Public events mix with private life, shallowness mixes with deepness, and the common events mix with news. However, these mixtures, which become preferences, are not essentially thematic. The recurrence of certain contents is associated with stances related to ideological, religious, social or cultural tendencies.

Originality lies on the formation of nodes, mostly opposed to each other, in which a given stance totally excludes any other stance, regardless of whether the information pieces on circulation stem from truthfulness, professionalism and production rigor. It is also interesting to notice that audiences do not demand more precision in the news content. In fact, people want the media and the journalists to explicit their positioning in relation to the circulating topics. It is not important if they add information or show professional inadequacy. Then, people exhort the media and the journalists to openly approve or condemn specific matters. In this scenario, the production of information is focused on the third stage of the process. According to Omar Rincón (2013), the tasks of journalism in the digital platforms will slowly resemble those of a DJ: Cutting, linking and mixing other people's productions seems to be the more stable activity of the media professionals. In addition, in the case of the coverage of events on real time in which information professionals cannot possibly compete with people holding cellphones with cameras in the very scene of the events, editing dominates the rest of the stages of newsmaking.

The news selection and organization into a hierarchy emerge from algorithms expressed in metrics that measure the practices of audiences within the media. More and more the satisfaction of the demand moves away from the idea of information, the agenda-setting disputes and the predominance of the corporate positioning of the news companies. However, this is not the only way in which the subjects to be published are selected. Viralization, which will be discussed in following paragraphs, becomes key in the editorial decision-making process. The unidirectional idea of traditional information is challenged by a net, whose nodes are constituted by potential popularity and not by professional practices. From viralized interconnections emerge new criteria for news selection.

In the meantime, as images, gifs and micro-videos flood the social media networks, the textual weight of many of the news published in informative sites is swimming against the tide of transmedia storytelling. To discuss transmedia storytelling, it will be useful to return to Jenkins (2003). From his perspective, narrative experiences circulate fragmented through the different media and platforms, and the users are the ones who actively collaborate on the construction of a narrative universe. Furthermore, it is important to analyze the consumption practices of the new generations that, in their micro breaks, find the time to consume stories or video fragments, or write posts in blogs. These micro breaks or "Leisure Bubbles" (Igarza, 2009) are nurtured by the widespread use of smartphones, Internet connection (Liuzzi, 2014) and the ability of the new generations to adapt to the languages used.

The most interesting but also disruptive aspect of the notion of transmedia storytelling in relation to traditional storytelling is that, according to Gosciola, "transmedia storytelling unfolds a media convergent force while remaining open for audiences to collaborate, express questionings, and become a determining factor in the construction of storytelling" (2012, p. 9, own translation). The prominent role of audiences might seem auspicious, but it also contributes to the proliferation of fake news, climates of biased opinion isolated from the social nuances of everyday relationships, and exchanges between the networks and the real world, which distort perceptions and, in many cases, generate violence (Calvo, 2015). In this regard, different outlooks on a same issue stimulate irreconcilable positions over a specific event. In Argentina, the conflict over the export taxes imposed on the agricultural sector, which began on March 11, 2008, and lasted 127 days, ended up in a dispute between the opposition, which had links with the agricultural sector, and the followers of the government of Cristina Kirchner. The media took an explicit stance, while participation in social networks was high (Aruguete & Zunino, 2010). The agricultural corporations carried out protests—including verbal aggressions through the networks and forums of digital newspapers—which derived in incidents involving threats, punches and the destruction of vehicles in the country's roads as a consequence of clashes between the opposing parties (Infobae, 2012).

Allcott and Gentzkow define fake news as "news articles that are intentionally and verifiably false, and could mislead readers" (2017, p.3). Although the distortion of news is not always intentional, it is true that the lack of training, professionalism and informational inputs on certain subjects magnifies the impact of the content spread and viralized by the users. Despite the potential for narrative construction enabled by the platforms, which allow audiences to participate, collaborate and be part of subjects that might spread outside social media, there is also a need for news professional management and narrative adjustments in the supply of news. The decision of not exploiting to the full the narrative possibilities offered by the medium is based on conservative conceptions of the news business. The lack of investment on professional transdisciplinary teams, the journalists' work overload and the use of social media networks as content creators distort the news products. Furthermore, the fact that companies do not give enough training and pay low wages, force journalists to train on their own (Amado, 2016b), at the expense of their own incomes. The combination of complex languages with precarious working conditions, lack of trust from the public and contemporaneity of events puts strain on the news space. Therefore, viralization of contents, which will later become news, seems to be one of the stable tools of the news market, and of the logics of production.

GOING VIRAL

There are several contents, which are not mediatized through the press institutions. In some cases, this is decided by the traditional application of newsworthiness criteria. In other cases, by censorship. Finally, there are events which are not mediatized because they do not comply with the concept of news. To understand this decision-making process, it should be stressed that news is "the journalistic construction of an event whose novelty, unpredictability and future effects upon society are publicly displayed for recognition" (Martini, 2000, p. 33, own translation). However, ranging from the social networks to the traditional press contents, the common elements are the number of clicks, views and shares they receive, and also the fact that, when they gain ground in the press, the topics are already widespread known as a consequence of their high exposure in social networks. "Gone viral" is usually the band these contents carry when incorporated by the traditional press. In this sense, the decision to publish a topic, which interest derives from the high sensation it caused on the Internet, is made to the detriment of the news scoop.

The concept of "spreadable media" (Jenkins, Ford & Green, 2013) might be useful to understand the complexity of this phenomenon. The users' actions and participations go beyond the idea of contagion and strengthens the idea of performing a concrete action to encourage the circulation of content. Nevertheless, the tensions between the interests of the industry and those of the users, and those of the communities they belong to, should be part of the spreadable media context. According to Carlos Scolari (2008), the porosity of that border is sustained by negotiations and tensions that "might end in temporal cooperation agreements" (Scolari, 2013). In Latin America, the studies on the tensions between the borders and the center of the culture refer to certain concerns expressed not only in the literature of Borges (1974), but also in the scientific studies on the region's communication and culture. The works of Jesús Martín Barbero (1987), Aníbal Ford (1994) and Néstor García Canclini (1990) had already dealt with the disputes between cultural industries and collaborative culture, and the work of Scolari (2008) analyzes the negotiations, borrowings and tensions between the logic of the traditional industry and the participation of the users in the networks. Even so, the institutionalized press is modified by the very same elements it loathes. First, because its informative and commercial interests do not generally coincide with those proposed by the users. And second, because a break in the negotiations would leave them with no public.

To understand the way in which this news selection methodology works, this chapter will focus on three examples: (1) The Lioness with the Green Uniform. Estela Morandi, an Argentinian doctor, who directed the Disaster Response Team of the City of Buenos Aires emergency medical unit SAME, suddenly died on April 13, 2015. A photo of her was taken during her work in a railroad tragedy that took place on February 22, 2012, at the Once Station of the Sarmiento Line (Devana, 2015). The photo went viral and, four days later, the traditional press decided to cover the story. However, the Government of the City of Buenos Aires only held a small ceremony in her honor on May 1, 2015. (2) The revolts that broke out in Tunisia in 2010, and spread to the rest of the Arab countries. The events, known as the Arab Spring, allowed many youngsters to bypass the censorship of the ruling regime by resorting to the online social networks. Thanks to their posts, the world came to know events censored by their governments, triggering widespread political and social repercussions. (3) The chapter will refer to Chewbacca Mom, a video which first version reached 9,269,282 views on YouTube (Deak, 2016). Up to now, the video is the most viralized content in the history of Facebook, with 164 million reproductions (Payne, 2016). Furthermore, the appearance of the mom in "The Late Late Show with James Corden" reached 16,173,186 views on YouTube (The Late Late Show, 2016).

Anonymous Heroine

Estela Morandi devoted her life to Medicine. She always worked in the Public Healthcare System, with a high social commitment. Her relationship with the press media was not very good. Focused on her work in the emergency response team, she got mad when journalists, photographers and camera persons burst into the disasters zones, wanting to get a scoop, while she was saving lives. During her twenty years as head of the Disaster Response Team of the City of Buenos Aires emergency medical unit SAME, she organized the rescues of the victims of the attacks on the Embassy of Israel and the Argentine Jewish Mutual Aid Association; of the LAPA tragedy—the plane crash that took the lives of 62 passengers on August 31, 1999 (La Nación, 2014)— and of the Cromagnon club that caught fire on the night of December 30, 2004, leaving 194 teenagers killed (La Nación, 2012). The tragedy of Once took place when a brakeless train hit on the terminal station, leaving 51 persons killed (Sánchez, 2017).

Trained on emergency and health management, she was an outstanding professional. However, she did not feel comfortable when it came to public relations and preferred to establish personal relations. Her daughter, a young lawyer who works as a photojournalist, had taken a great picture of her mother working at the Once tragedy, in 2012. Dr. Morandi became known due to the visual impact of her expression, caught in all its essence by one of the persons who knew her most. Then, the photo went viral. Many interviews, prizes and a certain level of popularity, which she disliked, arose from that viralization. After that, she was always present in the different events of the busy life of the City of Buenos Aires. In the morning of April 13, 2015, she died unexpectedly at her house, assisted by her husband, Dr. Rafael Acunzo, and by an ambulance of the emergency team she had worked with.

Up to this point, many classical criteria for news selection were present: Unpredictability, proximity, and social relevance of the figure, even though she was not a widely known person. Few hours after her decease, social media was flooded with her photo, the one her own daughter had taken three years before. The photo shows her desperate and weeping face as she was carrying an injured man on a stretcher to the ambulance, in the middle of the train crash (Devana, 2015). The photographer's friends, young journalists who had known Dr. Morandi, discussed the publication of the event in their newsrooms. But, almost in every case, the news companies decided not to cover the story. Only the website of the National Supreme Court, Infojus, published an article on the very same day. Her death coincided with the deaths of two well-known writers: Eduardo Galeano, from Uruguay; and Günter Grass, from Germany. In the meantime, fragments of The Open Veins of Latin America, Galeano's pivotal work published in 1971, mixed with the photo of Dr. Morandi along with messages mourning her death. The overflowing number of shares, views, and comments made editors change their attitude and raise the topic. Once again, isolated from the audience's interest, they had to reconsider. Five days later, the news channel TN made an interview at her house. “A lioness with a green uniform” was the title chosen by journalist Julio Bazán (Telenoche, 2015). Her sons, nephews and husband were there. But they did not show the moving goodbye at the gates of the building where she had worked. The quality of the images captured by emotional non-professional cell phones users was not suitable for television. In any case, a story that had been analyzed as a topic of little interest found its way into the agenda, and broke yet another criterion related to periodicity. An event that had taken place five days before was updated by the force of viralization.

Broken Fences

There was a traditional conception of the regimes installed in the Arab countries: Authoritarian policies, censorship, and media control seemed to set a comfortable scenario to silence discontent. With the irruption of digital technology, the citizens began to have access to information forbidden to them. Moreover, they could start spreading unknown facts to other countries. Social media, along with its storytelling practices, interactions, collaborations, and participation, put the conflict on the social agenda, even though the local political leaders and media would not have included it. The revolts began in Tunisia. On September 17, 2010, Mohamed Bouazizi, a street vendor who had his wares confiscated by the police, set himself on fire in the middle of the street. He died on January, 2011 (Fisher, 2011). The protests, demonstrations and gatherings ended the ruling of Zin Abidile Ben Ali, who had been in power since 1987. The events known as the Jasmine Revolution were the first of a series of events that followed in other parts of the region. Protests broke out in Egypt, Libya, Algeria, Syria, and Yemen. Their governments had similar methodologies. All of them were presided by political leaders who had been in power for more than a decade, and who imposed censorship, isolated citizens and forbid the entry of foreign press (Soengas, 2013). In Egypt, Hosni Mubarak was overthrown on February 10, 2011, after 30 years in power (Lee, 2017). Social media and the collaborations of cybernautic activists from all over the world helped young people organize themselves, publish the information and circumvent the information fence imposed by the regime. Demonstrations spread all around the region. The conflict in Libya with Muammar Gaddafi was the first conflict to have major consequences. The opponents to the regime organized a Liberation Army that collided with the loyal forces resulting in a Civil War, spanning from January to October, 2011 (CNN, 2017). The intervention of the United States and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), both acting on the rebels’ side and throwing bombs over the country, ended with the execution of Gaddafi.

This topic was included in the agenda worldwide, although there are several reasons why it would supposedly not be included. Investing in the coverage of remote events does not imply that the return will match the expenditure of the news companies. Besides, the censorship and terror that characterize this type of regimes forbid the access of the foreign press. On the other hand, the local sources working on government propaganda do not add enough information to understand the conflict, and are not considered news input by the foreign press. The armed conflicts, the intervention of global forces, the famine deriving from them and, above all, the irruption of the publication of protests across social media add new elements in relation to the information flow and the forms of organization. The political impact of the events opens new forms of discontent, less bloody, but which also question the management of a society. The events, organized through digital tools, are now spread by news channels and imposed themselves on the global agendas by means of viralization.

The Laughter Mask

On May 20, 2016, Candace Payne posted a video wearing a mask of Chewbacca, the Star Wars character. Sitting insider her car, on the parking lot of a toy store in Texas, she was telling her Facebook followers that, although her son had asked her to buy him that toy, it was hers and only hers. In the meantime, she could not stop laughing. Only an hour after the posting, the video had 50,000 views. Later, it became the most seen viral video on the history of social media. Quickly, the traditional media covered it. The video was reproduced in the news around the world: Almost from one day to the next, Chewbacca Mom became a celebrity.

Which are the criteria used by the press to include in the news this kind of content? If we think of the traditional criteria, none of them applies. A woman has fun with a toy bought to her son and she says she is not giving it to him. What principles of the transmedia language become appealing and disruptive for the conventional storytelling practices? It is not possible to find other elements apart from instantaneity and the possibility of sharing content. There are no references to other contents because the material consists only on that: A lady laughs with a Chewbacca mask on. What are the elements that appear on this video and make it interesting for the global press? Analyzing the changes in information management, it is noticeable that the almost immediate huge number of shares and views guarantees the success of the product. Maybe the key of its success relies on the fact posed by Candace's words: "Laughter is a universal language. My video was just joyful and had nothing to do with any agenda" (Williams, 2016).

CONCLUSION

These are only few cases considered to analyze the new forms of assessing the contents published in news media. Although the chapter incorporates events with a local impact in Argentina, the analysis of the Arab Spring, as an event organized through social media that had political consequences, and the Chewbacca Mom video, that transforms an insignificant event into global news, enable us to think viralization as a newsworthiness criterion within networking contexts. Along with other examples, these cases present inadequacy to traditional criteria as a constant. When events are newsworthy, according to traditional journalistic criteria, issues like censorship or information fences imposed on societies with non-democratic institutions help the events impose themselves on the social agenda, with the help of the new technologies. These practices, which question the institutions of the political systems, also question the credibility of the press. Interested on information segments related to soft news, audiences seem to demand explicit positioning from the media in relation to the coverage of political topics. Another phenomenon to be taken into account is the violence these irruptions carry when going beyond the bounds of social media. Microblogging, as a tool for political organization, also irrupts in the news as well as in the democratic practices of the current societies. At the same time, there is a direct correlation between the immediate access to information, tactics and viewpoints, and the impatience seen in other processes. From this point of view, questioning the traditional institutions is beginning to be seen as a problem.

Another factor that emerges from this research is the two-way game played by the online social networks over the media: Viralization puts on the spot the demand for certain ignored topics, while the strength of viralization makes those topics newsworthy. On the other hand, censorship on the media forces the flow of information to find other channels that will prove the importance of the content published. It is also interesting to see that contemporaneity changes the perceptions and expressions of the social tissue, which is now characterized by constant, instantaneous and, in some cases, shallow, demands. Contemporaneity operates upon the press decision-making processes and changes the hierarchy of the published topics. The use of metrics in the analysis of the topics proposed mixes together important and insignificant subjects. The importance of the click, the share and the view as newsworthiness values transforms the consumption practices but also the methods of news production. The stability of these tendencies and their impact on the knowledge and participation practices of the society requires further analysis. In the meantime, viralization seems to consolidate as a newsworthiness criterion, even though the possibilities given by transmedia storytelling can be developed further. The implications of viralization in transmedia journalism are directly connected to the core aspects of transmedia storytelling, in general, and transmedia journalism, in particular: Multiple media platforms, content expansion, and audience engagement (Gambarato & Tárcia, 2017). As the examples discussed in this chapter highlight, multiple media platforms are involved when the news worthy content migrates from social media networks and invades several other outlets, such as television, radio, and the printed media. The migration of content creates the conditions for the news to be expanded and further explored in different media environments. The audience direct involvement occurs when creating the content as well as when sharing and disseminating it online. Therefore, journalism transforms the force of viralization into a newsworthy criterion.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Contemporaneity: Spatial and temporal symmetry in which time and space do not necessarily coincide.

Gap: Difference of informational interests between the producers of information and the public.

Juxtaposition: The cultural scenario is thought as a patchwork in which the traditional press and the contents emerged from the web coexist.

Market: System of rules for the production of news in which actors compete with one another to achieve profitability and influence the public opinion.

Newsmaking: The process of construction of news in which sources, professionals, companies, and public opinion are involved.

Press: The information industry developed in markets by news companies, which consider news as a consumption product; the activity performed by communication professionals specialized in information management.

Social Networks: Spaces for virtual community interactions, emerging from the interrelations that take place within society.

Viralization: Process of massive circulation of contents through online social media networks and communities with shared interests.

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Chapter 42
The Media Event as Enhanced News Story:
How User-Generated Content Determines the News Agenda

Andrew Fox
University of Huddersfield, UK

ABSTRACT

Social media has, over the past decade, become a significant method of communication. People can now interact with each other more easily and more frequently than in the past thanks to websites like Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. This chapter concerns itself with examining how social media has enabled the public and the news broadcasters to work more closely together. Explored are three key elements. Firstly, there is a review of literature which discusses issues of convergence and the changing nature of news production. Secondly, three major news stories from 2015 act as case studies to discuss how the public contributed to the "eventisation" of the stories through the use of social media platforms. These analytical elements of the chapter feed into the broader context, which is how a media event is now defined given the changing nature of the public's role in news production. The chapter concludes by offering an explanation as to how a media event can now be potentially driven by the public's interaction with the news organisations through social media. Therefore the overarching conclusion that is reached is that the media event as defined in the traditional sense (a live broadcast) has been superseded by 24 hour rolling news channels constant live coverage of news events and that the broadcasters are increasingly reliant on a public contribution. We now have a middle tier between a traditional news story and a media event, the enhanced news story. The final conclusion of the chapter is that it is possible that an enhanced news story can easily become a media event but we need to be cautious not to be seen to be "over eventising" some stories for the sake of filling schedules.

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INTRODUCTION

If we take Dayan and Katz's (1992) work on media events as a starting point, insofar that a media event is a major happening that is broadcast live, we can see much correlation with news outputs. Indeed all the examples used by Dayan and Katz (1992) would have qualified as being worthy of being high up in the news agendas. However, Dayan and Katz's (1992) work was published before broadcasting underwent the transition towards digitalisation and the world wide web allowed greater interactivity and connectivity between the audience and producers of content. The eventisation of news has moved on since the days of the, now iconic, Zapruder home movie footage of the assassination of John F. Kennedy. Social media sites and the development of smart phone technology has enabled the average citizen to have more means at their disposal to capture and disseminate still and moving images of news stories before the broadcasters can mobilise.

This chapter is framed within the context that the idea of the audience being passive observers merely absorbing what the media provides is long gone. Citizens are now active participants to the point of taking on the role of the journalist when necessary. What this chapter will explore is how that active participation has enabled broadcasters to work with their audience and vice versa in the creation of media events. While the chapter will take a discursive approach methodologically the discussion will be rooted in three news stories which became media events in the first half of 2015, namely the terrorist attacks on the Charlie Hebdo offices in Paris and the beaches of Tunisia in January and June respectively as well as the live on air murder of Alison Parker and Adam Ward in August 2015.

Theoretical Framework

While much has been written about the transformational nature of the audience (see for example, Bird, 2003; Lewis et. al. 2005; Jenkins, 2006; Silverstone, 2007; Ross, 2008), and on the transitional nature of broadcast media, particularly television, (see, Gripsrud (ed.) 1999; Ellis, 2002; Spigel and Olsson (eds.) 2004; McGrane and Gunderson, 2010) how the general public can not only influence but instigate a media event is a relatively new research area. Cui (2015) examines how smartphone applications enable enhanced communicative potential and can be used to precipitate a media event. My aim in this chapter is to combine this way of thinking with previous literature to further the argument that smartphone technology used by members of the public can work in tandem with broadcasters in covering news stories. As a result of this co-operation between the broadcasters and general public it will become apparent how it is now possible for user generated content to not only influence the news agenda but contribute to an extension of the story and enable a bona fide media event.

Therefore the work of Jenkins (2006) on the culture of fandom and Ross' (2008) idea of tele-participation are of particular importance in framing this chapter as both examine the way that the audience is evolving and becoming more involved in media constructs. Both authors speak ostensibly from the viewpoint of the fan but what becomes clear is that the onset of digital technologies have led to the emergence of a new kind of audience, as Andrejevic (2008) recognises with his idea of the savvy audience. What Ross (2008) explores is 'how tele-participation has begun to operate in relation to the rise of the Internet' (pg. 219), in terms of how fans are provided with a new sense of identity and ownership. For Jenkins (2006) the question is whether the participatory culture that the Internet has enabled has led to a new form of democratic exchange between producers and viewers. However, both concepts, in dealing with fandom, do not raise the question as to how members of the general public can become active in disseminating content captured at the scene of major news stories. This chapter uses these ideas as the basis for furthering how both convergence culture and tele-participation, through the use of smart phones and social media, can be used in explaining how the general population can provide content for media events.

As Wall and El Zahed (2015) stress ‘citizen content has become part of the mainstream news media’s coverage of key global events’ (p. 164). The style of collaboration as envisaged here moves away from the fan orientated method of participation which has been noted previously. The focus of Wall and El Zahed’s (2015) research is that citizen journalist are able to provide content from places that journalists cannot go. In addition, through the use of such applications as Periscope and Bambuser, it is possible for the citizen journalist to provide an element of live reporting before the broadcasters have the chance to mobilise camera crews and reporters. This represents a fundamental shift in the manner that contemporary journalists gather news. Journalists traditionally chase stories and repackage them for the audience, the citizen journalist can stream live to followers, who can then push the content further, meaning that an exponential number of people can view material instantaneously.

Anden-Papadopoulos (2014) calls this form of participation the ‘citizen camera-witness’ (p. 754). As smart phone technology expands both its technical capabilities and market reach what is enabled is a ‘shift from an understanding of visual images as illustrations and carriers of information to an appreciation of their power to enact and perform in the social field’ (Anden-Papadopoulos, 2014, p. 755). Therefore through the use of camera phones the average citizen ‘marks not only their presence but their active participation in a public event’ (Anden-Papadopoulos, 2014, p. 763), which was not a consistent occurrence when Dayan and Katz (1992) defined the media event over twenty years ago. We therefore need to address the public’s increasing participation in media events further to reflect this technological change and the impact this has had on what constitutes a major news story.

Smart phones providing a method of participation by the public and the willingness of the news organisations to use the content generated by witnesses to a particular event has profound implications for the work of the journalist. Traditional journalistic practice involves the reporter being given a story to cover, going to the location and then editing the material to provide an objective but still ‘as they see it’ approach to the story; after all, pieces of journalism are called stories for a reason. Additionally it is rare for a journalist to be present at a story as it is beginning, it is more usual for the reporter to arrive either as the story is unfolding or after the event has happened. Citizen journalism disrupts the equilibrium between the journalist/organisation relationship and news editors have had to adapt accordingly. For Sienkiewicz (2014) news organisations developed a two tier approach to citizen journalism. The first tier is occupied by the providers of the content who find themselves in a place and time and instinctively reach for their smart phone and begin filming when the event begins to take place. News organisations occupy the second tier and act as the method of disseminating the content by incorporating it into their news agenda. However, Sienkiewicz (2014) identifies a third tier of citizen journalist who acts as a bridge between the member of the public and the news organisation by acting as an interpreter to ensure that the material is verifiable. This bridging tier represents a fundamental shift in journalistic practice as the material is provided by an external source rather than a reporter in the field and therefore needs to be checked for reliability. So, citizen journalism, or more specifically, citizen journalism using a smart phone to provide pictures has inadvertently placed another level in how news content reaches the audience.

Using Marchionni’s (2015) analysis of journalism as conversation I wish to argue that the above serves to identify that the culture of the professional journalist has changed. For Marchionni (2015) ‘(C) onversation stands in contrast to decades of traditional journalism as a lecture, in which the journalist alone knows what is news and conducts a monologue with the public on such matters, or perhaps a dialogue with public officials and other elites' (p. 218). The relationship between the journalist and the audience was previously one of storyteller to observer which could lead to producing a 'journalism of arrogance and human detachment, which in turn results in public retreat from civic life' (Marchionni, 2015, p. 220). Furthermore, with rolling 24 hour news channels now being the norm the news is not compressed down to three half hour long bulletins at various times during the day. With more space to fill and the public able to contribute, the broadcasters need the audience to be more active than passive.

For Marchionni (2015) the relationship between the journalist and the public has become more collaborative, '(R)ather than talking *at* them, journalists work *with* audience members to more fully capture the truth of the story' (p. 222). Collaboration allows the public to contribute to a news story, giving the sense of having more say in the days news agenda therefore satisfying, what is for Andrejevic (2008) a psychological sense of well-being and empowerment. However, collaboration also ensures that when a major story breaks the news organisations have a potential source of material which far outstrips the amount and instantaneity that a reporter with a camera crew would achieve. It is therefore possible that a combination of instantaneous material being available and the need for the news organisations to fill airtime leads to a breaking down of the media event as Dayan and Katz (1992) defined. "Liveness" is now everywhere and available to the audience all the time, be it a sporting contest or a news story. The difference now is that the audience can input their mobile footage as well as thoughts and concerns directly to the news organisations and then back to the audience as a reception feedback loop.

The work of Seck and Rantanen (2015) concludes that the concepts developed by Dayan and Katz (1992) are still valid but are placed under pressure by the emergence of the collaborative conversation which now exists between the journalist and public. In addition the "liveness" of 24 hour news coverage reduces the necessity to set up the media event which by-passes the predictability element of Dayan and Katz's (1992) concepts. While Mitu and Poulakidakos (2016) have enabled a healthy debate about the contemporary media event, a further exploration of where the media event stands given all the technological change, the public's use of smart phones and the news organisations willingness to broadcast user generated content is timely and necessary.

Methodology

As the purpose of this chapter is to examine the changing nature of what could be considered a media event due to developing technology and methods of content dissemination the approach will be discursive. The existing literature discussed above will form the framework for the following discussion. However, I will use specific case studies of three news stories which occurred in 2015 the provide a foundation for the chapters central argument that the media event needs a subtle re-definition;

- The terrorist attacks on the Charlie Hebdo offices in Paris, France.
- The terrorist attack on holidaymakers on beaches in Tunisia.
- The murder of Alison Parker and Adam Ward while conducting a live television interview.

A case study approach has been chosen because the aim of the chapter is to 'understand a real-life phenomenon in depth, but such understanding encompassed important contextual conditions' (Yin, 2009, p. 18). Each example is a news story so really happened but also demonstrate subtle differences in how the broadcasters and the public collaborated. There is consequently the need to identify these differences and contextualise the four examples to move the research forward and provide a new angle to how we define media events.

As case studies can examine 'individuals, organisations, processes, programs, neighbourhoods, institutions and even events' (Yin, 2009, p. 17) the methodological approach is further justified. The main focus of the chapter is the stories themselves, the events. However, the manner in which the public collaborates with the broadcasters means that the relationship between the organisation and the contributor needs to be discussed, as does the process that is involved.

Discussion

All three case studies satisfied the criteria for media events, insofar as they were broadcast live once the event had occurred through twenty four hour news channels in the UK. While none of them have the more developed aspects of a media event, such as coronation and competition, that the stories were considered to be important enough to warrant live continuous coverage reinforces my central argument; that the media event of the 1980's and 1990's has been surpassed by contemporary media coverage and therefore needs a rigorous re-examination.

Charlie Hebdo: Collaboration as Breaking News

On the 7th January 2015 the offices of the satirical French newspaper, *Charlie Hebdo*, were the subject of a terrorist attack in which 12 journalists were killed. While social media was quick to react to the attack (see Armand Ruiz's geotags of the spread of tweets, for example, at https://developer.ibm.com/predictiveanalytics/2015/01/09/analysis-charliehebdo-sentiment-spss/), and provided video footage captures by witnesses (see for example, http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-30710883 and http://www.cbsnews.com/news/charlie-hebdo-french-satirical-magazine-paris-office-attack-leaves-casualties/ among others) the mainstream media were able to cover the subsequent manhunt for the perpetrators in a more conventional manner.

The reason for using this story as an example was the subsequent reaction, through social media, of the general public and the insertion of the sentiments expressed into the mainstream news media agenda. In the immediate aftermath of the attack a graphic with the phrase 'Je Suis Charlie' (I am Charlie) was 'shared more than 140,000 times' (http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/in-pictures-30712925). Further shows of support manifested themselves through various vigils around the world. The culmination of all this was a march by senior politicians from around the world through Paris a few days after the attack.

My analysis here concentrates on the public reaction to the attack, in particular the *Je Suis Charlie* campaign. The *Je Suis Charlie* graphic was an impulsive act which demonstrated not anger at the attacks but support for the magazine and freedom of speech. In itself the message would have been a powerful message had it merely appeared on posters or t-shirts. That it emerged and was subsequently taken up by social media amplified and disseminated the message more rapidly. Another angle was added to the story, which at that point had moved away from the immediate aftermath to the chasing down of the two perpetrators. In this respect, while the manhunt was more dramatic, the outpouring of public support demonstrates how the relationship between the news broadcasters and the audience has changed. As Ross' (2008) tele-participation applies to the manner in which fans can interact with their favourite television programmes so we can adjust the theory to the news coverage of the *Charlie Hebdo* attacks.

Through the *Je Suis Charlie* campaign, and the subsequent viral pick up that the graphic influenced, the public directly influenced the story. I would argue that the manner in which the mainstream media provided coverage of the story warrants defining the attacks as a media event. However, the manner in which the public reacted to the attacks precipitated a further “eventisation” insofar as support was expressed for a democratic right, freedom of speech. Journalistic norms would be to cover the search for the perpetrators of the attacks as traditional narrative structure would assume that the audience would want to see the attackers brought to justice. Through an extension of tele-participation the public enabled an influence on the news channels to also express how the general population felt about the attack and its aftermath. Therefore the public and the audience generated another angle of the story, which rejected the focussed element of the news coverage, the attack followed by the chase, and forced the broadcasters to address the right of freedom of expression and democracy.

Tunisia: Collaboration as Story Telling

Superficially there seems to be a correlation between the *Charlie Hebdo* attack and the Tunisian beach massacre, the latter occurring in June 2015 and resulting in the death of 39 people. Both atrocities were claimed by the same group, both happened completely by surprise and, unsurprisingly, both registered international outrage. Likewise both commanded heavy coverage on UK news bulletins, particularly the rolling 24 hour news channels. However, Paris is a cosmopolitan capital city and houses several of the main French broadcasters as well as hosting offices for many international news organisations. Sousee in Tunisia is more remote and requires more time and effort to get there, and UK news channels were running the story as unverified for several hours before confirming that the attack had actually happened and was a fact.

Social media, therefore, became a valuable tool in the actual telling of the story of the attack. By the time the news organisations had correspondents on the scene the attacks were several hours in the past so reporters had to rely on social media to piece the story together. Through collaboration with witnesses, who recorded the attack on their smartphones, broadcasters were provided with an array of footage, some of the same part of the attack but from a different angle (see, for example http://news.sky.com/story/1509871/tunisia-gunman-filmed-sprinting-along-beach, http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-33312532). As a result the collaborator became the chief story teller and the journalist was relegated to that of chief interpreter. The broadcasters shifted their attention to who was responsible for the attack and identification of the victims for much of their live broadcasts in subsequent days before the story faded from the news agenda.

The role reversal between the journalist and the collaborator activates Sienkiewicz’s (2014) concerns about the verification process. While the collaborator becomes the main provider of content and information the journalist as interpreter has a moral duty to ensure that the footage and comments relate to the relevant story. As Schifferes et. al. (2014) point out social media can be about mis-information as much as reliable information so the checking process has to be accurate but also efficient. This is particularly true of a story which stops being a conventional news story and becomes a media event. In an on-going story as an event the broadcasters recognise that it is possible that not only may a larger audience be watching but also that there may be relatives of the deceased relying on the broadcasts for crucial information at the initial stage. The verification process enables not only a more factual accreditation of the content but also means that the information can be disseminated more quickly.

What an example like this serves to emphasise is that the live coverage by the broadcasters is the media event and the collaboration is the primary method of providing the content. The serious nature of the story and the amount of footage that can be generated then defines whether or not the conventional report becomes a media event. However, one the main differences in this case study, compared to the others, is the unexpected nature and brutality of the attack on tourists, which was subsequently captured by holiday makers on their smart phones. An example of how a traditional event can be turned into a media event through the deliberate use of smart phone technology will be explored below.

Parker and Ward: The Perpetrator as Story Teller

A disturbing development in how smart phones can be used was the murder live on air of reporter Alison Parker and camera operator Adam Ward in August 2015. We cannot consider this as a media event in the UK, as it was treated as a standard news story with live drop-in's when necessary. However, there are two reasons as to why this story can be considered a global media event; firstly the use of live weblogs and embedded social media content across the world allowed the story to unfold as live (see for example, the Independent in the UK, http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/virginia-shooting-live-alison-parker-and-adam-ward-shot-dead-cbs-wdbj-tv-by-gunman-during-live-tv-10472804.html and the International Business Times in the USA, http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/alison-parker-adam-ward-wdbj-news-reporters-shot-dead-live-air-virginia-1517177). Secondly, the perpetrator of the murder used social media techniques which added a new angle to the story. Not only was the assault broadcast live on air, something the murderer deliberately perpetrated, but the assailant recorded the murder and the aftermath on his own device before posting images, videos and a confession through his own social media feeds, which were quickly shut down by the authorities.

None of the literature cited above takes into consideration social media being used in this manner. Another issue here was the pick-up of the material in the immediate aftermath of the incident. Before the assailant's social media sites were closed down the footage captured was disseminated, which further raises another issue that the broadcasters have; the speed by which material can be passed on. In this particular instance the incident was aired live. The level of unexpectedness was captured initially by the anchor when the picture quickly cut back, however, there still has to be a level of journalistic ethical practice that needs to be adhered to before the confirmation of the incident can be verified. It is this vacuum that social media fills and takes the lead on the story. Therefore the three tier approach collapses as news of the incident spreads and rises up the trending tables on social media. In the early 2000's there was much debate about the new 'reality' style of television (see for example Andrejevic (2004), Bignell (2005), Dovey (2000) and Hill (2005)), what we have now is a culture of immediacy. The difference is that the reality television shows were constructed by the broadcasters, followed broadcasting rules and were then presented to the audience. Social media has no strict regulatory and ethical code of conduct, as such, and when an incident occurs, large swathes of the population turn to the platforms for information while the news organisations are still piecing the story together.

Vester Flanagan coldly and callously shot dead two of his colleagues. However, because of the knowledge of the media he had what was colder and more callous was the nature of the murder. Flanagan knew that he would create attention immediately by waiting for the live interview to begin, he made doubly sure of gaining attention by capturing the murders personally. In short, the hope that Flanagan had was that he could create a statement, by doing it live on television he succeeded on one level, but also, by using social media, he succeeded on another plain and created a media event.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has attempted to move the classic definition of the media event closer to how the general population can contribute. Previous research into the topic, particularly Dayan and Katz (1992), could not have taken into account the impact social media would have had on the media event simply because Twitter, Facebook, et.al. did not exist. My recurring theme has been how the broadcasters can take the lead from postings on social media in order to help them tell stories but also react to the immediacy of a particular event. As social media is more immediate than journalism in the traditional sense there is a clear need for broadcasters and users to co-exist and collaborate. In this sense it can be argued that social media has led to a more democratic relationship between news channels and the public. There is increasing reliance by the broadcasters on the public to provide content which helps piece together stories.

However, each of the three case studies represent a disturbing trend in how social media captures and contributes to the media event. Two of the case studies were terrorist attacks and the third was a pre-meditated murder. In each event the perpetrators would have known that had their attacks been carried out they would have made headlines across the world. In all likelihood the attackers would have hoped that social media would have picked the incidents up and disseminated them more quickly than the news broadcasters would have. As social media is not regulated it is easier to spread rumour while journalists are still establishing facts. In each case study the assailants had a point to make, in the case of Charlie Hebdo the publication of cartoons which were deemed offensive, for the Tunisia massacre an attack on western civilisation and for Parker and Ward a disgruntled ex-colleague with anger management issues. The broadcasters would have run the stories had no social media content existed but my argument here is that the social media angle enhanced the news story by taking it beyond journalistic norms.

This is where we need to examine when a news story becomes a media event. In the past the media event has been something broadcast live which can incorporate an element of competition and/or news worthiness. So sports events, royal weddings and major news stories all exist under the umbrella of the media event. My argument here is that, with the emergence of 24 hour news channels and user generated content provided through social media platforms, there needs to be a re-definition of the media event. As there is now a three tier approach to verifying news stories (Schifferes et. al. 2014) so there is now a middle ground which can be reached to describe a major news story, the enhanced news story. An enhanced news story is neither a conventional news story, or a media event, but is something that the public are encouraged to participate in. An example would be the Syrian conflict, which is, at time of writing, on-going, has been for some time but has dipped in and out of the headlines. It has however had a large amount of content which has been provided by members of the local population through social media, in some cases live streaming.

With the arrival of digital platforms, the digitalisation of television and continuous rolling news channels the relationship between the audience and the provider has changed. Lewis et. al. (2005) ask if we are citizens or consumers, in the context of this chapter, and superficially, the answer is both. As consumers we can now access more information than before across a multiplicity of platforms and devices. What social media enables is the move away from being a consumer to a more active citizen. The problem with that is that the relationship between content providers and the audience is more complex and multi-faceted than in the past. Another problem is that the broadcasters do not choose all social media posts, there is still a selection process in place, therefore the whole audience empowerment argument could be a ruse; the broadcasters now have to fill more space and that the public can do that helps.

In conclusion there are three key issues that emerge from this chapter. The first is that there is a clear need to provide more comprehensive coverage on the behalf of the broadcasters. Secondly, to do this, rather than provide more resources for newsrooms to employ, the temptation is to use the public's newly acquired ability to provide content. Thirdly the public now have the ability to directly influence the news agenda but the selection process for the broadcasters still holds firm. We therefore need to be cautious when discussing the media event. It was always that the media event had a clear differentiation from a news story. What happens now is that a story breaks, it then becomes a news story, an enhanced news story and finally a media event. It is possible to suppose with the last point that there is now a hierarchical structure to the news in terms of story importance and that there are stages to go through before becoming a full blown media event. However, it is also possible for the media event to be determined by the public and taken up by the broadcasters. Therefore we need to revisit and discuss exactly what the media event is and what defines it in the 21st Century.

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Chapter 43
Citizen Engagement and News Selection for Facebook Pages

Georgeta Drulă
University of Bucharest, Romania

ABSTRACT

As news flows in the social media environment, communication processes are facilitated by connecting processes between different categories of people. Thus, multimedia stories in social media journalism link not only pieces of information, but also people. Social media platforms are not only to communicate with audiences, but also to make connections between different stakeholders in the online production of news. This chapter investigates if this process of the selection of news for social media platforms is based on algorithmic criteria, or is only based on a human judgment? Methodologically, this chapter will analyse data from the Facebook pages of Romanian news sites in order to generate data which will be developed for a comparative analysis with online media in Poland. The questions raised by this study concern how media companies promote information on social media sites today.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter demonstrates that the users' engagement with a Facebook for Business page is according to what news and articles are selected by the media company.

The emphasis of this chapter shows that the selection process of news done by the media companies must depend on Facebook algoritm and also by the users' needs for specific types of information. In the same time, the Facebook algorithm favors users, and not the business pages, so media companies must faces with an important challenge to reach the users. Also, the selection process of news and articles for Facebook pages influences the users' engagement causing a large number of likes, shares and comments.

As traffic analysis of web sites shown, the Facebook pages of media products are the second place where the audience comes from. So, media companies are very interested to use Facebook pages to make known their products and to bring the audience on news sites.

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This chapter provides together both the users perspective, who find news sites starting from Facebook pages, and also the perspective of media companies, and the use of the selection process of the news that causing the reaching of news sites by the users through Facebook pages.

In the same time users have their own criteria to select news in their Facebook feed.

Considering this context of finding news on the Facebook platform, it must be found the strategies and principles in benefit of both of the users, and the media companies.

Thus, media companies attract users to news sites with information that generate more engagement, that means content which makes the user to react giving evaluations through buttons of like, share and comment. Thus, a business objective of media companies is to provide content that increase user engagement. In this direction, media companies can use the viral content, for instance.

Users of Facebook receive a plethora of information within the 'News Feed' section of the site, both from profiles of their friends and from Facebook 'Pages' (representing organisations or groups) that they 'Like'. Media companies have an important strategic fight for their news to be found by users in their News Feed. Moreover, this news content must engender user engagement too. This objective is central to the news selection processes by media organisations. Therefore, prioritising news on the Facebook News Feed is crucial.

According to a Digital News Report done by the Reuters Institute for Study of Journalism (2014), users of social media (primarily YouTube and Facebook) employ different methods to find news. In this context, social media platforms, such as Facebook or Twitter, have become vehicles to deliver news and an important entry to find news. The study suggested that younger users access social media as a solution for finding news, that women use Facebook more to discover news than men, and that Facebook users prefer to comment on a news story and watch video content. The report concludes that users that search specifically for news are more attached to Twitter, whilst casual users with relatively low levels of interest tend to use Facebook. So, it proposed that Twitter is used more for searching for news than Facebook, which is used more for discovering news when users browse their personalised News Feed.

In this context, news providers are looking increasingly to maximise user engagement and participation on social media platforms as a central business objective. Creating viral content is a good solution for driving the editorial content on social media platforms and to catch users' attention. Due to intense competition between news agencies on social media platforms, indicators such as reach, or frequency of posting, are employed as additional indicators for a more nuanced interpretation of meaningful engagement. Facebook is central. Newman (2014), in research on the importance of social media platforms for sharing and discovering breaking news, shows that Facebook is the biggest social media platform used for any purpose, including news. Video news stories on social media platforms are preferred more for some topics such as celebrities, fun, and sports, getting an important number of views. Finally, the study revealed that consumers/users of social media, strongly favour traditional journalistic criteria, such as objectivity and impartiality, in their digital news.

Social media's relationship with news has multiple uses: news media use, journalistic practices, audience research, as a source of news, a way to finding news or a way to engage with news (Nielsen & Schrøder, 2014). This relationship is complex, with social media also being involved in the news information cycle, the processes of production and dissemination of content, and also for creating the cross-media content. Many studies therefore address social media as a distinct form of media use, not least given the creative potential and participatory features within the medium. In this environment, users are actors in the news information cycle in a participatory sense in that they are creators, but also disseminate and discuss news. Social media is an aggregator and a cross-media repertoire to access, find, and engage with news (Nielsen & Schrøder, 2014). Its reach is expansive. In Romania, according to site facebrands.ro, in July 2015, there are 198 Facebook Fan pages for general news, and 381 Facebook Fan pages for local news. According to other measures, it was suggested that there are 68 Facebook Fan pages for business news, and 372 Facebook Fan pages for TV news (according to sati.ro.)

FACEBOOK AND THE ALGORITHM OF ARRANGING THE NEWS IN THE FEED: MARKETING STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE NEWS CONTENT

Digital media markets engender new concerns vis-à-vis news production. Facebook has an important role for news diffusion to large but targeted audiences, and in this market, the users' relationship with news is shifting all the time. News selection in the News Feed, or feed, is conditioned by the Facebook algorithm which creates the feed. As of 2015, this algorithm prioritises the personal content of friends within the users' network. This change has caused a visibility problem for Pages and media companies. Chowdhry (2015) describes how changes to the Facebook algorithm are oriented to usability principles and to improve the users' experience. In this new format, one's News Feed can offer multiple posts from the same source, whilst posts from friends are arranged higher in the feed. Additional changes are related to methods of interaction with the posts, and seek to encourage direct interaction between users and different posts.

Facebook specialists have provided, on the company's public blog, some information about variables that influence the algorithm. In June 2014, it was suggested that every time someone visits their News Feed, she/he can find on average 1,500 potential stories from friends, people they follow, and Pages (Boland, 2014). This is a very large number of posts for users, and indeed, this high number of different stories is found each time a user logs on. Thus, a Facebook News Feed that consists an average of 1,500 posts a day, is reduced to a more manageable 300 posts that are prioritised according to the algorithm (Dredge, 2014). The position of posts in the feed is achieved according to several factors such as frequency of interaction with a friend, the number of Likes, shares and/or comments received by a post, the frequency of user's interaction with that kind of post, or whether the content were hidden.

In June 2015 Facebook applied several changes to the algorithm with reference to the displaying of specific kinds of videos in the feed (Chaykowski, 2015). The most important of these changes relate to the way in which videos can be prioritised – that is, how high they appear in the feed. The users' actions, such as the number of likes, comments or shares on a video, all directly influence the video's placement in the feed. At the end of June 2015, this algorithm was changed again to favour certain posts and stories. So, the time spent on certain stories came to influence which posts were ultimately shown in the user's News Feed. More recent updates to the Facebook algorithm seek to select content according to users' wishes and actions. So, the latest changes show users more of the types of videos they want to see (Chaykowski, 2015).

Recent statistics suggest that Facebook counts all "video views" - that is, whether the video was viewed at least three seconds, including also the auto-play videos in the News Feed (Facebook for Business Page, 2015). However, for brands, to simply view a video is not enough, and so more detailed metrics of "clicks to play video" are important, such as: unique video views, the average duration of the video view and audience retention. All these metrics can help brands/companies to understand their audience, and to design and promote an effective video on a 'Facebook for Business' Page. A strong strategy to promote a video on the News Feed of Facebook, requires an understanding of audience behavior e.g. an audience might be interested in a specific part of a video, and not for the whole sequence, say.

Welch and Zhang (2014) suggest that people must find the most relevant content for them in their News Feed, and at the right time. Given this, Facebook improved the video rank in the News Feed for all videos that have been uploaded directly to Facebook, as opposed to hosted on a third party video server. Videos uploaded directly on Facebook then are important, and it is considered as a form of favoured content, whilst the Facebook algorithm uses a metrics to rank the videos from other sites, including video sites. Generally, Facebook pages must share videos that resonate with the audiences interests.

Recently (July 2015), Facebook started to allow users to customize their News Feeds. The new Facebook algorithm is then customised by user by applying upgraded News Feed Preferences. Now, users can see in their News Feed only updates that they want to see. This selection of news by the user seeks to improve the Facebook algorithm, and its criteria, according to users' needs, whereby users can choose the content they want to see using the "priority star", a sign that appear on user's profile image. This process can be an advantage for brands, as according to the new logic of the algorithm, users can select to view news from desired Pages. This algorithm can therefore drive a higher reach for business pages in the feed (Hutchinson, 2015a). Alongside this, Facebook launched "instant articles" (Wilson, 2015) a publishing platform that hosts stories from the New York Times, BuzzFeed, National Geographic, NBC and The Atlantic.

USERS' METRICS AND FACEBOOK ALGORITHM

The most important metrics to evaluate the way in which the Facebook algorithm works are 'engagement' and 'reach' indicators. These are tools that can measure peoples' reactions to a Page/post and/or advertisement, providing data and information that can be used to inform future decision making about audiences.

'Organic reach' is correlated to the number of friends and Facebook Page likes. The information provided by the Page Insight tab within Facebook can help to define a proper strategy for online marketing. The statistical indicators given by the Page Insights tab refer to the:

- Number of people that like the Facebook Page, and also the number of new likes,
- Number of people has seen the Page and the posts, and
- Number of people that have clicked, liked, commented on, or shared the Page or its posts.

Some posts are more engaging with users and audiences, so knowing the socio-demographic aspects of one's audience is good when creating specific and targeted content. Whilst indicators such as Likes, Reach, Visits, Posts and People demonstrate Page efficiency, one of the most important indicators is 'Reach'. This describes the interactions between posts and users. It allows Page managers to know whether people react more to a specific type of content, such as statuses, photos, videos or text. For the Pages of media products, the 'Post Reach' is a good parameter to understand how people see and interact with posts. Generally, posts with video and photo content get more attention, and interactions with a post are defined as 'Engagement'. So, when a post has a large degree of engagement, it is a good strategy to create similar content for the Page. The 'Total Reach' for the Page is another crucial indicator and refers to unique visitors who saw any activity on the Page. Alongside this, it is important to know how people find the Page, information which is provided by the 'Visits' indicator. Information related to which Page sections are frequently visited by the users, are also important.

As suggested, the Facebook algorithm places on certain posts in the feed, and the chosen posts are influenced by the total number of comments, likes and shares of the posts similar with these. Given this, the metrics for users' engagement (number of comments, likes, and shares) have a direct impact on the visibility of posts, and can influence the selection of similar posts. Furthermore, the type of content in the posts influences the visibility of those posts, be they text, video, photos, or links. For instance, posts that have links have a greater visibility than posts that have images or update of the status or posts on a popular topic have improved visibility in the feed. There are conversely some practices that can negatively influence the visibility and rank of posts in the News Feed of Facebook. What are known as 'bait links' reduce the visibility of a post. Facebook can detect this type of fake links given that many users might click a link but few of them take actions (like, comment, share). The being said, posts that contain links have greater visibility than posts that contain images, or status updates.

'Organic Reach' refers to the number of unique users that will have the content of a Facebook Page in their News Feed through an unpaid distribution. It is estimated that Page content is listed in the News Feed of only 16% of 'Fans', and 60% of the friends are listed in a user's feed (Negrea, 2014). According to the Facebook algorithm then, the first news seen by users is from friends. Thus, media companies must use strategies to capture the user's attention, and Facebook metrics are vital to build this strategy. Interactions with users can place a company's media stories in the feed. Therefore, company strategy must be built on interaction with users. This interaction is based on reach and users' engagement, amongst other metrics.

To promote content and news on Facebook, it must be done with a well-defined strategy. When the content of a Page is well appreciated by the audience, it will have a good rank in the News Feed. So, the best solution is to consistently produce good content, which is attractive to the Page users.

Participation and Users' Engagement on Facebook

According to a study done by the Pew Research Center (2013), people do not go to Facebook seeking news. However, an important percentage of users - 78%- acquire news incidentally.

Given that social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter change the ways in which news is produced, and disseminated, media organisations use these platforms for driving traffic to news sites. In 2015, 63% of Facebook users utilized the social network for finding news and events unrelated to their friends and family; an increase of 16% compared to 2013 (study done by the Pew Research Center). Indeed, due to Facebook's increasing importance as a method of news distribution, the network created specific facilities for news. In May 2015, Facebook launched 'Instant Articles', a feature that allows the direct publishing of stories on Facebook instead of linking to them via third party news sites.

Identifying key trends for news on social media platforms, and verifying the stories that emerge on these platforms, engenders new challenges for media employees and software designers (Schifferes et al., 2014). Collaborative work between social science scholars, journalists, and computer scholars can offer new tools that conceptualise, develop, and check news. Indeed, it is common in the field of online journalism to monitor web metrics and track users' behaviours, and these processes in many cases direct the editors' decision-making for different topics. A study by Vu (2014) explored the hierarchy of influences in the new media environment by examining the effects of audience web metrics on editors, suggesting that the former greatly influenced the decision-making of the latter. However, Vu (2014) suggests that it is not known whether these data sources are taken into consideration by journalists in the process of writing news, or whether there are adjustments for news selection in order to boost subsequent online traffic. Nonetheless, web metrics are important for editors from an economic perspective and to increase audiences. Indeed, in the study done by Vu (2014), some editors used online metrics to plan the future content production and/or placement, and propose therefore that the gatekeeping model of journalism is today increasingly more oriented towards audiences i.e. the selection of news is based largely on audience interests. Users are thus involved in shaping news content, and new journalistic practices appear due to this fact, such as "changing placement, adding extra editing or analysis, seeking additional web elements to running similar stories to what readers want to read" (Vu, 2014).

Hille and Bakker (2014) undertook a study related to users' comments on Facebook and news sites, suggesting that the quality and quantity of comments is influenced by the platform options, and the moderation regime. The study considered comments on Facebook Pages of Dutch national and regional newspapers, public and commercial broadcasters, newsweeklies, national news programmes, and online news sites, presenting an analysis which takes into consideration both the quantity of comments, and also the quality of text by using a text analysis tool, such as MAXQDA. They posit that news media prefer comments from Facebook and conclude that the majority of media apply the post-moderation system for comments given by users. Furthermore, the highest number of comments was obtained from news sites and Facebook Pages with a high level of user interactivity. They show that users comment more on news sites than on their accompanying Facebook pages, and this is explained due to visibility of the comments: comments on news sites are generally anonymous, whilst Facebook is not, and users are thus more inclined to be outspoken to display opinions.

Additionally, the study suggests that users like to respond to each other. There are no comments between journalists and users, largely given that journalists work in a time-pressured environment, but also for fear of losing journalistic authority. All comments analysed are on topic, but they do not complement the original news story. Indeed, whilst users post more comments on news sites, and their quality is higher than on Facebook, Facebook still remains a platform for reaching audiences and generating their participation and engagement. The authors noted that comments on news sites were more elaborated compared to comments on Facebook. Despite the fact that all news sites use the Facebook comment plug-in to generate comments both on news sites and on this social platform, the length of comments and debates on news sites were longer than on Facebook pages.

The empirical findings presented by Hille & Bakker (2014), can help to build an effective strategy for user engagement on Facebook Pages of news sites, and also to lead the user engagement and participation to news sites. The examples given by Hille & Bakker (2014) can be extent because other authors sustain the high-quality comments on Facebook (Marshall, 2011). Social media plug-ins that allow users to login with a social media account is a useful feature for news sites. It is clear that social media has influenced the way in which the news cycle production is working. Thus, social media can be a source of news for other media, a source of news for users with which to find news, but social media can also be the way in which users interact and engage in participatory forms of news use.

Social media has a growing importance and generates new habits related to cross-media news.

Bastos (2014) compared news from newspaper outlets The Guardian and The New York Times and their subsequent diffusion on social media platforms Twitter, Facebook, Google+, Delicious, Pinterest, and StumbleUpon, proposing important differences in the topics considered by newspapers editors and social media users. The study suggests that users of social media platforms prefer opinion news, along with national, local, and world news, in sharp contrast with editors, who prefer sports, economy, entertainment and celebrity news. It seems that each social media platform has a preference for specific types of news. Delicious and StumpleUpon have more articles about science and technology, Pinterest is mostly dedicated to fashion, arts, lifestyle and entertainment, whilst Twitter has news from all topics. The study proposes that the most common news stories on social networking sites are about arts, technology and opinion pieces, and that the dominant topics of news on social media depend on editorial decisions (Bastos, 2014). This study presents a contrast between the selection of news according to public interest as defined by the editors, and the users' interest and feedback for news on social networking sites. Bastos (2014) discusses the importance of the moment when articles are posted on social networking sites, highlighting that users read and interact with news items, on average, two days after they are published. Another conclusion of this research shows that users' feedback for news articles depends on more the "appeal" of the article than the topic.

Both newspapers analysed by Bastos (2014) publish a large volume of articles on sports, but they do not actively engage users on social media platforms. Even if articles, and their frequency, published on social media platforms is a decision of news managers, the quantity of news published on different themes differs.

This research of Bastos (2014) then, ultimately concerns the transition from traditional printing presses to news sites, and from news sites to social networking sites, and how this has changed reading habits and the way news is consumed. The most recent transition from news sites to social networking sites involves changes in visual design, illustrations, typography, and layout, meaning news can be accessed and shared by even larger communities of users. Furthermore, public interest, defined in the journalistic sense, is very different to the interests of users in the social networking sites; newsrooms have to strike a balance between news selected by editors under personal criteria and news that answers to users' wishes, taking into account increasingly large interactivity and participation of users. Bastos (2014) considers this as a challenge for news organisations which must now understand that networked journalism involves new criteria for selection, diversity and engagement with news articles

This work goes further and comments on how the customisation of the News Feed impacts communities of users. As users are exposed to content that it is proposed he/she agrees with/likes according to a Facebook algorithm which selects news, so, Bastos (2014) predicts, a new paradigm shift will happen. On social media, news will increasingly be drawn from a 'hard news' category, differing from print media and editorial decisions, which will be oriented toward 'infotainment' style news. Social media users have different news reading habits than users of online newspapers, and social networks that are not associated with news, such are Pinterest or StumpleUpon, has an important role for niche topics and their diffusion to communities.

Since participation is considered to be the most important feature of social media platforms, this chapter addresses concerns related both to the selection process of news and also the users' reactions to the published news on Facebook pages. In the flow of news in the social media environment, communication processes are facilitated by connecting processes between different categories of people. Thus, multimedia stories in the age of social media journalism link not only pieces of information, but also people. Therefore, the role of journalism on social media platforms is not only to communicate with the audience, but also to make connections between different stakeholders in the production of online news. This can be considered as a paradigm change in the model of journalism on social media platforms.

Audience's Engagement and News on Facebook Platform: Empirical Study

The interest in this chapter is to study the audience behaviours and needs for different topics on Facebook platform. Unlike studies done by Vu (2014) and others mentioned hitherto, the most important concern of this chapter is the identification of the ways in which the articles from news sites are selected in order to be promoted on social media platforms. This chapter seeks to ask if this process of news selection for social media platforms is based on an algorithmic criteria, or on human judgment? Another objective of this chapter is to assess if the way news is selected for Facebook Pages influences users participation and genuinely, and meaningfully, brings news audiences to news sites. This will be done by analysing the main Facebook Pages of news sites in Romanian online media, generating data which will be developed for a comparative analysis with online media in Poland, on Facebook pages.

In accordance with the conclusions and remarks of Bostos (2014), Romanian online media has moved its focus towards social media platforms, especially Facebook. The selection of news for this platform seems to be a subjective decision undertaken by a human being, and based on personal observations that a certain topic is more read by users than another. This means that decisions relating to the number of news items that are published a day on Facebook, or the timing of such publication, is very different than that of an algorithm. This study will consider 6 Facebook Pages, representing 6 general news sites. These sites have been chosen according to the hierarchy provided in the category 'General News', by sati.ro, a site studying Internet audiences in Romania. These Pages represent a television channel (realitatea.net), a television show (stirileProTv.ro), three online publications (adevarul.ro, gandul.info, and evz.ro), and one online news portal (hotnews.ro).

According to Likealyzer.com, an analysis tool that provides metrics for presence, dialogue, action and information on Facebook, in 2014 and 2015 posts across all Facebook pages were predominately links to articles from the news sites i.e. links to sites created by the same media company. Linkealyzer.com highlights the number of posts published per day (Table 1). The Engagement Rate is calculated by taking the total PTAT ('People Talking About This') and dividing by the total number of likes. PTAT (People Talking About This) represents the number of the people who have interacted with the page during a week and it is a sum of numbers of people who have liked, shared or commented on Facebook page. This metric is considered very important for expression of the users' engagement.

The situation illustrated below in the next tables and makes a comparison between Facebook pages of news sites in Romania and Poland.

As it can be seen a larger number of likes for Facebook pages of televisions news sites does not bring a high value for the metric engagement rate. Also, a large number of 'Posts per Day' does not guarantee a high 'engagement rate'. It can be noticed that the frequency of publishing the posts do not influence more the engagement rate.

This means that other aspects that are related more with qualitative aspects are important for a high 'engagement rate'. These aspects are related to type of posts (photos, videos, or text), the length of posts or using content indicators, such as hashtags. Also, choosing a good moment to publish posts synchronized to the users' attention on Facebook wall is very important. Few Facebook pages of news sites allow users to post on their timeline. So, the users' engagement is more oriented to get the reactions of users, not for participation by posting content.

The number of posts per day is an important measure for engagement rate and also for the process of selecting news by the media companies. So, the media companies can consider that a large number of posts on Facebook could raise the users' engagement, but it seems not be so. When we have a large

Table 1. Users' engagement of Facebook pages of news sites – July 2015 - ROMANIA

Facebook Fan Page of News Sites	Page Performance – July 2015	Posts by Pages	Recommendations Done By Likealyzer
StirileProTV.ro	**Likes:** 1,892,094 **Engagement Rate:** 10.81%	**Posts per Day:** 73.23 **Likes, Comments & Shares per post:** 272 Perfect timing with users. Posts with a lot of photos. **Hashtags:** Not using. Nobody posted on the page.	Create more engaging posts. Review the length of posts. Increase the variety in posts.
Realitatea.net	**Likes:** 1,079,309 **Engagement Rate:** 10.76%	**Posts per Day:** 46.08 **Likes, Comments & Shares per post:** 33 Photos: 95.8%; Links: 4.2%. Perfect timing. **Hashtags:** Not using.	Increase the variety in posts. Create a Facebook campaign in order to gain more likes.
Adevarul.ro	**Likes:** 380,427 **Engagement Rate:** 28.99%	**Posts per Day:** 230.40 **Likes, Comments & Shares per post:** 296 Images on posts: 20.8% Links on posts: 79.2% **Length of posts:** Less than 100 characters. **Hashtags:** Using. (Fans seem to responding best to Links, especially Links posted between 03-06 (GMT). Posts by fans are allowed.	Publish more photos. Create a Facebook campaign in order to gain more likes.
Gandul.info	**Likes:** 538,626 **Engagement Rate:** 3.65%	**Posts per Day:** 133.32 **Likes, Comments & Shares per post:** 48 Images: 41.7%; Video: 4.2% Links: 54.2% **Timing:** Publish many posts between 06 - 09 (GMT), but it is preferred between 21 - 24 (GMT) to engage more users. **Hashtags:** Not using. Fans seem to responding best to Links, especially Links posted between 21 - 24 (GMT). **Everyone can post to timeline.** (The most common times that users write to are between 09-11 (GMT)).	Create more engaging posts. Respond to fans questions and comments more quickly. Respond to posts by others more frequently. Publish posts less often.
Evz.ro	**Likes:** 97,487 **Engagement Rate:** 2.05%	**Posts per Day:** 71.55 **Likes, Comments & Shares per post:** 2 Photos: 41.7%; Links: 58.3% **Hashtags:** Not using.	Create more engaging posts. Publish posts less often. Publish more photos.
Hotnews.ro	**Likes:** 214,572 **Engagement Rate:** 7.75%	**Posts per Day:** 48.24 **Likes, Comments & Shares per post:** 86 Photos: 4.2%; Videos: 4.2% Links: 91.7% **Timing:** Way off. Publish many posts between 09-12 (GMT). But posts published between 21-24 (GMT) engage more users. **Hashtags:** Not using. Everyone can post to timeline and this is h**appens on a daily basis.**	Create more engaging posts. Publish more photos. Respond to fans questions and comments more quickly. Respond to posts by others more frequently.
StirileTVRonline	**Likes:** 10,116 **Likes Growth:** 5.42% **Engagement Rate:** 25.53%	**Posts per Day:** 145.97 **Likes, Comments & Shares per post:** 3 Photos: 33.3%; Videos: 8.3% Links: 54.2%; Texts: 4.2% Perfect timing. Posts are published between 06-09 (GMT). At this time, users seem to be most active. The majority of posts are shorter than 100 characters which is appreciated by followers! **Hashtags:** Using. Fans seem to responding best to Photos, especially posted between 06 - 09 (GMT).	Create more engaging posts. Must add more milestones.

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Table 1. Continued

Facebook Fan Page of News Sites	Page Performance – July 2015	Posts by Pages	Recommendations Done By Likealyzer
TVR.ro	**Likes:** 128,819 **Engagement Rate:** 37.19%	**Posts per Day:** 35.81 **Likes, Comments & Shares per post:** 192 Photos: 16.7% ; Videos: 54.2% Links: 29.2% **Timing:** Many posts are published between 06-09 (GMT), but posts published between 21-24 (GMT) engage more users. **Length of posts:** Less than 100 characters. **Hashtags:** Using. **Everyone can post to timeline.** Happens on a daily basis. (The most common times that users write are between 18-20 (GMT) and 06 - 08 (GMT) and the most common days are Mondays & Thursdays.)	Create more engaging posts. Respond to posts by others more frequently. Publish more photos. Improve timing.
ProTV.ro	**Likes:** 2,110,994 **Engagement Rate:** 7.63%	**Posts per Day:** 79.44 **Likes, Comments & Shares per post:** 178 Photos: 83.3%; Links: 16.7% **Timing:** Slightly off. Many posts are published between 06-09 (GMT), but posts published between 03-06 (GMT) engage more users. **Hashtags:** Not using. Fans seem to responding best to Photos, especially photos posted between 03 - 06 (GMT).	Create more engaging posts. Create a Facebook campaign in order to gain more likes. Use hashtags in posts.
ProTVnews.ro	**Likes:** 6,606 **Engagement Rate:** 0.76%	**Posts per Day:** 3.61 **Likes, Comments & Shares per post:** 2 Photos: 16.7%; Videos: 4.2% Links: 75%; Texts: 4.2% Perfect timing. Majority of posts are published between 06-09 (GMT). The majority of your posts are shorter than 100 characters. (It is recommended to write longer posts since longer posts generate more response from followers.) **Hashtags:** Not using. Fans seem to respond best to Links, especially Links posted between 06-09 (GMT)).	Create more engaging posts. Review the length of posts. Publish posts less often.

number of posts published on Facebook, the process of selecting news has very few filters. In fact, the process of selecting news does not exist. Data show that a large number of posts per day do not positively influence the engagement rate. Metrics in this table can be used to create various algorithms and procedures for news selection process by the media companies.

Thus, the selection process of news for Facebook pages must by done according to the best time for the audience, and this is called a good timing. Also, the selection process of news could be done using criteria based on a list of hashtags used for classification of content offered to users. Another criterion could be the type of content. So, it can be noticed that multimedia content is attractive to users, so the selection process of news for Facebook can be also oriented to such content.

The users' participation and their approaches of interaction with the Facebook pages of news sites are measured by the number of likes, the value of engagement rate, and the number of likes, shares and comments (shown in the tables). All these measures and their values are consequences of the selection process of news by the media companies.

Data offered by the likealyzer tool for Facebook Fan Page analysis suggests that media companies greatly consider users engagement and are concerned with maximising users' participation. In this context, the Facebook Pages of news sites considered for analysis in this study are molded to become increasingly more attractive for users, employing various types of posts, combining photos, videos and links to articles, and concerned about timing, so users can appropriately action posts. Each Facebook Page published an important amount of posts per day, on average between 2 and 10 posts per hour, even if this distribution is different during different times of the day. Most of the Facebook pages do not use hashtags, even though they can help the posts' attractiveness for users. It is important to note the length of posts, which was in general between 100 and 500 characters.

The users' reaction to these decisions taken by media companies can be said to be represented by the number of likes, shares and comments a post receives (Table 2). Thus, it can be noticed that a large number of posts do not bring a greater participation of users on Facebook pages; the quality and viral nature of posting is more important. The number of posts must be correlated with the other indicators that measure the Page's performance. For example, the Facebook Page of the news site stirileProTV stimulates a great number of likes, shares and comments even though it has a relatively small number of posts per day compared to the other pages. On the other hand, data collected for the Facebook Page of the stirileTVR site, shows that a large number of posts does not necessarily engender significant participation and engagement amongst users. Of course, a higher participation and engagement of users can be seen when Facebook Pages have a large number of fans.

Statistical values for mean of posts per day and number of likes, shares and comments from Table 2 show that media companies use less data for the decision of selecting news for the Facebook pages.

Considering the same approach, it was considered also the Facebook pages of news sites in Poland, for a comparison. In Poland, data collected using likealyzer.com, considering Facebook Pages in the same category and according to the same selection criteria as in Romania, suggests the following (Table 3).

It can be noticed that on Facebook pages of news sites in Poland, the number of posts per day published comparable to Romania is considerably smaller, but also the number of likes and engagement rate is smaller. They do not use hashtags to index the content and also the selection and publishing process of news do not consider the best time, that audience can see them. The qualitative aspects related to the

Table 2. Posts published and users' engagement of Facebook pages of news sites - ROMANIA

Facebook Fan Page of News Sites	2015 – MEAN Posts Per Day	2015 - MEAN L_S_C per Post / Day
stirileProTV.ro	73.23	272
Realitatatea.net	46.08	33
Adevarul.ro	230.40	296
Gandul.info	133.32	48
Evz.ro	60.53	2
Hotnews.ro	48.24	86
stirileTVR.ro	145.97	3
TVR.ro	35.81	192
PROTV.ro	79.44	178
ProTVnews	3.61	2

Table 3. Users' engagement of Facebook pages of news sites – July 2015 - POLAND

Facebook Fan Page of News Sites	Page Performance – July 2015	Posts by Pages	Recommendations Done by Likealyzer
Sport.pl	**Likes:** 382,569 **Engagement Rate:** 12.12%	**Posts per Day:** 48.59 **Likes, Comments & Shares per post:** 1,279 **Posts per type:** Photo: 25% **Video**: 70.8% Link: 4.2% **Timing:** Perfect timing! **Length of posts:** Less than 100 characters. **Hashtags:** Not using. Fans seem to responding best to Photos, especially Photos posted between 18 - 21 (GMT). **Everyone can post to timeline.** The most common times that users write are between 09 - 11 (GMT).	Respond to fans questions and comments more quickly. Respond to posts by others more frequently. Ask more questions to fans. Publish more photos. Create a Facebook campaign in order to gain more likes.
Wirtualnapolska	**Likes:** 247,822 **Engagement Rate:** 9.45%	**Posts per Day:** 15.57 **Likes, Comments & Shares per post:** 149 Video: 16.7% Links: 83.3% Timing: Many posts are published between 12-15 (GMT), but posts published between 09-12 (GMT) engage more users. The majority of posts are between 100 and 500 characters. It is recommended to write shorter posts since shorter posts generate more response from followers. Fans seem to responding best to Links, especially Links posted between 09 - 12 (GMT). **Everyone can post on timeline.** (**The most common times that users write are between 12-14 (GMT) and the most common days are Mondays.**)	Create more engaging posts. Review the length of posts. Publish more photos. Respond to fans questions and comments more quickly. Respond to posts by others more frequently.
Warszawaodnowa	**Likes:** 67,082 **Engagement Rate:** 5.21%	**Posts per Day:** 4.51 **Likes, Comments & Shares per post:** 193 Link: 95.8% Video: 4.2% Goog timimg: The majority of posts are published between 21 - 24 (GMT). At this time, followers seem to be most active. **Hashtags:** Using. **Everyone can post on timeline.**	Respond to fans questions and comments more quickly. Create more engaging posts. Respond to posts by others more frequently. Ask more questions to fans. Increase the variety in posts.
Radio Tokfm	**Likes:** 70,897 **Engagement Rate:** 3%	**Posts per Day:** 11.73. A lot of new posts are published but fans do not seem to respond to these. **Likes, Comments & Shares per post:** 60 Photo: 20.8% Link: 41.7% Texts: 37.5% Many posts are published between 06 - 09 (GMT), but posts published between 15-18 (GMT) engage more users. **Hashtags:** Not using. Fans seem to responding best to Links, especially Links posted between 15-18 (GMT). **Everyone can post to your timeline.** The most common times that users write to are between 09-11 (GMT) and the most common days are Tuesdays.	Respond to fans questions and comments more quickly. Create more engaging posts. Review the length of posts. Use more Call to Actions (e.g., like and share) in posts. Respond to posts by others more frequently.

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Table 3. Continued

Facebook Fan Page of News Sites	Page Performance – July 2015	Posts by Pages	Recommendations Done by Likealyzer
Marketingprzykawie	**Likes:** 46,039 **Engagement Rate:** 4.61%	**Posts per Day:** 4.36 **Likes, Comments & Shares per post:** 56 Photo: 33.3% Link: 29.2% Text: 37.5% Many posts are published between 12 - 15 (GMT), but posts published between 09 - 12 (GMT) engage more users. **Hashtags:** Not using. Fans seems to responding best to Photos, especially Photos posted between 09 - 12 (GMT). **Everyone can post on timeline.**	Respond to fans questions and comments more quickly. Like other Pages and interact with them. Create more engaging posts. Use more Call to Actions (e.g., like and share) in posts. Respond to posts by others more frequently.
Kurier Lubelski	**Likes:** 36,396 **Engagement Rate:** 6.33%	**Posts per Day:** 9.25 **Likes, Comments & Shares per post:** 31 Video: 4.2% Link: 95.8% **Hashtags:** Not using. **Everyone can post on timeline.**	Respond to fans questions and comments more quickly. Create more engaging posts. Use more Call to Actions (e.g., like and share) in posts. Publish more photos. Ask more questions to fans.
Nowa Trybuna Opolska	**Likes:** 36,397 **Engagement Rate:** 7.91%	**Posts per Day:** 9.80 **Likes, Comments & Shares per post:** 176 Photos: 20.8% Links: 79.2% Many posts are published between 09-12 (GMT). But posts published between 06-09 (GMT) engage more users. The majority of posts are shorter than 100 characters which is appreciated by followers. **Hashtags:** Using. Fans seem to responding best to Photos, especially posted between 06–09 (GMT).	Open Page and let users communicate with it. Ask more questions to fans. Publish more photos. Improve timing. Add more milestones.
WPROST	**Likes:** 67,382 **Engagement Rate:** 6.36%	**Posts per Day:** 21.38 **Likes, Comments & Shares per post:** 69 Links: 100% Many posts are published between 09-12 (GMT). But posts published between 21-24 (GMT) engage more users. **Hashtags:** Not using.	Open Page and let users communicate with it. Create more engaging posts. Use more Call to Actions (e.g., like and share) in posts. Publish more photos. Ask more questions to fans.
Wydawnictwo Znak	**Likes:** 50,075 **Engagement Rate:** 2.07%	**Posts per Day:** 2.53 **Likes, Comments & Shares per post:** 46 Photo: 33.3% Video: 8.3% Link: 58.3% Publish many posts between 09-12 (GMT). But posts published between 06-09 (GMT) engage more users. Bigger is better. The majority of posts are longer than 500 characters, which are appreciated by followers! Fans seem to responding best to Photos, especially posted between 06-09 (GMT). **Everyone can post on timeline.**	Create more engaging posts. Respond to posts by others more frequently. Create a Facebook campaign in order to gain more likes. Improve timing. Add more milestones.

usage of a particular type of content (photos, videos, or links), and attractive topics in posts must be considered for the selection of news for the Facebook pages. As a difference from Romania, in Poland it seems to be necessary developing the network of users by creating Facebook campaigns in order to gain more likes. Also, in Poland, in all situations, users can publish on the timeline of Facebook pages of news sites, what does not happen in Romania.

Table 4. Posts published and users' engagement of Facebook pages of news sites – POLAND

Facebook Fan Page of News Sites	Likes	2015 MEAN - Posts per Page per Day	2015 MEAN L_S_C per Post/ Day	Relative Engagement (L_S_C/Likes)
Sport.pl	382,569	48.59	1,279	0.33%
Wirtualnapolska	247,822	15.57	149	0.06%
Warszawaodnowa	67,082	4.51	193	0.28%
Radio Tokfm	70,897	11.73	60	0.08%
Marketingprzykawie	46,039	4.36	56	0.12%
Kurier Lubelski	36,396	9.25	31	0.08%
Nowa Trybuna Opolska	36,397	9.80	176	0.48%
WPROST	67,382	21.38	69	0.10%
Wydawnictwo Znak	50,075	2.53	46	0.09%

A higher engagement rate could be achieved only through an attractive topic, such as sport for instance, and an adequate multimedia content. Thus, the selection process of news must use these criteria for having success in the interaction with the users.

Timing with the users is also an important criterion in the process of news selection for Facebook pages, and it helps users to find quickly the news. In both situations, Romania and Poland, this aspect is less considered.

For Poland, the Facebook Pages of news sites adhere to the same rules as in Romania: when there are fewer posts, the users' engagement is maximised (Table 4), (influenced by and dependent upon the number of fans a Page has). On the Facebook Pages of Polish news sites, hashtags are not often used, as per the Romanian case. Likewise, the Facebook pages of Polish news sites use hastags on different topics. The content of the posts were mostly multimedia and links. Timing with fans is in general accomplished by the Facebook pages, with a few exceptions. The length of post appears appropriate to draw the readers' attention, even if in some cases it is recommended by the likealyzer.com site that the length of the post must be lower.

CONCLUSION

The data collected in this study on the Facebook Pages of news sites, suggests that the number of posts, and their moment of posting, is a subjective decision, and therefore that the selection of news, and when it is posted on Facebook, are not decisions based on an algorithm. The news selection for Facebook pages seems to be a journalistic decision taken using subjective criteria, such as getting more traffic. The process of selecting news for Facebook platforms is not based on algorithmic criteria, but human judgment.

The chapter has sought to analyse the main Facebook Pages of news sites in Romania, and compare this with data from Poland. It can be seen that the factors which influence levels of engagement on the Facebook Pages of news sites in Poland correlate with those in Romania. Whilst a high number of fans can establish a high engagement rate amongst users, a high number of posts published to a Facebook Page timeline is not a good solution for high engagement. Therefore, the general conclusion of this study is that media companies are still reliant on a high number of fans to increase their levels of users engagement on Facebook Pages.

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APPENDIX

Facebook Fan Pages of News Site Analyzed: Romania

- StirileProTV - https://www.facebook.com/StirileProTV; website: www.stirileprotv.ro
- Realitatea.net - https://www.facebook.com/portalul.realitatea.net; website: www.realitatea.net
- Adevarul.ro - https://www.facebook.com/Adevarul; website: www.adevarul.ro
- Gandul.info - https://www.facebook.com/Gandul.info; website: www.gandul.info
- Evz.ro - https://www.facebook.com/evz.ro; website: www.evz.ro
- Hotnews.ro - https://www.facebook.com/www.hotnews.ro; website: www.hotnews.ro
- StirileTVRonline - https://www.facebook.com/StirileTVRonline; website: http://stiriletvr.ro
- TVR.ro - https://www.facebook.com/fanTVR1; website: http://www.tvr.ro
- ProTV.ro - https://www.facebook.com/ProTVRomania; website: www.PROTV.ro
- ProTVnews.ro - https://www.facebook.com/ProTvNews; website: www.protvnews.ro

Facebook Fan Pages of News Site Analyzed: Poland

- Sport.pl - http://www.sport.pl
- Wirtualnapolska - http://www.wp.pl/
- Warszawaodnowa - http://www.nowawarszawa.pl
- Radio Tokfm - http://www.tokfm.pl/
- Marketingprzykawie - http://www.marketing
- Kurier Lubelski - http://www.kurierlubelski.pl
- Nowa Trybuna Opolska - http://www.nto.pl
- WPROST- http://www.wprost.pl
- Wydawnictwo Znak - http://www.znak.com.pl

Chapter 44
Social Media in Crisis:
How Social Media Created a NPO and Relief During a Wildfire Crisis

Lauren Bacon Brengarth
University of Colorado Colorado Springs, USA

Edin Mujkic
University of Colorado Colorado Springs, USA

Meg A. Millar
University of Colorado Colorado Springs, USA

ABSTRACT

This case study examines how social media tools were used by a Nonprofit Organization (NPO) to raise money during a catastrophic fire in the Western United States. The fire claimed over 18,000 acres of forestland, nearly 350 homes, and 2 human lives. When it occurred, it was the most catastrophic fire event to hit this community. This case illuminates specific ways in which social media provided the key tools that enabled the creation of this NPO, the sale of hundreds of thousands of tee shirts in one month, and ultimately dollars donated to aid the victims of the fire. This case is unique because it is the story of an organization that was created overnight because individuals in the organization's social system rapidly evaluated and adopted their innovation. Additionally, opinion leaders (particularly those in traditional media) within the social system aided the NPO in rapidly establishing legitimacy with its followers.

INTRODUCTION

Social media have transformed communication and opened new possibilities for individuals and organizations to reach their publics. The instantaneous, two-way communication enabled by social media technology has changed virtually all communication. Modern day crisis communication is notably different as a result. Since the proliferation of social media in the beginning of 21st century, crisis management is constantly changing to adopt new techniques. Communication during crisis situations has notably transformed in the last two decades. Publics no longer solely use traditional media, such as newspapers

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and TV broadcasts for their news. Social media offer varied sources of information for publics, especially in times of crisis (Austin, Liu, & Jin, 2012). First responders also utilize social media formats such as text messages and social web sites (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, etc.) to communicate with greater flexibility with the general public, disaster management command centers, and with each other.

More and more, individuals turn to social media in times of disaster to learn about ways they can connect, help, and assist in relief efforts. Austin et al. (2012) found that people seek out information on social media after a crisis in order to obtain insider information. This provides NPOs with a unique opportunity to not only disseminate timely information after a crisis, but also to garner more attention to their social media sites than their traditional media counterparts. In the case of the Western Fire, social media enabled the creation of a new nonprofit effort, Tees for A Cause (a pseudonym used for participant anonymity). Credible endorsement was key in fueling its tremendous success.

Social media allow NPOs to lower the cost of coordinating group action and delivering key messages to the public (Salamon, 2003). This was the case for Tees for A Cause, as the organization incurred virtually no expense to market the tee shirts to the public. Nonprofits, much like all other organizations with a social media presence, are able to use these channels to create a direct connection with their constituents. This allows them to carefully and strategically control messages delivered instead of having to rely on a journalist's interpretation of a story (Fineberg, 2002; Muralidharan, Rasmussen, Patterson, & Shin, 2011; Pavlik, 2001). In establishing a direct connection with various publics through social media, NPOs use more positive emotional appeals in order to foster a relationship. On the other hand, traditional media often use negative emotions to augment readership (Muralidharan et al., 2011). These positive changes put more message control in the hands of NPOs and are especially helpful in a critical moment of crisis.

This study focuses on the case of Tees for A Cause, a NPO that used social media tools to aid victims of the 2012 Western Fire. This case highlights the ways in which social media are transforming crisis response and the communication that surrounds it. Using a qualitative approach, this case features the specific ways in which social media served as a catalyst to start a new NPO as well as to establish its legitimacy. It also addresses the question of how the NPO used social media in order to secure financial aid for victims of one of the most devastating wildfires to hit the U.S. in recent years. The goal of this study is to contribute to literature about how social media provide tools that enable NPOs to serve as a catalyst for change and aid in times of great need and emergency situations. Specifically, this study uses Diffusion of Innovations Theory (Rogers, 2003) as the lens through which analysis occurs. The rapid diffusion and adoption of the social media outlets of Tees for A Cause were critical in the organization's immediate success and contributions to fire relief efforts.

Although NPOs vary in size and mission, the organizations and their employees share some common traits. NPOs provide services for the public good and are defined as private organizations that do not distribute profits to people who control or support the organization (Salamon, 2003). NPOs are generally exempt from federal, state, and local taxes as long as they serve a public purpose. To qualify for such tax exemptions NPOs are often designated as 501(c)(3) (those exempt from federal taxes) or 501(c)(4) (those that operate for religious, charitable, scientific, or educational purposes) organizations.

Professionals working in the U.S. NPOs today face an increasingly challenging operating environment (Hackler & Saxton, 2007). Competition with other NPOs for scarce donor resources is a significant obstacle. Decreased government funding and increased demands for services also increase pressure on NPOs during economic downturns (Hackler & Saxton, 2007). In addition to increased demands for services, there are also increased demands on NPOs to demonstrate superior standards, oversight, services and accountability (Burt & Taylor, 2003). Amidst these challenges, financially affordable social media opportunities arrive at a good time. Several U.S. NPOs have seen traditional fundraising strategies fall to their lowest levels, while Internet and email fundraising is rising (The Non Profit Times, 2009).

NPOs are resourceful and present a dominant force in new media use. A study of the 200 largest NPOs in the U.S. (as listed annually by *Forbes Magazine)* by Barnes and Mattson (2008) shows that NPOs outpace the business world and academia in their use of social media. The researchers found that 89% of charitable organizations use some form of social media. A majority (57%) of NPOs blog compared to only 27% of Inc. 500 corporations in the same time period. Forty-five percent of the NPOs studied report that social media are very important to their fundraising strategy. Smitko (2012) noted that NPOs often use Twitter to engage their publics and thereby establish relationships in order to garner donations. As NPOs implement new media technologies, new opportunities arise to help address the challenges they face (Berlinger & Te'eni, 1999; Burt & Taylor, 2000, 2003; Elliott, Katsioloudes, Weldon, 1998; Hackler & Saxton, 2007). However, it becomes more important for NPOs to understand how to effectively diffuse their social media channels and secure user adoption of these forums.

Since the turn of the century, growing scholarship examines Internet activism and how new media are effective tools for advocacy, activism, and social movements (Diani, 2000; Fitzgerald & McNutt, 1997; Jensen, 2012; Kahn & Kellner, 2004; Lovejoy & Saxton, 2012; McNutt & Boland, 1999; Van Aelst & Walgrave, 2002; Waters & Lo, 2012). Prior to the Internet and social media, community advocates relied upon face-to-face meetings to accomplish time-sensitive goals. While face-to-face interaction remains one of the most valuable ways to address social agendas (Diani, 2000), new media broaden the scope and speed of advocacy.

Online advocacy is revolutionizing advocacy practices in the U.S. (McNutt & Boland, 1999). It is defined as technological media used to influence stakeholders to affect policy change (Fitzgerald & McNutt, 1997). New media present participatory, democratic, societal opportunities in which people publicly express views and opinions and engage the broader community. Participatory new media, such as online communities, blogs, and wikis open new opportunities for NPO activism (Kahn & Kellner, 2004). NPOs can use social media to increase awareness about the organizations or a cause or effort in addition to encouraging participation (Muralidharan et al., 2011). Particularly as mobile technology continues to integrate with social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter, social action can take place any time and from any location (Jensen, 2012; Lovejoy & Saxton, 2012; Rheingold, 2002; Waters & Lo, 2012), creating endless potential.

New media also enable nonprofits to execute volunteer efforts and recruit volunteers with greater ease (Briones, Kuch, Lui, & Jin, 2011; Cravens, 2006; Dehbar & Stokes, 2008). Research supports that new media enable NPOs to engage volunteers who otherwise would be unnoticed (O'Rourke & Baldwin, 2004). They also expand opportunities for NPO philanthropy. Around the turn of the century, scholars Austin and Wendroff (2001) forecasted an e-philanthropy revolution. Since that time, a steady pickup in e-philanthropy movements have occurred, and scholars (e.g. Frumkin, 2006) have worked to understand and explain how the Internet fits into NPO marketing and fundraising strategies. Hart (2002) found that the Internet is a successful tool for raising money and creates important relationships with current and prospective supporters. The case presented here supports that claim through its demonstration of tremendous success in raising funds rapidly.

Social media give NPOs a wider reach, greater exposure, and the capacity for accommodating multiple mediated connections. These advantages enable links to people across distances that are otherwise unreachable (Frumkin, 2006), such as the global reach demonstrated by the current study. E-philanthropy became mainstream in NPO practice over the past decade, and social media opportunities continue to grow (such as the newer texting campaigns and social media applications). NPOs are successfully linking social media opportunities with pathways to influence their community.

To better understand how social media impacted the resource development efforts of NPOs providing aid during the Western Fire, this study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. How did Tees for A Cause use social media to establish its business?
2. How did Tees for A Cause use social media to establish legitimacy?
3. How did Tees for A Cause use social media to garner resources for victims of the fire?

CONCEPTUAL/THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

New media have diffused into virtually all facets of business and personal communication in the U.S. Diffusion of Innovations Theory (Rogers, 1962) is a theoretical approach that helps scholars and technological adopters understand the communicative process that occurs as new media are adopted by society. For this case, it helps in understanding how the diffusion of innovations influenced NPO activity during the fire event.

Probably the most important addition to the understanding of how innovations spread emerges from Everett Rogers' (1962) piece *The Diffusion of Innovations.* Here, Rogers studied the social and psychological processes that take place in adopting new technology. His work built on other works by Gabriel Tarde (1890/1903), Joseph Schumpeter (1934), Edgar McVoy (1940), and Bruce Ryan and Neal C. Gross (1943) that led to the Diffusion of Innovations Theory. Rogers' book has continued to evolve into its most recent fifth edition (Rogers, 2003). His work suggests that there are specific characteristics that make diffusion communication (the communication that surrounds a new product or idea) unique from other forms of communication. Diffusion communication is concerned with the spread of a new idea or technology. It is this newness that gives diffusion its special character because some degree of uncertainty is involved.

Main Elements in the Diffusion of Innovations

There are four main elements in the diffusion of innovations: the innovation, communication channels, time, and social system (Rogers, 2003). Rogers describes the diffusion process as one in which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system. This model is specifically concerned with the type of communication that is associated with new products and ideas.

Innovation

The innovation is an idea or object that appears to be new to the individual or group of adopters. Innovation characteristics are important in helping explain different rates of innovation adoption. The characteristics are relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability (Rogers, 2003). Table 1 shows the central question behind each of these characteristics.

The first innovation characteristic is relative advantage. This is the degree to which an innovation is perceived as better than the idea that precedes it (Rogers, 2003). The most important component of

Table 1. Four main elements in the diffusion of innovations

Element	Central Question or Concept
Relative advantage	Is the new idea or product advantageous?
Compatibility	Is the innovation in line with values, past experiences, needs?
Complexity	How difficult is it to understand the innovation?
Trialability	Can the innovation be experimented with? At least on a limited basis?
Observability	How visible are the results of the innovation to others?

relative advantage is whether a person perceives it as advantageous. The greater one sees the advantage, the more quickly it will be adopted. In this case, society at large saw the purchase of tee shirts in support of fire victims as an advantageous proposition, thus its wide and rapid adoption.

Compatibility is the second innovation characteristic. It is the degree to which an innovation is perceived as being in line with existing values, past experiences, and needs of potential adopters (Rogers, 2003). If an innovation is not in line with values and norms of a social system, it will not be adopted as quickly as one that is compatible. For Tees for A Cause, the community had a great need and desire to support those impacted by the fire. This provided a monetary and symbolic way in which tee shirt consumers could accomplish this goal.

The next two innovation traits are complexity and trialability. Complexity is the degree to which an innovation is perceived as difficult to understand and use (Rogers, 2003). If potential adopters do not understand the innovation, it is less likely to be adopted. Trialability is the degree to which an innovation may be experimented with on a limited basis. People often want to try a product before fully adopting it.

The final innovation characteristic is observability. This is the degree to which the results of an innovation are visible to others (Rogers, 2003). Observability promotes discussion of the new idea. If it is easier for people to see the results of an innovation, they are more likely to adopt it.

Communication Channels

Communication channels are the next important elements to the diffusion process. Communication channels are those through which there is an exchange of information regarding new ideas from one person to another in order to reach a mutual understanding (Rogers, 2003). They are the means through which a message can get from one person or unit to another. As previously discussed, diffusion is a particular type of communication where the information that is shared is concerned with new or perceived new ideas. In the diffusion process, information is exchanged where one person shares a new idea to one or many others. This process involves four components: (1) an innovation, (2) an individual or other unit of adoption that has knowledge of or experience with using the innovation, (3) another person or unit that does not have knowledge of the innovation, and (4) a communication channel connecting the two people or units (Rogers, 2003). The information exchange relationship between the pair will determine how a source will or will not share the innovation with the receiver and how the transfer of information will have an effect on the receiver. Information channels as defined by Rogers (2003) can be mass media channels or interpersonal channels.

Time

The third element of the diffusion of innovations is time. Time is concerned with the period between innovation through either adoption or rejection. In other words, in the diffusion of innovations model, one should be concerned with time in relation to how quickly an innovation is adopted or rejected (Rogers, 2003).

Social System

The last element of diffusion of innovations is the social system. The social system is a set of intertwined units that interact in a joint problem-solving mission to achieve a common goal (Rogers, 2003). Social systems can be characterized as heterophilous or homophilous. The heterophilous social system embraces innovation, change, and new ideas (Rogers, 2003). A homophilous social system is one that is less innovative and stays locked within the norms of the social system (Rogers, 2003).

One's prior values, beliefs, and past experiences within a social system can hinder or advance the adoption process. Rogers (2003) defined a social system as "a set of interrelated units that are engaged in joint problem solving to accomplish a common goal. The units of a social system may be individuals, informal groups, organizations and/or subsystems" (p. 24). Each unit in a social system can be distinguished from other units and all members work together to solve a shared problem and reach a mutual goal. The objective sharing process is what binds the system together (Rogers, 2003). Social systems can range in size from everyone living on a city block to all of the consumers in the United States. It is within the social system that diffusion occurs.

One's closest personal contacts such as peers, colleagues, and family have an especially strong influence on whether or not one will adopt a particular innovation. In the NPO setting, one's co-workers and professional networks are also influential in this process. If the people that one trusts and respects adopt the particular innovation, an individual is more positively influenced by their adoptive behavior and therefore more likely to adopt an innovation.

Adopter Categories

Diffusion of innovations also consists of specific adopter categories that describe the time frame in which one adopts the new technology (Rogers, 2003). These adopter categories include the innovator, early adopters, early majority, late majority, and laggards. Table 2 presents each category and a brief explanation of their characteristics.

Table 2. Adopter categories and descriptions

Categories	Descriptions
Innovators	The first people to adopt an innovation; willing to take risks; may be high profile within social system.
Early adopters	People who are on the cutting edge of new technology and quickly adopt the new innovation.
Early majority	A larger group of people who let more time pass before adopting, but still adopt relatively quickly.
Late majority	A group that waits to watch others adopt the innovation in order to observe and evaluate prior to adopting.
Laggards	The very last to adopt the innovation; often adverse to change; traditional.

Innovators are the first people to adopt an innovation (Rogers, 2003). They generally are willing to take risks and may be high profile within the social system. Early adopters are people who stay on the cutting edge of new technology. The early majority represents people who have let more time pass before adopting the innovation (Rogers, 2003). The late majority represents people who are a bit more skeptical about adopting the innovation (Rogers, 2003). The late majority waits for the early majority to adopt the product so that they can observe and evaluate whether or not it is worth adopting. After they feel confident in the innovation, they too will adopt it. The final adopter category is the laggards. Laggards are the very last to adopt an innovation. They are often adverse to major change and are more focused on traditions.

It is also important to examine the roles that people play within a social system. Diffusion is particularly concerned with opinion leaders and change agents. An opinion leader is a person who is able to informally influence other peoples' attitudes or behaviors with relative frequency (Rogers, 2003). In this case, opinion leaders were critical in helping Tees for A Cause establish legitimacy. They earn this status through technical knowledge, social accessibility, and conforming to social norms. Because they are closely conformed to the system's norms, they have the ability to exemplify and express the system's structure (Rogers, 2003). Opinion leaders remain at the center of their system's communication networks; therefore they can serve as a social model whose innovative behaviors are often imitated by other members of the system. Opinion leaders are strongly linked members of the social system in which they use their influence. Change agents are people who influence clients' innovation decisions in a direction seen as desirable by a change agency (Rogers, 2003). Change agents may use opinion leaders within a social system to assist in diffusion campaigns. Change agents are usually highly trained professionals with higher degrees in technical fields.

Diffusion theory provides an expansive framework for understanding the processes by which new technologies are diffused through society via unique diffusion communication practices. This is important because this knowledge provides a framework with which we can begin to examine social media adoption during a crisis. In addition to the work of Rogers, several other scholars have added to the discussion of the unique characteristics of digital diffusion of innovations, such as through social media (Watts, 2003; Shirky, 2008; Bennet & Segerberg, 2013). Particularly in the case of Tees for A Cause, the organization experienced, through the use of social media, unique adoption patterns that led to their ability to garner resources in order to aid fire victims and responders.

METHODS

A case study approach using in-depth interviews (Creswell, 2009) was utilized to answer the research questions and analyze the data for emergent themes. This method allowed the researchers to gain rich, thick descriptions of the unique experience that took place in this case. For this case study, one issue (social media uses by Tees for A Cause during the Western Fire) was selected and a detailed case was described to illustrate the issue (Creswell, 2009). The goal was not to construct a generalizable definition of reality, but rather to hear the personal account of the unique experiences to gain highly detailed information. Prior to any data collection, the researchers received approval from the local university Internal Review Board (IRB) to ensure compliance with research protocols involving human subjects.

This study is anonymous and pseudonyms were assigned to protect any identifiable information. Upon approval, participants were recruited and interviews were conducted with several NPOs, however this piece only focuses on the specific Tees for A Cause case, which was part of a larger multi-case study. The researchers also fully acknowledge the biases that are inherent in this study, as in all qualitative research. The researchers have worked with and volunteered for NPO organizations and have close connections with the community in which the fire occurred.

This case study focuses on a NPO located in a Western U.S. city with a metro area of approximately 600,000 people. The researchers interviewed a manager of the Tees for A Cause effort that emerged rapidly when the Western Fire engulfed a large region of the city and surrounding areas. This individual was interviewed as part of a multiple case study, however his story presented a highly unique case in that it provided an example of a business that started truly from nothing into a highly successful initiative within days on social media. Additional data were also gathered by viewing the social media activity that took place both during and after the fire event.

In-depth interviews allow participants to share a detailed, personal account of the lived experience as it is remembered (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2008). To guide the interview process, techniques outlined by Kvale and Brinkmann (2008) were used. Interviews were guided by a semi-structured list of predetermined questions. A pilot study tested the interview protocol with two NPO employees and confirmed it worked well with minimal changes. The interview used as a focus in this case lasted 60 minutes and was recorded. It took place face-to-face in the office of the interviewee. Interviews were transcribed and all identifying information was masked for anonymity.

Diffusion of Innovations Theory was used to inspect the data for emergent themes. Yin (2009) stated that the most preferred strategy for case study research is to follow theoretical propositions to lead the case study. It guides the original objectives and design of the study, which influences the research questions, literature review, and hypotheses. Data interpretation for this study follows the analysis format identified by Creswell (2009) for case study analysis. The researchers created a detailed description of the case and themes within the case (a within-case analysis). This was followed by interpretation of the meaning of the case overall. The data were used to analyze how social media enabled the NPO to raise funds and support for victims of the Western Fire. Data analysis led to the final step: reporting the meaning of the cases in this study, explaining what is learned from this research, and the study's implications for the future (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

To analyze the data collected through in-depth interviews, a thematic analysis of the case study was conducted (Kvale & Brinkman, 2008). The coder determined a theme based on three criteria: recurrence, repetition, and forcefulness (Owen, 1984). Categories were tied to specific questions asked of the participants. Categories were then broken down by characteristics that defined them. Once the data were completely coded and themes defined, the researchers began the verification process (Kvale and Brinkman, 2008). To confirm that the research properly illuminates the participants' experiences (Creswell, 2009), the researchers used several verification methods to ensure that the research findings are reflective of the lived experiences of the participants in this study. These include peer review (an external check on the research process), use of thick, rich descriptions (using large portions of participant interviews to allow the character and opinions of the interviewee to shine through), and clarifying researcher biases.

CASE

Organization Background

Tees for A Cause began in the summer of 2012 when an unprecedented wildfire destroyed and threatened a large area of the NPO's city. A group of designers, marketers, and printers who worked in separate organizations but lived in the area joined forces to create a product to generate funds that could help aid victims of the fire. Essentially overnight, tee shirts were designed, marketed, and began selling because of social media efforts. The group worked in conjunction with the local community foundation to help ensure its compliance with all IRS regulations as the organization began and grew more rapidly than anyone could have imagined. Tees for A Cause started through a website and Facebook, which were credited for the incredible success this team experienced.

Project and Experience

Tees for A Cause was a collaborative effort between four companies to generate relief for wildfire victims. The inspiration for the organization came when one team member, who had previously witnessed relief efforts in a neighboring state, had an idea to design and sell tee shirts in order to generate financial relief for victims of the Western fire. The team was spurred into action as the smoke rose in the city's skyline on Saturday. By Monday, Tees for A Cause began to develop a formal plan to create tee shirts. After the fire tragically and unexpectedly destroyed hundreds of homes on Tuesday the team rallied to formalize their plan and by Wednesday the plan was launched and a new business began.

The quickness with which the organization developed was due to the forceful efforts of the team's marketing professional. He explained, "I essentially launched it before everybody was ready,"…"just 'cause…that's partly my personality in the group. That's my role… to launch things…more or less. And so, we launched it Wednesday at noon." And social media, along with a website became the bricks and mortar of the effort.

The group wanted to use the vehicle that would enable the farthest and fastest reach with greatest impact. So they used what was right at their fingertips: social media. Managers from the group describe social media as something that "was absolutely the crux of what we did." It truly was the vehicle that created the Western Tee organization. The immediacy of social media enabled them to be both nimble and quick. Using Facebook as the primary vehicle, they navigated unchartered territory, as the fire was of unprecedented in size and impact, and no one had direct experience in tee shirt design and sales. The team knew that, as one member of Tees for A Cause described: "There were certainly some aspects…like we were riding a wave. And so, the execution…for us to be able to launch it the following day at noon was key." And so they did. Less than 24 hours after the fire engulfed nearly 350 homes in its path, Tees for A Cause took to social media to launch its efforts in order to donate all profits back to relief efforts.

While social media propelled Tees for A Cause into a tee shirt selling frenzy, it did not go entirely without a hitch. Facebook was identified as the best outlet through which the effort could spread virally. Twitter was also a useful tool, with the exception of getting held up in Twitter "jail." One Tees for A Cause manager describes the experience, "Twitter helped. We actually…set up a Tees for A Cause Twitter account that got…put in Twitter jail as we call because you know Twitter is very conscious of…you know, bought accounts basically, and spam accounts. And so, we were getting tons of activity on our Twitter account right off the bat, and they, they shut us off. And, we were like 'Ahhh!' (laugh)." Getting that fixed was not something that could be done immediately. It took nearly two weeks to resolve the situation.

Despite the issues with Twitter, Tees for A Cause forged ahead. They tracked where people were linking through to reach the Tees for A Cause website. In viewing their website analytics, the Tees for A Cause team found that Facebook was "100% by far and above the biggest one." Mainstream media caught wind of the Tees for A Cause effort and a story that ran on MSNBC was another key source of traffic. After the story ran, several hits they received clicked through from the MSNBC news website. However, although national cable news was one driver of traffic to the Tees for A Cause site, the Tees for A Cause said that social media ware "absolutely the most effective." It was not long before Facebook followers grew to include people from all across the U.S. and around the globe. Tees for A Cause is housed within a building that shares space with several other professionals. One of the other professionals in the building heard about Tees for A Cause from her friend who learned about the effort on Facebook. This friend lived nearly 1,500 miles away.

The data collected in this case clearly demonstrates that social media were key in making Tees for A Cause and its support of relief efforts a tremendous success. The organization found that above all other social media vehicles, Facebook was most effective growing the effort and reaching the target audience. The rapid diffusion and adoption of Tees for A Cause' Facebook page demonstrates the various elements outlined by Diffusion of Innovations Theory (Rogers, 2003). It is because of the rapid time by which adoption occurred that the organization experienced such success.

Social media were where the Tees for A Cause effort began. The startup effort began by crowdsourcing for designs to compete for placement on the tee shirts. Designers submitted designs from all over the country for consideration, and a few were selected to go on the tees. There was one design that became the hallmark logo that resembled the state flag with a flame rising through it.

Through Facebook, Tees for A Cause was able to do what they do best: market the product and tell the story. Facebook enabled two-way communication with followers, which then wove into the overall narrative of Tees for A Cause, its mission, and the people it was helping. It also enabled photos, that at times were difficult to view, to serve as powerful visual examples of this unfolding story.

"Facebook is a very visually oriented media," says a Tees for A Cause manager, "And so…as much as we could we were trying to get pictures…of you know, families, and sometimes even houses burning, which is not always ideal…but just various (pictures). We were trying to tell a story. And that's what marketing is. It's telling a story…what's happening, what's been going on." And by telling the story, others would share, and soon people in all corners of the earth were part of the story and joining the Tees for A Cause effort. Facebook was also utilized as a form of benchmarking for growth. Based on social media patterns, Tees for A Cause' strategy would often move from idea to execution. As a Tees for A Cause manager explains, "We would do things like…if we can get up to 500 likes on this post then we'll start selling kids' tees or something like that."

Challenges and Opportunities

While using social media can be an effective means of communication between an organization and its publics (Briones, et al., 2011), it can also present challenges. The Tees for A Cause case shares both challenges and opportunities, both which hinge upon its fundraising efforts promoted through social media.

While the organization experienced tremendous success—they sold over 600-thousand tee shirts at $20 each—this success was also the challenge. The bulk of the tees sold were purchased in June and July of 2012. For an organization that was new to the tee shirt industry, this presented a bit of a learning curve.

When the threat of the wildfire dissipated, Tees for A Cause experienced a drastic slow in tee shirt sales. However, sales did not completely stop. Tees for A Cause continued selling around $2,000 worth of tee shirts per month for several months after the peak of sales.

The masterminds of the successful Tees for A Cause business never could have imagined the incredible response that quickly spread. Diffusion of their social media (particularly Facebook) and tee shirt purchasing site rapidly expanded and was adopted (Rogers, 2003). They sold approximately $160,000 worth of tees in the first 36 hours before the effort was formally branded. Social media were the key to making this effort an incredible success.

"It was insane," says a Tees for A Cause manager, "and, we were just like…wait. So, that creates some logistical problems…we have to get people tee shirts." Never could they have envisioned the large-scale operation, to the tune of more than 600,000 tee shirts, they were unveiling. "We were going into this thinking, we're not going to sell that many…by any means…by any stretch of the imagination," says a manager, "We're like, just, you know…on a Saturday afternoon with a six pack of beer and just have good ol' time and ship out our tee shirts (laugh)." The result was far more reaching than packing some boxes over a six pack of beer. Rather, it was managing the distribution of over 600,000 tees, and it was no easy feat.

"I would say…um, and this is more of a vulnerable thing for us…one of the things in being completely volunteer oriented is that we ran out of the ability sustain ourselves…running it…as well as we wanted to," said a member of Tees for A Cause management. "So, a lot of what I focused on was getting the distribution pieces in place as quick as we could," he said. He explained that there were certainly some hiccups, including some people who ordered a shirt within the first three days of sales but waiting about a month to receive it in the mail.

Things were happening so quickly, the team had to be resourceful with financial logistics. "It was kind of a blur…it was definitely a lot, and I think that, you know, … part of the problem was that we sold so many t-shirts. We were trying to get all of these logistics squared away. And, that was a lot (of) work. Just getting that…just getting the logistics squared away." Management described the types of questions that rattled their minds as the orders poured in, "How…how are we going to get all of these printed? We have this huge list coming out of PayPal (which PayPal is a pain in the butt). But, you know, we learned just a lot of those details. You know, the whole nonprofit thing, kind of 'How do we do this?' We're working with the Community Foundation on (things). Can we be a fiscal sponsor fund? Or are we just a donor advice fund? We were working with them and some of their legal department on things. So, it was just a lot of logistics, because volume brings that stuff out. Make sure you dot the I's and cross the T's when they're complicated!"

An additional challenge presented by employing social media for fundraising efforts is establishing legitimacy. During the fire, many fraudulent companies attempted to collect on the community's hardships. Tees for A Cause had to do its part to stand out as a true legitimate organization designed to help victims of the fire. Fortunately, the Tees for A Cause team was comprised of trusted professionals from the community who used their own network of opinion leaders (Rogers, 2003) to publicly vouch for them during initial sales. The organization was comprised of individuals who were natives of the community and therefore had deeply rooted connections with key business leaders, media professionals, and individuals in the nonprofit sector. Drawing upon this network to help establish the legitimacy of

Tees for A Cause led to rapid diffusion and adoption of both online donations and Facebook interaction (Rogers, 2003).

Because the Western Fire was unprecedented in size and destruction, its devastation was equally as unprecedented. A burn scar physically remains on the mountain that burned and in the hearts of those who watch a beloved city under fire. In such despair, the Tees for A Cause effort gave the community a glimmer of hope and the chance to contribute to something that could make a positive impact for those who were victims of the fire. As the Tees for A Cause team explained, as people watched homes burn to ash, "There was an emotional wave of wanting to do something, and we provided an outlet."

Unfortunately, wildfire danger is still a great threat for many drought-stricken communities in the Western U.S. As a result, Tees for A Cause remains an active NPO today that has created and sold additional tee shirts to aid victims of other fire events that have happened since the time of the Western Fire.

Solutions and Outcomes

In order to overcome challenges that the rapidly developing crisis created, Tees for A Cause turned to its network of opinion leaders in the community and "word of mouth" to establish legitimacy. Traditional media outlets were particularly helpful because they could vouch for Tees for A Cause management. One manager stated, "The media helped. They knew us, and so the media would say, 'These guys are good business people here in (the city).' It's just the value of a relationship. And, that's where social media is a big deal. A lot of social media is really new, but it's not…in the relationship department. It's very paradoxical." Although social media channels were utilized, it was traditional interpersonal relationships that carried the clout needed to legitimize the organization in its infancy.

To obtain further legitimacy, the organization conveyed a partnership with an established community fund directly on its website. Tees for A Cause included it as one of the main navigation pieces of the site with a detailed explanation of the community fund's organization, its people, and its partners. As widespread social media and mainstream media coverage also increased, legitimacy as an organization was established.

Tees for A Cause also had the challenge of formalizing a nonprofit. The organization was created by a small number of family and friends who each worked for different marketing-related agencies. They came together to pool their collective talents and create Tees for A Cause. As marketing professionals, designers and web developers, they had no previous knowledge of how to start a nonprofit. As stated by Tees for A Cause management, "We're just doing what we do best (marketing), but the money side of it all. We had no idea. We'd never started a nonprofit before. We've never…we had no idea. We're marketers, right? We're designers and web developers and, and …strategy guys. So, that was, that's been the biggest thing that we've been, that we're still going through 'cause becoming a nonprofit is arduous process." Establishing oneself as a legitimate legal nonprofit organization is an arduous task, particularly because of the strict guidelines set forth by the Internal Revenue Service. In order to meet these guidelines, Tees for A Cause used its deeply rooted community resources to establish a fiscal partnership relationship with the local community foundation. The foundation set up a specific fund for donations and helped to facilitate the distribution of donations to fire victims. Because the community foundation was already a trusted and established NPO, they were able to handle the financial logistics and compliance of tee shirt sales while staff of Tees for A Cause was able to focus on design, implementation, marketing, sales, and shipping.

CONCLUSION

The case presented in this study contributes to the general and academic knowledge about utilization of the social media by NPOs in times of an emergency. With social media around us 24/7, this case proves that right now, and especially in the future, this way of communication will be dominant. The key to success in using social media is having easy access to its outlets, such as Facebook. This case also provides evidence that even a small NPO can have tremendous reach across the nation and even the globe. The case illuminates how rapid diffusion and adoption (Rogers, 1962) of social media innovations lead to the creation of a new NPO that was able to sell hundreds of thousands of tee shirts in order to fund relief efforts for fire victims. Also, this case indicates that NPO's are very flexible when it comes to reaction to big emergency situations. The Tees for A Cause case is clear example of how a small NPO can have a dramatic impact on the community in a time when all governmental agencies are consumed by an emergency.

This case also presents example of NPO in a role of the first responder. In the time of cutting budgets, from national level to local level, NPOs are assuming very significant role in the community usually as supporters of a first responders and needs of local residents, but more and more often as the first respondents itself.

However, from this case it is also clear that the response from people using social media, particularly Facebook, overwhelmed the small NPO. Based on this case, it would be prudent in the future, that small NPOs prepare for such an overwhelming response from donors, when there is an emergency that has national or even global attention. In a situation such as this, NPOs could prepare by training additional on call staff or volunteers to meet the social media demand.

Also, this case shows that opinion leaders were key in the adoption process. It was because of community partnerships with trusted opinion leaders (such as members of traditional media) that the Tees for A Cause organization could be established in a rapid manner with instant credibility. NPOs should continue to pursue partnerships and strong relationships with members of traditional media, both on local and national levels. Based on this case, traditional media was catalyst for social media, a route for people to help community in need.

However, regardless of unquestionable importance of traditional media, there is a trend where the news will spread through social media much faster. Social media is actually the fastest and safest way to spread the information about NPO that needs donations, since NPO does not know whether traditional media will "pick-up" story or not. In this case, traditional media "picked-up" story about Tees for A Cause only when information already reached a lot of people. Still, traditional media played very important role as a catalyst for more attention.

One of the problems that Tees for A Cause faced with was security "paranoia" of Twitter. The fact that Twitter unlocked Tees for A Cause account after a week and a half or two weeks is unjustifiable. Although Twitter is a for-profit company, one must not forget that everyone as well as for-profit companies has responsibility toward community and nation as a whole. This case points toward a lack of preparedness among social media companies when it comes to large emergencies. Facebook, Twitter and other social media outlets need to have an emergency protocol, where there would be dedicated staff that would fallow emergencies in the U.S. and across the globe. In that way, these companies can react much faster when it comes to checking whether accounts from various NPO's are legitimate or not.

This case illustrates how complicated it is to start a new NPO in a short time period. In particular, the legal work that is required to establish an NPO and follow IRS guidelines is often complicated to

NPO entrepreneurs that do not have a legal background. In order to quickly establish the Tees for A Cause organization, the leadership of this group was resourceful and utilized the assistance of the local community foundation to ensure that funds could be collected and distributed while adhering to all IRS logistics. While this group was tremendously successful in starting quickly and not getting bogged down in the legalities of starting the NPO (although there still was plenty of that, however, the community foundation partnership allowed some nimbleness), such challenges in starting a new NPO can serve as a preventative measure that keeps people from starting NPOs in the future. The Tees for A Cause example illustrates creative organizing that could serve other new NPOs in the future. In similar cases, small NPOs could explore opportunities to join forces with already established community organizations. Particularly in a time of crisis, when timing is critical, this type of partnership is beneficial to the newly formed NPO as well as the people it aims to serve.

Based on this case study, in the future it would be prudent to conduct research among small donors that used social media as a way to donate money to small NPOs. This would shed light from different direction to understand what motivates individuals to make charitable donations through social media vehicles. Also, based on lessons from this case, it would beneficial to conduct research on what effect IRS has on a creation of small NPOs and provide possible recommendations how to make process of starting up NPOs less complicated.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Community Foundation: A philanthropic organization that manages a capital fund designed to support a specific geographic area. Donations from private and public donors constitute the fund for grant making purposes for the defined geographic area.

Crisis Communication: Communication between parties engaged in solving a natural or man-made crisis.

Diffusion of Innovations Theory: A theory developed by Everett Rogers (1962) that explains how new ideas and innovations spread through and are adopted by society.

Grassroots Organization: An organization started by ordinary people in a community.

Legitimacy: The state of being legitimate (real, official, able to be trusted).

Nonprofit Organization (NPO): A private organization that provides services for the public good and does not distribute profits or dividends, but rather uses surplus revenues to achieve organizational goals. A NPO is generally exempt from federal, state, and local taxes as long as they serve a public purpose.

Overwhelming Response: The response to an event, often a disaster or tragedy caused by nature or human activity that is difficult to manage.

Social Media: Online communication through which individuals and organizations can exchange ideas, information and images; they can organize communication around a particular interest or effort.

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APPENDIX

Interview Protocol

1. Please describe your general work duties.
2. What types of social media do you use in your job?
    a. How do you use them?
3. How did you use social media to garner support for victims of the Western Fire?
    a. What were some specific outcomes you witnessed based on these uses?
4. Did you use traditional media as well?
    a. If so, what do you believe was more effective?
5. Are there any social media interactions that took place during the Western Fire that stand out in your memory?
    a. Were there any mishaps that you remember?
    b. Did you notice an increase in followers during this time?
6. Have any of the day-to-day efforts been impacted (positively or negatively) after the rush of activity during the fire (i.e. more/less fundraising, volunteers, etc.)
7. Is there anything else you would like to add?
8. May I contact you later if I have follow up questions?

Chapter 45
Stakeholder Interaction for Sustainability:
The Impact of Social Media on Nigeria's Oil and Gas Industry

Uzoechi Nwagbara
Greenwich School of Management London, UK

ABSTRACT

The wave of new media technology is sweeping across the globe. Given its speed of information dissemination and retrieval, it is relevant to explore how it can be used to manage corporate-stakeholder relations, engagement, and communication. This is because communication is an effective medium for managing relations (and crisis). In the post-conflict era in Niger delta region of Nigeria that has been described as slipping into the abyss of renewed conflict and violence following perceived failure of the amnesty deal to drive change, it is crucial to rethink the instrumentality of the new media in bringing better corporate-community relations in the region. It is expected that this process will democratise stakeholder engagement and widen discursive space following the speed, method, and multiplicity of the platforms that new media affords. The author also hopes that arguments shared here will cause a rethink on the possibility of a sustainable future in post-conflict Niger delta through new media technology.

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is a major crude oil exporter with equally huge potentials to be a major player in the global marketplace (LaMonica, 2011). Sadly this is not the case, as the nation is embroiled in deepening crisis and conflict following oil exploration. It has been argued that the reason for this landscape is the scramble for ownership and wealth distribution coming from oil. In a similar vein, Kashi (2008) contends that the mode of oil exploration and exploitation is largely responsible for lingering conflict/crisis among stakeholders (particularly the multinationals and community people) in Nigeria. Despite being the fifth oil producer in the world, as well as having enormous human and natural resources, Nigeria is imperilled by mutative shades of conflicts that have stunted the nation's environmental sustainability and development.

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And for the foremost part, this has also triggered corporate-community impasse. This poor landscape is more pronounced in the Niger delta, the oil-producing region of Nigeria (Frynas, 2009; Idemudia, 2010). The Niger delta is located in the Southern part of Nigeria. This region is one of the world's largest wetlands with total land area approximately 29, 100 km square; this excludes the continental shelf (Gobo & Abam, 2006). The region is made up of nine oil-producing states called the Niger delta region, which is experiencing lingering oil-induced conflicts and corporate-community problems.

Following decades of neglect, marginalisation and oppression through unethical business practice that has given rise to conflicts between the multinationals (MNCs) or companies and the community people in the region, this paper argues that corporate-stakeholder conflict can be managed via new media. New media system and mechanism if employed can deepen more cordial stakeholder engagement thereby defusing future conflicts given the democratised method of engagement that it affords. Throughout history, when violence and other brute forms of governance fail, humanity turns to dialogue – communication – which is central to reaching consensus and mutual interest representation (Habermas, 1984). Communication amongst individuals/stakeholders to arrive at trust, mutuality and consensus predicated on shared sense-making and sense-giving (Morsing & Schultz, 2006), is vital for managing conflict. As the paper argues, this process will bring to the fore collegial engagement for a peaceful and harmonious relationship between the multinationals and their host communities in the region (Evuleocha, 2005). This can also impact on transcending ''predation-insurgency'' (Chung, 2009, p. 132) claim. This proposed method of a more cordial corporate-stakeholder engagement is in congruence with what Xu & Thomas (2010) have identified as ''relationship-oriented behaviour'' (p. 404) management in dealing with conflict management.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The presence of the multinationals (MNCs) in developing countries has generated criticisms and corporate-stakeholder impasse as their institutional philosophy often conflicts with stakeholders' perception and interests (Madsen, 2009; DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). The stakeholders have often perceived the MNCs as not living up to their billings in terms of corporate social responsibility (CSR) and sustainable business culture (Evuleocha, 2006; Frynas, 2009). The conflicting stakeholder perspectives on CSR have intensified debate on the role of business in society. Corporate social responsibility is not merely business-society dynamics; rather it is a method of considering the role of firms in society, which goes beyond the narrow economic perspective by incorporating social and environmental concerns (Carroll, 1999). This parallels what Elkington (1997) characterised as triple bottom line approach to business by factoring in economic, environmental and social issues.

Since the discovery of oil in commercial quantity in Nigeria's Niger delta for nearly six decades, the nation has witnessed one of the worst forms of conflict, poverty, marginalisation, and environmental devastation. To this end, the stakeholders (community people, NGOs, and the media) have accused the MNCs of not being committed to CSR initiatives (Agbiboa, 2012). Thus, the ongoing conflict in the region is a consequence of oil politics, exploration and exploitation. To this end, in his book, *Crude World: The Violent Twilight of Oil*, Peter Maass stated the Niger delta's sorry state:

Communities in the Niger delta, where most of Nigeria's oil was found, received little more than token payments after significant extraction got under way in the 1960's, and this accelerated a process of *national breakdown. … Foreign companies fed the conflict … I visited Nigeria to learn how oil had turned a once healthy country, and the people who lived there, into a specimen of rot (2009, pp.53-4).*

The Niger delta, which is the economic mainstay of Nigeria, where over 90% of the nation's revenue as well as 80% of her gross national product is derived, is paradoxically embroiled in this ''rot'' and incessant oil-induced conflicts (Frynas, 2009). In this vein, in his bestseller, *The Prize: The Epic Quest for Oil, Money and Power* (1990), Daniel Yergin in the 800-page blockbuster chronicled the history of global oil politics and its attendant issues. Similarly, in his *The Age of Oil: The Mythology, History and Future of the World's Most Controversial Resource*, Leonardo Maugeri articulated that oil has played a remarkable role in the economy and history of modern era (2006, p. xi). This is why ''oil, or more accurately, a range of liquids produced from it, has earned an incomparable place in human evolution'' (Smil, 2008, p. x) and conflict.

In transcending the above sad landscape, scholars have identified communication as central to managing stakeholder conflict more effectively (Morsing & Schultz, 2006; Burton, 2008; Azar, 1990). Thus, among other factors aimed at managing conflict, which include clarion call for more renewable energy consumption, geological storage of highly radioactive wastes, carbon taxes, reduction in carbon emission/greenhouse effects, and social responsible business, is the use of communication. Communication – new media technology – can be used to alert humanity on the dangers of unsustainable business culture that feeds conflict (Touri, 2009). The democratisation of communication strategies that new media makes possible accentuates the process of conflict management as it enables stakeholders' views to be aired (Wright, 2009). This process impacts on trust, credibility and legitimacy of firms' commitment to CSR and sustainability. This is the mainstay of the study. It is also within the parameters of the foregoing that conflict can be managed in the Niger delta for as well as for better corporate-community relations and stakeholder engagement (Eti, 2009, p. 92).

As a result, messages and communication about corporate performance and corporate social responsibility (CSR) most of the time animate reactions from other stakeholders, who argue that corporations or firms are not living up to expectations or that they are amplifying their CSR commitment (Morsing & Schultz, 2006). In management literature, stakeholders are those whose interests or stakes can be affected or can affect an organisation's business success (Neville, Bell & Whitwell, 2011; Freeman, 1984). Others have also reasoned that when companies focus too much on how socially responsible they are, they may be engaging in reputation management (Brown & Dacin, 1997). To this end, the way companies communicate their sustainability initiative and CSR commitment is critical for organisational growth, profitability and legitimacy particularly in the age of new media, when the dynamics of information dissemination and sharing stares everyone in the face (Youngs, 2009). Thus, communicative approach to crisis/conflict management enhances an organisation's image by building and maintaining positive identity of such organisation. This approach also generates positive feedback from stakeholders, who can influence an organisation's financial and strategic success (Freeman, 1984; Dhir, 2007). Therefore, ''with the seeming failure in the use of force, constructive confrontation … in the Niger delta conflict/crisis, the only reasonable approach is to turn to the greatest endowment of man – the spoken word'' (Ikpe, 2011, p. 97). The spoken word in this instance is communication (dialogue), which is a corporate strategy for reputation management and for mitigating scepticism arising from stakeholders' perception of organisations' CSR initiatives. This is because communication is critical in defusing conflict or crisis as it makes differing intentions clear in a way that potentially removes distrust by creating avenues for credibility and transparency of intentions.

In the age of globalisation, new media is a potent instrument in engaging with stakeholders in the Niger delta given the impacts it has on information transmission, retrieval and speed, as well as transparency. Apparently, if the killing of the Nigerian eco-activist and human rights campaigner, Ken Saro-Wiwa, had happened in the era of new media, the impacts and reactions that the event would have spawned could have been different given the infectious nature of new media technology in promoting stakeholder engagement and social solidarity (Kperogi, 2011). Recently, events around the world in which new media have been instrumental in fostering social transformation and change of public perception are well noted (Shepherd, 2011, p. 3). To this end, according to Payton & Kvasny (2012)

… the ''magic'' of the Internet is that it is a technology that puts cultural acts, symbolisations in all forms, in the hands of all participants; it radically decentralises the position of speech, publishing, filmmaking, radio and television broadcasting, in short the apparatuses of cultural production (p. 83).

In addition, new media offers greater visibility and opportunity for stakeholders to connect as well as engage in direct communication that impacts social and environmental conditions. This is also important for businesses to be perceived as being CSR-oriented as they use the platform of enhanced CSR communication precipitated by new media to engage with other stakeholders thereby deflecting criticism and conflict (Merilainen & Vos, 2011, p. 297).

Theoretical Framework

In the Niger delta region of Nigeria, where most of the multinationals' operations are carried out, conflict has been considered to be incessant and unabated in view of its prolonged nature, causes and consequences. Issues of environmental neglect, marginalisation of community people (stakeholders), and denial of human rights have coalesced to underpin a complex kind of conflict. This is what Burton (2008) has characterised as ''deep-rooted'' conflict. Azar (1990) concurs to this and considers conflict in the region as protracted. According to Okoh (2005), conflict is defined as ''contradictions arising from differences in the interests, ideas, ideologies, orientations and precipitous tendencies of the people concerned'' (p. 92). This means that conflict is a function of contradictions inherent in individual approach to issues. Irobi (2010) sees conflict as a struggle between groups that consider each other as incompatible. In Deutsch's view (1973), it is a protest amongst aggrieved people. The methods and strategies utilised in managing conflicts are referred to as conflict management. Conflict management deals with strategies and processes that help to manage or control conflict (Botes, 2003; Aminu & Marfo, 2010). It involves effective ways of handling conflicts, crisis and the like to achieve peaceful co-existence.

As stated earlier, how conflicts or crises are managed in the Niger delta has been described as largely responsible for lingering violence associated with oil exploration (Okoh, 2005). There are discourses on how to deal with waves of conflicts that are associated with managing crises in the Niger delta (Irobi, 2010; Okonta & Oronta, 2003). But, most of the debates focus on conflict as a consequence of socio-economic and political contradictions, as well as government/transnational collusion in crises plaguing the region (Ojokarotu, 2008). However, this paper will take a new dimension, which will add to new insights into crisis management in the region and Nigeria by extension in relation to oil politics. This will be articulated via the instrumentality of new media as a platform for better stakeholder engagement towards a sustainable future (Youngs, 2009; Campbell, 2009). This is vital in the new media age, when the discursive space is widened. The new media is an interactive strategy that galvanises (stakeholder) engagement and increased discursivity (Peled, 2000). The opportunities that new media affords stakeholders to engage with social and environmental issues have been characterised as ''a new form of activism from an influential constituency rarely heard in the past'' (Booth & Matic, 2011, p. 184). So, in the Niger delta, the stakeholders can appropriate new media for wider and more effective dissemination of information and opinions that could impact CSR matters, crisis management and business-community relations. Accordingly, as Mei, Bansal & Pang, (2010, p. 143) observed, ''[I]n times of crises, the new media present another avenue of communicating with stakeholders''.

Thus, the emergence of new media technologies leading to reduced communication costs, amplified ''richness'' of communication and reduced travel cost, has propelled a reconsideration of stakeholder engagement that finds expression in re-conceptualising stakeholder engagement and above all managing crisis. In their book, *The Social Construction of Disability in New Media*, Goggin & Newell (2003) defined new media as ''… new digital communications technologies that include the Internet and broadband networks (fast high-capacity data services), advanced telecommunications networks (offering services such as caller ID, digital mobile phones, third-generation mobile telecommunications, video telephones), and digital broadcasting …'' (p. xiii). New media has an unprecedented level of connectivity and user-friendly application process. Given its stretch, reach, speed and user-generated content application, new media technology is widely used by stakeholders to advance environmental issues (Peled, 2000). It is noteworthy to say that central to new media is the Internet. The Internet can be defined as the interconnection of a number of computer networks on a global magnitude through which information can be transmitted and retrieved. Through the connection of telephone and cable networks, which gives the Internet its unique feature, as a communication medium, it can be ''owned'' or ''operated'' by a particular body be it a single individual, corporation or government. This is what Cunningham (2010, p. 5) calls ''personalisation of communication''.

A recurring decimal in the discussion of virtual communities, which is a metonym for new media, is the extent to which they can mimic ''real'' communities (Komito & Bates, 2009, p. 233). Through this process of imitating the real, engagement can be launched. In exemplifying this, recent events around the world in which new media played pivotal roles in bringing social transformation have been well documented. For example, the case in Arab Spring (Egypt), where by belonging to a Facebook group devoted to Khalid Said, the Egyptian programmer that was killed by the country's police forces, online protest was galvanised that metamorphosed into ''real'' protest. This was instrumental in toppling the government of Egypt's erstwhile dictator, Hosni Mubarak. Another case is the Kryptonite Crisis, where poor and lack of immediate response to public relations issue by a company that sells bicycle lock, resulted to damaging PR to the company. The birth of Facebook in 2004, YouTube in 2005 and Twitter in 2006, as well as other social networking sites have brought unprecedented wave of activism and stakeholder engagement in human history. No matter the criticisms levelled against these mediums of engagement and interaction, they are potent instruments in crisis management, as well as in safeguarding rights of stakeholders (Youngs, 2009). In view of the innovative nature of new media, it has been observed that this medium is changing ways of information dissemination, as well as reshaping the whole process of stakeholder engagement in the Niger delta (Kperogi, 2011). This reality is lacking in using traditional or mainstream media, which is highly regulated. Traditional media also shies away from reporting or engaging in issues that affect corporations' wellbeing; this is because the mainstream media is usually protect the corporations' interests (Campbell, 2009).

In realising the importance of new media in facilitating better social and environmental advocacy, Nigerians are tapping into this platform to advance sustainability issues (Rising Voices, 2013). In exemplifying this, there is evidence of growing use of the Internet – social media – by Nigerians given rising level of literacy as well as availability of Internet cafes in the nation. According, there are proofs of a rising use of the social media by Nigerians. As a consequence, social platforms such as Facebook and Twitter have become important mechanisms for keeping in touch. Certainly, social media are opening up the Nigerian social space in an unprecedented manner. It is now the new equaliser that is deconstructing the information monopoly conventionally enjoyed by the state and mainstream or traditional media house (Ihebuzor, 2012, p. 1). To this end, Nigerian-made Internet portals such as *Nairaland*, *Sahara Repporters*, *onlineNigeria* and *YNaija.com* and others are creating unusual opportunities for Nigerians to report environmental matters more effectively. This upsurge of ''social-intelligence literacy'' (Haryson, Metayer & Sarrazin, 2012) has ruptured the monopoly of traditional media that limits stakeholder engagement, corporate-community relations and socio-environmental issues.

Traditional Vs. New Media: Towards a New Form of Crisis Management

New media (Internet) provides an alternative media that affords opportunity for accessing more news items, as well as advancing alternative voice particularly that which might not be available through traditional media (Campbell, 2009, p. 139). It also provides a platform for wider access and dissemination of news and information against what the traditional media can offer (Youngs, 2009). To this end, many media outfits and individuals as well as television and radio stations such as CNN and BBC rely heavily on social platforms as significant sources of news items and information especially given its spontaneous information dissemination and diffusion. The new media is characterised by the following:

- Speedy information delivery and diffusion
- User-generated application and unbounded retrieval system
- ''Boundaryless'' space and use of multimedia
- Up-to-minute reporting and building of social momentum
- User interactivity and reduced political editorialising
- Citizenship journalism online

New information and communications technologies are central to the processes of engagement. Thus, in today's world, mediated communication is the leading instrument for constituting reality and managing crisis. This has led to an unprecedented exposure of corporations to the public regarding their CSR initiatives, weak stakeholder engagement and opaque (CSR) communication (Touri, 2009). In addition to managing crisis, new media can fuel crisis/conflict and resistance amongst stakeholders (Mei, Bansal and Pang, 2010, p. 145).

Thus, if new media has the capacity to escalate crisis, it could also be used to manage or mitigate crisis (Hilse and Hoewner, 1998). Thus, in the age of new media, immediate, emerging and sustained crises (Parson, 1996, p. 26) can be dealt with since it has the capacity to manage emotions via virtual community. It can also negate content editorialising, which traditional media makes possible. Also, since new media is community-driven and interactive, it can facilitate lively conversations and citizen journalism, which is a platform for reinventing the social space and sustainability discourses. To this end, new media is a ''grassroots movement that may sow the seeds for new forms of journalism, public discourse, interactivity, and online communities … more credible than traditional media'' (Ko, Yin & Kuo, 2008, p. 542). The next section of the paper explores environmental sustainability and stakeholder engagement contingent on ''Zapatista Effect''.

Advancing Sustainability and Stakeholder Engagement Through New Media: The "Zapatista Effect" in the Era of Amnesty Deal

Social media sites such as FaceBook, Twitter, LinkedIn, My-Space and others deliver connectivity based on stakeholder interaction and plurality of views grounded on the anvil of inter-subjective opinions and blurring of ideological positions. This is in consonance with the ideal of assemblage of communicative spaces that permits the circulation of sustainable practices. Remarkably, in the ''age of new activism'' Evuleocha (2005, p. 328) new media communications technology is playing a growing role in mitigating time, travel and funding stresses, as well as facilitating dialogue that are crucial for changing environmental and political landscape in the region. This process impacts sustainability and environmental activism as ''electronic dialogue … can eliminate the constraints and barriers of physical space'' (Dale, Newman & Ling, 2010, p. 39). Taken broadly, this process is not only about technoactivism (Payton & Kvasny, 2012, p. 88); it is more of intensifying ''democratic self-expression and networking, as well as re-inventing corporate-community relations (Kahn & Kellner, 2004, p. 91) for sustainable futures.

Given that the use of force and violence have failed to bring lasting solution to the Niger delta conundrum, The Yar'Adua administration came up with a political programme to foster sustainable peace in the region. Thus,

[I]n his determination to overcome the crisis of the Niger delta, which President Yar'Adua has described as a night-mare… he set up a Niger delta ministry. In the same vein, the Yar'Adua government also set up the Niger Delta Technical Committee, which has already submitted its report … (Egwemi, 2010 p. 137)

The above frameworks were set up to advance sustainable peace in the region. This political experimentation metamorphosed into Amnesty Deal (Nwagbara, 2010). The amnesty deal is a programme that promised ending the drawn-out conflict in the Niger delta by offering warring militants state pardon as they trade their arms and ammunition with state pardon.

By trading knives and guns, the ex-militants were promised by the federal government of Nigeria to have rehabilitation programme in terms of providing jobs, payment, skills acquisition and other perks that will dissuade them form engaging in conflict. President Yar'Adua's political leadership programme is surmised in what has been described as the ''7-Point Agenda''. However, it has been noted that President Yar 'Adua's ''7-Point Agenda'' is a mere revised version of similar programmes in the past, which Nigerian heads of state tried to implement without significant success (Ibaba, 2012). Eneh (2011) has identified President Musa Yar'Adua's political move to reinvent Niger delta, the fault-line area of Nigeria, as a mere make-believe. For him, this programme is ''white-washed or modified versions'' (2011, p. 66) of previous commendable, but unrealisable programmes by previous administrations. This situation has rather brought about new wave of violence and conflict as the community people (stakeholders) see the amnesty deal as not living up to its billings.

In view of the foregoing, there is renewed stakeholder agitation and conflict in the region on the heels of perceived ineffective stakeholder representation by local chiefs and other intermediaries between the government and the communities in the Niger delta (Adeyemo and Olu-Adeyemi, 2010). The instrument of communication to bring inclusive debate and shared vision is crucial for sustainable future in the post-conflict era, when trust and credible information dissemination and sharing are critical to consolidate the tenets of the peace deal. Thus, as ''… the commanders'' – the leaders – of the amnesty programme benefit immensely from the ''largess and state patronage while their foot soldiers'' as well as stakeholders are short-changed (Oluwaniyi, 2011, p. 50), the new media will help foster citizen participation in the decision-making process, that is still in the shadow of few individuals (representatives), who are rather self-serving. Democratising public opinion as well as widening the public sphere via blogging is crucial in this instance (Wright, 2009). This process is expected to bring about change around Nigeria's political and environmental landscape and CSR (Touri, 2009).

The first blog started a little over two decades ago and were called weblogs (Alcock, 2003). Weblogs were shortened to blog in 1999, and the Internet creator called blogger. In view of the constraints of HTML knowledge to prospective bloggers, blogs did not become popular until development in Internet use grew, which enabled bloggers (online publishers) to create their own online diaries without good knowledge of HTML. This saw rapid growth of blogging (Aharony, 2009, p. 588). The new blogging facility enables permalinks, which means permanent links to posted messages, as well as simplified method of archiving. This process allows readers of blog posts to make comments on posts, as well as facilitates conversation between primary author and contributors to their comments (posts). According to Hargittai (2003), blogs are classified as thus based on style and contents:

- Interactive commentary on a given subject matter;
- Editorial pages: one-way commentary;
- A personal journal that describes author's diaries and comments;
- A list of links with commentaries on behalf of the blogger; and
- Potpourri blogs.

Other authors have given different typologies of blogs according to ownership; while others have classified them according to content, authorship and layout.

The advent of blogs has marked a watershed in environmental advocacy, political agitation and democratisation of the public sphere (Youngs, 2009). This has also necessitated a ''new form of mainstream communication'' (Rosenbloom, 2004, p. 31). To this end, reasons have been proffered why people engage in blogging. Dvorak (2002) stated five reasons for blogging: a need to share; a need to publish; ego gratification; ''antidepersonalisation''; and elimination of frustration. Nardi, Whittaker, & Schwarz (2002) opined that people blog to disseminate their knowledge and views about societal realities. For Graham (2002), blogging is animated by the need to publish, the need to reduce spam, the need to have sense of community and the desire to learn about web publishing. No matter the reason why people blog, blogging is essentially a commitment by concerned citizens to widen the blogosphere. This space echoes the Habermasian public sphere, a space where private opinions engage public debate to advance democratic ideals, as well as informed and reasoned public opinion that are necessary for stakeholder engagement and sustainability. This is in sync with what has been considered as ''virtual democracy'' (Youngs, 2009) in media history.

Following the introduction of North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in 1994, the Zapatista National Liberation Army (ZNLA) in the Southern state of Chiapas in Mexico launched a pioneering online attack that calibrates ''social netwar''. This groundbreaking move in new media technology, culminated in the use of the Internet in a warlike situation. This move gave birth to a phenomenon known in new media jargon as ''Zapatista effect'' or ''Zapatista Movement'' (Wallis, 2005, p. 220). It has been noted that this single effort reverberates with the reframing of how social network could impact the media, civil society, social movements and the virtual community in general. The Nigerian social movements have replicated this phenomenal online engagement in the efforts to rearticulate corporate-community relations as well as CSR commitment and sustainable business culture in the Niger delta and Nigeria in general. Interestingly, this platform has created a remarkable dimension of counter-hegemony, which is Nancy Fraser's term for ''counter public''; this has equally facilitated power shift from the mainstream to the periphery, which is moored to stakeholder engagement (Nwagbara, 2013).

Central to blogging is the issue of change. In instantiating this, in the Niger delta, blogs have been appropriated by communities and individuals in local and non-local settings to produce knowledge and information for democratic re-engineering (Kperogi, 2011). In post-conflict the Niger delta (Nigeria), the use of blogs has been contributory to sensitisation of the people about the hoax of the amnesty deal. Blogs such as *Livewire* by Amnesty International, *Elendu Report, TravelBlog*, *Naijapolitics@yahoogroups.com*, *AfricaArgument.org* and *Patitos Post* among others are increasing the flow of people's participation in political debate in the Niger delta – and Nigeria in general (Kperogi, 2011). These blogs are vibrant in exposing as well as challenging the dynamics of stakeholder engagement and CSR-related matters s well as sustainability in the Niger delta (Graham, 2002).

In this connection, some other online media outlets such as *Gamji.com*, *Nigeriavillagesquare.com*, as well as Nigerian online newspapers (*Times of Nigeria* and *USAfricaonline.com*) are being used as sites for contestation of corporate-stakeholder engagement. This is unlike the situation in pre-Zapatista era (Lunat, 2008, p. 7). To this end,

[B]logs on mainstream media sites could certainly be regarded as an indication of a modified public sphere approach, integrating new forms of horizontal (individualised) engagement with more traditional … forms. … The hybrid role of established media in combining their traditional 'mass' (vertical) role with new (horizontal) forms, including blogging, is one of the most notable developments of new media era (Youngs, 2009, p. 133).

Given the magical flow of information made possible by the Internet, blogs and other new media technologies are used to push for better environmental management and sustainable culture. Correspondingly, The Zapatista Movement, a product of new media, has galvanised a form of resistance and Gramscian counter-hegemony movement that finds materiality in community media by removing control and inhibitions associated with media ownership permitted by state-sanctioned ownership structure. This effort also witnessed the ascendancy of popular journalism (citizen journalism), as well as what has been described as ''guerrilla journalism'' in Nigeria (Ndlela, 2010, p. 87). Guerrilla journalism in spite of the criticism that bedevils it is a virile apparatus for interrogating unsustainable practice that existed in pre-amnesty Niger delta.

CONCLUSION

In concluding this paper, it has been argued that new media is a potent platform for managing conflcit, as well as a medium for advancing sustainability and stakeholder engagement, which traditional media make difficult. Through the instrumentality of new media that finds expression in unfettered diffusion of information and sharing, stakeholders in the Niger delta can arrive at stakeholder consensus premised on inclusive engagement. Thus, with the failure of violent and aggressive means in the past to bring sustainable peace to the region, this paper has argued that the elusive peace and sustainable future can be achieved through new media, which is a harbinger of flexible dialogue, unfettered communication, relationship-building and engagement. It is also within the parameter of this statement that oil-induced conflict, which is responsible for poor corporate-community relations and lingering conflict in the region, could be transcended.

In moving forward, policy makers and management experts on sustainability and business ethics can appropriate the insights shared in this paper to advance sustainability debate and CSR in Nigeria, which is crisis-ridden as a result of petro-violence. Thus, in the post-conflict era (amnesty deal period), which is referred to as gradually slipping into a fresh wave of conflict, the use of communication – new media – is urgently needed. This will help to build trust and credibility for sustainable peace given the failure of past attempts via violent means that failed to curb or manage conflict as well as engender stakeholder interaction effectively. Therefore, for sustainable peace and better corporate-stakeholder relations in the Niger delta, the place of new media is essential as it democratises access to information dissemination and sharing as well as enhances sustainability and stakeholder participation in CSR dialogue.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Corporate-Community Relations: How affected stakeholders, particularly the communities in the Niger delta region of Nigeria, relate or interact with the oil and gas companies (MNCs) for sustainable development.

Crisis Management: A management or corporate strategy aimed at mitigating levels and dimensions of crisis or better management of conflicts for peaceful co-existence.

New Media: Different from traditional media as it democratises information flow, dissemination and consumption as well as personalises how information is shared amongst people globally. A facet of new media is social media, which is based on socialising through application of new media.

Niger Delta Amnesty Deal: Given prolonged corporate-community problems, Nigeria's last president brokered the amnesty deal as a way to bring lasting peace in the region as warring Niger delta people drop their arms to embrace peaceful reconciliation with Nigerian government.

Nigeria: A sovereign nation and the most populous country in Africa with nearly 170 million population. Its economic mainstay is oil and gas, which is traditionally known as a major source of its corporate-community relations problems as communities allege that the oil and gas companies are not living up to their billings in terms of CSR or community development and rural capacity building, among others.

Stakeholder Engagement: A public relations strategy as well as engagement process that recognises inclusion of all people (stakeholders) affected in the Niger delta issue. The Niger delta is the region or states that produce oil and gas in Nigeria, that is where oil and gas are deposited in Nigeria.

Sustainability: A management and business strategy in which three essential factors such as environment, people and profit are considered in order to ensure sustainable development and sustainability or peaceful co-existence.

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Section 7

Transmedia Journalism

Chapter 46
Journalism in the Twenty-First Century:
To Be or Not to Be Transmedia?

João Canavilhas
Universidade da Beira Interior, Portugal

ABSTRACT

Transmedia content has been the subject of several studies in the field of fiction, sustaining relative unanimity about the characteristics that this kind of content should have. In the field of journalism, the situation is fairly different due to its particular specificities. Multimedia, intermedia, or cross-media are often wrongly used as synonymous of transmedia, although there are important differences between all these concepts. In part, this misunderstanding is motivated by the fact that all of them relate to convergence processes in journalism, but a more detailed analysis allows us to find differences, highlighting transmedia as the most complete concept. This chapter proposes a framework that can support journalists in the production of transmedia contents that conveniently explore the characteristics of the involved media, using formats and languages that better fit the story, and enabling the user to engage in the interpretation, change, and distribution of these contents.

INTRODUCTION

The exhibition of highly successful series and movies has aroused the attention of the scientific community to transmedia contents and has contributed to an extensive discussion, which has helped to explain this concept when applied to fiction (Scolari, 2009, 2014; Gosciola, 2012; Bona & Souza, 2013). In journalism, the situation is quite different due to the field's specificities. Notions as intermedia (Rajewsky, 2002), multimedia (Salaverría, 2005) or cross-media (Veglis, 2012) are often confused with transmedia given their similarities, though they have important differences.

In the first part of this chapter, the author will present a detailed analysis to allow finding differences between diverse concepts about transmedia, emphasizing the difficulty to apply transmedia to journalism due to the complexity of its application in an activity where short-term periodicity is paramount. As a

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starting point, the author uses the considerations about transmedia storytelling initially discussed by Jenkins (2003, 2006) because their simplicity help to transpose them into the field of journalism. To the author, a story can be considered transmedia when: 1) It is expanded through different media, formats and languages; 2) each of the story contents is autonomous, has a proper meaning and can be used as an entry point into the narrative; and 3) the audience participates in the story through the aggregation of elements and their sharing.

Jenkins compiled in his blog in 2009 what he has called the core principles of transmedia storytelling, which have been updated/improved over time. Those principles are: Spreadability vs. Drillability, Continuity vs. Multiplicity, Immersion vs. Extractability, World building, Seriality, Subjectivity and Performance. The simultaneous verification of all these conditions in a journalistic environment can be difficult due to their intrinsic characteristics, constraints related to production time, and a lack of human resources in the newsrooms. In the second part of the paper, the author explores those same principles in Moloney's (2011) perspective when applied to journalism.

In the third part, the chapter focuses on an example of a successful Portuguese transmedia journalism product called "E Se Fosse Consigo?" [What if it Were You?], a TV show expanded to a second TV channel, press, sites and social networks. Lastly, the paper delineates an indicative framework that can support the producers of transmedia contents in the elaboration of products that conveniently explore the characteristics of the involved media, using the formats and languages that better fit the story and enable the user to engage in the interpretation, change and distribution of these contents.

Having explained the approach to the concept of transmedia, and its transposition from fiction to the journalism field, the relation between journalism and the future remains to be understood, as mentioned in the title of this work. That is, why is there this link between transmedia journalism and journalism in the XXI century?

Recent studies show journalism trends for the next few years and among them are some that fit perfectly into transmedia journalism. The increasing consumption of online news has been reported every year by the Reuters Institute Digital News Report (Reuters Institute, 2017), which also confirms the increase in accesses to Internet through mobile devices (Rosenstiel & Mitchell, 2012). The use of these platforms facilitates the personalization of consumption (Lorenz, 2014) and the participation of users (Kammer, 2012), allowing the passage "from the monarchy of content to the republic of users" (Aguado & Güere, 2013, p.64). Other phenomena linked to transmedia journalism, such as the use of news gamification (Ferrer Conill & Karlsson, 2015), confirm that the future of journalism could undergo a transmedia process.

MANAGING CONCEPTS AROUND TRANSMEDIA

Updating a previous compilation (Canavilhas, 2013), it is worthwhile to approach the concept of transmedia to better isolate the characteristics that distinguish transmedia from other similar concepts, and try to integrate the discussion into the field of journalism.

The starting point is the concept of *multimedia* because it is the simplest and the most associated with journalism. According to Salaverría (2005), multimedia is "the ability, granted by the digital support, to combine in a single message at least two of the three following elements: text, image and sound" (p.32). In 2014, Salaverría simplified the definition, not because the previous one was too complex, but because he considered that the constituent elements of a multimedia product are now more than the ones initially enunciated (text, image and sound) and that in the future many more will appear, associating the concept of multimedia with human senses. Keeping in mind that the current elements of text, photography, graphics and videos appeal to vision, just as sound appeals to hearing and vibration appeals to the touch. In the future, it is predictable that temperature and shape may also rise associated with touch, and aromas associated with smell, and taste will be associated with the palate. In this sense, Salaverría (2014) proposes a simplified definition: To be multimedia, content must "combine at least two types of language into one message" (p. 39), but in this larger context of elements. The author stresses that, in fact, this simple combination is a very common feature, even in the pre-digital media, but it has become more visible with the emergence of the Internet because this is a medium clearly understood as the combination of contents previously distributed by massive mainstream media. It seems obvious that there is no possibility of confusing multimedia with transmedia.

The second concept analyzed is *cross-media*; which could be defined as "the production of any content (news, music, text, and images) for more than one media platform (for example print, web, and TV) within the same media organization" (Veglis, 2012, p.210). Salaverría (2014) calls that a kind of "multimedia as a platform" (p.27), referring to the logistic combination of several media. Boumans (2004) adds that the content must be delivered to a range of devices and "the use of more than one medium needs to support one theme/story/one purpose/one goal/one message" (p.4). Thus, a cross-media story uses several devices to deliver multimedia content that complement the purpose of empowering the story, but audiences do not necessarily participate in the spreading process, and that is why the concept cannot fit with the definition proposed by Jenkins.

Other possibility is the concept of *intermedia*, understood by Rajewsky (2005) in two dimensions: As a medial transposition, i.e. "the transformation of a given media product (a text, a film, etc.) or of its substratum into another medium" (p.52) or as a media combination, which is "the result or the very process of combining at least two conventionally distinct media or medial forms of articulation" (p. 52). The concept falls in line of previous ones, ignoring the audiences and the complementarity between elements of a certain story.

Finally, the concept of *transmedia* brings together some of the characteristics set out in a single formula: "stories that unfold across multiple media platforms, with each medium making distinctive contributions to our understanding of the world, a more integrated approach to franchise development than models based on urtexts and ancillary products" (Jenkins, 2006, p.334). As noted by Veglis (2012),

Transmedia is not just about multiple stories, but about creating a rich in-between space, an archive of shared meaning in-between different parts of the story. By using different media, it attempts to create "entry points" through which users can become immersed in a story world. (p.315)

Thus, adapting this concept to journalism becomes more complex than in cases of fiction, because the journalistic contents are always related to real events, which causes problems to create multiple entry points, but also because of the current reduced newsrooms and the fact that cycles of production in journalism are quite different from those in the fiction industry.

TRANSMEDIA JOURNALISM

The considerations about the transmedia phenomenon jumped from fiction to journalism, prompting several discussions due to the previously mentioned difficulty in adapting the concept to an activity marked by the periodicity of the publications, the short cycles of production, and to the use of a raw material difficult to handle: The unpredictability of society's daily reality.

As expected, in the early years, authors sought to label what defines transmedia journalism, focusing initially on two essential fields: 1) Narrative, namely the relation between content and media (Moloney, 2011; Renó & Flores, 2012; Alzamora & Tárcia, 2012), and 2) the user's participation in the contents (Davis, 2013). In addition to these fields, other authors have dealt with some particularities of transmedia journalism, such as the possible formats (Canavilhas, 2013), the factors that affect production (Hayes, 2011), and the design (Serrano Telleria, 2016), to name just a few examples, which will not be analyzed in this chapter.

Concerning the definition of transmedia journalism, Renó & Flores (2012) agree with Jenkin's definition, when they say that a narrative must use more than one medium and mention the obligation of the user's participation. The authors highlight the role of mobile devices in the process. Although they consider them a mere intervention by the users, it is enough to fulfill this requirement because it is not mandatory that their participation change the narrative. However, Scolari (2013), referring specifically to non-fictional transmedia, reinforces the significance of the user's interventions, which can change the narrative, to be considered as transmedia content: Therefore, this possibility must be considered in journalism. In fact, this is one of the greatest difficulties of journalistic content and the one that most divides researchers in the area: Whether the role of users can be limited to a low involvement participation (e.g. comment) or the participation must necessarily influence the development of the reported story. Livingstone (2004) notes that, the activity of viewing "is converging with reading, shopping, voting, playing, researching, writing, and chatting. Media are now used anyhow, anyplace, anytime" (p.76). This ubiquitous communication has created a media ecosystem where audiences are compelled to participate. The massification of smartphones with Internet connectivity, as well as the exponential growth of social networks, have created the conditions for the shift from a one-to-many system to a many-to-many system, requiring people's participation. That is why audience participation is crucial for the content to be considered transmedia, transforming the previous passive audience into a complex tangle of opinions and proposals that change and enrich the content.

If the issue of user's participation is important for the discussion, the relationship between media and content is equally fundamental. Keep in mind that news stories can be expanded through independent information nodes with their own meaning and that the nodes can be of three different types, each with its own significance. Therefore, according to Rost, Bernardi and Bergero (2017), "*expansion* is when each message adds inputs that expand and enrich the original story through information, opinions or inspiring ideas, ranging from the addition of sametime location data or space, into links, images, among others" (p.16). On the other hand, "*adaptation* is when you bring the same content to another medium or platform, adapting it to the narrative possibilities of the new support but without adding inputs. Story does not expand, it only adapts itself to another environment" (p.16). Lastly, "*tipped over* is when exactly the same content is replicated in another medium or platform, without respecting its own language" (p.16). This classification will be used in the analysis of the contents offered by the TV show "E Se Fosse Consigo."

One of the most comprehensive approaches to transmedia journalism, and the one that will be used here, emerges from a master thesis: Moloney (2011) revisits Jenkin's principles, adapting them to in-depth journalistic formats (features and documentary) because "daily journalism, with its time-constrained brevity, is not a viable option. Transmedia must be designed carefully and developed with a lengthy lead time to be effective" (p.12). Moloney (2011) "revisit[s] these principles, albeit in a new arrangement" (p.62):

Spreadability is about content dissemination. To be spreadable, the content must include the Internet in its dissemination strategy, whether in its own website, using aggregators, e-mail, newsletters or, the most popular way, through social networks. This feature is present today in almost all news, which facilitates its sharing by providing an icon of several social networks at the end of the content.

Drillability seems to be a strange concept to journalism because reporters aspire to tell the whole story. However, powered by the Internet, news is now faster, which forces journalists to leave reading tracks expanding the developments of the subject, linking to databases or more accurate information offered by other media. This is a very common feature in online news, which, in addition to the intext links, offers information related to the topic of the news, and background of the event itself, provided by the characteristic databases of this generation of journalism.

Continuity is something that, within journalism, may be visible in the editorial approach and in the style the media uses to address the issues. In a multiplatform story with different kinds of contents, and independently of the journalists that participate in it, the final work is cohesive and meets a set of common requirements.

Diverse and Personal in Viewpoint is a fundamental characteristic of journalism because objectivity depends on the selection of different voices in the story. In this case, it is about double diversity because it works on two levels: The different perspectives on the subject of the story but also the diversity in the authorship, i.e. the connection with other works that can add other points of view. In this case, user's participation can be seen as an important contribution to the diversity of views, since it introduces elements with the potential to open new paths to the news.

Immersion is another transmedia principle that challenges journalism. The author suggests the gamification as a way to reach the user's immersion in news contents. Another possibility is to be able to transport the reader to the place of the event, which can be done with multimedia contents and life stories with which people can identify themselves. This kind of "sense of being there" can still be achieved with the use of immersive technologies that explore virtual reality.

Extractability is about the things that users can do with the knowledge absorbed from the news. Contents must include enough information to help the users in their daily life and allow them to understand the world where they live. In fact, this is one of the principles of journalism, so it warrants to be enumerated to distinguish journalistic content from entertainment, something very important because transmedia initially ascended associated with this field.

Built in real worlds is one of the easiest principles to put into practice because the goal of a feature is exactly to transmit the local environment in the most helpful way and as close as possible to reality, which can be done using sound, for example.

The corollary of Jenkins' principles adapted by Moloney (2011) is *Inspiring to action*. "If journalists enter the profession hoping to inspire change and engage the public in democracy, facilitating a way for the public to act on information is a significant goal" (p.91). Combining this principle with extractability, it is possible to say that transmedia journalism keeps one of the essential journalism missions, even when using principles from fiction.

This is fundamental because one of the basic objectives of journalism, and especially long-form genres, is to inform users with accuracy. Helping citizens to perceive the world in which they live and, thus, help them to make decisions in electoral moments, is fundamental for the functioning of democracies. The recent phenomenon of fake news, and its possible influence in American elections, is a living example of what can happen in a context where information is insufficient or not diverse: The absence of a multitude of sources and the non-participation of users opens the field for phenomena, such as the so called “post-truth” with unforeseeable consequences.

The fulfillment of this objective—the provision of independent, varied, accurate, reliable information inserted in a meaningful context—depends on the proper function of the trilogy “media support » content architecture » user participation” in a media environment characterized by diversity and the emergence of bidirectional, interactive and personalized media that allows users to have a more effective role in the news process. Transmedia journalism could be one of the ways to offer this to the user, although only in long format contents due to the complexity of production, which includes eventual developments resulting from the participation of users.

E SE FOSSE CONSIGO? AN EXAMPLE OF TRANSMEDIA JOURNALISM IN PORTUGAL

Considering all that has been mentioned previously, for this research a Portuguese journalistic production that fulfills all the transmedia requirements was chosen, although one of the items only meets the minimum. To select an example was not a simple mission because of the demands it entailed. The TV show “E Se Fosse Consigo?” [What if it Were You?], broadcasted on the SIC channel in 2016, may be one of the few examples of transmedia content. Produced by Impresa, one of the largest Portuguese media groups, the program involved the national television channel SIC (Sociedade Independente de Televisão) [Television Independent Society] and the cable channel SIC Notícias as central elements. The narrative was complemented with the works published in the two most widely read press titles in its segments—Expresso (weekly newspaper) and Visão (news magazine) —and in online social networks.

The main show, broadcasted simultaneously by SIC (prime time) and SIC Notícias, was developed around situations in which actors staged cases of prejudice and social intolerance in public places. The reactions of anonymous citizens around the location where the staging took place were recorded through hidden cameras, seeking to analyze their ability to intervene in defense of fundamental values of society. This central element was contextualized with interviews conducted previously and interviews with the citizens recorded immediately after the staging had ended.

In the presentation of the show, Ricardo Costa, Impresa’s general-director of information at the time, described it as a social experimentation program. SIC Notícias website stated that the show “tests the Portuguese’s capacity of intervention in defense of others, departing from fictional situations” (SIC Notícias, 2016a) and asked: “To what extent do we say no to intolerance, prejudice, and violence?” (SIC Notícias, 2016a). Eight episodes have addressed topics such as racism, homophobia, domestic violence, dating violence, youth and alcohol, bullying, obesity, and elderly abuse.

The transmediality of the format occurs through developments on other platforms. At SIC Notícias, the show was followed by a studio debate led by the anchor, Conceição Lino, where experts and victims of the situations covered in the episodes participated. Issues and comments made by the audience on the show’s Facebook page appeared on the ticker during the debate. Although the first television program was broadcasted on April 18, 2016, the show began its public debut on April 7, 2016, with the creation of the Facebook page and the publication of the first post on the 8th.

Welcome to the "E Se Fosse Consigo" page on Facebook. Here you can access more contents, besides those which you will see on SIC information program. I hope you enjoy the page, and join us and use your power to share it. This page was created to be even closer to our viewers. So please do not hesitate to send us comments, suggestions, criticisms or compliments. We value intelligent and well-informed contributions that can enrich our work and represent different points of view. We reserve the right not to accept inappropriate comments with offensive or commercial purposes. If you notice any of these situations, please be sure to let us know. (E Se Fosse Consigo?, 2016a)

In this first message, it is possible to find two features of transmediality: On the one hand, the use of a second platform; on the other, the opening of the show to the audience's participation. Moreover, on this day, the first promos of some themes to be addressed in the program were released as well as the show's jingle and the hashtag that was going to be used in various social networks: #esefossecontigo. The following day posts were dedicated to the introduction of the show to the press, to the video clip of the music used in the beginning and to the presence of the presenter in other information channels to talk about the program. Small reports about the first theme—racism—started to be published and will be analyzed. In parallel, two journalistic publications belonging to the same group—Visão and Expresso—published weekly pieces on the show's themes. Likewise, opinion polls and texts were published. In the online industry, "E Se Fosse Consigo" used the SIC Notícias website, the Expresso website and the Snapshat of this publication, and followed the Twitter publications that used the hashtag #esefosseconsigo. In order to better understand the transmediality of the program, the first show will be analyzed: *Theme*: Racism; *Date of issue*: April 18, 2016; *SIC audience*: 1.2 million viewers.

Television

On April 16, 2016, two days before the show's debut, SIC and SIC Notícias news programs included a survey on racism, advertising that the subject would be the theme of "E Se Fosse Consigo?"

Most Portuguese do not consider themselves racist, however, as for accepting someone black in the family, the answer is different. These are the results of a Eurosondagem opinion study for SIC. Get to know the results of an opinion study on racism in Portugal. What do you have to say about these numbers? (SIC Notícias, 2016b)

The next day, April 17, 2016, the host of the show was interviewed during SIC's Evening News. On the 18th, after Jornal da Noite, the first program was shown on SIC, and this is the central element of the transmedia story. The content of this first program is summarized below.

After a small block of contextualization images, the first scene occurs: On a café's esplanade, a young woman presents her black boyfriend to her father. The father, surprised, does not greet the boy and tells his daughter that she has disappointed him by choosing a person of that color. He emphasizes that they have a different set of values and culture and, before leaving the place, tells her to find another boyfriend. From this moment on, the show continues with diverse contents on the subject, namely interviews (couples living in a similar situation, such as a member of Parliament (British)/a Representative (American), whose children felt victim of racism; a black judge who recounts some stories that happened in court; a businessman who talks about episodes that occurred in his business; social activists; and a musician). The program also included the repetition of an experience with black and white children where skin color preferences were analyzed, a video that explains how the scene used in this episode was rehearsed, and a fundamental part in the program—interviews with citizens who witnessed the staging and who had different reactions, ranging from complete ignorance in relation to the scene to those who directly intervened.

On the 19th, the day after the first episode was aired, the two channels broadcasted news about the program's premiere, using images and reactions on social media networks. SIC Notícias broadcasted, after the program, which was broadcasted simultaneously with SIC, a debate moderated by Conceição Lino, where a social psychologist, a writer, and a musician participated. In the opening of the debate, the journalist calls for the participation of viewers via Facebook. During the program, the phrases the viewers published on the social media network about the theme were presented on the ticker.

Printed Press

The weekly newspaper Expresso also participated in this transmedia content: In the paper edition of the 16th, a text entitled "More than 16% of the Portuguese say they are racist" (Expresso, 2016a) was published, using the poll results that were also broadcasted by SIC. Still in the group's written press, the news magazine Visão published a report named "Our subtle racism" (Carvalho 2016) on the 14th.

Online Media

The online versions of Expresso, Visão and SIC Notícias were also part of the transmedia process, disseminating some of the works published in traditional media, but also adding some personal contents. The first video on the theme of the first show—racism—was published on the Sic Notícias website on April 15, 2016, three days before the show's premiere on television. The text that accompanied the video was as follows:

The debate came in force on social media networks, opinions either overlap or are divided, as in all subjects not well studied and discussed. There is a belief that the Portuguese consider themselves tolerant and inclusive people. But is it really like that? In social relationships, when it comes to getting a job or making a list of deputies, does not the skin color weigh on criteria, choices, decisions? (Sic Notícias, 2016b)

In addition, on this day, a second video was published, this time with a group of 11th grade students discussing the theme in the classroom (SIC Notícias, 2016b). The next day, April 16, 2016, a video was published with the survey on racism, a content produced for the television channels and used on the program. On the 17th, a new video with testimonials that were to be used in the show the next day was published. Likewise, on the same day, they published the video with the children's experience, launched with the question: "To what extent are children influenced or aware of what racism is? See the responses of our respondents aged 6 to 8" (SIC Notícias, 2016c). On the 18th, before the program was broadcasted, excerpts of videos to be included in the program were published on the website. That same day, after the TV show aired, the program was fully available on the website. The debate was also made available.

In the following days, the website offered the expanded interviews of some statements that appeared in the program, prolonging the discussion on the subject.

The online version of Expresso presented two contents on the subject during this period. On April 18, 2016, the report "I am not racist, I even have a friend..." (Expresso, 2016b), which included text and video excerpts, was presented. In the following day, an opinion article by Henrique Monteiro (2016) named "The racism of soft Portuguese," was published.

Social Media

Facebook (E Se Fosse Consigo?, n.d.): On April 15, 2016, the video published on the SIC Notícias website was shared with the 11th grade student group, generating several comments. The next day, another video was published, reversing the order used on the Sic Notícias website. The previously mentioned survey was also published on Facebook and the post was highly commented and shared. On the 17th and 18th, several posts with videos that would later be broadcasted on the program and commenting on Expresso's article were published. Conceição Lino's interview with SIC's Jornal da Noite was published as well. On April 18, 2016, in an exclusive video for Facebook, Conceição Lino called for citizen participation on Facebook to express their opinion on the topic and intervene in the debate. A day after the show's premiere, the debate continued on social media networks, adding interviews with reactions and other contents that pursued to extend the media effect of the program.

Snapchat: Among other contents, there is a video made for Snap-Expresso (name of Snapchat's Expresso channel) by Iryna Shev (E Se Fosse Consigo?, 2016) in which the journalist begins by presenting the theme and interviews with the reactions of youngsters after watching a video of the program on their mobile phones.

Twitter: The program did not officially use this social media network, but the reactions that just used the hashtag #esefosseconsigo were followed and used in some content produced for the other media in the group.

In a first approach, all the principles enunciated by Moloney (2011) have been fulfilled in this program, although in some cases their presence is minimal. Studying the show, it is possible to confirm the *spreadability* because they used the websites of SIC Notícias, Facebook and Snapchat to engage people and spread the content on different platforms and attract users. Hence, the hybrid media strategy followed by Impresa resulted in thousands of content shares on Facebook and Twitter. *Drillability* is confirmed in the connection between online news and other media contents about the subject of the show that results from journalistic research. The connection between contents is quite visible and confirms a web of knowledge about racism and the way Portuguese society is dealing with this issue. The *Continuity* of the contents is easily achieved because this is a transmedia story from the same media group and the presence of an editorial orientation and cohesion of the whole content is clearly observed.

The *Diverse and Personal in Viewpoint* is partially guaranteed in the studio interviews and in the content, when the journalist talks with different people placed around the scene. However, this content would need to deepen the audience's point of view: Although the debate organized by SIC Notícias showed some user's opinions in the ticker, which allows it to meet the basic criteria, this participation did not change the content because the journalist did not introduce these questions or observations in the discussion between experts.

Immersion is another difficult characteristic to identify in this product. Nevertheless, it is in the personal stories about white/black couples, children, artists, activists, and a huge variety of actors with which audiences can identify themselves because of its diversity. The immersion can be inferred due to the use of the hidden camera during the filming of the scenes, since this transports the user to the situation. Another more effective way to create immersion would have been to develop an online game to measure participants' racism, something that would be closer to what is done in fiction.

The last three principles are in the matrix of the content: *Extractability* is one of the goals of the program because they want to sensitize people to a social problem called racism using a situation from the *real world* (racism) and *Inspiring to action*, i.e., encouraging people to react against all forms of racial discrimination.

Lastly, looking at the type of content used by the classification proposed by Rost, Bernardi and Bergero (2017), it can be concluded that all types were used. The "expansion" is materialized in the survey, articles published in the press (Expresso and Visão) and the work produced for Snapchat, since they are contents that add inputs that enrich and expand the story. In the case of "adaptation", its presence is mainly visible on the Internet, albeit on a reduced scale because it has been limited in some cases to the reduced edition of some content used in television: It is the same content, on another platform, but without adding information to the story. Finally, "tipped over" was the type of content most used, especially on social networks, which simply reproduced the videos and news received from the sites or the newspapers.

CONCLUSION

The transmedialization of journalistic content is not a simple process. The examples of transmedia journalism that fulfill all the core principles of transmedia storytelling are scarce and, as a rule, imply the existence of a set of human resources unusual in actual newsrooms, which are experiencing a time of crisis. Therefore, this research proposes a simplification of the above-mentioned principles, in a formulation close to that advanced by other authors (Renó & Flores, 2012; Rost, Bernardi & Bergero, 2017). Thus, to be considered transmedia, a journalistic content should meet three conditions: 1) Full integration between content and platforms. The content should be multiplatform, since the effectiveness of each type of content depends on its use in the specific platform for which it was initially created, i.e, using expansive or adapted contents, including immersive contents, ranging from the simplicity of 360º images to the use of augmented reality and virtual reality. The use of the Internet is mandatory. 2) Each story must be composed by independent chunks of information and they should be sufficiently meaningful to be used as an entry point into the narrative. These chunks should have links to more than one chunk of the same story, to allow multiple reading paths and, consequently, enable a personalized navigation for each user. 3) The user should be able to contribute to the story by adding elements that can change the content. This participation may vary between low complexity (comments in the news or posts) and high complexity (joining contents that change and/or expand the course of the narrative).

Taking into consideration the three rules previously mentioned, and in line with what was mentioned by Renó and Flores (2012), there is a media platform that can contribute strongly to improve a transmedia journalistic narrative: Mobile media. Being a stable and user-friendly technology, an object for personal use and having Internet connection, the smartphone can be exploited in two ways: As a consumption platform and as participation interface.

As a consumer platform, the smartphone is an everyday life object that accompanies its owner permanently. It became, therefore, an extension of the senses in a personal level. For these reasons, the smartphone allows the maximum degree of news personalization, which can happen by consumer drive (preferences declared voluntarily), by their habits of consumption (cookies in browsers) or by the location of the consumer powered by the Global Positioning System (GPS). As a platform for receiving content, smartphones have another important advantage in the context of transmedia journalism because they facilitate one of the most difficult strands to be achieved: Immersive contents. This occurs because these devices allow an easy adaptation to virtual reality glasses and because they are already a gaming platform (gamification of information). In terms of user participation interface, the smartphone facilitates the whole process of contributing to the story, since its multimedia recording capacity (photo, video, and sound) and its easiness to send content or comments is an incentive for a greater engagement of users in the expansion of transmedia products. By fulfilling the three conditions previously stated, and using smartphones as a fundamental part of the system, all the fundamental rules of transmedia journalism are fulfilled.

Applying the three rules to the content studied in this chapter, it can be said that "E Se Fosse Consigo?" is a transmedia production, although the perfect integration between content and platforms does not always occur. Actually, the shovelware occurs in many situations, with the replication of the same content in diverse platforms, but sometimes with small adaptations, such as reducing the duration of the videos. The connection between story chunks exists and the user could start reading from several contents and platforms without problems to understand the subject of the program. The contribution of the user can occur through the participation in the television show itself, but also via the websites and online social media network comments, which were referred by the newspapers, giving rise to new content about the subject. The role of smartphones was not measured in this chapter, but could be analyzed in the new season of the program scheduled for 2017.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Journalistic Convergence: A phenomenon characterized by the disappearance of frontiers and/or integration of different mass media that can occur in the fields of content, production processes, professional activities, and business models.

Journalistic Shovelware: Republication of journalistic contents without the necessary adaptation to the characteristics of the new media.

Long-Form Journalism Contents: Extensive digital journalistic formats that require an in-depth research and production process and should also include extensive multimedia resources.

Media Ecosystem: Set of different media and its relations with environments, structures, contents, and audiences.

Portable Devices: Portable and personal communication devices capable of receiving online news, such as smartphones and tablets.

Post-Truth: Related to circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief.

Ubiquitous Journalism: Journalism developed from anywhere and intended for users holding mobile reception devices.

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Chapter 47
A Question of Trust:
Functions and Effects of Transmedia Journalism

Tobias Eberwein
Austrian Academy of Sciences, Austria

ABSTRACT

Narrative forms of journalistic reporting are traded as a sheet anchor in many newsrooms, as editors hope that they could brave the never-ending storm of the media crisis. But how does journalistic storytelling evolve from analog to digital? What are the potentials of narrative journalism across multiple media types and platforms? And what effects do such transmedia narratives have on media users? These questions are answered based on a multi-method research design, which includes both an explorative communicator study and an experiment with users. The investigation demonstrates that journalists expect narratives in digital media surroundings to invigorate the authenticity and comprehensibility of their coverage. This hope, however, only partly becomes a reality on the side of the recipients. Indeed, users judge multimedia online reportages to be more emotional than monomedia offline pieces, but as far as remembering and comprehending their contents is concerned, print texts are more effective.

INTRODUCTION: ACCELERATE, DECELERATE

In the digital age, journalistic production is influenced by manifold processes of uninhibited *acceleration*: Not only the time span between an event and its coverage becomes shorter and shorter, particularly in the new media; moreover, there is much evidence to indicate an increased density of journalists' working days (through an increased amount of tasks, both journalistic and non-journalistic) and, thereby, also a reduction in time per task, which results in a reduced length of the prevalent attention cycles and, in many cases, an increased publication frequency (see Krüger, 2014). The consequences are clearly perceptible in everyday news work: While it is often a matter of seconds which newsroom can boast to break a story first, pressure on journalistic actors is notably on the rise. At the same time, the quality of journalistic output appears to be at stake, in many instances: When speed becomes the paramount aim of editorial routines, other quality criteria—such as accuracy, truthfulness, comprehensibility, etc.—necessarily fall behind (see e.g. Eberwein, 2015a).

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In reaction to this maladjustment, many media scholars—as well as practitioners—are calling for a fundamental redefinition of journalism's identity and its professional purpose (see e.g. Lee, 2014). Rather than following the general obsession with speed, which has become characteristic for most online news platforms around the globe, they argue that *deceleration* is the key to help journalism (re)gain public trust and to fulfill its social function in the best possible way (see e.g. Greenberg, 2007). Particularly high hopes are nourished by the approach of a narrative journalism, which is often said to have multifaceted positive effects, e.g. for generating attention for certain topics and communicating them in a most comprehensible manner (see e.g. Boynton, 2005; Kramer & Call, 2007; Sims, 2007). Success proves them right: Apparently, narrative forms of journalistic reporting have recently been experiencing a proper upsurge in many newsrooms (see e.g. Eberwein, 2013). In fact, quite a few editors are trading storytelling techniques as a sheet anchor that could not only help them to sell their products, but also highlight the social significance of journalistic writing in general and, thus, brave the never-ending storm of the ongoing media crisis, which has irritated the profession to the core.

Indeed, various experimental studies have shown that narrative forms of journalistic reporting have many advantages when it comes to explaining an ever more complex social reality to readers and viewers, while the traditional news form often interferes with remembering and comprehending journalistic contents, among other things (for an overview see Frey, 2014). However, many questions are still unanswered in this context: What does this mean for the future of journalistic genres in the Internet age? How does journalistic storytelling evolve from analog to digital? What are the potentials of narrative journalism across multiple media types and platforms? And what effects do such transmedia narratives have on media users?

Up to now, questions like these have not been analyzed systematically—neither in communication and media studies, nor in adjacent academic disciplines. This paper is supposed to assemble some first answers based on an innovative multi-method design, which combines an explorative communicator study with a reception experiment.[1] Before the empirical studies are presented in detail, however, it is necessary to provide a brief sketch of the underlying theoretical concepts and the previous state of relevant research in this field.

JOURNALISTIC STORYTELLING: DEFINITIONS AND STATE OF RESEARCH

Scientific debates about storytelling have regularly been receiving high levels of attention in recent years (see e.g. Kleine Wieskamp, 2016). The cause for this concern can be seen in an increased interest among media practitioners in the various developments associated with this term: Not only in journalism, but also in other professional contexts—particularly in PR and marketing—the cultivation of well-told stories is considered to be a quality indicator (see Fog et al., 2010; Prinzing, 2015). However, it is striking to see that it remains unclear what this actually means, both in media practice and research. The heterogeneity of scientific definitions of terms like narration, story or narrativity is exemplified by a recent content analysis (Frey & Früh, 2014), for which a broad spectrum of different journal articles from this field of research has been evaluated. They allude to manifold sources from the most different scientific contexts, thereby referring to a multitude of possible key characteristics. So far, a consensus about a universally applicable definition is not in sight.

The study presented here follows an approach that originates from the narratological theories in literary studies and can, therefore, rely on a comparatively long tradition of academic inquiry (for an introduction see e.g. Fludernik, 2009; Schmid, 2010). In this sense, narrations can be defined as representations of real or fictitious events that are communicated by a *narrator* to one (or more) *narratee(s)* (see Prince, 1987, p. 58). They adhere to particular *structural* (e.g. orientation, complication, evaluation, resolution, coda; see Labov & Waletzky, 1967), *stylistic* (e.g. poetic language, detailedness/clearness, images/metaphors; see Lausberg, 1998) and *formal* (dissociation from description, argumentation or statistical representations; see for instance Brooks & Warren, 1979) attributes and are usually designed to create certain *effects* (such as suspense, empathy or entertainment; see Brewer & Lichtenstein, 1982).

By now, the notion seems to be generally accepted that the production of narrative texts is by no means restricted to the literary field, but can also result in non-literary publications (see Berning, 2010). Especially in journalism, narrative forms are usually associated with typical genres such as reportage, feature or profile (see Abrahamson, 1995; Hartsock, 2000), which are differentiated from other genres such as "inverted pyramid" news, commentary, interview, etc. (see e.g. Pöttker & Kornilov, 2010). In many journalistic cultures, narrative patterns of reporting have in fact turned into an explicit alternative to the mainstream of traditional news journalism—with the aim of counterbalancing its limitations and creating a more effective "third way" of describing social reality, in the territory between journalism and literature (see Connery, 1990; Eberwein, 2015c). By now, the historical development of this literary journalism has been described quite thoroughly by a large scope of individual studies (for a first overview see the *Selected bibliography of scholarship and criticism examining literary journalism* by the International Association for Literary Journalism Studies, 2011), even from a comparative perspective (see e.g. Bak & Reynolds, 2011; Keeble & Tulloch, 2012), although a contextualizing social history of the genre and its specific functions still remains a desideratum (see also Eberwein, 2013, p. 102).

Besides, the links between narratology and journalism studies have also been put to the test only insufficiently so far, although the reference to narratological theories would be exceedingly advantageous for journalism scholars, for several reasons: First of all, it is conducive to systematizing the basic definitions in this area of research, thus illustrating what journalistic storytelling actually is—or can be. At the same time, it provides a comprehensive analytical framework that allows for a structured approach to the investigation of journalistic (and other) narratives (see Andrews, Squire & Tamboukou, 2013).

Moreover, the historical development of relevant models in the field of narratology already points to an illuminating shift of the analytical perspective, which is also relevant for this study: While classical discriminations such as Stanzel's typology of "narrative situations" (see Stanzel, 1984) were primarily focusing on the relationship between the narrator of a text and the figures that he reports about, many younger theoretical approaches display an increasing interest in the role of the reader in the process of receiving narrative communication (for a general view see e.g. Suleiman & Crosman, 1980). Such a shift of focus seems to be even more obvious when—as in our case—a research project is supposed to reconstruct how journalistic storytelling advances from traditional print reportage to the innovative multimedia productions that are currently sprouting on various online news sites across all journalism cultures. In order to live up to the reality of narrative journalism in digital media surroundings and across multiple media types and platforms, conventional narrative theories need to be adapted—among other things to specify the changing relationship between author and reader. The necessity of such a theory modification becomes evident in the case of new multimedia and interactive forms of storytelling that go beyond traditional narrative techniques in journalism and literature (see Bull, 2010; Penn, 2013). Well-known international landmark productions such as *The New York Times*' "Snow fall" (Branch, 2012), *The Guardian*'s "Firestorm" (Henley, 2013) or "Killing Kennedy" by *National Geographic* (National Geographic Channel, 2013) may serve as interesting case studies in this context, as they exemplify different degrees of multimedia integration and user interaction and, thus, demonstrate how the reader can take over a more or a less active role in the process of absorbing and co-creating journalistic narratives online. They also offer meaningful examples of transmedia storytelling (Jenkins, 2003): By complementing the conventional offline coverage by the respective newsroom and moving the featured protagonists across different media platforms, they are expected to enhance the reception experience of their users and catapult narrative journalism to a new level (see e.g. Moloney, 2011; Schlichting 2015; Gambarato & Tárcia, 2017).

Empirical research has not yet tackled these developments in a satisfactory manner. Indeed, there is a large quantity of experimental studies that discuss cognitive, emotional, evaluative and motivational-conative effects of narrative forms of communication within and outside of journalism (besides Frey, 2014, see also Bilandzic & Kinnebrock, 2009; Echterhoff & Straub, 2003, 2004; Green, Strange & Brock, 2013; Hinyard & Kreuter, 2007; Ricketts, 2007). However, the specific case of journalistic transmedia storytelling is largely blanked out. After all, existing research indicates that narrative communication apparently has the ability to positively influence intended effects, such as remembering and comprehending specific contents (see Machill, Köhler & Waldhauser, 2006) or the emotional experience of a given text (see Adaval & Wyer Jr., 1998). The impact, however, can vary, depending on moderating influences such as gender, age, social status and previous knowledge (see Flath, 2013; Vanoost, 2017), but also due to different modes of representation, which may include or exclude the use of photos, sound effects, etc. (see Lee & Gretzel, 2012)—a first clue leading to the assumption that the effects of monomedia newspaper reportages and transmedia reportages can be expected to differ.

However, it remains unclear in previous studies how exactly these differences come to manifest themselves. Indeed, quite a few scholars have been ascribing clear advantages to online journalism in general, which they believe to be superior to traditional print coverage because of its hypertextuality, multimediality and interactivity (see e.g. Steensen, 2011). Nevertheless, several reception experiments were also able to detect counterproductive effects: Particularly among recipients without a discernible affinity to web applications, for instance, the use of hyperlinks, audio and video elements as well as the active inclusion of users often lead to a feeling of disorientation and cognitive overload (see e.g. Opgenhaffen & d'Haenens, 2011) with negative consequences for the overall impact of the particular coverage.

Investigations of the specific effects of web-based journalistic narratives in comparison to offline newspaper or magazine reportages do not exist so far. What is missing, therefore, is a combination of the two above-mentioned strands of research regarding the effects of narrative communication, on the one hand, and online communication, on the other hand. This desideratum is going to be amended by the multi-method study that is detailed in the following parts of this chapter. Accordingly, two central research questions need to be answered:

1. Which specific aims and effects do reporters in print and online newsrooms strive to reach with their narrative texts, and in how far do the two actor groups differ from each other?
2. Can these aims be adequately realized with the available narrative means offline and online, or in other words: Do the intended effects really impact on the side of the recipients?

JOURNALISTIC STORYTELLING IN TRANSITION: A MULTI-METHOD APPROACH

In order to probe into these questions, the research project presented in this chapter made sure to implement a two-step analytical design, which initially—on the basis of semi-structured interviews—highlighted the perspective of journalistic actors on the object of analysis. Subsequently, the focus was redirected to the perspective of the recipients, which was evaluated with the help of an experimental user survey. Thus, the superordinate aim of the study was to bridge the usual gap between communicator and reception research—a scientific strategy that has been postulated more and more vehemently in recent years, without having become a common practice up till today (see Dohle & Loosen, 2014).

The *communicator study* intended to retrace and comprehend current changes in the field of journalistic storytelling, in order to lay the foundation for a more systematic analysis of this widely neglected area of media research. Following an explorative approach, a total of 30 problem-centered interviews (see Witzel, 2000) with reporters from selected print and online newsrooms of German-language news media were conducted during Winter term 2012/2013. The interviewees were handpicked, in order to represent different types of print media (e.g. daily newspapers such as *Süddeutsche Zeitung* and *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, weekly newspapers such as *Die Zeit*, or news magazines such as *Der Spiegel*) and their online counterparts as well as different positions in the newsroom hierarchy (e.g. freelancer, reporter, editor-in-chief). The interviews followed a half-standardized field manual that was supposed to help the interviewers to structure the relevant issues of the analysis and reflect them with the interviewees in a comprehensive manner. This manual comprised different thematic blocks, which focused, among other things, on the interviewees' professional self-concept, typical workflows in their newsroom, and the practical aims and objectives that they want to reach with their publications. The interviews were conducted face to face or via telephone and lasted up to 80 minutes. They were recorded, and afterwards, key passages were transcribed in full, before being evaluated with the help of a qualitative content analysis (see Mayring, 2014). By this means, it became possible to develop a set of assumptions that stressed the differences between printed and web-based reportages in convergent media spaces, particularly with regard to their specific benefits and intended effects.

These effects were subsequently analyzed in the context of a *reception experiment* (see e.g. Thorson, Wicks & Leshner, 2012) during Summer term 2013, for which exactly 100 probands were confronted with monomedia (print) and multimedia (online) versions of different journalistic narrations from the same news outlets as examples of transmedia journalism in practice. The members of two control groups each read a reportage that had been published in the German quality print media *Süddeutsche Zeitung*[2] and *Der Spiegel*[3] in a similar form. The test persons in the two treatment groups received the same articles on screen, with audio and video elements added to the original text, but otherwise congruent contents. Thus, the multimediality of the journalistic coverage, which was intentionally manipulated by the research team, served as the independent variable in the experimental research setting; the aim of the study was to measure its impact on the process of remembering and comprehending the presented topics as well as other qualities of the narrative approach offline and online (dependent variables). The probands were recruited with the help of a quota plan that was differentiated based on sociodemographic attributes (including gender, age and educational background); the allocation to the four test groups adhered to the principle of randomization. In order to avoid socially desirable behavior, the test persons were initially kept in the dark about the intention of the experiment: They were only instructed as vaguely as possible, by indicating that the research project was designed to evaluate "new trends in journalistic storytelling." In the test situation, under laboratory conditions, each proband first had time to read (and if necessary, re-read) one of the assigned reportages, which could take up to 20 minutes. Directly after the process of reception, the test persons completed a fully standardized (face-to-face) survey with 18 questions altogether, which, among other things, included an examination of how many basic facts they had remembered and if they had understood the article's central meaning. Additionally, it was also tested how the participants themselves would rate the quality of the different reportages.

The following passages of this chapter are going to document key findings from both steps of the analysis, which are juxtaposed afterwards in order to assess in how far the aims and intentions of journalistic storytellers, both offline and online, are actually realized on the side of the recipients.

RESULTS

From the Perspective of Professional Communicators...

The qualitative communicator study demonstrates that the self-concepts and professional aims of reporters in print and online media hardly differ: Both actor groups have in common that their narrative strategy of communication is understood as a purposeful opposition to conventional news work, which is still the dominant pattern of coverage, both in analog and in digital media surroundings. According to the interviewed reporters, traditional news journalism brings along various limitations, first and foremost because it claims to be detached and objective. However, as one of the interviewees put it: "Things that insinuate they are objectively true—they are exceedingly silly. […] They are full of attitude—attitude by the people that carry them."[4] Objectivity, therefore, is considered to be an ideal which is impossible to reach. Consequently, journalists that intend to create a reliable understanding of social reality need to develop alternative strategies and vehicles to describe it.

Such a vehicle is spotted in the approach of narrative journalism, which diverges from the mainstream of news journalism in many respects. According to several interviewees, an important constraint of conventional journalism is the fact that is has to operate under severe time pressure: "It is a classic view that a journalist does not have time. That is a typical limit. […] Quite a few rules in journalism are a result of a lack of time," one reporter explained—adding that he tries to escape this dilemma by deliberately "trying to have time, acting unjournalistically, in a way." Only with sufficient time resources, it becomes possible to realize a key condition of any reportage journalism that is to have a first-hand view on the issues and events that are supposed to be described. As another interviewee stated, it is of paramount importance "that we see with our own eyes what is really happening. Because I increasingly have the feeling that other forms of journalism—mostly news journalism—only create a kind of informational layer that is not accurate any more—that is simply not true."

But narrative journalists not only demand different research methods, they also distance themselves from conventional journalistic routines by generating their own modes of presentation: Instead of summarizing the mere facts of an event or topic, which is the common practice in most informatory journalistic genres, they want to capture and tell the story behind it. With narrative means, they want to make their readers "feel the facts," as one of the interviewees said, thus, enabling them to live through the covered events themselves. Reaching this aim is only thought possible with "a certain formation of language, […] a certain style," another colleague added, claiming a substantial degree of narrative freedom, often inspired by the conventions of literary writing, that would be precluded by the strict standards of the "inverted pyramid" form. Through creating narrative forms of journalism instead, he strives for a transmission of social contexts that is "as vivid and authentic as possible"—a wording that resounded in many of the interviews in a similar way (see also Eberwein, 2013, pp. 162–215). As assessments like these seem to be typical both for print and web reporters, the conclusion that the self-concepts and professional aims of the two sub-groups are basically identical is relatively obvious.

At the same time, however, the qualitative investigation delivers various cues, which suggest that both actor groups also differ from each other. For instance, quite a few of the interviewed newspaper journalists made it clear that they tend to cultivate a critical view on current trends in the realm of digital journalism. While they themselves are evidently happy with the available forms of offline storytelling, they feel that online journalists should rather focus on non-narrative modes of high-speed news coverage "because the Internet is always quicker anyway," as one of the interviewees pointed out. In the eyes of many print reporters, the online media are the true driver of journalism's current obsession with speed, paving the way for a new kind of "fast food coverage" that merely consists of short and incoherent bits of information, while impeding longer narrative or analytical publications. Elaborating on this argument, another interviewee expressed hope that the Internet might one day even "depollute" printed newspapers and magazines from the daily news coverage altogether, thus, making room for more reportages and other forms of contextual journalism. In his view, print media are the ideal container for narrative reporting and he is convinced that they will continue to fulfill this function in the future, despite the current transformations of the media landscape. This view was seconded by a further colleague, who believes that the ongoing media transition

is paradoxically quite good for the literary reportage, because those forms that do not work out online are going to work out on paper in the long run. […] I believe that reportage has a bright future in print media but rather not in the digital media.

This argument, however, was challenged by many web reporters, who retorted that the communicative potentials of online storytelling actually entail manifold chances, which could even help to renew and reinforce the narrative approach in journalism, in general, and in transmedia journalism, in particular. These chances are essentially accounted for by the ingredients of multimediality and interactivity, which lead some of the reporters to believe that they might enhance the authenticity and effectivity of their coverage. "Adding sound and images creates an atmosphere that would not be thinkable in traditional print reportage," one interviewee argued, adding that "it helps to activate the user and it draws him into the scene, until he becomes a part of the narration himself." From her point of view, digital storytelling can even be seen as the future of narrative journalism, which might eventually get ahead of conventional print reporting by strengthening its traditional aims and objectives. In order to underline this argument in the interview sessions, many of the online journalists referred to impressive examples of award-winning online projects, such as the aforementioned "Snow fall" by the *New York Times*, which seem to be expanding the territory of journalistic narration and serve as role models for many newsrooms in their attempts to redefine what storytelling journalism is all about. At any rate, web reporters refuse to accept the view by their print colleagues that online platforms should only serve the exchange of quick news coverage and be off-limits for long-form narrative pieces. Transmedia journalism examples, such as "The Sochi Project" (Hornstra & van Bruggen, 2013), help to support their refusal.

...And From the Perspective of the Recipients

These conflicting assumptions by print and online reporters needed to be tested in a second step of the investigation, after finishing the communicator study. However, the experimental survey demonstrates that the hopes fostered by the web journalists can only partly be substantiated.

On the one hand, it was evaluated whether online reportages—in contrast to their print counterparts—are in a better position to facilitate the process of *remembering* single facts and *comprehending* the larger context of the published contents. In order to approach these questions, the procedure of cued recall seemed to be the most valuable strategy, since it had been applied in a similar way in earlier experimental studies on the effects of narrative journalism (see e.g. Machill, Köhler & Waldhauser, 2006; Flath, 2013). In practice, after having received one of the stimuli, the probands were confronted with a set of test questions, which were designed to quantify how many details of the contents they were able to reproduce. Among them were several very simple open questions (e.g. “Which airport does the family live on?” and “How old is the boy?”) as well as multiple factual statements that the survey participants could comment on with “true” or “false” (e.g. “The protagonist and the woman are married to each other” and “The family earns money by collecting empty bottles”). The succeeding questions for investigating the degree of comprehension were considerably more complex. Here, the test persons were deliberately taken to the task of reflecting on the causes and consequences of the problems being discussed in the articles (e.g. “South Africa is a very liberal country when it comes to rights for homosexuals. Which reasons for the hostile attitude of many persons does the text mention?”). Afterwards, the answers from both blocks of questions were evaluated with the help of a pre-defined marking grid, which made it possible to compare the effects of print and online reportages on the process of remembering and comprehending their contents.

As Table 1 shows, printed monomedia reportages are clearly more effective than multimedia online reportages with regard to remembering and comprehending essential journalistic contents. While the probands in the two control groups were able to reach 12.64 out of 16 maximally possible points on average for the test questions in the area of remembering (that equates a share of 79 percent), the two treatment groups only scored 10.21 out of 16 points (or 64 percent). In the context of the comprehension questions, the control groups—with 5.64 out of 12 points per proband (47 percent)—also scored higher than the treatment groups (4.98 out of 12 points or 42 percent). This result refutes the assumption that was expressed in the qualitative interviews, according to which narrative multimedia articles can communicate their contents in a more effective manner than monomedia print narratives—at least as far as remembering and comprehending is concerned.

However, small deviations from the average values are notable within the four test groups, when certain moderating influences are taken into account. For example, younger users (14 to 29 years) tend

Table 1. Remembering and comprehending print and online reportages

	Remembering		Comprehending	
	Points per Proband	Percentage	Points per Proband	Percentage
Print	12.64/16	79.0	5.64/12	47.0
Online	10.21/16	63.8	4.98/12	41.5

Source: own research project

to remember and comprehend the contents of online reportages more successfully than older users (50 or more years). Moreover, female recipients achieve considerably lower scores for the online stimuli as compared to the print versions in both the categories of remembering and comprehending, while the discrepancies among the male test persons are much smaller. Both age and gender are correlated with the average amount of time that the test persons usually spend online and their previous experience with mobile media (smartphones, tablets, etc.), which generally lead to higher scores in both categories too. Finally, previous knowledge about the topics of the reportages also has a positive effect on the average test scores. These moderating influences help to explain the specific impact of web-based multimedia storytelling, thus offering insights that may be valuable for newsrooms in the process of planning their editorial agendas.

On the other hand, the reception study was also a helpful instrument to test which other qualities the probands ascribe to the different narrative texts, for instance, with regard their *information value*, their *entertainment value* and their *emotional qualities*. Therefore, they were shown twelve further statements (e.g. "The presentation of the article is entertaining", "The article evokes my compassion", and "I consider the article to be trustworthy"), which they were supposed to rate on a scale from 1 ("I totally disagree") to 5 ("I fully agree").

Table 2 exemplifies that the overall interest in the chosen articles is slightly higher among the print readers as compared to the online readers. While the former assessed the respective statement with an average value of 3.62, the latter only reached a value of 3.44. A similar discrepancy resulted from the statement "The presentation of the article is informative"—here the control groups leave the treatment groups behind too (3.84 vs. 3.64). It may come as a surprise that the readers of the monomedia narratives (2.92) also judged their articles as more entertaining than the recipients of the multimedia pieces (2.82), since this result again stands in contrast to the assumptions derived from the qualitative study in which the web reporters insisted that their forms of reporting are a warranty for more authenticity and vividness. On the other hand, the experiment also makes it obvious that multimedia online reportages create a distinctly higher degree of compassion (4.02 vs. 3.42) and, furthermore, that they are considered to be more trustworthy (4.52 vs. 4.33), although the value of trust for the print articles also reaches a high level.

In analogy to the results for the test of remembering and comprehending, moderating influences such as age, gender, affinity to online and mobile media as well as previous knowledge about the reported topics may lead to small variations within the test groups. These moderating influences, however, do not change the overall tendencies indicated by Table 2 and are, therefore, negligible in this context.

Table 2. Other qualities of print and online reportages

	Print (Mean Value)	Online (Mean Value)
Article is interesting	3.62	3.44
Presentation is informative	3.84	3.64
Presentation is entertaining	2.92	2.82
Article evokes compassion	3.42	4.02
Article is trustworthy	4.33	4.52

Source: own research project

DISCUSSION: TRANSMEDIA STORYTELLING—BOOSTING TRUST IN JOURNALISM?

What can be learned from this multi-method study? In how far does it advance our previous knowledge about narrative journalistic concepts in the age of media convergence? And what are possible implications for the practice of transmedia journalism?

The qualitative communicator study demonstrates that journalistic storytellers ascribe extraordinary potentials to narrative forms of presentation such as reportages or profiles, particularly if they are looking for a lively and authentic strategy of communicating social reality. Many reporters explicitly describe their narrative modes of journalistic coverage as a countermovement to the dominant pattern of a seemingly objective news journalism, which is regarded as an insufficient means to describe the contemporary world. Oddly, while several print reporters blame the digitization of the media landscape to propel a hitherto unknown demand for speed in many newsrooms, it is generally agreed among their online colleagues that the special features of web-based communication (for instance, interactivity and multimediality) may even invigorate the impact of narrative journalistic genres.

This hope, however, only partly becomes a reality on the side of the recipients: Based on the user experiment, it can be shown that recipients indeed perceive multimedia and interactive reportages as more emotional than traditional narrative articles in newspapers and magazines. However, with regard to remembering and comprehending the communicated contents of the stories, the printed text forms are considerably more effective. Interestingly, multimedia online contents are also regarded to be more trustworthy than monomedia offline reporting, although the level of trust is remarkably high for the latter as well.

Certainly, the empirical research design developed for this study is by no means beyond doubt. The communicator study, for example, with its sample of 30 journalists, can merely claim to have an explorative character; a representative survey on the self-conception and professional aims of the specific groups of narrative journalists, both offline and online, is still missing—not only in the German-speaking world. Also, the narrow focus of the reception experiment, specifically pinpointing the issue of remembering and comprehending journalistic contents, is far too limited to allow for a universal judgment about the impact of storytelling practices on different media platforms. Here, more complex analytical designs, also with a more precise discrimination of varying degrees of multimedia integration and user interaction, could undoubtedly help to produce much more differentiated findings. Such a differentiation would also make it necessary to produce more complex stimuli, a requirement that was impossible to be addressed in this chapter, in view of the limited resources of the research seminar that realized the project presented here.

Nonetheless, the results of the study—even though only documented in an abbreviated version—provide various entry points for further discussion: Currently, media practitioners in many newsrooms around the world lament the fact that audiences do not seem to trust journalistic products any longer (see also Donsbach, Rentsch, Schielicke & Degen, 2009; Peters & Broersma, 2013). The reputation of journalistic actors is at the usual low level (see e.g. Institut für Demoskopie Allensbach, 2013) and recent discussions about media performance in a time of "post-truth" politics have done their share to discredit the profession even further (see Tanz, 2017; Eberwein, Fengler & Karmasin, in press). Surely, these are not the best of circumstances to justify why it is still important to invest in professional journalism in the middle of a media crisis. At the same time, the data which have been collected for this study illustrate quite impressively that a narrative presentation can clearly enhance the credibility of journalistic output. Apparently, this is even more so if a story is covered in different formats across different media types.

If this insight is thoroughly reconsidered, the concept of transmedia storytelling applied to journalism, which includes both on- and offline media outlets, functions not only as an instrument for communicating journalistic contents to media users, but also as a valuable strategy for newsrooms in their struggle for public trust, which the profession needs more than ever these days. Transmedia journalism can reconcile print and digital storytelling, extracting the best of both universes, as the empirical research highlighted. Such an interpretation may once more substantiate why journalistic storytelling is being traded since recently as a multifaceted concept with manifold potentials, not only in communication and media studies, but also in practical journalism. If journalism is to have a future, more deliberation on this topic will be inevitable.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Hypertextuality: The extent to which online texts (or parts of them) are related to each other by internal or external hyperlinks.

Interactivity: The degree to which users are involved in the exchange of information with computers.

"Inverted Pyramid" News: A form of news story that communicates the basic facts in the initial sentences.

Multimediality: The extent to which different media channels (text, images, audio, and video elements) are combined and integrated in a common digital form.

Narratology: A branch of literary theory that focuses on the study of narrative structure.

Problem-Centered Interview: A theory-generating research method in qualitative social sciences that aims at combining the principles of induction and deduction.

Reportage: A journalistic form of storytelling that, first and foremost, intends to create an authentic account of the events it covers.

Storytelling: A method of communicating information in the form of stories that is applied in journalism and organizational communication as well as in fields such as knowledge management, education, psychotherapy, etc.

ENDNOTES

1 The point of origin for the thoughts presented in this paper was a project seminar in the MA program for Journalism at Technische Universität Dortmund, Germany, which the author supervised in Winter term 2012/2013 and Summer term 2013, together with Horst Pöttker (see Eberwein 2015b for further details). The participants of this seminar deserve recognition and gratitude for their contributions to the empirical parts of the study.

2 The text delineates the fate of a Bulgarian family of refugees that has been living at the airport in Munich, Germany, for several months. The original version is available online at: http://www.sueddeutsche.de/muenchen/krisenfluechtlinge-am-flughafen-muenchen-alles-ist-besser-als-zurueckgehen-1.1534989

3 The article broaches the issue of homosexual women and men in South Africa. Its original version is online as well: http://www.spiegel.de/spiegel/print/d-8515-7573.html.

4 All direct quotations that are not attributed to any particular source are taken from the problem-centered interviews which were conducted for this study. They were translated from German to English by the author.

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Chapter 48
Designing Transmedia Journalism Projects

Kevin Moloney
Ball State University, USA

ABSTRACT

This chapter explores the design and execution of transmedia journalism projects to inform professional production and academic experimentation. It draws on the author's current project to illustrate real-world production planning. The chapter opens with a discussion of how design thinking and audience targeting apply to this task and contribute to project success. The chapter then elaborates the flow of decisions required for a thorough transmedia plan and finally presents the Refuge project as a design example. This pilot transmedia story network focuses on the single issue of refugees: those who migrate by force, either to escape suffering and deprivation or to build new, more hopeful lives elsewhere. It is the first in a networked series of similar projects that will explore the issues that polarize the electorate in the American West, from economic stratification to religious identity, environment, and gun ownership rights.

INTRODUCTION

A transmedia project in any other industry must first build a storyworld, a superbly imagined, detailed space and culture the characters inhabit and in which the public may immerse, as described by Frank Rose (2011) and by others (Jenkins, 2006, 2009; Ryan, 2006, 2014). Journalism, however, works within the real universe (often as it is in the process of falling apart). For the transmedia journalism project creator or analyst, this refocuses the question: How does a transmedia journalist build a project that does not fall apart? For a transmedia story to function most effectively it should leave much less to chance than that to which journalists are accustomed. Thoughtful, comprehensive design is imperative.

Deep and pre-planned design is a relative rarity in journalism. The task of covering an ever-changing world and the role of check and balance on governmental and social structures leaves journalists reacting to news as it emerges. Other media industries, however, must design the production and delivery of all content they produce. In journalism, rarely enough thought is given to how that work may better reach critical publics across a complex mediascape—there just is not enough time in the news cycle. Though

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not all stories should be given a transmedia structure, and though the news business will always be a heavily reactive one, journalism can certainly benefit from applying transmedia storytelling techniques to longer-term, investigative and socially concerned work.

This chapter will explore the broad idea of *design thinking* as well as audience targeting that is applicable to the design and execution of transmedia journalism projects, and it will draw from the author's own current project to inform academic experimentation and professional production. As discussed in the growing body of literature (Gambarato & Tárcia, 2017; Moloney, 2011, 2015; Ryan, 2013) and throughout this book, transmedia storytelling in journalism differs as much from its counterparts in other media industries as it is similar. To illustrate this, the chapter will elaborate the flow of decisions required for a thorough transmedia plan (Moloney, 2015, pp. 99–101) and will finally present as a design example the *Refuge* project, being launched by the author and a team of transmedia journalists as of this writing. For practicing journalists, this example could be used as a customizable template in the design of new projects. For academics, this example can help inform the study and critique of transmedia journalism production decisions.

DESIGN THINKING AND TRANSMEDIA STORYTELLING

There are many essentialist traps in the study and production of transmedia storytelling. Definitions of transmedia logic vary by media industry and by the researcher describing it. In journalism, understanding of the term and how to implement it differ between publisher and between editors or reporters. Similarly, as Johansson-Sköldberg, Woodilla and Çetinkaya (2013, p. 132) note, the concept of *design thinking* defies essentialist description as its character and use changes between academics and industry, and between analysts and designers. Despite this lack of codification, the common elements among these many views on design thinking are a valuable entry point to transmedia journalism project design. They can help journalists bring the care they put into the creation of traditional single stories into the planning of a complex project constructed of many interconnected parts.

Definitions

Johansson-Sköldberg et al. (2013), in their comprehensive examination of the history of the term, divide design thinking into two broad discourses. The first, *designerly thinking,* includes academic analysis along with the "creation of artefacts," a "reflexive practice" (the self-critique of cognitive perspective), a "problem-solving activity," and the "creation of meaning." The second discourse, *design thinking,* they largely attribute to management practice and a business manager's role in building and maintaining a creative environment of the creation and marketing of products. This discourse, they describe as including design thinking as "a way of working," as a "necessary skill for managers" and a "part of management theory." Their analysis is clearly an academic one, declaring the latter discourse to be "less thoughtful and robust than contributions to the designerly thinking discourse that have been argued and reflected on by scholars over several decades" (p. 127). In simpler, less taxonomic terms, the two discourses might be better discussed as practices of *creation* and *implementation.* These terms place the discourses they astutely identified at a more equal level of importance. Creativity without implementation (or public accessibility) is as low in ultimate value as is the implementation of uncreative work. Though their analysis of both discourses is thorough and complete, their greater valuation of the creative acts within designerly thinking appears biased toward the academic world.

Of most relevance to this chapter is the design thinking realm of implementation. Crafting a good individual story—using anything from tried-and-true legacy reporting methods to cutting-edge game forms—is universal to journalism and is of enormous value. The design of a more complex transmedia journalism project is an act of implementation and management. It coordinates the creative work of content production to build an effective storyworld. In industry, the powerhouses of design thinking include Stanford University's d.school and IDEO, a company founded by Stanford engineering professor David Kelley. In the Harvard Business Review, IDEO chief executive officer Tim Brown, described the company's design thinking process as "best described metaphorically as a system of spaces rather than a predefined series of orderly steps" (2008, p. 88). He continues:

Design projects must ultimately pass through three spaces. We label these "inspiration," for the circumstances (be they a problem, an opportunity, or both) that motivate the search for solutions; "ideation," for the process of generating, developing, and testing ideas that may lead to solutions; and "implementation," for the charting of a path to market. Projects will loop back through these spaces – particularly the first two – more than once as ideas are refined and new directions taken. (pp. 88-89)

These very broad spaces are certainly applicable to the design of transmedia journalism projects, and one could consider the *inspiration* space as where a project's story world is identified, *ideation* as where that storyworld is delimited and refined, and *implementation* as how both the individual stories and their wider network can reach the publics that can best use them. "Put simply," Brown writes, "it is a discipline that uses the designer's sensibility and methods to match people's needs with what is technologically feasible and what a viable business strategy can convert into customer value and market opportunity" (p. 86).

In *Design Thinking* (2010), editor Thomas Lockwood of the Design Management Institute collects articles on design thinking theory and practice from the organization's *Design Management Review.* The articles explore design thinking from a management perspective while acknowledging the broad scope of theory and practice that fall under the term. Despite that broad scope, Lockwood identifies five key tenets of design thinking that cross between these perspectives. The first is to engage observational and ethnographic research into consumer insights and unarticulated needs—to *understand the market* rather than to *market your understanding.* The second tenet he identifies is to collaborate, both with users and with multidisciplinary teams. "This helps to move a company toward radical innovation, rather than incremental improvement, and of course seeks added value" (p. xi). The third tenet is to learn through hands-on experimentation and rapid prototyping. Failing early and often fuels quick and comprehensive learning. The fourth tenet is to visualize key concepts through sketches, rough physical mockups, stories, role playing or storyboards. "The objective is to make the intangible become tangible, and visualization is the best way to do that" (p. xii). His final tenet is the use of concurrent business analysis through the duration of a project, rather than as a post-facto success measure or as a limit on extreme creative thinking. "This can be a tricky balance," he writes. "But the key is to enable integrative thinking by combining creative ideas with more traditional strategic aspects in order to learn from a more complete and diverse point of view" (p. xii).

Creation

Traditional business strategy concerns fueled the creativity of one of the world's best known (if accidental) transmedia stories. When Lucasfilm Ltd. negotiated for the *Empire Strikes Back* sequel they reclaimed all merchandising rights for the series, expanding not only transmedia engagement but the fiscal market that continues to fuel it today (Fleming, 2015). In *The Art of Immersion: How the Digital Generation is Remaking Hollywood, Madison Avenue, and the Way We Tell Stories*, Frank Rose (2011) breaks down how Lucasfilm was able to turn the chaotic spin-off and merchandising success that followed the original 1977 film into a cohesive transmedia storyworld:

Star Wars had its own, unique problem. The licenses turned out tons of stuff—novels, comics, lightsabers, action figures, video games, radio adaptations, what have you. Some of it was great—like Boba Fett, the bounty hunter who started life onscreen as an obscure character in a 1978 TV special and ended up, thanks to the fans' response to the action figure that came out afterward, a significant figure in the movies. But try to put it all together and you have a confused jumble. If it wasn't Marvel conjuring up a giant bunny[1], it was Luke Skywalker in the 1978 novel Splinter of the Mind's Eye (Foster, 1978) getting affectionate with Princess Leia—who five years later, in Return of the Jedi, would turn out to be his twin sister. (p. 71)

With these apocryphal story texts erupting without apparent control, Lucasfilm refocused on the comprehensive, long-term design of the *Star Wars* storyworld—an activity within Brown's *inspiration* and *ideation* spaces discussed above. At least until the Walt Disney Company's purchase of Lucasfilm in 2012, the design of the transmedia story and its characters would be guided by *The Holocron,* a database of characters, events, worlds, languages and other details of the *Star Wars* galaxy. The Lucasfilm *Holocron* illustrates a kind of "storyworld bible," described in 2009 by experience designer Lance Weiler as the important first step in transmedia experience design:

The process starts with the creation of a storyworld bible, a document that provides an overview of the experience that I wish to create. It shows the relationships between storylines, characters, locations and interactions online and in the real world. Media consumption habits of the audience are considered and there is focus placed on how to build story bridges that provide seamless flow across devices and screens. (2009)

In transmedia fiction, the storyworld bible helps define how the storyworld expands and where the characters might go over the timeline. Useful templates and examples of storyworld bible building for transmedia fiction projects are available (Hayes, 2011; Phillips, 2012) and their guidelines may act as conceptual starting points. In transmedia journalism, however, the storyworld bible must constrain the storyworld—defining the limits of topic coverage, who and what the subjects will be and where coverage will stop. As the real world is interconnected in an all-but-unlimited way, haphazard expansion of subjects and ideas resembling the early days of *Star Wars* is likely if clear borders are not drawn. The author saw this very problem when analyzing the 2014 *Future of Food* project produced by the National Geographic Society (Moloney, 2015). In the case of this mammoth early transmedia journalism project, one particular channel that developed impressive influence in the story network—*The Plate* blog series (Fulton, McKenna, McMillan, & Rupp, 2014)—clouded the definition of the storyworld through too little planning and relatively unsupervised production. This story channel had been an afterthought in the project's design but proved to have deep and wide connections to communities of interest that gave the project its greatest traction. As D.W. Harding (1963, p. 166) wrote, "The most important thing is not what the author, or any artist, had in mind to begin with but at what point he decided to stop." In transmedia journalism, delimitations on the issue, topic, characters and focus of the project—the storyworld—are critical. Later in this chapter a template list of questions illustrates how these delimitations may be drawn.

Brown's space of ideation and Lockwood's tenet of collaboration combine in the planning structure of transmedia entertainment powerhouse Pixar Animation Studios. Pixar president Ed Catmull (2014) describes the company's Braintrust, a flexible collective of writers and producers assembled for each film to "push us toward excellence and to root out mediocrity." He continues, "Its premise is simple: Put smart, passionate people in a room together, charge them with identifying and solving problems, and encourage them to be candid with one another." That candor, he writes, is the critical element in the process. "This isn't some pie-in-the-sky idea—without the critical ingredient that is candor, there can be no trust. And without trust creative collaboration is not possible" (pp. 86-87). Most journalists would argue that candor is never a scarcity in a working newsroom. The high-speed pressure of filling a news publication's content feed strips most interactions of delicacy. Conversations can be blunt, serious and often loud. However, Catmull is not describing this often-caustic candor that is thinly veiled in newsroom politics, status and personality. Effective collaboration, he argues, requires not only clear honesty, but "humility and ego, openness and generosity" (p. 87). These qualities also require maintenance, a role performed by Catmull and Pixar general manager Jim Morris:

The fear of saying something stupid and looking bad, of offending someone or being intimidated, of retaliating or being retaliated against—they all have ways of reasserting themselves, even once you think they've been vanquished. And when you do, you must address them squarely. (p. 87)

Transmedia journalism is, by necessity, a team effort. Building complex projects made of serialized, interrelated parts while reporting on timely and complex issues is beyond the scope of a single person. Collaboration in the transmedia planning process is critical, and Pixar's candid model is a great improvement over the hierarchical and tense decision-making structures of daily journalism. This candid and equal-status collaboration also fuels another philosophy that Pixar shares with other design innovators: to "fail early and fail fast." Innovation in design requires experimentation, and with it, risk of failure, as Lockwood also described in his third tenet above. "Mistakes aren't a necessary evil," Catmull writes. "They aren't evil at all. They are an inevitable consequence of doing something new (and, as such, should be seen as valuable; without them, we'd have no originality)." This, he argues, is not as simple as it sounds. People fear failure. It tends to spark personal feelings of shame and inadequacy developed in childhood by Western educational systems. The answer, he notes, is for its leaders to inspire a fearless culture. "Part of the answer is simple: If we as leaders can talk about our mistakes and our part in them, then we make it safe for others" (pp. 108-109).

Implementation

For most journalists, Brown's "space of implementation" is limited to simply publishing material. At legacy journalism organizations, Brown's "charting the path to the market" means that the content goes exclusively to the wholly-owned channels controlled by the organization. *New York Times* content is found first and often exclusively on its own printed pages, websites and mobile applications. This is fueled partly by the need to keep audience eyes on the advertising that funds these organizations, and partly by habitual practice. For two centuries prior to the Internet revolution, news organizations had captive audiences and could depend on the public to come to them for content. Now, however, readers across the globe have constant access to nearly every publication produced anywhere. The audience has scattered. Here, Brown's space of implementation is best seen through the eyes of other media industries where audiences are very specifically targeted. The entertainment and advertising media work not to appeal to mass audiences, but to talk directly to the most efficient publics.

Transmedia producers in all industries and the scholars who study their work describe the building of community and active engagement as key qualities. To accomplish this, the design of transmedia journalism projects should target publics as other media industries do. Most journalists conceive of their audience as they report, interview and craft their stories. In the end, they talk to those readers through their work. This is typically a "gut instinct" about who those readers are, built on assumption, knowing vaguely who makes up the audience, and the interactions a reporter has with the engaged readers with whom they come in contact. Though the organizations track demographic data and engagement, this data is generated mostly for the benefit of advertising sales teams and rarely do reporters seek it out. By contrast, story designers in other media industries rely on this and other data to model their audiences and determine where to most effectively find them. A well-targeted transmedia journalism project has a much better chance of succeeding in its communication goals.

The tools used by advertising media buyers are the most thorough and effective for both modeling the audience and knowing through what media channels it can be found. These tools—such as Simmons Research (2017) and Kantar's SRDS (2017) in the U.S., for example—are extremely expensive. They are a sizable investment for a large organization, and an impossibility for small groups of independents working together on a transmedia project. Other tools are available, however. Statista (2017) is an online statistics, market research and business intelligence aggregation and interpretation portal from Germany. The organization boasts 1.5 million statistics on 80,000 topics serving both industry and academia. Their regularly-produced infographics can be a valuable source for story topic insights, and their volume of data can help model the audiences for the individual stories in a transmedia project. The pricing ranges from limited free accounts, through affordable premium, corporate and university accounts. Though this quantitative resource is familiar to many researchers, it is less familiar to journalists. For the latter, it and others can assist in project design from the creation stage of designing interesting and relevant journalistic storyworlds to the first implementation design stage of understanding what publics can best use that transmedia reporting. If the demographics and psychographics—age, gender, brand preferences, political affiliations, activities, religions and more—of a target audience are modeled, they can be invaluable in selecting what media channels will reach that audience.

The tools used by advertising media buyers, such as SRDS in the U.S., are also expensive to access. The high price is due to the exclusive datasets built by media buying research organizations and the scale of the economics of the advertising and marketing industries. They are thorough and their data is specific. Often databases can be accessed through university libraries. SRDS and Simmons are available for free in many institutional libraries, but the data provided for library use is three or more years old. Though this is often adequate for journalistic purposes, other options can provide good data for Internet engagement—which evolves rapidly—and this can often be extrapolated to print and broadcast media as well. The most popular Web engagement data service is Google Analytics Solutions (2017). Though it is heavily used in tracking Web engagement, the statistics it generates are private, provided only to the owner of a URL. This does not render them completely out of reach, however. If negotiating for the publication of a transmedia project story, the channel a journalist wishes to use may provide demographic and psychographic data. Quantcast (2017), however, makes the tracking data it collects for online media that contract its services free and publicly accessible. This relative newcomer to the digital engagement data industry is now one of the world's most influential, and it provides a valuable way to select media channels for transmedia project implementation. By correlating the psychographics of target audience groups, media channels used by publics with that psychographics can be selected to deliver transmedia content.

The design of an effective transmedia journalism project is a complex process, beginning with the definition of a topical storyworld to be covered, through collaborative brainstorming, experimentation and creation of a series of stories designed for digital, analog and brick-and-mortar media channels. The richness of the creative design should fuel deep engagement from readers and move them through the story network to maintain that engagement over a longer period. That design then places those stories directly in front of the readers who can best use the information reported. By targeting media channels that reach critical publics, a transmedia journalism designer can make the project more efficient as a public good.

TRANSMEDIA JOURNALISM DESIGN DECISIONS

Collaborative design thinking is a post-structuralist act. By its nature, creativity is best accomplished in a uniquely balanced condition of freedom and constraint (Saleh, 2015) and within delimitations discussed in the previous section. When in a designing mode, however, one tends to minimize structure and often pays the price for that excessive freedom. The following decision flow is intended to help transmedia journalism designers achieve a more successful implementation of their creative work by posing questions that should be asked of most projects at the initial stages of the design process. This list of questions is meant as a starting point as each project requires a unique set of decisions specific to its goals. Each decision below inevitably leads to a new series of questions:

1. **What Is the Storyworld?** As discussed above, defining a real-world storyworld is an act of delimitation rather than expansion. As any subject taken from the real-world interconnects infinitely with every other, more than a broad subject identification is required here. In this initial design stage, you must decide on the timely issue or topic covered, what are the individual stories and characters that will put a face on that issue and how those stories interconnect with each other across a complex mediascape.
2. **What Are the Starting-Point Stories?** Like a good news *lede*, the initial stories set a tone or an operatic overture for what will come after. Here the scope of planned stories is examined to determine which story for each separate media channel will quickly engage the target public while also alluding to what more will come through subsequent stories the series. Though transmedia projects are inherently nonlinear in structure, story elements published early in a project timeline should still act as an overture for what is to come.
3. **What Are the Continuing Stories, and How Will They Unfold?** Continuing story elements should be planned to embrace this nonlinear nature. Though each must add new information, context and perspective, producers must assume that they will be engaged in random order as the

public discovers them. Though producers may time the release of stories or explicitly direct their publics to read these individual pieces, it will be rare that such direction functions. As journalism, each story should be able to both stand alone as if it were the only story found, and add new value for readers who engage with more than one story.

4. **Who Are the Key Publics for Each Story?** Here one should think in great detail about who can best use the information from individual stories or their extensions. Are they young? Old? Rich? Poor? Do they play games? Liberal? Conservative? Are they policy makers or voters? Do they hunt or fish? Cook or play chess? One should "talk" to them through the stories. Most good journalists have a reader in mind as they write, photograph, produce or edit.
5. **What Media Channel Would Best Reach Those Publics?** This also requires specific and detailed research using, if possible, the demographic and audience research databases used in advertising. Identify in very specific detail, what media channels are most likely to reach the publics that can best use the information gathered. Partnerships will likely be necessary to get those stories published, and agreements that are beneficial to both transmedia producer and publisher are possible.
6. **What Media Forms Will Best Tell the Story?** One should think critically here about what works, not simply what one is most confident producing. Text is best for context. Video tells powerful stories that have a strong narrative arc and puts the flesh on characters better than almost any other form. Still photos isolate discrete moments. Audio engages the imagination. Games describe systems. Artifacts connect. Illustration accesses the camera-inaccessible. The channel necessary to reach one's public may create a limit on the possibilities here. If necessary, channel could be revisited in light of the best form for the story.
7. **What Genre, Length or Structure Will Best Serve a Story's Public?** Different channels encourage different levels of engagement. A *New Yorker* magazine reader flips open the cover expecting a 10,000-word story, but a *Vice* reader might expect a quick short-form video. One should provide content that appeals to attention spans that may vary from 30 seconds to two hours. Most journalists are comfortable selecting the appropriate genre for a story; however, much may be learned from the demographic study of the target public. Stories should be produced for the reader, not for the journalist him- or herself.
8. **How Should These Stories Interconnect?** The network one builds is the key to good transmedia storytelling. Carefully plan what stories will interlink. Are they hot-linked in digital spaces? Referred to in analog spaces? Are source materials and external content available with a click to provide transparency? This planning could extend to the design of a reader's investigative path through the project either as a trail of breadcrumbs or with a more gameful quality if desired. Whether the public follows that path or not, the design will only improve project structure. The project should allow the most engaged readers to build mastery of the subject, and by doing so, they will become the most powerful social advocates—both online and offline—for the project (Moloney, 2015, p. 54).
9. **How Can These Stories Be Conversations?** As all media become social, producers of transmedia journalism must engage the many-to-many cultural production ethos of the digital age (Lessig, 2009). A successful production will enable social commenting, sharing, remixing and amateur production of the work produced. Though these varying forms of public engagement are often seen

as separate phenomena, the author argues they should be seen collectively as different degrees of user contribution. In traditional journalism comment blocks on digital stories are common, they alone do not make for a conversational space. Engagement will increase if the reporters and producers of a transmedia journalism project enter that conversation with responses and updates. Public contribution should allow engaged readers to help build stories with the producers or contribute their own for consideration. This will increase their ownership in the story and their engagement, and it will enable more transparency and a multi-perspective view on the subject. These spaces cannot be left journalistically unattended, though. Public contribution should face the same editorial rigor as the contribution from contracted journalists, or the space should be clearly identified as amateur production.

10. **Who Is on the Team?** First, assemble a Pixar-inspired Braintrust (Catmull, 2014, pp. 108–109) as a check and balance on your thinking. Few brilliant ideas are generated in social isolation or free of candid critique. Select individual story producers who both understand the goals of the overall project and will produce content at the quality level expected of professional journalism. If you are assembling a production group of like-minded independents, seek out people with needed skillsets for business management and fundraising as well as good reporters.
11. **Where Does the Money Come From?** Complex, long-term projects are expensive. Your time is valuable. If you are producing a transmedia journalism project in a large media company with a sizable staff, be sure your budget calculations are thorough and accurate so you can maintain the support of the company for the project. Independents must decide from where their operational and reporting budget will come. Is it grant funded? Crowd funded? Private donor funded? Is time donated? After this can content created as part of the project be licensed to target media channels at rates high enough to pay for the reporting and producing time?
12. **What is the Timeline?** Decide how the project will launch, set target points for key elements of the project along the way, and define when and how the project ends. Though reporting and publishing may end, does the project remain on its publication channels as an archive? Which stories might be fleeting in accessibility and which should not?

Change is a constant, and though some answers to these decisions will necessarily change, likely multiple times, from concept to finish, a thorough and comprehensive plan will result in a more cohesive, fluid, engaging and successful project. Constant iteration from within the borders of the storyworld will inevitably improve the outcome.

UNDER CONSTRUCTION: THE REFUGE PROJECT STORYWORLD BIBLE

The storyworld bible need not be complex. The example that follows as a real-world illustration of these ideas is from a simple, shared Google Docs document that acts as a working outline for the author's current transmedia journalism project. Though it will continue to evolve and refine the subject delimitations and implementation plans of the project, it is frozen here as of this April 2017 writing. This is a transmedia journalism storyworld bible in the very early stages of project development.

REFUGE

What Is the Refuge Project?

Refuge is a pilot transmedia story network that will focus on the single issue of refugees: those who migrate by force, either to escape suffering and deprivation or to build new, more hopeful lives elsewhere. It is the first in a series of similar projects that will explore the issues that polarize the electorate in Colorado and the American West, from economic stratification to religious identity, environment and gun ownership rights.

The American West has always attracted dreamers, from 16th-century silver-hunting Spanish explorers, to gold rushers, homesteaders and entrepreneurs. But it has also been a magnet for those escaping social, political or economic oppression. Many of those same Spanish silver hunters that settled New Mexico (Chávez, 2012; Simmons, 1993) and southern Colorado as early as 1598 were Jews fleeing the Inquisition (Chávez, 1974; Orme, 2014). Former slaves, tenant farmers, Mormons and others preceded more recent resettlements of Japanese-Americans locked into camps for the duration of the Second World War, Holocaust survivors, former urban gang members and exhausted police officers, hippies and survivalists escaping the grid, property rights activists invading public lands, and, of course, migrant workers and war refugees.

Storyworld

Refuge will define its storyworld around the characters of contemporary westerners who have fled real or perceived oppression, from across the social spectrum and political divide, humanizing their stories. It will build a "sense of place" for their particular refuge and, when possible, the situation they escaped.

Why Does It Matter?

Why Now?

Immigration and refugee policies are perennial issues in American politics, dating all the way back to American founding father Benjamin Franklin's 18th-century disdain for low-class German immigrants (Franklin, 2006), through 19th-century refugees of the Irish potato famine, 20th-century fear of Mexican migrant farmworkers and, most recently, Syrian war refugees. The 2016 U.S. presidential election made more raw the ongoing rhetoric on immigration policy, refugee resettlement and border security. The current highly-polarized debate would benefit from a cross-political and cross-cultural look at refugees of all origins, from Syrian and Iraqi refugees to Holocaust and Japanese internment survivors, Soviet defectors and others.

Why Here?

As noted above, the West is perceived as a place of reinvention, boot-straps hope and possibility as open as its spaces. Whether this mythology actually holds true or not, the region provides a scope for this work and an emotional connection for readers.

Why Us?

Kevin Moloney is a transmedia designer and scholar, a veteran international journalist and descendent of the American West's first European refugees. He is one of the world's earliest researchers of transmedia journalism and an internationally recognized visual storyteller and teacher.

Matt Slaby is a polymath westerner with deep experience covering, engaging with and working toward solutions for marginalized communities. He and his company LUCEO are internationally recognized transmedia storytellers.

Who and What Are the Subjects?

With an eye on the liberal and conservative, expected and unexpected, subjects and characters will be researched and vetted from the realms of:

- Political refugees.
- Cultural refugees.
- Economic migrants and refugees.
- Environmental migrants and refugees.
- Urban "refugees."

Reporting will focus on the emotional experience of loss and relocation, and the hope of reinvention. Much has already been done on the horrors of war and imprisonment or the difficulties of starvation or discrimination. This will be covered enough for context, but the internal emotional life in this situation shows the universal in the experience. In addition to character-driven visual storytelling and interview, content that develops a sense of place for each character's story will be gathered—images, audio and other content that conveys either the place escaped and/or the refuge found.

Starting-Point Stories:

(These are not necessarily in order of publication. The first is under imminent threat of deportation. Another two, who are in their 80s-90s, should be interviewed and photographed soon.)

- *Ingrid Latorre* is in sanctuary at a Denver Mountain View Quaker Meeting House. The illegal Peruvian immigrant mother of two faces deportation and separation from her U.S. citizen children.
- *Bob Sakata* was interned by the U.S. government in the Tanforan Race Track (2017) and Topaz (2017) relocation camps in 1942. Later that year he was released to perform sponsored farm work in Colorado, a refuge for Japanese-Americans thanks to the foresight of level-headed republican governor Ralph Carr (2017). Carr's political career floundered after he opposed the internment of Japanese-American citizens. After the war Sakata, moved his father and siblings to Colorado and built one of the most productive large-scale vegetable farms in the region.
- *Walter Plywaski* survived multiple Nazi death camps during the Holocaust, systematically working to move from camp to camp to avoid death and cajoled his way into the U.S. "I like the idea of low population density," Plywaski said of his wish to move into the mountains above Boulder. "I don't like big crowds," he added about the concentration of the Nazi camps. He more recently had

to flee a wildfire that destroyed his home. Or Fanny Starr, who survived Auschwitz, and relocated to Denver after a long journey through displaced persons camps in Europe and new homes in the U.S.

- *Neal Schwieterman* was a first-responding sheriff's deputy at the Columbine high school shooting in 1999. The first-hand experience with the horrible event pushed Schweiterman and his wife to move to rural Paonia, Colo., where he became first a bicycle-bound police officer and later mayor of the quiet rural town.
- *The Lack of Legal Immigration Options* consistently foils those wishing to move to the U.S. legally. Though the political right often argues that immigrants should follow legal procedure, very few options for long-term or permanent immigration to the U.S. actually exist in 2017. Can a subject abroad with whom few Americans would have objections, and document their extreme struggle to follow federal immigration laws be found?
- *More to come.*

Secondary Stories

Multiple interesting support characters surround the main subjects—those who help, protect, teach, support or advocate for refugees and immigrants. Short interviews may be made for use on social media feeds as additive content or for use in external channels. Examples may include:

- **Dan Carr:** Attorney and grandson of 1940s-era Colorado governor Ralph Carr who risked his political career to support Japanese-American citizens during WWII internment.
- **Hans Meyer:** Denver-based immigration attorney, who represents illegal immigrant Jeanette Vizguerra—herself named one of *Time* Magazine's 100 Most Influential People in the World ("Time 100," 2017)—and fights to require Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to secure a warrant before arresting those appearing in Denver courts for immigration violations.
- Sanctuary Church Pastors.
- Sanctuary City Organizers.
- Refugee Relocation Workers.
- Friends and Family Members of Primary Subjects.
- More to come.

How Will It Look and Feel?

Sensitivity to Unequal Degrees of Suffering and Loss

This is a wide-ranging set of subjects, from those who simply up-and-left a situation that had become uncomfortable to those who survived the modern era's most horrific atrocities. The project producers must avoid any mistaken understanding that it puts these disparate experiences on equal footing. Consultation with relevant communities will help determine how material is published for pairing, interconnection and order.

Is the starting point going to be with subjects escaping situations that put their lives and families at very mild risk (like Neal Schwieterman, for example) and progress to Syrian atrocity refugees and Holocaust survivors? Or does the project limit subjects to those on the same scale—fewer subjects that include only atrocious events from the Holocaust to Stalin's gulags, Cambodia, the Balkans, Kurdistan, Syria and others on varying horrific scale?

The philosophy behind the wider perspective is to ease the reader ultimately into the horrific space. Kevin would like to use the closer-to-us-all ideas of escape to carry readers incrementally to the more hellish. This will hopefully make the atrocious more real and immediate than it might otherwise be, and to liberate it from political rhetoric, national origin or economic class.

What Media Forms Will Be Used and How?

This will be a largely visual storytelling project, making use of video, still photography, audio and artifact in early stages, and lecture as a final stage. For sake of scale the project uses a small set of the many possible media forms.

- **Video:** Extended 30-minute videos when justifiable for Web, cable or over-the-air use, to short 3- to 5-minute Web segments, to Instagram-length for social media use. Web-length videos will pair interview clips and moving portrait clips with archival images and clips of the story spaces (location left behind, and/or refuge found) in a randomized diptych and triptych screen format. Separate and exclusive video portrait clips will be held out along with short interview statements for social media use. Documentary-length television segments will be edited for the standards and aesthetics of the potential partner channel.
- **Stills:** At the time of interviews, intimate and highly-polished portraits of the subject for gallery or museum exhibition will be made. These can be created digitally, though Kevin envisions medium- or large-format black and white silver prints. This work can imply both permanence and scarcity to the images, and provide a way for those deeply engaged with a story to take it home into their lives through purchase of a portrait or landscape print. Behind-the-scene digital images for Instagram will also be made to give the community a peek into coming stories as the pace of the project accelerates.
- **Audio:** Interview audio can be edited for independence from the visual elements of the story, allowing for over-the-air radio, podcast and use by the visually impaired. For Web audio, stories read by voice actors could remove a layer of bias. Stories centered on the emotional stress of rebuilding a life in a new culture would be aimed at making these experiences universal and help listeners of all political or cultural backgrounds internalize the experience.
- **Text:** Though this is a visually-driven project, transcribed interview text should be provided for those engaging with the project in quiet spaces and for those who prefer to read rather than listen. Like all other forms in use here, additive information will be provided in all text, encouraging engagement with all media forms in use. It will not simply be a repurposing of interview audio.
- **Artifact:** When possible, physical objects related to each story's experience will be borrowed for careful and respectful display in exhibition spaces. Artifacts like this add direct physical presence with a story better than any other media form. Items will be insured, packaged and transported with extreme care and documentation and receipts provided in accordance with museum collection best practices.
- **Community-Generated Content:** The editorial system will allow for meaningful community-generated contribution to the project. Unsegregated space will be provided to contribute vetted

comment and story. Though this material must meet project journalistic standards, the community will be able to add meaningfully to our work.

Options:

- **Game:** Simple gamefulness could be created with a minimum of design demand using the voice-acted audio described above. Deep engagement could be encouraged from listeners by asking them to identify when and/or from where a refuge seeker originated, but without the clue of accent. This form is best planned and created by experienced game designers.
- **Lecture:** A small series of lectures or forums may be produced late in the project publication process to foster community conversation over the issue, and to provide community members with the opportunity to hear from and meet project characters.

What Media Channels Will Be Used and How?

Our project will use digital, analog and brick-and-mortar channels to reach targeted publics. As rich and powerful as digital channels are, the rare, singular and physical of the analog world add invaluable depth to story. Our publication goal is to place our work in people's paths rather than hoping they will just happen upon us.

- **Web:** A story hub will be created interconnecting as many pieces of the larger story as possible. While much of the work will be available on the site, it will not be intended to be the project's final destination. Well-targeted external channels will be the final destination for the varying project elements. Its design will allow for as much nonlinear story interaction as possible. Off-the-shelf Web technologies will be used—content management and display through Wordpress, video hosting through Vimeo, audio through Soundcloud or similar systems—to pilot the easiest possible construction and to avoid the pitfalls of singular, personally-coded systems.
- **Mobile:** Wordpress (if used) content can easily be fed to app-like mobile templates providing deep access to the project to the fastest-growing media channel technology. As above, however, our aim is not to create a destination channel of our own, but to feed our content to targeted high-traffic external channels. Here digital social media is an important piece of our mobile strategy, with non-repetitive and targeted content distributed through *Instagram, Twitter, Facebook* and other online social spaces.
- **Digital Social Media**: Here exclusive and native content that adds to story depth is included rather than simply using social to link to full stories elsewhere. Content should be designed as if this will be the only place readers may find the story, but coax them into the wider digital and analog story network. In similar projects, *Instagram* has proven to be an excellent channel for behind-the-scenes looks into the project and *Twitter* as a discussion and dissent space. Facebook is now an excellent storytelling channel where new publics can be reached with greater depth.
- **Galleries:** Highly-polished portrait and landscape imagery and artifacts will be used to bring these stories into physical space. Each portrait will be paired with a scene-setting image of a space key to the story. For example, an intimate and provocative portrait or Bob Sakata could be paired with an image of the Topaz Relocation Center today, or of his vast farming empire on Colorado's Platte

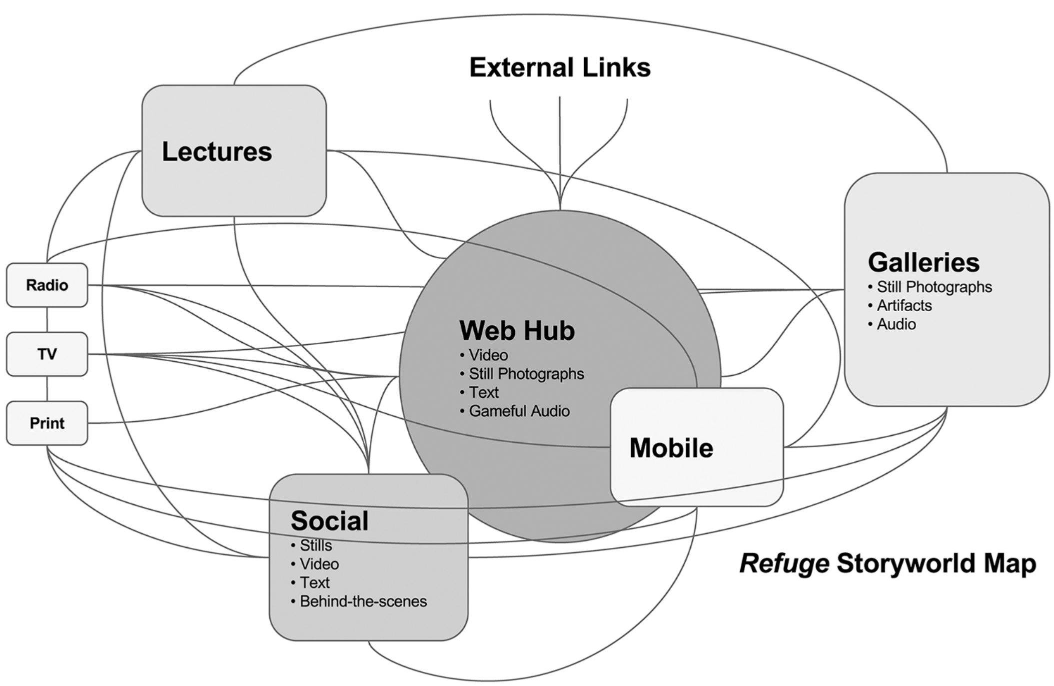
River. Artifacts from his story would stand in a case near the images. Potential gallery spaces include the display space on the Concourse A bridge at Denver International Airport where an extremely broad population waits in security lines or passes transit time. More targeted options may include the Mizel Museum in Denver, a social justice organization centered around the Jewish experience, to local community centers in less urban areas of the state. In small scale spaces care will be taken to display work that conforms to local filter bubbles in pair with that which does not.

- **Links to Existing External Projects:** Following Google's Law of the Internet—the more you send people away, the more they keep coming back—other reporting and social engagement projects operating in the same spirit will be linked to *Refugee*. Links through which the public can act on the information produced will be also provided, allowing deeper investigation into topics or related organizations.

Options:

- **Lecture/Forum Spaces:** In a similar vein as the galleries, in-person interaction with willing story subjects, project producers, local issue activists and politicians will be coordinated to create analog social media spaces. These may be in pair with gallery openings, as part of larger community events or in collaboration with local educational institutions.
- **Legacy Media:** Content may be distributed through the online, print or broadcast channels of commercial and public media in the region capable of reaching new targeted publics (Figure 1). In order to break filter bubbles, broadcast or publication of stories that are more recognizable to their demographics could be paired with those that upend expectations.

Figure 1. The Refuge project storyworld visualized



Who Should It Reach?

The goal is to reach more than the choir—those within various social or political bubbles—with this project. The work will be not only to reach the Trump voter with a compelling and relatable view on refugees, immigrants and others looking for sanctuary in the American West, but to reach refugee-supporting liberals with a broader view of refuge. For both poles, the hope is to convey that one person's refugee is another's threat.

To achieve these goals, first there will be exploration of published research and reporting into regional attitudes about refugees, immigrants and the concept of sanctuary to make sure gut-level understanding of these attitudes is supported and to expand that basic understanding. On more broadcast-oriented media content from both perspectives will be paired. Channels where more specific demographics could be most efficiently reached will be identified. The project will foster comparisons between situations with which a reader or viewer may agree and another with which he or she may not.

Targeting

Initial target media channels will be determined through research into the demographics of the users of these channels. The team currently has access through university libraries to databases like SRDS for legacy media, Quantcast for much online media, Simmons OneView for demographic cross-tabulation of interests and media consumption. For other channels, such as brick-and-mortar gallery spaces, demographic and traffic information is likely available from the source. This data will assist in determining which stories land in which channels, and how they are paired or arranged to most effectively engage each audience. *Refuge* should not rely on legacy journalism's simple "spray and pray" distribution model.

When Will It Happen?

Initial Launch Schedule for an 18-Month Production and Publication Timeline

- **April:** Moloney and Slaby continue to refine the project definition and map the storyworld limits and set storytelling and publication goals. Research into public attitudes about refugees and immigrants will be initiated.
- **May**: Production begins on four to six initial stories. The first one will be with Ingrid Latorre because of possibly short availability before deportation, and follow with nonagenarian subjects like Bob Sakata and Walter Plywaski. Work on defining target audiences and how to reach them will be initiated.
- **June**: Infrastructure building for Web, social channels, content management and backup archiving systems. Story production continues as subjects arise. Consider attending a Quaker retreat on the sanctuary movement to be held at Ghost Ranch, N.M. for background reporting.
- **July:** Begin feeding preliminary story elements to social media channels.
- **August:** Launch first full Web stories.
- **October:** Begin negotiation with external publication channels—regional legacy and online media, brick and mortar exhibition locations. Plan and book lecture series locations and schedule.

- **April:** Opening of exhibitions at brick-and-mortar locations such as Denver International Airport, public gallery spaces on the Western Slope and rural Colorado and other western states.
- **September:** Lecture series launch (Figure 2).

How Will It Be Funded?

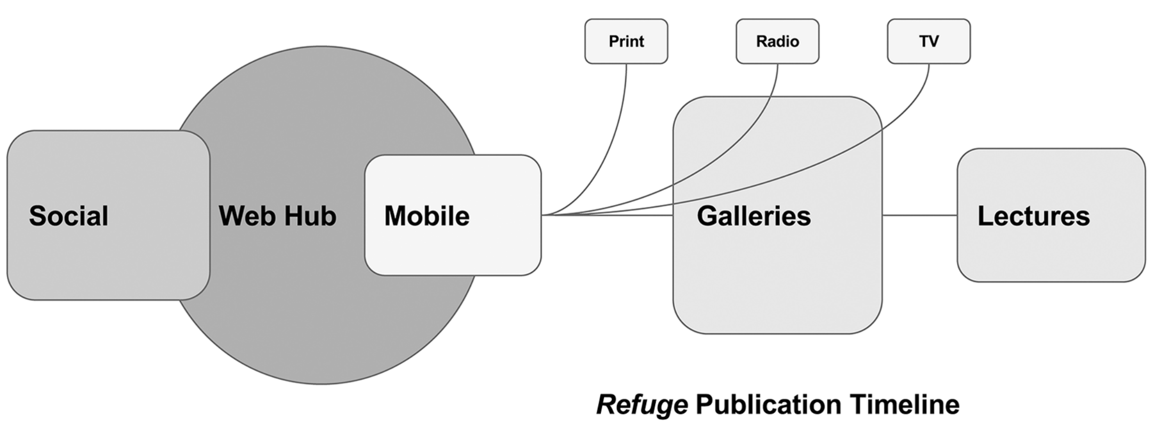
Beyond initial investment in time and resources by the producers, a scale-up of the project would require funds for content gathering and distribution to venues that would not or could not pay to license the content. Though most producers named below would be likely to donate their work to the goal, this project hopes to pay market rates for content production and provide at least a modest stipend to administrators.

- Moloney and Slaby will work with the Colorado Nonprofit Development Center (CNDC) on a fiscal sponsorship to ease the workload in fundraising and accounting. This arrangement will last through the wider Divided Colorado series of transmedia projects.
- Initial needs could be met through a crowdfunding campaign to produce content.
- Ongoing needs may be met through topical grant funding sought with the aid of the CNDC. Funding will be sought from organizations that support refugee, immigration, journalism and documentary projects.

CONCLUSION

If implemented thoughtfully and carefully, transmedia storytelling shows promise for journalists as a possible answer to an ever-more complex mediascape. The required design and planning of transmedia projects can be a foreign idea for journalists accustomed to reacting to a rapid news cycle. This chapter described design thinking as a loose structure for effectively planning transmedia journalism projects and briefly examined cases where too little design planning led to complications of their storyworlds. In answer to those complications, the author proposed a decision flow to aid transmedia journalism design-

Figure 2. Refuge project tentative production and publication timeline



ers and analysts in understanding how to prioritize the needs of a project and iterate its design without losing sight of its purpose. This decision flow was demonstrated with an early-stage storyworld design document for a developing transmedia journalism project: *Refuge*.

For the bulk of traditional, day-to-day newsgathering, the classic design of journalism is usually enough: Report double-sourced, timely and relevant information; verify it; craft it into a compelling story; publish it to the appropriate section of a preexisting channel with social media links and start over again the next day. This cycle is a difficult one to escape because by the time one round is finished, new events and issues have arisen that demand a journalist's attention. This process also persists because it has worked for more than two centuries and still works adequately enough to keep most journalism organizations afloat for now. Because it is a fast-paced, stressful and important job performed largely in the public eye, journalists like this author must give it an almost religious purpose to endure it. Like all religions, dogma and tradition make it very slow to change.

Other media industries do not often see their work through such idealistic lenses. No matter the importance or social value of the product being created, all methods to reach an efficient public are explored and coordinated with other methods. This has led to the rise of transmedia storytelling there far sooner and more rapidly than it has in journalism. Their eyes-on-the-prize focus on measurable success also requires detailed start-to-finish planning of projects to achieve their goals. To be most effective, transmedia journalism must be thoughtfully designed to achieve its goals too. A careful user-centered design that is both constrained and liberated by a prioritized set of decisions is critical to ensure that the project does not fall apart.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Audience Targeting: Strategic placement of advertising, entertainment, or news content in media channels to reach predetermined segments of the public.

Decision Flow: An ordered set of decisions in which the prior questions are ideally answered before the subsequent.

Demographics: The statistical characteristics of a population, including age, race, gender, income, and others.

Design Thinking: The problem-solving process of creating, marketing, and implementing products or services with a focus on end-user utility and satisfaction.

Essentialism: A view that every entity has an essential set of attributes that define it. The Linnean taxonomy of biological organisms is an example of an essentialist structure.

Lede: (/lid/) An American journalism spelling differentiation that clarifies it from the similar pronunciation of lead. A lede is the paragraph of a news story that introduces the subject. A lead (/lid/) is a clue to follow in reporting and well as the leader of a reporting team. Lead (/led/) is also the space between typeset lines of text, named for the heavy metal used in early letterpress typesetting.

Psychographics: Statistics that classify populations by psychological characteristics, such as preferences, affinities, fears, and social values.

ENDNOTE

[1] Marvel released a series of apocryphal comics following the success of *Star Wars* that included Jaxxon, a giant rabbit-like alien as an Empire-battling character alongside Han Solo and Chewbacca. After a canonical absence of 20 years, he has since reappeared in games and Web comics ("Jaxxon," n.d.).

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Chapter 49
Pedagogical Guidelines to Introduce Transmedia Learning Into the Classroom:
The Brazilian Context

Patricia Gallo
Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte, Brazil

Maria das Graças Pinto Coelho
Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte, Brazil

ABSTRACT

Transmedia learning has been adopted as a theoretical and practical approach aimed at young students learning with technologies. It allows for open, dynamic, and engaging teaching and learning, integrating the school curriculum with life and sociocultural demands in a continuous information flow. This paper presents some pedagogical guidelines for introducing transmedia learning into the classrooms. For this, we will take into account the Brazilian context regarding the technologies and media available in Brazilian public schools, the media literacy of students and teachers, and the rules derived from the management team.

INTRODUCTION

The processes which have been founded for communication and sociability mediated by means of electronic networks are complex. However, it is not enough to use technical appropriations to understand the economic, cultural, social, and political dimensions of virtual spaces which have used the bimodal communication method (providing and receiving information). Therefore, not only are modes of consumption and production of information necessary, but also the access to cultural sphere is modified in that process.

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In turn, the role of the individual changes from that of being just a consumer and passive spectator (critical or not) to being a critical consumer and active producer. This is not a natural and simple process. On the contrary, it requires individual and collective efforts to become a social actor who is aware of the implications of his global and local actions in the virtual and physical spaces that he frequents.

For this to take place, it requires the individual to understand the opportunities that have been opened up with the new interactional forms afforded by the mobility and connectivity in the network. There is an immeasurable amount of information to be accessed, analyzed, evaluated, selected, shared, edited, and reproduced concerning new signs and languages in technology and media. That is a complex process for an individual in an interconnected world, because to be an aware citizen both on- and offline requires not only text literate but also one who is media literate.

Our constant contact with young students[1] had led to one of the problems we have found concerning media literacy. Students have not mobilized some skills in the process of interaction with the world across various technologies and media. These devices could be the instrument for emancipation and social transformation in their life.

In this perspective, we refer to the mobilization of skills and competencies that will support sociocultural practices so that young students are not just consumers of media content but also citizens, exerting a critical and conscious participation on the communication process. Livingstone (2004) has argued: “Only if these are firmly foregrounded in a definition of media literacy will people be positioned not merely as selective, receptive and accepting but also as participating, critical; in short, not merely as consumers but also as citizens.”

Referring to the importance of skills and competences of media literacy, Mimi Ito calls attention to a facts about our students cannot be ignored and that meets our concerns: “Beyond what they are learning in school, they are connecting socially and are being influenced by each other’s knowledge” (Ito quoted by Reilly 2009, p. 9). The author also says that: “these informal mentors have effectively taken their place among the many sources influencing children’s processes of knowledge-building and identity-forming”. It is important to mediate these new communicational ways that the children are involved.

Another problem that we have found is the fact that teachers give priority to school literacy. In other words, they just select the skills and competences that the students will develop and mobilize in function of what they will be requested to do in the formal and national exams.

This direction draws the school away from the spaces where the students are interacting with others. As a result, we have a literacy process which is not contextualized and not connected with the sociocultural demand of a student’s surroundings. As Freire and Shor (1986) argued, this action reveals the dichotomy and highlights the division between the “words of school” and the “words of reality”.

To minimize these problems we propose transmedia learning as a pedagogical approach to introduce media literacy into public schools, considering the Brazilian context[2]. We also suggest some pedagogical guidelines for its application in the classroom through a connection between teaching and learning, the school curriculum, media literacy, and the transmedia storytelling approach.

With transmedia learning, we intend to promote learning from the exploration of knowledge. Students will be involved in the discovery through their own initiative, inside and outside of school, to allow them to develop skills in media literacy.

METHODS

Study Subjects

In order to understand some pedagogical situations in the school in which we carried out our research, we needed to know the ways and procedures that our research teachers adopted in order to interact through technology and media. As we get to know the features and social worlds of the school in question, we will be able to suggest transmedia learning as a teaching and discovery practice that focuses on media literacy.

Six teachers were able to participate in our research. Those teachers were volunteers: one male and five female. All teachers work in public high schools in Parnamirim City, Brazil. Their average age was 35 and they had, on average, 12 years of teaching experience. With the data collected through questionnaires, we can draw the teachers' technological profile both in terms of daily use and as the pedagogical use.

With regard to technological profile, teachers access the Internet as little as three times a week ranging to daily, at home and at work, mainly through laptops. The main uses of the internet, in order of importance are: email access, social networks, websites to download content, news portals, and radio/music listening. With regard to cellphones, the main uses correspond to: making calls, sending and receiving SMS, accessing the internet and social networks, sending / reading email, and listening to music.

Teachers also have autonomy in the handling of technological devices, so they just ask for help after first trying on their own to solve a problem. Their main daily habits related to media and analogical and digital technologies are: listening to the radio, reading printed books, reading scientific papers, reading news online, reading print magazines and downloading material for classes.

The main technological devices that they have are: tablet and mobile phone. With two or more units they have: computer, TV, camera and DVD player.

With regard to the use of the school's computer lab, teachers say they do not use it. However, they identify the technologies and media as tools that bring new dynamism and methods for teaching and learning. In addition, teachers have never had a preparatory course for the use of technology in education provided by the school or State Education department.

Research Method

Ethnomethodology gave us the guidelines for a methodological approach to study ordinary procedures the teachers we were researching. In Coulon's words (1995, p. 30) ethnomethodology "is the empirical research of the methods that people use to make sense while performing their actions every day: communicate, make decisions, reason", whether these activities be learned or trivial.

Garfinkel is the creator of the term and leading scholar of ethnomethodology. In 1967, he published the book "Studies in Ethnomethodology"; collating dispersed work already published before. This text has its theoretical origins in phenomenology through the influence of Schutz and Husserl's ideas, which consider the natural attitude and world of common sense as problematic.

In his preface to the Studies in Ethnomethodology, Garfinkel (1967) states that social facts must be considered practical achievements. In this perspective, "social reality is constantly created by the actors, it is not a pre-existing given" (Coulon, 1995, p. 31, author's translation). In ethnomethodology, the evidence is in the mode of members' conduct when they interpret social reality.

The ethnomethods are the ways in which the members act, and they form the corpus of ethnomethodological research. So, ethnomethodology refers to the science of ethnomethods. In this sense, one of the ethnomethodology research strategies is to describe what members do and how they organize their social lives together.

Using ethnometodology, we collected data in order to understand how the teachers think and organize the process of teaching and learning in the field of pedagogical research, a place where they are members of a community following the same rules and instructions.

Conversation was adopted as one of the data collection instruments. This promoted a spontaneous explanation from the teachers' group, including ourselves as active participants in the debates that emerged in our meetings. We discussed varied subjects, both related and not related to school. Thus, we felt comfortable to share and to reflect about everyday social life.

We organized groups and used devices such as adjacent pairs to allow understanding and continuity in the plot of conversation.

Through conversation, (our main used interaction tool) we got to know the teachers in the school and what they do inside the classroom, especially the technologies and media they use. We shared in their statements in similar language and context to avoid misinterpretation.

Ethnomethodology showed us not only how teachers produce and present their ordinary world, meanings, and methods in the teaching-learning process but also what use they make of technology and media in both school and non-school contexts. The findings were essential to provide us with the foundations to draw up the proposal of educational intervention about transmedia learning.

SCHOOL AS LITERACY AGENCY: SOME FINDINGS RESEARCH

The strong relationship between schooling and literacy has placed school in Brazil as the main and most important literacy agency. This is due to both school being the main place to learn reading and writing and literacies being inserted into National Curriculum Parameters. As a result, literacies are now part of the recommended topics that are used in the classroom by many Brazilian teachers.

Greater focus has been placed on individual reading and writing skills rather than social practices. The adoption of literacy has focused on decontextualized works of various genres as well as the assessments and national testing. These tests results mean either good or bad performance for Brazilian schools.

School literacy reduces and filtered the concept of literacy more than it expands it. From this angle, the "school institution redefined literacy, making it what now can be called school literacy, that is, a decontextualized knowledge system, validated by the performance of tests" (Cook-Gumperz, 1986, p. 14 quoted by Soares, 2004, p. 85).

In this scenario, the school selects the skills and competencies that students will develop and utilize, as dictated by the national tests. This decision leaves behind the literacies of family, street, work, etc. and creates a practice of literacy that is decontextualized and free of socio-cultural demands of their surroundings.

Although National Curriculum Parameters guide technology and media use in socio-cultural situations, they also emphasize the computer as learning software that has little value, since there is no focus on the professional, social, and cultural purposes of its use. The computer has mainly been adopted as an isolated appendix with no connection to other contexts or demands.

About this distance, Freire (1986), talks about the dichotomy between the words we read and the world we live in, dividing them into "school words" and "reality words". According to Freire and Shor: "the other world, the world of facts, the life-world, the world in which events are very much alive, the fight world, the world of discrimination and economic crisis [...] has no contact with students in school through the words that the school requires them to read (1986, p. 164)".

Therefore, literacy practices at school are based on the autonomous model of literacy, which considers the practices of reading and writing processes as neutral and independent of socio-cultural contexts.

The authors make us think about the dichotomy of a world where our reading only includes at school. This world is a closed one, unfortunately isolated from the world we live in where reading is not done the same as it is in school. However, Kleiman (1995) emphasizes that it is necessary to know the discursive practices of large groups of literate societies and the ideological model should guide the development of school practices also.

What we found about media literacy at the school we were studying was no different. Many practices that involve technologies and media show an instrumental use. These practices are done for show only, without seeing their potential for learning and distributed cognition. They often repeat old practices on new equipment without regard to critical media or more open models of learning.

In many Brazilian schools, there is still a ban on some technological devices in the classroom and a block on websites in the computer lab. This only increases the distance between the school world and the world in which the students live. In addition, the video room (or multimedia room) and the computer lab room are normally closed, restricted to use at specific times, always accompanied by a teacher or monitor responsible for the equipment and the room.

In the teachers' reports, we sought to identify what resources were present and how they were encorporated in classroom dynamics. For this purpose, we identified the textbook as the resource they used most. As a result, they plan classes based on the chapters the book is divided into or the topics in each chapter. Citelli (2004, p. 87) found after a survey in 14 public schools, "the programs and the list of topics taught follow basically hierarchical commitments, many of them in no historical order, chosen according to the order offered by the textbooks" (author's translation).

The textbook used is chosen by the school from three options that are evaluated by teachers of the same discipline. The book rated the best is used by all teachers and purchased for all students to use collectively. At the end of the school year, the book is returned to the school and other students can use it. The individual and group work activities and the formal test evaluations are part of the teaching process. Activities from the book to do as homework are given daily.

To Wachowicz (1995, author's translation) school education can be a social practice, which is either progressive or conservative. For the author, what determines the direction is the method behind education. It is the teaching method that will characterize it. The author states "it is not the content itself, but the way in which it is passed on to the student which will rework, transforming it into knowledge which is either conservative or progressive" (1995, p. 13).

If the teacher shows the content by itself without the social practices in which students live, they will be deprived of reading critically.

Wachowicz emphasizes that this critical reading process of social practice is not only in the personal or in the teacher-student relationship, but "is a collective process whereby a group of people come face to face with knowledge (heritage and future), without losing their individual perspective" (1995, p.15, author's translation).

When connecting the curriculum and social practices, teachers should not only consider the role of technology and media in society, but also the importance of media literacy in practice.

MEDIA LITERACY: THE ESSENTIAL SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES

Media literacy has become a field of research which interests many scholars and teachers in various countries. Some countries- like the United States and England- have more representation in the scientific and educational setting. They have been studying literacy for longer and have begun to explore the relatively new consequences.

More recently, media literacy has been on the agenda of discussion and research in many other countries, including developing countries. Through researchers and/or associations, the number of people interested in the field has been growing. This has resulted in valuable contributions in the composition of theoretical framework and performance, especially disseminating educational practices that emphasize media literacy.

Even with this increased interest, the scope of the concept of media literacy has been one of the main focuses of doubt and discussion at scientific meetings and conferences, especially with teachers and professionals. This can be explained because media literacy is a plural and interdisciplinary field involving concepts of cognition, education, communication, technology, culture, ethics, behavior, citizenship etc.

With a few variations on the conscious and critical use of technologies and media, it is possible to identify a certain consensus of scholars and associations as to what is meant by media literacy. Thus, the individual must be able to access, analyze, evaluate, create and communicate using technology and media in all its forms and devices (Livingstone, 2004; NAMLE, 2007, 2014; Hobbs, 2010; P21, 2011.).

According to NAMLE (2007), media literacy consists of a series of communication skills, including skills to access, analyze, evaluate and communicate information in a variety of printed and digital forms. When it comes to media literacy in education, NAMLE (2013) recommends as a guide for the teacher to focus skills in order to access, analyze, evaluate, create and communicate using media in all its forms. Finally, the P21 (2011) recommends activities involving: critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity.

The set of skills and competencies are not fixed and vary when there is a redefinition of language components from new social contexts arising from cultural formations.

From this perspective, Santaella (2003, author's translation) distinguishes six types of cultural setting, distinct and sequential logics that merge and interconnect all of them: oral culture, written culture, printed culture, mass culture, media culture (transition period between the previous and the next) and cyberculture.

Currently, all culture forms coexist in our ordinary actions. Santaella (2007, p. 128, author's translation) emphasizes "we live in a real general brotherhood of all culture forms, in a huge melting pot, forming a hypercomplex and hybrid cultural tapestry".

In this cultural complexity, where global signs are mixed with local signs, our students are in ongoing processes of knowledge-building and identity-forming. As a result, new technologies allow us to be and to move in the physical and the virtual worlds simultaneously. In this space, the socio-cultural practices are hybridized as a result of the coexistence and interaction of the cultural logics (from oral to cyber).

In new communication networks individuals (social actors) engage in a processes that are involved in several degrees of engagement: appropriation of knowledge and techniques, sociability, transitory identities, hybrid culture, literacies, production and consumption of information, and cognitive interactions flows. This process is facilitated by computer language in technological standards, media convergence, and Internet.

According to Vygotsky (1998, author's translation), a human being is defined through social interactions with others. It is through symbolic systems provided by social culture that the individual will represent reality. With regard to this, Santaella (2003, p.24, author's translation) states that it is a mistake to believe that cultural transformations come only from new technologies. The author emphasizes that messages and communication processes in the media "are responsible not only for shaping human thinking and sensitivity, but also promoting the emergence of new social and cultural environments".

Jenkins (2009) postulated the term Convergence culture to designate the current cultural transformation when individuals in cultural settings are encouraged to seek new information and make connections between dispersed media content. According to the author, convergence culture arises from the relationship between three concepts present in society: media convergence, participatory culture, and collective intelligence.

Fragoso (2006, author's translation), in turn, addresses media convergence in three major areas, namely: coding modes; support types; distribution forms of media products. However, what we are seeing is that platforms and hardware are diverging and content and messages are converging. During this convergences, the movement of content and messages is supported from the most experienced people in the networks.

For Jenkins et al. (2006, p. 3), participatory culture "is a culture with relatively low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement, strong support for creating and sharing one's creations, and some type of informal mentorship whereby what is known by the most experienced is passed along to novices".

The author adds that the participatory culture "members believe their contributions matter, and feel some degree of social connection with one another" (Jenkins et al., 2006, p. 3). People contribute by building cyberspace, and this action represents a participatory culture.

According to Levy (2007, p. 31, author's translation) "the whole intelligence no longer results in mechanically blind and automatic acts, it is people's thought which perpetuates, invents and sets in motion the thought of society." Thus, individuals are participants in a collective process of social interactions, union membership skills, resources in the search for solutions to common problems, building knowledge, and producing and consuming information.

In short, in convergence culture "old and new media collide, where corporate media and alternative media intersect, where media producer power and consumer power interact in unpredictable ways" (Jenkins, 2009, p. 29). Using Culture of Convergence as a background, Jenkins and his team not only thought of a path to more participatory learning but also "identified a set of core social skills and cultural competence that young people should acquire if they are to be full, active, creative, and ethical participants in this emerging participatory culture" (Jenkins et al., 2006, p. 56).

It was called New Literacy Media that offered ways of thinking and ways use reading and writing in new communication practices.

According to Reilly (2009, p. 8), the new media literacies "can be understood as offering ways of thinking (mindsets —for example, 'collective intelligence') and ways of doing (skill sets—for example, 'transmedia navigation') that recruit the traditional literacies of reading and writing into new kinds of literacy practices". Due to current social demands, reading and writing practices are re-contextualized and re-signified, combining thinking and acting on the world through technologies and media.

The set of twelve skills and competencies outlined by Jenkins and his team (2006) detail and extend ways of doing. As mentioned earlier in this topic, these competencies are inserted into the top five skills of media literacy to emphasize sociability and type of text. Moreover, the division that the NML project about literacy uses is: Printed literacy (writing / text); Media literacy (critical view of media, questioning the texts); New media literacy (social + text).

According to Jenkins and his team, the twelve social skills and social competencies are necessary for the individual to actively participate in convergence culture. Some of the most important elements are:

- **Play:** The capacity to experiment with your surroundings as a form of problem-solving;
- **Performance:** The ability to adopt alternative identities for the purpose of improvisation and discovery;
- **Simulation:** The ability to interpret and construct dynamic models of real world processes;
- **Appropriation:** The ability to meaningfully sample and remix media content;
- **Multitasking:** The ability to scan one's environment and shift focus as needed to salient details;
- **Distributed Cognition:** The ability to interact meaningfully with tools that expand mental capacities;
- **Collective Intelligence:** The ability to pool knowledge and compare notes with others toward a common goal;
- **Judgment:** The ability to evaluate the reliability and credibility of different information sources;
- **Transmedia Navigation:** The ability to follow the flow of stories and information across multiple modalities;
- **Networking:** The ability to search for, synthesize, and disseminate information;
- **Negotiation:** The ability to travel across diverse communities, discerning and respecting multiple perspectives, and grasping and following alternative norms; (Jenkins et al., 2006, p. 4).

In addition, there is one more skill: "*Visualization* — the ability to interpret and create data representations for the purposes of expressing ideas, finding patterns, and identifying trends" (Reilly, 2009, p. 8). It was originally listed in the MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology's) NML project and is now linked to the Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism at the University of Southern California.

Many of these skills and competencies can be observed in the interaction of young people when they use technology and media. Some examples include: creating profiles and avatars on social media, re-reading and appropriating media content, negotiating points of view in virtual communities, or participating in chats/discussion forums.

Teachers still follow a top-bottom model of dispersing knowledge. Riley (2009) comments on this by saying:

Today's children learn by searching and gathering clusters of information as they move seamlessly between their physical and virtual spaces. Knowledge is acquired through multiple new tools and processes as kids accrue information that is visual, aural, musical, interactive, abstract, and concrete and then remix it into their own storehouse of knowledge.

Schools need to embrace this cause and incorporate literacy learning into the classroom and other school spaces. There are some ways to make this possible. We suggest transmedia learning as a pedagogical approach. It can provide students with media literacy education while promoting learning that connects curriculum with current demands of society.

The following figure shows a scheme with skills and competencies related to the media literacy we would like to see mobilized in transmedia learning. The set was organized by us from the conceptions of authors and associations such as: Jenkins et al (2006); Livingstone (2004); Reilly (2009); Hobbs (2010); NAMLE (2007; 2014) P21, (2011).

By definition, basic and socio-cultural skills related to media literacy should enable the individual to: access information; communicate through media; consume media content analyzing and evaluating information; act on and with the media participating and reflecting with social responsibility and ethical principles, and create messages, producing and remixing the content in both an individual and collective way.

TRANSMEDIA STORYTELLING: THE BACKGROUND

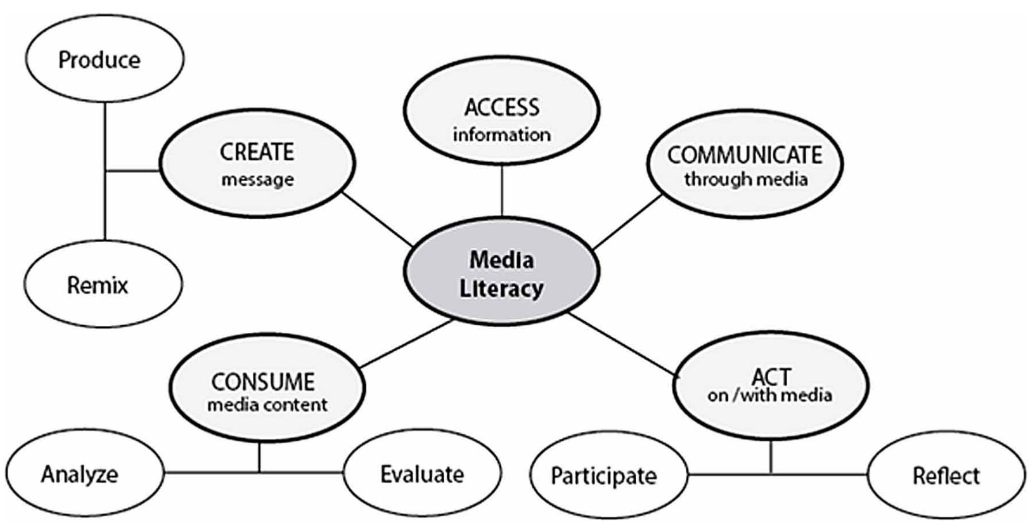
Transmedia learning is an offshoot of transmedia narrative with specific objectives and target audience. As a result, it is essential to conceptualize the narrative and set transmedia learning as a pedagogical approach.

According to Jenkins et al. (2013), "transmedia, by itself, means "across media" and it describes any number of possible relationships that might exist between the various texts that constitute a contemporary entertainment franchise" (p. 6). In other words, it is the content moving in various media platforms.

Jenkins (2011) explains that Marsha Kinder in the text *Playing with Power* wrote about "transmedia intertextuality" for the first time. However, Jenkins was one of the first who popularized the term Transmedia Storytelling which describes one kind of logic for thinking about the flow of content across media.

Based on this concept, it is important to note that there are categories of transmedia defined according the logic or the goals to be achieved in each area of application. However, all categories have the audience participation in a universe to be explored across the media. For Jenkins (2011), transmedia storytelling represents,

Figure 1. Skills and competencies of media literacy



[...] 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. (2011, p. 1)

Whether in journalism, entertainment, or in education, transmedia logic is a way of thinking about the content and the message. It tries to meet the expectations and demands of individuals who stand either as the audience or the producers. In this integration of roles, it is clear that consumer habits have changed and experiences are becoming more engaging and richer. It is the new interactional relationships offered by transmedia logic that we see being stimulated and enabled in educational settings as well.

Because of this, we combine transmedia storytelling (originally an entertainment industry's strategy to win the audience's attention) with educational learning. Through this approach, we see that we can plan out and carry a more interactive teaching practice that promotes the culture of convergence and media literacy in classes.

Transmedia story telling occurred because it establishes a participatory practice where individuals integrate multiple texts in various languages. Through technological artifacts, they establish a broader experience of interaction with acquired knowledge.

According to Jenkins (2009), transmedia storytelling "refers to a new aesthetic that emerged in response to media convergence – an aesthetic that makes new demands on consumers and depends on the active participation of communities of knowledge" (p. 49, Author's translation). Aesthetics is a universe to be explored. In order for participation to take place, the individuals must assume the role of the hunter. They follow the flow and pieces of the content through different media, comparing and sharing their discoveries and collections with others through online tools to come up with new discoveries (Jenkins 2009). The new forms of consumption, communication and sociability that are part of the culture of cyberspace[3] propitiate a different interaction with the narrative.

Jenkins (2007) concludes that "a transmedia text does not simply disperse information: it provides a set of roles and goals which readers can assume as they enact aspects of the story through their everyday life" (p. 1). In this sense, the interactivity is offered by the properties of technologies and participation of culture.

As already mentioned, transmedia storytelling can be seen as reasoning. Individuals accompany a story and make connections between the parts in order to understand the whole.

Thus, each individual appropriates the universe in a unique way, because they consume the content in different forms through numerous entries of exploration. In other words, each part of the narrative spread by various media is a possible entry point to start the exploration.

Moreover, the narrative text is based on an action or a goal that involves characters, conflict, transformation, time, and space. In this scenario, characters that want something or have a goal to achieve are faced with a search for the goal. During this search, they encounter a conflict or confrontation that makes it more difficult to achieve the goal. After reaching it, some transformation happens.

In the timeline of the narrative, there are other parts that compliment the story. These include the life story of the main characters and supporting cast, places where the story takes place, and the objects used by the characters. These complementary narratives are micro universes linked with the main universe through a dynamic connection between the past, present, and future of characters. As a result, each part of this universe can be accessed by individuals through various media such as: comic, blogs, social media profiles, virtual communities, books, sticker album, theater, cartoons, online encyclopedias, music, games etc.

In order to think about which participation form is expected by the audience, it is important to select which media will tell each part of the story. In this sense, Bautista (quoted by Pratten 2011) establishes the classification of media and technologies in transmedia storytelling, based on two forms of participation and two forms of experience: passive participation and active participation, individual experience and social experience.

With this in mind, it is possible to select media and technologies in a more careful and aware manner. In this step, media literacy is given priority in order to plan skills which will be developed or mobilized by individuals while exploring the narrative.

We can see the educational potential offered through transmedia storytelling when individuals use the set of skills to explore the main universe (with its micro universes). When individuals seek and follow the information flow, they are building their own understanding of the universe. Each medium contributes to connect parts and to provide a new and unique way of exploration.

More educational and media literacy opportunities will be provided as a story is more rich in elements, details, and twists to stimulate curiousity.

We propose to use some principles of transmedia storytelling in the classroom because their pedagogical possibilities create dynamic learning. This created environment is more interactive and engaging between students and their knowledge objects that are mediated by the teacher and the media.

Reilly (2009) argues that digital interactions produce more knowledge and influence the learning environment in a substantial way, driving the development of cognition. Thus, students begin contact with the curriculum content at school and maintain this contact, also exploring the knowledge object outside school. At the same time, skills and competencies related to media literacy are encouraged and used.

It is important to note that students should not only access the knowledge object as a spectator or a passive person, but as an active person, interacting with the curriculum, other students and the teacher. As a result, the student accesses, expands, and complements the object of knowledge through media that are bidirectional. This promotes a lifelong cooperative and collaborative learning environment in formal and informal education spaces.

Pedagogical Guidelines to Introduce Transmedia Learning Into the Classroom

According to Jenkins (2011), the transmedia practice is still in the experimentation and innovation phase. For this reason, “new models are emerging through production practices and critical debates, and we need to be open to a broad array of variations of what transmedia means in relation to different projects” (p. 1).

With the necessary adaptations due to entertainment and education being distinct, we are introducing some principles of transmedia storytelling. These guidelines are being adapted to design a theoretical and practical approach to teaching and learning. The main strategy is to plan and design a knowledge object that is expandable and uses the learning goal to see how expandable the object of knowledge can be. Initially, the process is planned by teacher, but in pedagogical action, students can expand the object further.

According to Fleming (2013), we can define transmedia learning as “the application of storytelling techniques combined with the use of multiple platforms to create an immersive learning landscape which enables multi-various entry and exit points for learning and teaching” (p. 371). In general, we refer to reading and writing in the new approach, through various textual genres conveyed by media and technology.

We propose a nonlinear interactive contact with the object of knowledge. Transmedia learning has four basic stages[4], adapted and reinterpreted from its transmedia storytelling: discovering, connecting, learning and taking ownership. The four stages are part of a cycle that will be repeated throughout the learning process because the connections that the students make can lead to new discoveries, new knowledge, or new objects to be known.

At the beginning, students discover the object of knowledge and make connections with science, life, culture, and social demands. First of all, they will know the object of knowledge to later take ownership, building their knowledge.

In all four stages, technology and media are no longer technological appendages. They integrate learning as cognitive tools, enabling the students to expand their intellectual capacity as they follow or interact with the object of knowledge.

Through this concept, technologies and media are mediating tools in the relationship between the student and the object of knowledge. In other words, technologies and media are external to the individual. They have the function to change or to control natural processes through concrete actions (Vygotsky, 1998).

In this respect, Fleming (2013) adds "transmedia learning combines the capabilities of ubiquitous technologies, real life experiences, and learner-focused pedagogy drawn from a rich ecology of content and media" (p. 371). By exploring the object of knowledge, the students are discovering it. Learning by discovery constantly engages students in the exploration of challenging alternatives to unravel it and know it (Bruner, 2001).

For this process of discovery to be possible, the teacher should not deliver the knowledge ready and finished as it is normally done in the classroom. Therefore, it is essential that there are spaces and gaps for students to discover and explore. The teacher should encourage students with unanswered questions, alternative routes to be traveled, and areas to be supplemented by students through individual and collective exploration.

Understanding that the object of knowledge is the main universe to be explored by students, each complementary part (micro universes) are connected with the aim of engaging students to build their own learning.

According the Bruner (1969 quoted by Moreira 1999), the environment of education must be perceived by the learner in terms of problems, relationships, and gaps he must fill to make learning significant and relevant. In this sense, there is no fixed and pre-determined route to the discovery of the object of knowledge by exploration. Luria (1981 quoted by Oliveira, 1992) helps us to understand that, even for simple tasks or problems, the complexity of the functional systems direct the accomplishment of the task through various routes.

Not only is the process of discovery learning important but also the findings of the students and the routes traveled. These discussions should be mediated by the teacher and discuss instruments of culture such as signs and significations. Together they make connections to know the object of knowledge better, reaching conclusions that alone, perhaps, they would not have arrived at. To think and to act with the help of another are therefore stimulated in transmedia storytelling.

Bruner (1986 quoted by Doll Jr., 1997), using the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) of Vygotsky, asserts that the individual is able to expand and increase his personal awareness by the interaction between his own reflective understanding and the reflective understanding of the other. In this perspective, the student is able to follow the thoughts and activities of others (teacher and classmates), although not able to build them himself. For Bruner, in the ZPD, the student is able to use feedback from colleagues and get organized with the help of others.

Thus, the relationship with the social other has an essential role in the concepts of Vygotsky (1998) about the constitution of the human being.The human has a dual nature: a biological species that only grows and a member of a social group.

For Bruner (1990 quoted by Doll Jr. 1997), the notions of himself" develop from experience in a world of meanings, images, and social ties" (p. 42). The author complements by saying that the notion of oneself is a key element in the knower-known transaction. The reflective consciousness turned inward (himself) and outward (society) are the intellectual tools that individuals use to accomplish this knower-known transaction. For Bruner (2001, p. 8), the "culture shapes the mind" and educates and trains:

The studies should focus on the meanings in which terms of oneself are defined both by the individual and the culture in which he participates [...] in line with the practices in which meanings of oneself are reached and put into use. This, in effect, provides us a more distributed view of oneself. (Bruner, 1997, p. 101, author's translation)

People discover either through personal journey or with the help of others. They share their findings with each other about the object of knowledge to enhance the capacity of collective intelligence. In this intelligence, everyone knows something and together they gather knowledge to go further towards a common goal. This collective exploration of the object of knowledge is fostered and facilitated by the different technologies and media. As previously mentioned, collective intelligence is a key component in the convergence culture and one of the skills related to media literacy.

From this viewpoint, Fleming (2013) reinforces the importance of teachers taking responsibility for the insertion of media literacy into the teaching-learning process of children. The researcher says:

We need to be able to equip them with the skills they need to be effective users and consumers of content and information across all media platforms, while providing for them participatory learning experiences that meet them where they are ready to learn. This is a set of skills and competencies that, as yet, too few teachers can claim to have, but it is an area of teacher development that is by now no longer optional. Our young people need these skills, and we as teachers have a responsibility to see that they are able to develop them with our support. (Fleming 2013, p. 372)

Throughout transmedia learning, activities are also designed with the objective of developing and/or mobilizing skills and competences related to media literacy. These activities can be coordinated with or without the use of technology and media, for example as in simulation activity.

The simulation activity can be worked verbally into the classroom, asking students sequential "And if" questions. An example of this is "And if there was no oil on the planet?" Students will simulate situations from their inquiry. As a result, students will reflect on and establish connections with the environment, the planet, life on earth, foreign policy, international relations, marketing, urban mobility, etc.

In transmedia learning, the Connect stage refers to the connection between the curriculum with the life and culture of the students based on past, present and future.

Regarding the curriculum, it is a word that originates from the Latin curriculum and currere verb, which mean "race" and "run", respectively. Thus, the curriculum has the meaning of a course to be run as in the trajectory of a course.

For Bruner (1990 quoted by Doll Jr. 1997), a curriculum oriented to *currere* becomes central self-reflection, imagination and public discourse. This is the essence of transformation. In this respect, the author proposes a curriculum not only to check what has been gained but also to understand the whys of the choices made and the procedures adopted. From this perspective, the teacher-student relationship ceases to be only informational (unilateral) to become dialogical (bilateral). The evaluation processes also change from emphasis sum to generative. In short, the author suggests that teachers have to think and develop curriculum plans that make use of dialogic student-student and student-teacher interactions.

In relation to the dialogical relationship between student-teacher and student-student with regard to the school curriculum, we refer to Freire (2011). He clarifies this statement by saying that "education is communication, is dialogue, it is not the transfer of knowledge" (p. 91, Author's translation). These meanings are socially constructed and shared by individuals through language.

Therefore, the curriculum as a social construction is continuously rebuilt. Because it is a result of socio-cultural, economic, and political changes of society, it must include a dialogue interaction between school, life, culture, and social knowledge. Therefore, it is essential that the teacher plan the new content prescribed in the curriculum, reflecting on the interaction approach and learning objectives.

In this sense, Almeida and Valente (2011) describe a dynamic curriculum that is planned by the teacher, taking into account the social demands and needs of the students:

The curriculum develops, rebuilding the content prescribed in representation processes, attribution of meaning and negotiation of meanings that occur first at the time that teachers plan their classes seeing the specific characteristics of their working context, needs and potential of their students, their preferences and their way of performing the pedagogical work. Then, the curriculum is reframed at the time of action when teachers change what was planned in the course of pedagogical practice seeing the emerging demands of its students, its make and reflect in action. (Almeida & Valente, 2011, p. 14-15, author's translation)

In transmedia learning, the curriculum is continuously associated and connected with socio-cultural demands, life, past, present, and future. These associations are stimulated and mediated by the teacher through questions and pieces of information. However, it is the student who articulates these connections when he discovers information. He then shares the results of his exploration with colleagues and reflects on the findings using technology and media.

About the integration of technology and media in the curriculum, Fleming (2013) points out that "if executed effectively, the curriculum and the technology become one" (p. 377). As mentioned, they are cognitive tools, supporting interactive contact with the object of knowledge.

In this exploration of knowledge, the teacher leads activities that emphasize media literacy. Some skills and competencies are mobilized in the object of knowledge process. For example, negotiating with colleagues, critical insight into information and its sources, data selection, monitoring of information flow, etc.

The more the student explores the object of knowledge, the more information he accesses. With the mediation of the teacher, the student will select, organize, and synthesize the information he brings every day from his culture and various sources. In the process, he acknowledges and negotiates meanings about the object of knowledge.

For Vygotsky (1998), it is the culture that gives individuals the symbolic systems of representation of reality and, through them, the universe of meanings that allows building the order and interpretation of real-world information. Also, in regard to the meanings they "have their origins and their importance in the culture in which they are created. It is this cultural location of meanings that ensures their market-ability and, ultimately, their communicability" (Bruner, 2001, p. 16, Author's translation). The author also points out that "although the individual seems to operate on his or her own to make their search for meaning, no-one can do it without the aid of symbolic systems of culture" (Bruner 2001, p. 16, author's translation).

Still talking about meaning, Oliveira (1992), a Brazilian scholar of Vygotsky thought, emphasizes that "the shapes culturally given will be, throughout the development process, internalized by the individual and will constitute the symbolic material that will mediate the subject and the object of knowledge" (p. 30, Author's translation).

As a result, the knowing makes sense in reference to transmedia learning. When students get in touch with the object of knowledge as a result of their curiousity, their interest is to know about the object and not just realize it.

When planning the relationship between curriculum and social demands, the teacher makes room for students to make their own connections between their life and the object of knowledge. In this perspective, the object of knowledge comes closer to the everyday student and his culture. This causes him to be more interested in the learning process and allows him to independently search for information and answers that satisfy his curiosity.

In transmedia learning, classroom practices aim to encourage the student to extend the contact with the object of knowledge when he is not on school grounds. Furthermore, the return of this autonomous action on the part of the student is reused in the classroom. The teacher can then mediate the process and stimulate new connections that become permanent and without breaks between formal and informal education spaces.

Vygotsky (1998) states that thought has its origin in motivation, inclinations, needs, impulses, emotions, interests, and affection. For the author, when the task is important for the individual and:

…when an act of thought concerning the resolution of a task is of vital importance to the character, it becomes clear that the connections between realist thought and emotions are often much deeper, stronger, directed and more significant. (Vygotsky, 1987, p. 348 quoted by Oliveira, 1992, p. 83, Author's translation)

Other authors also highlight the importance of motivation, interest, and curiosity of the student in the learning process. For Bruner (2001), the motivation is intrinsic and extrinsic, as are the reasons that concern what will be known in learning.

Almeida and Valente (2011) state that the teacher should plan "activities that arouse students' curiosity for discovery, learning with the other and understanding the problems of their context and the world" (p. 50, author's translation). Freire (2011, author's translation) emphasizes that knowing "requires a curious presence of the subject in face to the world. Requires his transforming action on reality. It demands a constant search and implies invention and reinvention. To Cortella (2006, author's translation) finding pleasure and job is part of what a student does in their universe.

Therefore, we emphasize that the teacher must seek strategies that consider the interest and motivation of students in their own learning process. Students are part of a network of meanings where they interact and have a dialogue about the object of knowledge with their colleagues. They do this in the classroom and beyond, based on technologies and online media. Availing themselves of characters, places, facts and events can be a valuable way to encourage students' motivation in the learning process. These are basic elements in a narrative structure that holds the attention of those who explore.

Following the stages of transmedia learning, we come to the appropriation that the type of learning refers to reacting to what is known, recreating it, and interpreting it in a conscious action of reality. The appropriation leads the student to have ownership of the object of knowledge, making it his. For Vygotsky (1998), this process is established by internalization. Thus, the individual, to accede to the forms given by culture, appropriates and uses them as personal instruments of thought and action in the world.

When the appropriation of the object of knowledge happens, students carry it into different contexts, recreating their own goals and offering their own meaning. Thus, many activities can be developed in the classroom to stimulate the recreation of the object of knowledge. In this process, media literacy is given priority in the interaction with the object of knowledge.

Transmedia learning has the purpose of promoting learning from the extent and exploration of the object of knowledge. Thus, students become involved in the discovery on their own initiative, within and outside the school. In this perspective, we suggest a systematic planning of transmedia learning that should be developed as follows:

- Establish connections with knowledge object (subject of the school curriculum) through past, present, and future, using the narrative structures or other mechanisms to connect the information;
- Access knowledge object through technologies and media ((at least three types, creating a multimodal interaction. For example, a textbook, a film, and an online encyclopedia.);
- Connect the object of knowledge with sociocultural demands, making them relevant to current life in society;
- Encourage student participation through questions that make them think or information as clues. This will allow them to seek for answers and informational supplements on the object of knowledge. At the same time, the teacher can encourage the use of other technologies and media by students and can mediate their findings;
- Recover student interest by linking them to the object of knowledge in order to encourage self-expression and engagement for their own learning;
- Encourage situations of individual and collective learning for the student to be both protagonist and collaborator in the learning process;
- Extend the opportunities for learning beyond the classroom and school, in a back and forth dynamic between school ⇔ world through technologies and media networking;
- Create activities that develop the skills and competencies necessary to interact with the world through technology and media.

The planning of classes following the guidelines mentioned above favor media literacy at school, because this process of exploration and discovery mobilizes and develops some skills and competencies necessary in the 21st century.

Transmedia learning as an open and non-rigid pedagogical approach can provide needed support for learning to take place in a pleasant way and with the constant participation of the students in this process. Evaluation is guided in the actions adopted by the students, but also in the production about the object of knowledge that is made by them.

In this conception, we believe to walk in the direction of a democratic pedagogy that "involves teachers sharing power with students as they join together in the process of unveiling myths, challenging hegemony, and searching for methods of producing their own alternative media" (Kellner and Share

2009, p. 11). Together they assume a citizen-critical co-participation using technology and media in school and other areas.

We believe that transmedia learning creates a supportive and viable scenario taking into account the school conditions regarding the use of technology and media integrated into the curriculum and teaching-learning process.

One of the advantages is that the teacher is free to define which technologies, media, genres and languages he wants to introduce into his pedagogical practice. Along with the students, he develops his own media literacy. It opens a space for students to act with him in the knowledge production, sharing their own languages, meanings, and technologies in connection with culture and life.

Life-Long Learning

School is a social place that can benefit from actions that widen the cognition of individual focusing skills and competencies. These are both seen in the field of social interactions through the Internet and media convergence and face to face moments in school. Some authors call attention to lifelong learning, putting into belief the process established between the school and the world experienced by the student outside the school.

Moran (2007) points to the way that classroom will be both a starting and a completing place of teaching-learning activities. The middle of this process will be interspersed with times when we attend other physical spaces. In this model, learning happens in different situations, inside and outside the school.

In turn, the media serve to enlarge the area of socio-cultural interactions, making them a constant presence. Moran adds that "mobility and virtualization frees us from rigid spaces and time" (Moran, 2007, p. 89).

With regard to this issue, Libâneo (2001, p.20) proposes "school as a place of synthesis between the experienced culture that takes place in a city, in the media and many other cultural contributions, and the formal culture." The author also says:

There is now a recognition that education happens in many places, through various agencies. In addition to the family, education occurs in the media, businesses, club, in the gyms, trade unions, on the street. Cities themselves are transformed in educational agencies through popular participation initiatives in the management of cultural programs, organization of spaces and equipment public. (Libâneo, 1988, p. 26)

Demo (2008, p 1) states that the deepest expectation in the digital age is "lifelong learning (everytime, everywhere) as a right of everyone to learn at any place and time, mixing physical and virtual presence." However, often a student only identifies the time when he is physically at the school as a learning moment. Also, he sees the school as a place unlinked to his cultural practices outside the school.

In this same direction of understanding, Santaella (2010, 2013) explores the term Ubiquitous Learning. It is a type of open learning, which can be obtained anywhere and is mediated by mobile devices. The author emphasizes that ubiquitous learning complements other forms of learning since all have their limitations.

Life-long learning is part of cultural change. Any practices that encourage the continuity of the teaching-learning process should be promoted by managers and planned by teachers with support of pedagogical coordinators.

The school can benefit from the convergences of media to stimulate and promote more open learning. It is important to rethink about the prohibiting or restricting of media and technologies in schools. We believe that should promote a process of open and interdisciplinary teaching and learning by connecting school and life through formal and informal knowledge.

Livingstone (2011, p. 13) suggests that the concept of "literacy" is "a set of basic and advanced competences connecting individual skills with social practices, crossing the border between formal and informal knowledge." However, it is not easy to break through the traditional and fragmented practices of an academic institution divided by subjects. In order for school to be open to the world, it is important to establish a connection between current social demands, official curriculum guidelines, languages, and media.

According to Oliveira, Tinoco, and Santos (2011, p. 33) "a literacy action involving language, makes sense only if it meets the user's interest and is linked to a fact concerning the social world of which he is part". The authors add "learning works as a form of building knowledge which is established from a dialectical process [relationship of past-present-future; individual-collective; local-global] "(Oliveira; Tinoco & Santos, 2011, p. 48).

Knowing that articulation of learning is permanent, beyond the classroom, without fragmentation of the learning process, and favoring media literacy, we suggest transmedia learning as a teaching practice at schools.

CONCLUSION

The more we think about the introduction of technology and media in school and in the teaching-learning process as an ordinary action, the more we can establish a culture integrated into the curriculum and school arena.

It is necessary to use technology and media like any other resource already used in the classroom such as books, tables, and marker boards.

We should not limit the pedagogical actions to technologies offered by the school. We need to see that students have access to devices, such as smartphones. However, for these devices to be integrated in the teaching-learning process, the school needs to rethink its decision to ban their use in the classroom. This was witnessed in the school campus where our research took place. Otherwise, we continue to have the technological gap in school space that produce student comments like this: "My smartphone has more technology that the entire school."

These students are aware of the technological, coversational, and informational potential of the devices they carry. In addition, they experience the gap between the world, its surroundings, and the school.

Through transmedia learning, we seek to reverse the gap between school culture and socio-cultural practices in society. This will allow students to reach out and connect the words read in life with the words read in school to promote social literacies in the classroom.

To conclude, transmedia learning creates a favorable and viable scenario for Brazilian schools to use technologies and integrate media into the curriculum and teaching process. The teacher is free to define which technologies, media, textual genres, and languages he wants to use in his approach. He opens the arena for students to act with him in knowledge production, sharing their languages, meanings and technologies in relationships and connections with culture and life.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Access: The ability to use media information also applying operational knowledge.

Act: The ability to participate on / with media applying social responsibility and ethical principles and reflecting on participation.

Communicate: The ability to sharing knowledge and expressing points of views through media.

Consume: the ability to analyze and evaluate the reliability and credibility of media content not only as consumer but also as citizen.

Create: The ability to produce messages and remix media content creatively and consciously considering its consequences.

Hybrid Culture: Refers to the coexistence, harmony, and synchronization of oral culture, written culture, printed culture, mass culture, media culture, and cyberculture mixing all of them in webs of meaning produced by individuals.

Technologies and Media: Are analogical (traditional) and digital (new) media as well as technologies that send and receive information. They are the support and all type of text that circulating therein.

ENDNOTES

1. We have spent more than 15 years working with students in higher education.
2. This paper is a part of the Ph.D research that has been developed in the Education Center at Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte - UFRN, Brazil.
3. The communication space opened by the global interconnection of computers and computer memories.
4. Long (2013, author’s translation) proposes the use of four stages in transmedia narrative projects: discover, collect, consume and react.

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