

German Communication Association  
Journalism Studies Section



**SGKM**  
Schweizerische Gesellschaft  
für Kommunikations-  
und Medienwissenschaft ...



**University of  
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**IPMZ – Institute of Mass Communication and Media Research**



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## **Call for Conference Submissions**

### *Re-Inventing Journalism*

**5th- 6th of February, 2015, Winterthur, Switzerland**

Convened by the Journalism Studies Sections of ECREA and DGPUK

Co-Sponsored by the Journalism Studies Sections of ICA, IAMCR and SGKM

**Note: The deadline for the submissions has been extended until 15<sup>th</sup> of October 2014.**

It is the best of times, it is the worst of times for the practice and study of journalism. It is the worst of times for journalists who lose their jobs. Many legacy providers of journalistic face difficulties in adapting to changes to their traditional business model. Yet this is also a time of creativity and innovation, reflected in the emergence of new types of journalistic outlets, story-telling formats and job profiles. With the challenge for journalism to re-invent itself in the digital media environment comes the challenge for journalism scholars to review their concepts and methods, and question the durability of findings.

The re-invention of journalism raises questions on different levels: On the systemic level, traditional assumptions about the role of journalism for society need to be reconsidered. On the organizational level, we might ask how newsrooms cope with media convergence and whether the newsroom remains the most important place where journalism happens. On the micro level, the changing practices of journalists and changing interactions with audiences and sources are important topics for journalism studies.

We invite researchers from Europe and beyond to present their latest research and to discuss conceptual and methodological issues related to the current changes of journalism at a conference hosted by the Zurich University of Applied Sciences (ZHAW) and the University of Zurich (UZH). The conference also serves as the joint annual conference of the Journalism Sections of ECREA (European Communication Research and Education Association) and the German Association for Communication Research (DGPUK). It is co-sponsored by the Swiss Association of Communication and Media Research (SGKM), as well as the Journalism Studies divisions of ICA (International Communication Association) and the IAMCR (International Association for Media and Communication Research).

The conference will feature traditional conference panels, but also two formats that allow for more interaction between the presenters and those people who were formerly called the audience:

(1) **INTERACTIVE WORKSHOP SESSIONS:** These discussion sessions will focus on specific questions that *you* are interested to discuss in a mini workshop with other conference participants. These mini workshops will be kicked off by input statements from the panel members, followed by an open discussion in which all attendees participate. As workshop organizer, please submit:

- a **question** relevant to the conference theme (such as: Do we need a (new) definition of journalism? What is the best way to conduct content analysis of online journalism?) and **an abstract** (300 - 800 words) contextualizing the question, linking it to the existing literature and outlining several questions and the aim of the session

- the names of **three people** who will attend the conference and contribute to the panel with short statements (five to fifteen minutes total). One of the contributors should be identified as the **moderator** of the discussion. We encourage submitters to form panel teams with people from different backgrounds: countries, universities, professional backgrounds: e.g. submitters may want to include a journalist in some workshop teams or researchers with a different area of expertise.

(2) HIGH DENSITY PRESENTATION/POSTER SESSIONS: Submitters will outline a research question, methodology and most interesting findings in a *five minute* talk. Instead of power point slides, participants will prepare a poster. After the round of intro talks, attendees will disperse towards the poster displays and discuss at greater length the research presented. As poster presenter, please submit:

- an **extended abstract (1.500 words)** presenting research results relevant to the conference theme. Please outline the state of research, the research question(s) or hypotheses, findings and conclusion(s).

(3) TRADITIONAL CONFERENCE PRESENTATION. Please submit:

- an **extended abstract (1.500 words, see above)** that, if accepted, results in a **20 minute presentation**. As the slots for those traditional conference presentations are fairly limited, please indicate whether or not you are also willing to do a high density/poster presentation instead.

*All submissions (posters and presentations) have to be original work, which is neither published, nor accepted for publication at the time of submission. They should not have been presented at another conference yet. We particularly encourage submissions for interactive workshop sessions, and we are happy to provide further information on this format should you still have questions. We will also send out additional information on the three different formats to those people who have successfully passed the review process.*

CONFERENCE LANGUAGE: English (for all submissions and presentations)

DEADLINE: 15th of October 2014

CONFERENCE DATE: 5th- 6th of February, 2014; preceded by a workshop for PhD students organized by the Journalism Section of the German DGPUK, a separate call for this will be issued.

VENUE: Zurich University of Applied Sciences, situated in Winterthur, a 20 minute train ride from Zurich city and 15 minutes from Zurich airport.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS: Prof Dr Jane Singer, Prof of Entrepreneurial Journalism at City University London  
Dr Neil Thurman, Senior Lecturer at City University London

CONFERENCE CHAIRS: Vinzenz Wyss, ZHAW and Michael Brüggemann, UZH

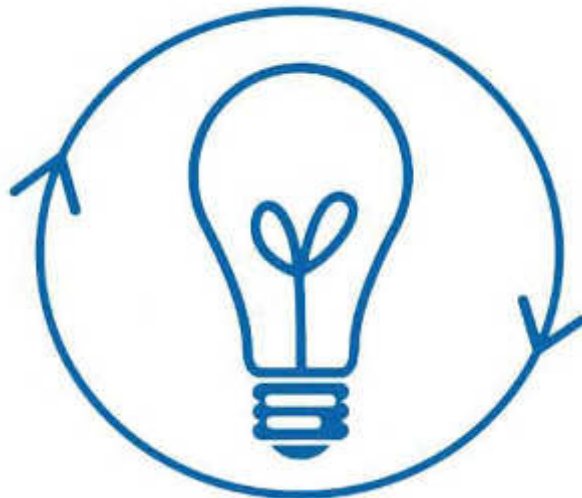
ORGANIZING TEAM: Filip Dingerkus, Mirco Saner, Deborah Harzenmoser

CONTACT: Please send your submissions or questions to: [journalism.iam@zhaw.ch](mailto:journalism.iam@zhaw.ch)

FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE THE URL: [www.re-inventing-journalism.ch](http://www.re-inventing-journalism.ch)

# **RE-INVENTING JOURNALISM CONFERENCE**

**February 5./6. 2015  
Winterthur  
Switzerland**



## **RIJ15**

**ZHAW Zurich University of Applied Sciences  
IAM - Institute of Applied Media Studies  
Theaterstrasse 15c, 8400 Winterthur**

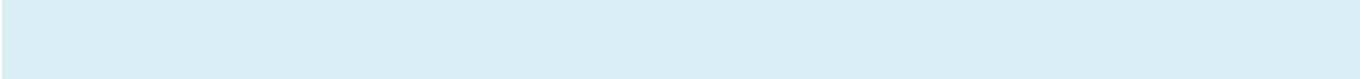
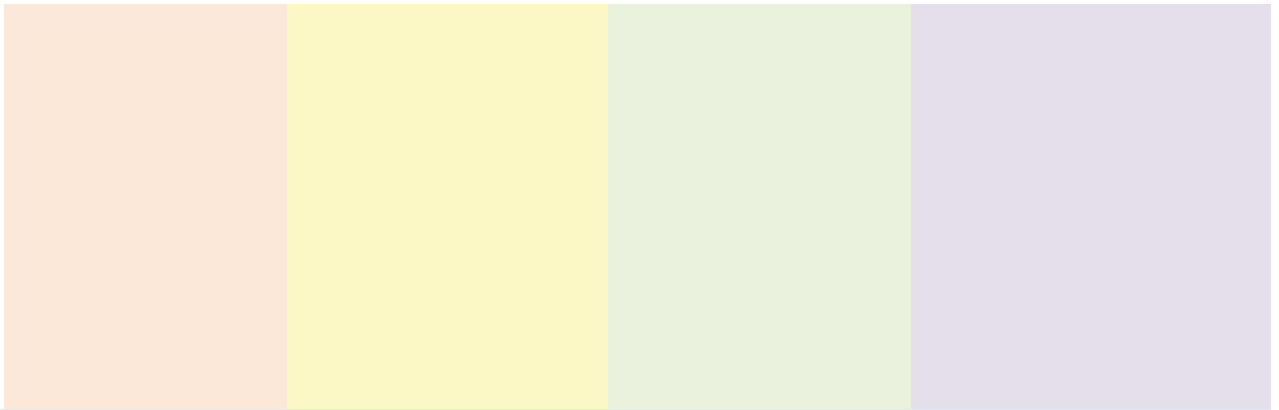
09:30 **Registration & Coffee**

Auditorium  
U.07

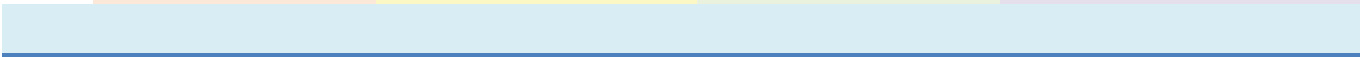
**Introduction**

**Keynote I:**

	Room O1.01	Room O1.05	Room O1.08	Room O1.11
	<b>Workshop A1 Theory &amp; Norms</b>	<b>Workshop A2 Practices &amp; Innovation</b>	<b>Workshop A3 Methods &amp; Design</b>	<b>Workshop A4 Methods &amp; Design</b>
12:30 - 14:00		<b>Poster Session</b> Room E0.17 (CMC) 13:00 – 14:00		
	Room O1.01	Room O2.01	Room O1.08	Auditorium U.07
	<b>Presentations A1</b>	<b>Presentations A2</b>	<b>Presentations A3</b>	<b>High Density A</b>
	<b>Future of Journalism &amp; Boundary Work</b>	<b>Paying for Journalism</b>	<b>Truth, Bias and Values in Journalism</b>	<b>Old and New Ways to reinvent Journalism</b>



<b>Presentations B1</b>	<b>Presentations B2</b>	<b>Presentations B3</b>	<b>Presentations B4</b>
<b>The Changing Business of Journalism</b>	<b>Journalistic Performance and Quality Assessment</b>	<b>Journalism, Sources and PR</b>	<b>Journalism by Algorithms and Networks</b>



**Keynote II**



Room O1.01	Room O1.05	Room O1.08	
<b>Workshop B1 Theory &amp; Norms</b>	<b>Workshop B2 Theory &amp; Norms</b>	<b>Workshop B3 Education &amp; Transfer</b>  <i>Chair: Yael Woortman-de Haan (University Utrecht)</i>  What about journalism education?  <i>Marco van Kerkhoven (University Utrecht)</i>	<b>Workshop B4 Practices &amp; Innovation</b>

**Keynote III**

Lunch & Socializing Foyer UG		<b>Meeting Journalism Section of DGPUK</b> 1245-1330: Room 01.08		
Room O1.01	Room O2.01	Room O1.05	Auditorium U.07	
<b>Presentations C1</b>  <b>Audience Participation &amp; Criticism</b>	<b>Presentations C2</b>  <b>New Formats &amp; Journalistic Content</b>	<b>Workshop C1</b>	<b>High Density B</b>  <b>Economic &amp; Journalistic Strategies</b>	
Short Break				

**Workshop C2  
with special guest**

**Workshop C3  
Education & Transfer**

**Workshop C4  
Visions & Reflections**

**Permanent Poster exhibition, Room: E0.17 (CMC) Thursday; 1300 -1400**

*Robin Blom & Michael Holmes (Ball State University):*  
**Journalism education redefined: Immersing students on (and for) the job**

*Jan Hendrik Boehmer (University of Miami), Edson Tandoc Jr. (Nanyang Technology University):*  
**Motivations to comment on online news: A civic voluntarism perspective**

*Philip Di Salvo (University of Lugano):*  
**IrpiLeaks, ExpoLeaks and MafiaLeaks: Digital Whistleblowing Platforms in Italy**

*Jonila Godole (University of Tirana):*  
**Women journalists in Albania. Between Empowerment and Obstacles**

*Magnus Hoem Iversen & Erik Knudsen (University of Bergen):*  
**Studying the audience of online journalism through a survey experiment**

*Jaana Hujanen (University of Helsinki):*  
**Reinventing audience engagement in the Finnish press.**

*Blanka Jergovic (University of Zagreb):*  
**Empowering or Impoverishing? Science News, Scientists and the Public**

*Peter Maurer (University of Vienna):*  
**Political influence upon journalism: A comparison of its perception by elite journalists in France and Germany**

*Dennis Reineck (University of Hamburg):*  
**Innovation or tradition? Young German adults' conception of journalism**

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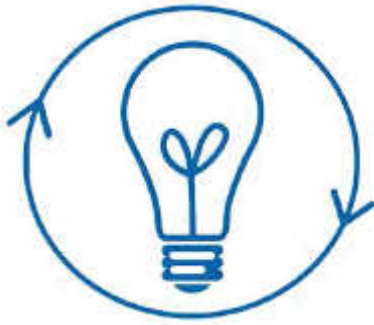


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und Medienwissenschaft



**Zürich Schaffhausen**

RIJ15



## Re-Inventing Journalism

Conference in Winterthur, Switzerland

5th & 6th February 2015

IAM Institute of Applied Media Studies

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## HOW MEDIATIZED ECONOMIC NEWS INFORMS THE INATTENTIVE AUDIENCE

Previous research about people's understanding of the economy has revealed an interesting paradox. Despite the fact that the economy is extremely complex, citizens generally have a good perception of the general state of the national economy, feel economically efficacious and have basic knowledge about the working of the economy. In this paper we argue that the changing style of economic journalism helps the inattentive audience understand the economy and make informed decisions. Results from a three-year research project, combining content analysis, panel survey data, and time-series analysis provides empirical support for this argument.

Economic news has important consequences for individual citizens, the financial sector the macro-economy and for politics. It can be argued that it is as important as political news. However we know little about the effects of economic news, beyond the effects on consumer confidence. We argue that the fourth estate or watchdog model which is generally used to hold the media accountable falls short as a normative model for economic journalism. Instead we argue that the information function is the most important function of economic journalism. Economic news should most of all teach citizens about the economic climate, allow them to understand the implications of economic developments for their own life, and allow them to assign political responsibility for these economic developments. Economic perceptions and understanding of the general economic climate are essential for vote choice, political trust, consumer confidence and consumption. Next to personal experience and interpersonal discussion, media coverage of the economy is a prime source of economic information.

Based on a review of debate about the rationally inattentive audience, monitorial citizens and learning as incidental-by-product, we present a model of how the media help citizens to make sense of the economy. We argue that citizens do not need to be fully informed or fully

understand the working of the economy, but can rely on heuristics and short cuts to develop accurate perceptions. Central in the model are the key aspects of media coverage which provide citizens with cues to base their perceptions on: visibility, negativity, identification, and consequence framing.

In recent years, changes in the economy, journalism and consumer culture have made economic news more mainstream and more accessible. This trend was enhanced by the recent economic crisis. In the words of Kjær & Langer (2005) economic news has become “infused with news values”. Like political journalists, economic journalists increasingly take a pragmatic approach when covering the economy, no longer seeing the economy as newsworthy by definition, but instead covering it depending on its newsworthiness. This has led to a negativity bias: when the economy goes down, this is seen as relevant and will get covered. Positive developments on the other hand are not seen as newsworthy and will not be covered to the same extent. Finally economic news has become more catered towards the general audience, relying on news values such as conflict, identification and personalization. Combined these aspects of economic news are expected to provide cues which help the audience to make sense of the economy.

In an empirical analysis of time-series data and panel surveys in Denmark we show that the visibility of economic news, negativity bias, and framing provide cues which help citizens to get a general sense of the national economic climate, feel economically efficacious and learn about the economy. In particular citizens with low interest, who are not personally affected by economic developments, learn most from economic news. The time-series analysis combined monthly consumer confidence data with automated content analysis data of over 20,000 economic news articles between 1996 and 2012. The automated content analysis measured volume and tone of economic coverage with validated search strings. The panel study is a unique dataset of four waves collected during 2013. In the panel study, data on the media use, economic knowledge and

perceptions of around 1.000 Danes are combined with a detailed content analysis of the news which they were exposed to.

Evidence for the positive influence of mediated economic news on economic knowledge is threefold. First, the macro-level analysis shows that the visibility of the economy in the news provides a mental shortcut for the state of the economy. Attention for the economy varies widely from month to month, and the economy is most visible when the economy goes down. The visibility of economic news in turn influences consumer confidence and brings it in line with general economic developments.

Second, analysis of the panel data shows that the negativity bias in economic news gives media users a feeling of being well informed. The media pay more attention to negative than to positive economic developments, due to the news value of negativity. This negativity makes audiences pay more attention to the news, which in turn gives them the feeling that they are better informed. Interestingly, in particular the people who are normally uninterested in the economy have the feeling they learn the most.

Thirdly, mediatized economic news indeed leads to knowledge gains. A large part of the news about the economy contextualizes economic developments by framing developments in terms of consequences or by using exemplars. Analysis of the panel data shows that audiences learn from this contextualized economic news. We argue that this is the case because they are more engaged and because the framing makes it easier for them to remember the information. Again, the influence of news on economic knowledge is moderated by personal involvement with the economy. The results show that in particular people with low interest, who are not personally affected by economic developments learn most from the news. This shows that it is in particular the inattentive audience who benefits from the shortcuts which economic news offers.

In the discussion we put these findings in perspective. We argue that when interpreting these findings it is important to remember that we only focus on the information function of economic news, disregarding other functions like the watchdog function. Furthermore *emotions* are also aspect of mediatized economic news. However the influence of emotions is not necessarily positive since they may invoke fear and uncertainty. We also take up the question whether economic news can also be too negative and discuss what type of knowledge we are actually measuring. Our study does not show that economic news leads to deep understanding of the working of the economy. However the question remains if ordinary citizens really need this understanding or whether mental shortcuts suffice.

In sum the paper reassesses some commonly held assumptions about what is good economic news and shows that the mediatization of economic news can have positive effects. Thus we argue against people who see the increasing reliance on news values as a sign of (economic) news dumbing down. Our paper speaks to the conference theme 'Reinventing journalism' in two ways. First, by assessing how economic news is changing and how this affects economic perceptions. This change is partly due to the recent economic crisis. Second, by reassessing the normative standards which are often invoked when discussing good journalism. By showing how the inattentive audience benefits from mediatized economic news, we broaden the definition of journalistic quality.

## **Why do Swiss journalists use Twitter? An analysis of the functions of Twitter and the role of professional variables for journalistic Twitter use.**

### **Theoretical Background and Research Questions**

The use of social media by journalists has been one of the trending topics in journalism research in the last years. The journalistic use of Twitter has been investigated recently in a number of studies because the adoption and use of Twitter is high among journalists (Bruns & Burgess, 2012; English, 2014; Hedman, 2014; Hermida, 2012). Twitter is a special social media tool as it is a social network site in which users interact with each other but which can also just be used as an information stream at the same time (Hedman, 2014). Some of its main functions for journalism is the distribution of breaking news or soliciting story ideas and facts (Hermida, 2010). Hermida (2010) thus argues that Twitter can be regarded as an "awareness system" (Hermida, 2010, p. 301) which is always on and keeps journalists and the audience in a constant, asynchronous interaction over the news.

In order to tackle the role of Twitter in journalism studies usually either analyze the content of journalistic tweets or rely on qualitative interviews or standardized surveys in which journalists give an account on why and how they use Twitter. In this respect, researchers have analyzed journalists' professional norms, ideals and identities in relation to social media and Twitter in particular (Hedman, 2014; Lasorsa, Lewis, & Holton, 2012).

Content analyses of journalistic tweets have shown that professional objectivity is still a dominant practice on Twitter but that commentary or opinionated messages also make up a non-negligent part of journalist's tweets (Coddington, Molyneux, & Lawrence, 2014). The fact that journalists offer their opinion more freely on Twitter constitutes a deviation from their traditional professional norms (Lasorsa et al., 2012). However, stating one's opinion is often done in a more subtle way by retweeting humorous messages (Molyneux, 2014). Journalists working for more traditional and elite news media such as major national newspapers or broadcasting networks are less inclined to change their original way of communicating or to be more opinionated on Twitter than other journalists (Lasorsa et al., 2012). There are gender difference in the journalistic Twitter use with females being more transparent and revealing more on Twitter than male journalists (Lasorsa, 2012). Results from a study of journalists' tweets in the US demonstrated that Twitter is also used as a service tool which includes live tweeting news events and retweeting citizens' messages (Artwick, 2013). Research in this area generally suggests that journalists use Twitter in a way that fits their traditional practices while they adjust other practices and norms at the same time which fit the new platform (Hedman, 2014;

Hermida, 2013). This is not only the case in daily journalistic work but also during specific events such as the coverage of electoral campaigns (Mourao, 2014). Hermida (2013, p. 306) therefore concludes: "Emerging research suggests new paradigms of collaborative and collective newsgathering, production and management at play, facilitated by the sociotechnical dynamics of Twitter".

There are fewer studies which do not only look at journalistic tweets but actually interview journalists about their Twitter use. Findings from Sweden underscore the tendency of normalizing Twitter use and adapting to it at the same time (Hedman, 2014). When being asked about the functions of Twitter, Swedish journalists understand Twitter as a tool for following ongoing discussions, finding new ideas and angles on an issues and as a tool for research (Hedman & Djerf-Pierre, 2013). Journalists can be segmented into different Twitter user types which differ very much in their social media practices. A study of Norwegian political journalists reveals five user types (the sceptics, the networkers, the two-faced, the opiners, and the sparks) and shows that they vary most when it comes to self-promoting and opining (Rogstad, 2013). It has also been investigated in different countries whether professional characteristics related to a journalist, such as the media sector or the length of someone's professional career, influence journalists' Twitter use (Gulyas, 2013). In this respect, professional characteristics which are specific to social media such as the existence of social media guidelines in a media organization have not often been researched yet. A first investigation in Belgium reveals that most Flemish journalists do not find social media guidelines necessary (Opgenhaffen & Scheerlinck, 2014).

The state of research leads to the conclusion that journalists vary in the extent to which they use Twitter, how they make use of it and that there are country-specific differences as well as professional variables which need to be taken into account (Gulyas, 2013; Lasorsa et al., 2012). However, many of these studies rely on the analysis of journalistic Tweets and deduce assumptions from the content of those tweets about the way and the reasons why journalists use Twitter. There is still only a small number of studies dealing with journalists' use of Twitter based on actual interviews with journalists. Therefore we extend this field of research and investigate the use of Twitter by journalists in Switzerland drawing on a standardized survey of Swiss journalists. We do not only focus on the functions ascribed to Twitter but also on the role of professional variables as explanatory factors for Twitter use. As professional variables can explain journalistic Twitter use to some extent but the results in other countries so far have been ambiguous we pose the research questions:

*RQ1: Which functions do Swiss journalists ascribe to Twitter?*

*RQ2: What role do professional variables play for the use of Twitter by Swiss journalists?*

## **Method**

We conducted a standardized online survey of Swiss journalists in September 2014. Our population was defined as journalists who have a Twitter account and either follow at least one Swiss politician or have been contacted by a politician via Twitter. The definition of the population was a consequence of the survey being originally part of a different research project which helped us to identify journalists on Twitter (\*\*\*). Nonetheless, our sample not only consists of political journalists but more than 60% also work on other desks and thus it represents the variety of different journalistic areas.

The journalists were identified based on a preceding study (\*\*) and a publicly available list of Swiss journalists on Twitter (Bauer, 2012) and their emails were gathered. The link to the online survey was mailed to 329 journalists with n=143 journalists completing the survey (response rate = 43%). The survey contained different items measuring the functions of Twitter for journalists' daily work (on a five-point scale), who they interact with via Twitter and several professional variables (e.g. type of media organization, job position, desk, job satisfaction, existence of social media guidelines).

## **Results**

Journalists in Switzerland mainly use Twitter to follow ongoing discussions or find new ideas for stories. They think that Twitter is most useful to be in contact with other journalists, their audience and politicians and they believe that most of the news today spread first via Twitter. On a bivariate level, ANOVAs show that professional variables such as whether the journalist is working for an online medium or not, his job position, the type of desk, and the existence of social media guidelines barely make a difference to the functions journalists ascribe to Twitter or how often they use Twitter.

Regression analysis reveals that professional variables are less important for explaining the frequency of journalistic Twitter use but that functions ascribed to Twitter – particularly Twitter as a tool for research – explain more variance (Table 1, Appendix). The only professional variables that have an effect are the desk a journalist is working for, professional use of other media and the kind of tasks journalists have to fulfill. Journalists working on politics use Twitter more often than others which fits to the fact that many Swiss politicians are using Twitter (\*\*\*). The less journalists use traditional mass media the more they use Twitter. This might indicate that Twitter can be a substitute for traditional media as a source of information

for journalists. The less journalists have to deal with the selection of texts the more inclined they are to use Twitter. This result supports the notion of Twitter being mainly a research tool. Journalists who have to deal a lot with the selection of texts are probably less involved in investigative journalism, thus having to do less research and using Twitter less in this respect.

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## Appendix

**Tabelle 1 Influence on the frequency of journalistic Twitter use**

	Frequency of journalistic Twitter use		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
<i>Professional Variables</i>			
Media type: Print	-.167	-.055	-.044
Media type: TV	-.164	-.059	-.003
Media Type: Online	-.200	-.159	-.133
Political desk (1=yes)	<b>.249*</b>	<b>.263*</b>	<b>.265**</b>
Professional media use (excluding online)	<b>-.245*</b>	<b>-.272*</b>	<b>-.240*</b>
Professional online media use	<b>.224*</b>	.190	.118
Twitter guidelines (1=existing)	.157	.185	.152
Job position (1=leading position)	.034	.071	.038
Journalism as part of education	-.026	-.084	-.184
Frequency of job activities: research	-.167	.137	.073
Frequency of job activities: writing own journalistic texts	-.079	-.106	-.122
Frequency of job activities: Editing of texts of Employees / colleagues or News agencies / Press Releases	.163	.189	.193
Frequency of job activities: Selection of texts	-.166	-.233	<b>-.235*</b>
Frequency of job activities: Organizational and management activities	.155	.164	.104
Frequency of job activities: Dealing with reactions of the audience	.011	-.036	-.087
Frequency of job activities: PR, marketing or advertisement	.209	<b>.273*</b>	.230
<i>Demographics</i>			
Age		<b>-.226*</b>	-.200
Sex (1=male)		-.085	-.035
Education (1= university degree)		-.105	-.106
	$\Delta R^2$	<b>.054</b>	
<i>Functions ascribed to Twitter</i>			
Function: Finding sources/interviewees			.135
Function: Research			<b>.379**</b>
Function: Finding ideas for stories			.020
Function: Following ongoing discussions			-.094
Function: Networking			-.122
Positive evaluation of Twitter for journalism (Factor)			.142
Negative evaluation of Twitter for journalism (Factor)			-.067
Importance of contacts on Twitter: Politics and economics (Factor)			.189
Importance of contacts on Twitter: Citizens (Factor)			-.025
	$\Delta R^2$		<b>.235***</b>
	<b>Gesamt R<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>.260</b>	<b>.314</b>
	N	86	83
			74

OLS-Regression, stepwise. Standardized  $\beta$ -coefficients shown. \* $p \leq .05$ , \*\* $p \leq .01$ , \*\*\* $p \leq .001$ . Dependent variable: Frequency of journalistic Twitter use (Item: „How often do you use Twitter for professional purposes in your daily work as a journalist (e.g. for research, staying in touch with people, etc.)?“ 1=never – 5= very often)

# Consuming News on Facebook: An Empirical Study on the Usage Patterns of News Fanpages.

Extended Abstract, submitted for the 2015 Conference “Re-Inventing Journalism”  
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# **Consuming News on Facebook: An Empirical Study on the Usage Patterns of News Fanpages.**

## **Introduction and Background**

In a fast-developing media landscape, the information behavior of young people is changing, with a trend toward avoiding traditional media, but turning to online environments as blogs or social networks (Marchi, 2012; Mindich, 2005). Currently, 26 percent of the German online population report to use the social network facebook at least weekly for the consumption of news (Hasebrink & Hoelig, 2014). In other countries the percentage of people getting their news from social networks is even higher (Pew Research Center, 2013; Reuters Institute, 2014). In their effort to react to these trends, news organizations are increasingly turning to social networks, hoping to reach out to younger audiences and generate more traffic for their website (Emmett, 2009; Palser, 2011). Besides, by inviting to comment, share and post content, news outlets try to engage with their users and receive feedback. So far, the most popular German news fanpage (“Bild”) has collected more than 1.5 million likes (Fanpage Karma, 2014). While these numbers might sound promising at first sight, they do not reveal anything about the actual usage of the fanpages, especially in terms of using the interactive features. The small body of research existing about news fanpages indicates that only a minority of users like, share or comment posts (Hasebrink & Hoelig, 2014). Moreover, as it is known from research regarding social networks in general, following a fanpage does not necessarily have to be based upon informational needs (Busemann, 2013). More often, people like a fanpage for reasons of identity and impression management with regard to their interest and attitudes or social motives (e.g. relationship management, Haferkamp & Kraemer, 2009; Schmidt, 2011). Especially when self-presentation is the dominating motiv, liking serves primarily as a statement and self-characterization for facebook friends. Updates and posts of the fanpage are often not read anymore (Busemann, 2013). When considering that news consumption is (in most social groups) usually associated with positive qualities as being educated, open-minded or engaged, news fanpages might also been liked for motives related to impression management. In sum, it seems plausible that individual usage of news fanpages differs in terms of motives for following the fanpage.

Hence, this study aimed to shed light on the concrete usage of news fanpages. It goes beyond existing studies by identifying patterns of use, especially in terms of the degree of interactivity. Besides, we further analyzed if the differential patterns of news can be attributed to underlying motive structures.

## **Method**

In May 2014, a quantitative online survey was conducted with N=314 facebook users who have liked at least one news fanpage, defined as an official facebook outlet of traditional news media (print, tv, online or radio). The questionnaire included questions about usage of the fanpage, the relationship of news consumption on the fanpage and its original media outlet, motives, general facebook use and

social demographics. The degree of using and interacting with the fanpage was operationalized following Reuters Institute (2014). Five items addressed if and in which way user read information on their favorite news fanpage. Eleven items asked for the frequency of using interactive features, for example liking, sharing or commenting posts of the fanpage. All items were assessed with a five-point Likert-Scale, reaching from 0 = “never” to 4 = “always”. The needs and gratifications or, more precise, motives for liking a fanpage were measured according to Kunzick & Zipfel (2001) and Schwab et al. (1998), differing between cognitive, affective, social and identity related needs. A factor analysis did not distinguish between social and identity related motives, so the two dimensions were later melted into one factor.

Participants were recruited on facebook, via posts on different news fanpages and a snowball system. Our final sample included slightly more females (54 %) than males. The age span reached from 13 to 55 years, with a mean age of 25.4 years. The educational level was exceptionally high, which might not only be attributable to the issue of the survey, but also the recruiting strategy.

### **Results (Extract)**

With  $M = 3.19$  ( $SD = 0.79$ ) the posts of the news fanpages are read by most of their followers quite regularly (see table 1). Less, but still a medium amount of attention is paid to the comments of a post ( $M = 2.01$ ;  $SD = 0.94$ ). In contrary, all of the interactive features are used considerably less frequently. Only 10.6 % of our sample like a post often, 36% at least sometimes ( $M = 1.38$ ;  $SD = 0.94$ ). Sharing and commenting posts is even more seldom. In sum, most fanpage users read the posts, but do not make use of the interactive features.

To identify differential patterns of activity, we conducted a cluster analysis. The items addressing the usage of the favourite news fanpage were included in hierarchical clustering, using Ward’s method, and optimized by k-means clustering. The findings indicated four clusters (see table 2). The biggest cluster ( $n=135$ ) was named “inactive users”, as the members score below average on all kinds of fanpage usage. Although they also read the posts quite frequently ( $M = 3.08$ ;  $SD = 0.78$ ), they have the lowest mean compared to the other clusters. Furthermore, they almost never like, share or comment. The second cluster “interested readers” ( $n=81$ ) contains users who show increased interest in reading the posts. In comparison to the other clusters, they reach superior scores on organizing and reading the fanpages’ information in special interest lists and via notifications. Thus, those users seem to attach some importance to the posts. The third cluster ( $n=51$ ) summarizes users who most actively engage in sharing the posts wherever they can – in their own profile, on friends’ pages or via message. Besides, they are interested in liking, but not in commenting posts. Thus, they seem to focus on the less extensive and time-consuming ways of interactivity. The last and smallest cluster ( $n=44$ ) can be described as “interactive users”. They score above-average engaged in all dimensions of using and interacting with the news fanpage. Most notably, interactive users most often comment or like.

Comparing the four patterns of usage in terms of socio demographics and underlying motives, we found no significant effects for education, gender and general facebook usage. However, we found significant differences for cognitive and social-/identity related motives. Both dimensions were rated as more important by sharing and interactive users than inactive users and interested readers (cognitive:  $F(3/292) = 7.513$ ;  $p > .001$ ; social/identity:  $F(3/295) = 8.001$ ;  $p > .001$ ). For the affective dimension, no significant group effects were found.

Overall, cognitive and affective motives turned out to be the strongest motives for liking a fanpage in general (cognitive:  $M = 3.7$ ;  $SD = .71$ ; affective:  $M = 2.9$ ;  $SD = 1.0$ ), while social-/identity related motives were less relevant ( $M = 1.7$ ;  $SD = 0.6$ ).

## **Discussion**

Our findings are in line with other studies (e.g. Hasebrink & Hoelig, 2014; Reuters Institute, 2014), confirming that the degree of interactivity with news fanpages is rather low. Most users prefer a passive mode and limit their activity to the reading of postings. Hence, even if the social web offers new possibilities for interaction, so far the news fanpages mainly just seem to serve as another channel for receiving information. Besides, those users who can be described as interactive in general also differ in their engagement with the fanpage. Many users focus only on liking and sharing information, activities which require less effort and time than, for example, commenting. Users who also engage in commenting and discussing are still a minority. Besides, interactive users are more driven by cognitive and social-/ identity related motives than passive users. As liking, sharing and commenting demand some engagement and are ways to show one's opinion and communicate with others, this finding seems quite plausible.

Interestingly, the motives for liking a fanpage and thus receiving news via social web do not differ from the motivational reasons found for traditional media consumption (e.g. Schwab et al., 1998): Cognitive and affective dimensions were of most importance. Social and especially identity related motivations, which were expected to play a crucial role due to its relevance for facebook usage in general (Haferkamp & Kraemer, 2009) turned out to be a less strong motive. If this result can be attributed to the fact that news users are generally less interested in self-presentation, or news fanpages are just not eligible to contribute to impression management, cannot be answered by our data.

In sum, our study reveals that for most users the news fanpage seems to be not more or less than another outlet for receiving information. For news organizations, the result that people predominantly report to pay attention to the fanpage postings might be good news, but if there is a real interest in discussing, new approaches to involve these readers are needed. Limitations due to sampling method and selection bias and further implications are discussed.

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## Tables

**Table 1.** Means and Standard Deviations of Fanpage Usage

	M	SD
Liking posts of the fanpage	1.38	0.94
Liking comments to the posts	0.67	0.88
Commenting posts of the fanpage	0.54	0.73
Commenting other comments to the posts	0.36	0.66

*Note.* N = 311.

Scale from 0 'never' to 4 'always'.

**Table 2. Means of fanpage usage (cluster variables) by cluster**

Fanpage Usage	Cluster				Overall Mean
	“Inactive User” ( <i>n</i> = 135)	“Interested Reader” ( <i>n</i> = 81)	“Sharing” ( <i>n</i> = 51)	“Interactive User” ( <i>n</i> = 44)	
Liking posts of the fanpage	1.05	0.95	2.14	<i>2.20</i>	1.37
Liking comments to the posts	0.41	0.22	0.90	<i>1.98</i>	0.66
Commenting posts of the fanpage	0.31	0.26	0.76	<i>1.41</i>	0.53
Commenting other comments to the posts	0.15	0.07	0.61	<i>1.20</i>	0.35

*Note.* *N* = 311. Scale from 0 “never” to 4 “always”.

Italicized numbers indicate the highest mean of all four clusters per variable.



Traditional Conference Presentation *or*  
High Density/Poster Presentation

## Re-thinking Trust in Journalism.

Attitudes and internal beliefs as important research categories – Theoretical underpinnings and first empirical results.

### Introduction

For the reinvention of journalism in a mediatized society, keeping audiences' trust becomes a key issue. This presentation will argue that the possible changes of journalism's role in society demand that in order to correctly measure trust, we will have to expand our concept of trust in news media to incorporate research into attitudes and internal beliefs of audiences and communicators alike. It will offer a theoretical background for this hypothesis based on neo-institutional theory and research from cognitive psychology, and present findings from an explorative empirical study in a local journalism environment.

### The importance of trust for the re-invention of journalism

In recent years, 'trust' has become a kind of key category in journalism studies. Not only has it re-emerged as a research subject (and conference theme), trust has also become one of the main answers to the question what sets traditional, professional journalism apart from other sources of information. What is the main asset legacy journalism outlets should be striving for in order to survive the system's changes and the growing competition from amateur sources? What sets it apart? Often, the answer centers around building trust with audiences through different measures: brand building, transparency, adhering to professional quality standards...

Trust, trustworthiness, and matters of accuracy and transparency as journalistic quality staples have become central pillars in the discussion of making journalism "fit" for new mediatized environments. Prominent examples of the current debate include Peters and Broersma's (2013) "Re-Thinking Journalism" with its emphasize on trust as a building block for a journalistic identity in a digital news environment, or the DGPuK 2014 Journalism Studies Conference in Münster on "Trust in Journalism".

### How we measure trust, and why it may not be sufficient any more

Within journalism studies' empirical exploration of the issue, trust has been mainly conceived as a complex construct of audiences' confidence in journalism's *ability to perform well with regard to different areas of quality standards*. Kohring's (2004) and Kohring and Matthes' (2003, 2007) seminal work introduced a multidimensional model combining approaches to measure media credibility with modern theories of journalism and society. With regard to the social theories of Luhmann (1979) and Giddens (1990), their approach has devised journalism as a social actor or "autonomous expert system" (Kohring/Matthes 2007: 238), in which audiences put trust "based on the idea that the news media's information actually facilitates [...] guidance" (239) within the complex structures of modern society. With this, the mechanisms of selectivity in journalism become the focal point of measuring trust: "[...] journalistic selections are basically incorporated into a recipient's further selection" (239), and trusting in the appropriateness of these journalistic selections becomes the key factor.

Based on this line of thought, they have developed a model analyzing trust with regard to four factors: trust in appropriate theme selectivity, fact selectivity, accuracy of depictions and trust in journalistic assessment – a model that is still a staple for the current discussion of the issue (see for example the book of abstracts for the 2014 DGPuK conference<sup>1</sup>).

However, this approach works on the premise that audiences conceive journalism and journalistic information as a guidance system. The idea of the specific (democratic) function of journalism within the public sphere is a condition. But, one of the main problems discussed in journalism studies in recent years (and the issue behind the title of this conference – the need to “re-invent journalism”) is journalism’s loss of communication hegemony in a mediatized society, its new place in a competitive information environment where often it seems to be put “in a defensive position, hemmed in by threatening forces.” (Dahlgren 2009: 147) The question is whether the perception of journalism’s functions is still the same, and it is a vital question for our understanding of what constitutes trust in the news media. In short: in order to see what creates trust in the media, we first have to see if audiences, journalists, and other communicators still hold the same perception of journalism we have traditionally been ascribing to it.

### **What this presentation will do**

With this in mind, this presentation will first argue that we should put our efforts towards analyzing audiences’ and communicator’s attitudes and internal beliefs towards journalism. Based on neo-institutional theory, it will discuss that trust can be understood as one of the central mechanisms of legitimizing journalism and that this legitimacy is directly linked to the perception of journalism’s norms, values, and functions. The presentation will offer a theoretical model to discuss which internal beliefs and attitudes are guiding the *action* of putting trust into the institutions of journalism, and draw from research in cognitive psychology to suggest how we could empirically analyze them. Second, it will present first results from an empirical study based on this model.

### **Trust in journalism from a neo-institutional perspective**

We commonly distinguish between three levels of research interest – like in the call for this conference: the meta (or systemic) level, the meso level of organizations, and the micro level perspective on individual actors and their actions. Neo-institutional theory offers an interesting framework to take all three levels into view and identify relations and processes between them. Neo-institutionalism commonly distinguishes between institutions, organizations, and actors (Scott 1995). Institutions, on the highest level, are the norms, beliefs, and ideas that structure the system. Journalistic institutions can be, for example, media law and policies (regulative institutions), objectivity, the separation of news and opinion (normative institutions), the belief in freedom of speech and a free press (cognitive institutions). Organizations can be understood as the structural manifestations of these institutions: corporations, different media, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). Their organizational structure is influenced by the system’s institutions but also by individual actors. Actors are stakeholders in connection to the system: journalists working for an organization, but also audiences buying their products or *putting their trust into the system*.

Central to our approach is the following: Putting trust into the system can be seen as a major form of legitimization – pragmatic, direct legitimization as well as more indirect, moral

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<sup>1</sup> [www.uni-muenster.de/imperia/md/content/dgpuk-vertrauen-journalismus/book\\_of\\_abstracts.pdf](http://www.uni-muenster.de/imperia/md/content/dgpuk-vertrauen-journalismus/book_of_abstracts.pdf)

legitimization (“the right thing to do”, Suchman 1995: 579). Both actions are stabilizing factors for the system, and they can come from both journalists and audiences. Lending legitimacy means adhering to the institutions of the system, accepting and following them. In this sense, trust as legitimization is directly linked to the moral and cognitive institutions of journalism. It also means that the cognitions of stakeholders – attitudes and beliefs regarding the institutions of journalism – are central to the formation of trust.

### **Analyzing attitudes and internal beliefs – approaches from cognitive psychology**

Analyzing attitudes and internal beliefs has a longstanding research tradition in cognitive psychology, from which the operationalization of the model sketched above will draw. Research has shown that beliefs affect the ways and results of acting, and can be understood as subjective theories actors have developed; they are instrumental to the initiation and upkeep of actions (Heigl/Thomas 2013), such as trusting. Although there is no unified model yet, Castelfranchi and Falcone (2000) argue “in favour of a cognitive view of trust as a complex structure of beliefs and goals” (1). They derive seven types of belief on which trust is based: competence, disposition, dependency, fulfilment, willingness, persistence, and self-confidence (5f.).

### **Empirical study: Attitudes and beliefs in local journalism**

The accompanying empirical study utilizing this model will be realized in a research seminar in a program in communication and media studies this fall semester. It will analyze the attitudes and internal beliefs in the institutions of journalism of different stakeholders within a German local media environment (midsized city, ~100,000 inhabitants). Four standardized surveys with different groups of actors will be conducted:

- journalists for the local legacy newspaper,
- independent information providers (such as providers of alternative journalism websites and other local information websites; media spokespersons of local businesses etc.)
- two audience surveys: one readership survey with subscribers of the legacy newspaper, and an online survey of independent local audiences.

The journalist and readership surveys will be realized in cooperation with the local newspaper (total circulation: 96,000 papers), ensuring the participation of their editorial staff as well as use of their longstanding readership panel for the audience survey.

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**The gap between journalism education and practice in the digital age:  
A survey of journalists and students**

***Abstract***

This twin survey of online journalism professionals and students examines their perceptions of journalism skills, duties, and concepts. Using samples of online journalists and journalism students in Hong Kong, Asia's media hub, it attempts to offer updated insights into the changes taking place in journalism classrooms and newsrooms, and uncovers the discordance between online journalism education and practice. The study finds that traditional journalistic skills remain prioritized over technical skills in online newsrooms. The findings also suggest that today's journalism students are fairly proficient in new media skills. Therefore, journalism curricula should not forgo training students in traditional journalistic skills for computer skills.

**Key words:** journalism education, online journalism, journalism practice, survey

**Manuscript Style Guide:** *Chicago*

In the last two decades, the rise of the Internet and other new media technologies has brought more profound changes to the field of journalism than ever before. This driving force has changed the way information is collected, produced, delivered, consumed, and paid for, affecting journalism practice and journalism education in almost every way imaginable. The skills that media professionals need to survive and succeed have shifted with the evolution of technologies, and today's journalism graduates are walking into a field that is constantly changing. The mission of journalism educators is to train future journalists to develop the capability to overcome such challenges. While the industry undergoes revolutionary changes, are journalism schools moving in the same direction? Are journalism educators responding accordingly? And are they teaching the skills and concepts that keep pace with the demands of the industry? Amid the emergence and evolution of online journalism, as journalism and mass communication programs integrate online and digital components into their curricula, it is vital for educators to understand what is needed in today's newsrooms as well as the disconnection between newsrooms and classrooms. The "practice–education" gap needs to be revisited and reinvestigated constantly, particularly in the changing new media context.

This study attempts to reexamine such a "practice–education" gap by comparing online journalists and online journalism students' current perceptions of skills, duties, and concepts. It provides an overall report of the latest demands in the news industry and the current state

of journalism education. It attempts to generate insights that journalism educators and program administrators can utilize in assessing and reforming the curriculum to meet the latest industry needs.

### *Literature review*

*The “Practice–Education” Gap in Journalism.* Journalism education has been criticized for failing to move in tandem with the real world of the newsroom for decades.<sup>1</sup> There are ongoing debates between media professionals and journalism educators about what is needed in newsrooms and what should be taught in classrooms.<sup>2</sup>

Research on the gap between journalism practice and education seemingly can never reach a definitive conclusion. In the relevant studies,<sup>3</sup> media professionals tend to express a general dissatisfaction with journalism graduates’ job skills and abilities, primarily with regard to their writing abilities, general knowledge, technical skills, and ability to communicate. At the same time, journalism educators have argued from their point of view that a journalism school is more than a vocational training center, since it aims at preparing graduates for a wide range of media and non-media careers.<sup>4</sup> Numerous recent studies have also confirmed that professionals generally agree that journalism education should place more emphasis on journalistic skills and career preparation than on conceptual issues such as theory, history, and laws pertaining to journalism.<sup>5</sup> The educators, however, argue that the conceptual components of the curriculum are more important than the skill ones.<sup>6</sup>

*New Challenges in the Digital Age.* Since the emergence of the Internet and other new media, researchers have investigated how practicing journalists tackle new challenges by adopting interactive, individualized, and convergent features in their news-reporting routines.<sup>7</sup> First, while the interactive features allow users to exchange views with others on a particular news story or even to generate news content,<sup>8</sup> the news industry has demanded that journalists be able to incorporate interactive elements into their job routines (e.g., blogging tools; site traffics monitoring).<sup>9</sup> Meanwhile, the challenges are not limited to the technical level. While journalists struggle to cope with the interactive environments, they still have to uphold traditional journalistic norms and thus face a dilemma when deciding to what extent to utilize biased, subjective, or poor-formatted content generated by users.<sup>10</sup> Second, while individualized features can provide customized news contents to cater to users' needs and preferences, practicing journalists are under pressure to acquire such skills as hyperlinking, search engine optimizing, and writing summary content for the web.<sup>11</sup> Third, while the Internet's multimodal nature offers users opportunities to consume a news story in various media forms, including texts, graphics, sound, voice, images, and movies,<sup>12</sup> online journalists are required to use multimedia tools and software packages such as Dreamweaver, Photoshop, and so on to provide such content. In order to converge different media formats for different parts in a news story properly, they also need to master storyboarding techniques and user interface design skills.<sup>13</sup> In the end, they have to cope with a higher level of



multitasking stress and greater time pressure than before.<sup>14</sup>

***Gap in the Digital Age.*** With the onset of the digital age, research into the practice–education gap has been extended to the online context. In the past decade or so, researchers have studied the possible gaps between newsrooms and journalism classrooms in the rapidly developing new media environment.<sup>15</sup> The major stream of this research focuses on the perception of skill-based and conceptual needs between the two camps. In earlier years, researchers mainly focused on the media industry’s rapidly emerging demands for new multimedia skills and concepts. Compared to the early 1990s, when research found that most editors perceived writing, spelling/grammar, and knowledge of journalism ethics to be the most important skills, and experience with computers and computer writing skills to be the least important for new journalists,<sup>16</sup> these new studies found that computer skills rose high on the list of importance, although the newsroom editors suggested these skills do not replace the foundations of journalism; the basic skills of writing, spelling, grammar, and critical thinking remain the most important.

While the online news media continued to develop in recent years, researchers have shifted their focus to the broad skill-based and conceptual requirements perceived by either side. Although newsroom employers, editors, and professionals, in general, believe that learning computer- or web-assisted reporting and multimedia production skills should be increasingly prioritized, the top priorities – of fundamental skills and concepts such as

writing, critical thinking, time management, and team collaboration – remain unchanged.<sup>17</sup>

From the perspective of journalism program directors and educators, while technical skills such as those needed in multimedia storytelling and visual communication have become a rising priority in most of the core courses rated “important” by program directors, storytelling, news gathering, writing, and media ethics still retain their top ranks.<sup>18</sup>

***Journalism Education in the Asian Contexts.*** Researchers have also studied journalism practice and journalism education in some Asian countries.<sup>19</sup> These studies<sup>20</sup> primarily focused on countries such as China, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Vietnam, and Kyrgyzstan, where news organizations are or were under state or ruling party control and have or had limited press freedom. Overall, these studies suggest that in Asia, a) in some places journalism education is still ignorant of digital demands, and b) where journalism educators are aware of digital demands, technical skills may be either over-emphasized in a curriculum to the extent that traditional conceptual training has to take a back seat, or under-taught because of technically deficient instructors or a lack of up-to-date facilities and equipment.

### ***Research Questions***

It should be noted that few studies in this research line have captured journalism students’ perceived needs and evaluations of their curricula. The literature, thus far, does not contain a more detailed and broader analysis of students’ perceptions regarding

journalism-related duties, concepts, and skills. Using educators as a surrogate sample or a “proxy” of students to speak for journalism education, as in most previous “gap” studies, is likely to create measurement errors.<sup>21</sup>

Furthermore, empirical research on the practice–education gap in online journalism is rather scarce in the Asian context, which in fact accounts for about 44% of the world’s Internet usage, with an annual growth rate of 20%.<sup>22</sup> Overall, the state of online journalism practice and education in Asia has been overlooked by researchers.

***Why Hong Kong?*** In Asia, Hong Kong has a well-developed and vigorous media industry because of its open society and press freedom. It is a major center for broadcasting and publishing and home to many of the biggest international media players in Asia, such as *The Asian Wall Street Journal* and Bloomberg. Journalism education is popular in Hong Kong, and half of its public-funded institutions, which are its leading universities, provide either a bachelor’s or higher degree in journalism programs. As in other advanced regions of the world, Hong Kong’s journalism or media programs have begun to offer courses and training in online journalism. Thus, Hong Kong is one of the most suitable places in Asia for studying the practice–education gap in online journalism.

This Hong Kong study aims to explore the practice–education gap in online journalism in Hong Kong by comparing online journalists’ and journalism students’ current perceptions of journalism-related skills, duties, and concepts. Based on previous research, this study

proposes the following general research question:

**RQ:** Are there any differences in the perceptions of (a) online journalism students and (b) online journalists regarding the skills, duties, and concepts required for online journalism?

If yes, what are these differences?

### ***Method***

***Development of the Questionnaire.*** The survey questions were developed in light of Du and Thornburg's 2011 study.<sup>23</sup> The questionnaires presented to online journalism students and online journalists for rating their own skills, duties, and concepts are essentially identical except that the wording of each question was adjusted to the target sample accordingly. Also, the same sets of questions regarding skills, duties, and concepts were given to the online journalism students to rate how the course they took taught these corresponding items.

***Samples and Procedures.*** The student sample was identified through a multi-stage procedure starting from the course directories published by two government-funded universities in Hong Kong. In all, 57 out of 97 students enrolled in the two courses responded to the survey, resulting in an overall response rate of 58.8%, which is satisfactory.

The journalist sample was obtained via a two-stage procedure. In all, 105 journalists out of 610 contacted responded to the survey, resulting in a response rate of 17.2%. Among these 105 respondents, thirty-four purportedly had more than one year of full-time work experience in online journalism. Their responses were used for further data analysis.

**Data Analysis.** First, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) with principal axis extraction and oblimin rotation was conducted for identifying factor structure.<sup>24</sup> The factorability of the data was ensured with the KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin) measure of sampling adequacy of .86 and with the significant Bartlett’s test of sphericity at  $p < .001$  level.<sup>25</sup> Adopting a minimum Eigenvalue cut-off of one, nine factors were extracted to explain 75.6 percent of total variance. The items with factor loading over .30 were reported in Table 1.

As Table 1 indicates, three factors are related to skills: “Traditional Writing” (STradW), “Webpage Management” (SWebM), and “Webpage Production” (SWebP). Alternatively, five factors are pertaining to duties: Perceived Duty performance in “Business Management” (DBusM), “Content Management” (DContM), “Content Production”(DContP), “Multimedia Production” (DMultP), and “Traditional Writing” (DTradW). The remaining factor concerns about perception of concept importance (Concept). All factors, except for DContP, indicated satisfactory scale reliability (i.e., .76–.93), according to the Cronbach’s alpha test (See also Table 1). DContP is a two-item-only factor but its Cronbach’s alpha is still over a suggested cutoff point of .60. These indicators supported the adequate reliability of DContP.<sup>26</sup>

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**Table 1. Exploratory Factor Analysis**

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Factors extracted	DBusM	Concept	DTradW	SWebP	DMultP	DContP	STradW	DContM	SWebM
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(Cronbach's alpha $\alpha$ )	(.83)	(.93)	(.89)	(.93)	(.84)	(.68)	(.82)	(.76)	(.79)
Duty: Train/teach other staff	.73								
Duty: Project management	.71								
Duty: Staff organization /admin	.65								
Duty: 3rd Party content	.61								
Duty: Work on bus. Issues	.49								.38
Concept: Interpersonal comm		.85							
Concept: Learn new tech.		.83							
Concept: Multitasking		.83							
Concept: Teamwork		.79							
Concept: Aware of new tech.		.77							
Concept: Work u/ time pressure		.64							
Concept: Online community		.63					.34		
Concept: News judgment		.57					.31		
Concept: Attention to detail		.48					.44		
Duty: Edit for grammar/style			.84						
Duty: Write /edit script			.78						
Duty: Edit text for content			.77						
Duty: Write headline/blurbs			.71						
Skill: HTML				.86					
Skill: Dreamweaver				.86					
Skill: Computer programming	.32			.72					
Skill: Web layout design				.70					
Skill: SQL				.69					
Skill: Flash				.68					
Skill: Photoshop				.50					
Duty: Multimedia authoring					-.84				
Duty: Video production					-.83				
Duty: Info graphic design					-.71				
Duty: Photo shooting					-.39	.36			
Duty: Blogging						.51			
Duty: Email newsletter						.49			
Skill: News judgment							.79		
Skill: Grammar style							.68		

**Table 1. (continued)**

Factors extracted	DBusM	Concept	DTradW	SWebP	DMultP	DContP	STradW	DContM	SWebM
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(Cronbach's alpha $\alpha$ )	(.83)	(.93)	(.89)	(.93)	(.84)	(.68)	(.82)	(.76)	(.79)
Duty: Manage user-gen content								.59	
Duty: Analyze site usage								.57	
Duty: Database management						.31		.51	
Duty: Story combination			.31					.35	
Skill: Web usability									.76
Skill: Search engine optimization									.44
Skill: Translation									.43
Skill: Content management syst									.41
Keys: STradW = Skills for traditional writing; SWebM = Skills for webpage management; SWebP = Skills for webpage production; DBusM = Duties of business management; DContM = Duties of content management; DContP = Duties of content production; DMultP = Duties of multimedia production; DTradW = Duties of traditional writing; Concept = Concept Importance									

As a follow-up step, the corresponding items for each factor were averaged to form a new composite score. Thus, nine factor measures in total were established for further data analyses. The fact that the correlation test among nine factor measures shows no coefficients to be over .70 indicates adequate discriminant validity of all factors.

Second, a series of one-way ANOVA were performed to determine whether there is any significant difference among the nine factor measures rated by either students (i.e., what they expected in the future online newsroom; what their current online journalism course have taught to them) or online journalists (i.e., what they needed in the current online newsroom). A series of post-hoc Tukey HSD tests were then conducted to check whether there is any significant mean difference between the two groups' perceptions regarding the skills, duties, and concepts associated with online journalism.

## ***Results***

***Perception of online journalism skills:*** . Table 2 reports the comparative findings in mean scores pertaining to perception of online journalism skill factors. With regard to mean score ranking in skill usage, the students' expectation in the future newsroom has the same resulting pattern with journalists need in the current online newsroom (from most use to least use): traditional writing, webpage management, and webpage production. Also, the students' rating of skill taught in the current online journalism course shared the same mean order. These findings indicate that the priority of online journalism course curriculum fits to both students' expectation to and journalists' need for skill usage in online newsroom.

However, for all the skill factors, the one-way ANOVA results showed that there are significant mean differences among online journalism courses' offering, students' expectation, and journalists' need. Those students perceived that their studying courses significantly lagged behind in the degree of training to all the skill factors for their future uses in online newsroom. But journalists' rating shows that the online journalism courses only have a significant gap from the needs for online journalism in the aspect of webpage management. These imply that the online journalism course curriculum can equip students to satisfy the skill needs for traditional writing and webpage production in their future practice of online newsrooms.



**Table 2. Perception of online journalism skills**

Skill factors	Future online newsroom (Expected by students)			Current online journalism course (Taught to students)			Current online newsroom (Needed by journalists)			<i>F</i>
	Mean	Rank	<i>n</i>	Mean	Rank	<i>n</i>	Mean	Rank	<i>n</i>	
	Traditional writing (STradW)	7.99 <sup>a</sup>	(1)	57	7.12 <sup>b</sup>	(1)	57	7.71	(1)	
Webpage management (SWebM)	6.60 <sup>a</sup>	(2)	57	4.67 <sup>a,b</sup>	(2)	57	6.00 <sup>b</sup>	(2)	34	18.08 <sup>**</sup>
Webpage production (SWebP)	5.42 <sup>a,b</sup>	(3)	57	4.28 <sup>a</sup>	(3)	57	3.55 <sup>b</sup>	(3)	34	12.92 <sup>**</sup>

Items were rated in 10-point scale

\* significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed); \*\* significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed);

Robust tests with Brown-Forsythes's *F* were adopted for those items with heterogeneous variances

<sup>a,b,c</sup> significant difference at the 0.05 level (2-tailed) in Tukey HSD test for post-hoc pair comparisons

### ***Perceptions of Online Journalism Duties.***

Table 3 shows the comparative results in mean scores about perception of online journalism duty factors. With regard to mean ranking in duty performance, the students' expectation in the future newsroom has the distinctive resulting pattern with journalists need in the current online newsroom. Although both groups agreed that traditional writing is the mostly performed duty, they greatly varied in the sequence of production aspect, i.e., content and multimedia productions verse management aspect, i.e., business and content management. Those online journalists reported that the duty priority of management aspect (i.e., second and third place) is over that of production aspect (i.e., fourth and fifth place) in their current practices. These imply that the students over-estimated the relative degree of duty performance in the production aspect than the management aspect for current online

journalism practice.

Similar to the finding of skill factors, the one-way ANOVA results found that students' perception of their studying courses have a significantly lag behind in the level of training to most of the duty aspect, including business management, content management, and content production for their future uses in online newsroom. Nonetheless, journalists' rating shows that the online journalism courses actually do not have a significant lag behind from the needs for business management duty in online journalism practice. Notably, these courses have significantly higher mean scores than what journalist rated for the duties of content management, content production and multimedia production. These support that the online journalism course curriculum can train students to satisfy their future duty performing needs in current practice of online newsrooms.

**Table 3. Perception of online journalism duties**

Duty factors	Future online newsroom (Expected by students)			Current online journalism course (Taught to students)			Current online newsroom (Needed by journalists)			<i>F</i>
	Mean	Rank	<i>n</i>	Mean	Rank	<i>n</i>	Mean	Rank	<i>n</i>	
	Business management (DBusM)	5.35 <sup>a,b</sup>	(5)	55	3.76 <sup>a</sup>	(5)	55	4.21 <sup>b</sup>	(3)	
Content management (DContM)	6.19 <sup>a,b</sup>	(4)	56	5.24 <sup>a,c</sup>	(3)	55	4.28 <sup>b,c</sup>	(2)	33	13.16 <sup>**</sup>
Content production (DContP)	6.89 <sup>a,b</sup>	(2)	57	4.84 <sup>a,c</sup>	(4)	57	3.58 <sup>b,c</sup>	(5)	34	26.59 <sup>**</sup>
Multimedia production (DMultP)	6.52 <sup>a</sup>	(3)	56	6.18 <sup>b</sup>	(2)	55	3.64 <sup>a,b</sup>	(4)	33	26.47 <sup>**</sup>
Traditional Writing (DTradW)	7.75	(1)	55	6.93	(1)	55	6.79	(1)	34	3.04

Items were rated in 10-point scale

\* significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed); \*\* significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed);

Robust tests with Brown-Forsythes's *F* were adopted for those items with heterogeneous variances

<sup>a,b,c,d</sup> significant difference at the 0.05 level (2-tailed) in Tukey HSD *t*-test for post-hoc pair comparisons

**Perceptions of Online Journalism Concept Importance.** Data analyses found that there was no significant difference between the journalists and the students in terms of their perceived importance of the concepts. However, the students perceived that the courses they took significantly lagged behind with regard to the level of attendance to the concept importance for their future online newsroom practices. This is also true when compared to the journalists' rating, which also verify that the current online journalism courses significantly fell behind from the current online journalism practice.

**Table 4. Perception of online journalism concept importance**

Future online newsroom (Expected by students)		Current online journalism course (taught to students)		Current online newsroom (Needed by journalists)		<i>F</i>
Mean	<i>n</i>	Mean	<i>n</i>	Mean	<i>n</i>	
8.52 <sup>a</sup>	56	7.08 <sup>a,b</sup>	56	8.24 <sup>b</sup>	34	16.14 <sup>**</sup>

Items were rated in 10-point scale

\*\* significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed);

Robust tests with Brown-Forsythes's *F* were adopted for those items with heterogeneous variances

<sup>a,b,c,d</sup> significant difference at the 0.05 level (2-tailed) in Tukey HSD *t*-test for post-hoc pair comparisons

### **Discussion and Implications**

This study is one of the first comparative analyses to investigate online journalism practice and education in the Asian context. It affords new insights into the “practice–education gap” discussion in the journalism field. It confirms the presence of a gap

in the perceptions of professionals and learners regarding the key skills, duties, and concepts associated with online journalism.

In particular, this study reveals that there is much discordance regarding skills and duties between journalists and students in Hong Kong. A variety of duties related to multimedia works and business management are performed by journalists far less in reality than the students presume. In line with these findings, journalists are far less proficient than students in the skills of webpage production. However, journalism professionals are more proficient in the traditional writing skills than students, which is not surprising at all.

These research outcomes imply that, in Hong Kong, journalists tend to focus more on traditional backbone skills and duties such as those in writing and news judgment, but less on technical skills and duties, than students. This major finding is somewhat contradictory to those of Du and Thornburg's U.S. study,<sup>27</sup> in which journalists overall stressed technical skills and duties more than the students did.

The results of this study also imply that the current online journalism education falls short of the students' perceived needs of learning these traditional journalistic skills and duties. Some much needed skills seem seriously "under-taught." The current online journalism education does not appear to meet students' expectation of learning the relatively important web/multimedia skills.

Based upon the present research findings, the administrators of journalism schools in

Hong Kong, and probably in other Asian countries, are urged not to directly adopt the approaches for online journalism education suggested in the Western literature. Perhaps the online journalism educators in Hong Kong should continue curricula that emphasize traditional backbone skills and duties pertaining to writing and news judgment. This does not mean, however, that journalism schools should neglect teaching new technical skills to students, as this is now an essential part of journalism training. As the findings in this study suggest that today's journalism students are already fairly proficient in new media skills, journalism curricula should not forgo training students in traditional journalistic skills for the sake of computer skills.

To conclude, the results of the present study indicate that traditional journalistic skills such as writing and news judgment are still more important than technical skills such as multimedia and website works in online newsrooms in Hong Kong. Hence, this study suggests that, while new media and technology components have become essential in journalism practice, online journalism educators and program administrators should not forgo journalism curricula that value traditional backbone journalistic skills. While continuing to stress the basic traditional skills and duties pertaining to writing and news judgment on the one hand, online journalism educators ought to strive to narrow the gap between what is needed versus what is taught by deploying more resources and implementing more practices to equip students with higher levels of skills and concepts.

## ***Endnote***

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<sup>2</sup> e.g., American Society of Newspaper Editors (ASNE) Committee on Education for Journalism, *Journalism Education: Facing up to the Challenge of Change*, (Washington: ASNE, 1990 Tom Dickson and Wanda Brandon, "The Gap between Educators and Professional Journalists," *Journalism & Mass Communication Educator* 55, no.3 (2000): 55-67; Carolyn Lepre and Glen L. Bleske, "Little Common Ground for Magazine Editors and Professors Surveyed on Journalism Curriculum," *Journalism and Mass Communication Educator* 60, no.3 (2005): 190-200; Society of Professional Journalists, *Tomorrow's Broadcast Journalists: A Report and Recommendations from the Jane Pauley Task Force on Mass Communication Education* (Greencastle, IN: Society of Professional Journalists, 1996..

<sup>3</sup> American Society of Newspaper Editors Committee on Education for Journalism, *Journalism Education: Facing up to the Challenge of Change*; Society of Professional Journalists, *Tomorrow's Broadcast Journalists: A Report and Recommendations from the Jane Pauley Task Force on Mass Communication Education*.

<sup>4</sup> Dickson and Brandon, "The Gap between Educators and Professional Journalists".

<sup>5</sup> e.g., Lepre and Bleske, "Little Common Ground for Magazine Editors and Professors Surveyed on Journalism Curriculum".

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Jo Bardoel, "The Internet, Journalism and Public Communication Policies," *Gazette* 64(2002): 501-11; Jo Bardoel and Mark Deuze, "Network Journalism: Converging Competencies of Old and New Media Professionals," *Australian Journalism Review* 23(2001): 91-103; Mark Denze, "Journalism and the Web: An Analysis of Skills and Standards in an Online Environment," *International Communication Gazette* 61(1999): 373-90; Steve Paulussen, "Online News Production in Flanders: How Flemish Online Journalists Perceive and Explore the Internet's Potential," *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* 9(2004), Retrieved from: <http://jcmc.indiana.edu/vol9/issue4/paulussen.html>.

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<sup>9</sup> Bardoel and Deuze, "Network Journalism: Converging Competencies of Old and New Media Professionals"; Denze, "Journalism and the Web: An Analysis of Skills and Standards in an Online Environment."

<sup>10</sup> Matt Carlson, "Blogs and Journalistic Authority", *Journalism Studies* 8(2007): 264-79; Eun-Gyoo Kim and James W. Hamilton, "Capitulation to Capital? OhmyNews as Alternative Media," *Media, Culture & Society* 28 (2006): 541-60.

<sup>11</sup> Matheson, "Weblogs and the Epistemology of the News: Some Trends in Online Journalism"; Singer, "The Political J-Blogger: 'Normalizing' a New Media Form to Fit Old Norms and Practices."

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<sup>12</sup> Bardoel and Deuze, “Network Journalism: Converging Competencies of Old and New Media Professionals”; Denze, “Journalism and the Web: An Analysis of Skills and Standards in an Online Environment”; Paulussen, “Online News Production in Flanders: How Flemish Online Journalists Perceive and Explore the Internet's Potential.”

<sup>13</sup> Paulussen, “Online News Production in Flanders: How Flemish Online Journalists Perceive and Explore the Internet's Potential”; Denze, “Journalism and the Web: An Analysis of Skills and Standards in an Online Environment.”

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## **Concentration in the Online News Sector**

### **Starting point: stating the problem**

This paper looks at whether the thesis – espoused particularly by the media representatives themselves – of an enhanced diversity resulting from the increased importance of online journalism – can in fact be upheld, or whether such hopes are not going up in smoke – at least for the Swiss media landscape. The analysis centers on the question of the concentration in online information journalism: does the available technology tend to increase the number of information providers in Switzerland and thus also to broaden the information offer, or are we witnessing an increased tendency to concentration rather than an enhanced diversity and plurality?

- We will firstly analyze which actors in the online sector are at all able to provide a high-coverage information offer in Switzerland.
- Secondly, we will examine the question of whether the increased importance of online information journalism is leading to a greater diversity of information providers, or rather whether we are not in fact seeing a progressive concentration?
- Thirdly, we will ask how the available number of online information providers has developed in comparison to the print sector in Switzerland.
- And finally, the consequences of such a development for the public democratic debate in Switzerland will be examined more closely.

### **Theoretical background / state of research**

The information media are caught up in a critical phase of upheaval: on the one hand the press titles – with a few exceptions – are continuously losing circulation numbers and advertising income (fög 2013); on the other hand, the Swiss population is increasingly consuming news via the (mobile) Internet (NET-Metrix 2013a) and a growth in advertising revenues is to be seen only in the online sector – if at all.

It is thus apparent that online information journalism has significantly increased the competitive pressure for conventional print offerings in various respects. As a consequence of the greater importance of online information journalism, publishers now feel obliged to rethink their existing business models. Considered as economic assets, the mass media as a whole are characterized by a series of factors which favor the tendencies to concentration and monopolization. This includes the degression of fixed costs, which – together with the growing attractiveness to advertisers – makes high item numbers and extensive coverage goals worth striving for. The commercialized mass media are thus subject to the logic of economies of scale, because large item numbers allow production and sales costs to be more

quickly amortized and hence higher profits to be obtained. The multiple use of journalistic products by the agency of convergence or interconnected systems also contributes to optimizing costs (economies of scope). In referring back to classical-liberal competitive arguments, the publishers in particular stress the positive effects of these developments (creation of new business sectors, higher efficiency, better quality in response to an orientation to demand): the competitive pressure is thus supposed to lead – from the outside – to a *re-invention of journalism*, which ultimately also benefits the readers (or from this viewpoint, consumers in general).

Nevertheless, the mass media are not only an economic but also a journalistic asset which is of central importance to securing the fundamental functions of the public sphere in a democracy. Under the influence of the Internet euphoria, however, the advantages of online journalism are prominently highlighted, not least in scientific discourse: it is argued that in view of the absence of any space restrictions in the online sector, greater diversity and information depth can be offered, that the quality of the public discourse is improved by the opportunities for greater interactivity, feedback loops to the public and multimedia options. Moreover, the possibilities of citizens' journalism on the Internet are supposed to go hand in hand with a democratization of public communications, and not least the extended technical functions also allow new information providers to establish themselves on the market (cf. Quandt 2008; Singer 2004a and b; Huang/Rademakers/Fayemiwo/Dunlap 2004; Kretschmar 2009).

However, this technically oriented – and almost exclusively quantitative – viewpoint, which reduces the quality of public communications and democratization processes in causal terms to technological innovations, remains blind to factors which are of far greater significance for the quality-enhancing or quality-diminishing potential of online reporting. Thus various authors have in the meantime linked the development of online journalism closely to the question of the availability of material and immaterial resources: this clearly decides whether the journalistic quality in the online sector can reach a comparable level and the information offer a similar width to those offered by the print sector (Barnhurst 2010; Fenton 2010; Trappel 2008; Wyss / Zischek 2004). They note that the scarcity of resources still prevailing in the online sector – financing problems on the one hand, a shortage of well-trained journalists on the other – in particular makes it unlikely for the new technical possibilities alone to lead to a greater diversity of providers in the online sector. As a result, the euphoric expectations oriented to online journalism are unlikely to be realized in the near future.

Following on from these observations, the following concluding thesis may be formulated: *The gain in importance of the online sector does not lead to a greater diversity of information providers; rather, the economic circumstances (including the scarcity of resources) tend to (further) favor the top dogs on the market and thus the tendency to concentration.*

## **Methodical procedure**

In order to determine the information offer in Switzerland, the news sites available in 2013 were selected which reach at least 0.5% of the local population in the three large Swiss language regions from the age of 15 years. All parts of the universal, general and current

online information media (general interest, i.e. no special interest websites) were recorded for the year. The selection of news sites was based on the figures from NET-Metrix (NET-Metrix 2013a; 2013b) which periodically issues data for the widely used Swiss websites on the basis of unique users per day. These figures tell us how many individual users visit the respective websites per day.

The media titles determined in this way can subsequently be assigned to their respective controllers (e.g. publishers). The development of the degree of concentration in the various language regions can then be inferred by mapping the diachronic development (data is available for the years 2010 to 2013).

In addition, a comparison of the concentration trends in the press sector allows the question as to whether the online sector really does contribute to a substantial broadening of the information offer to be answered. The press titles are selected on the basis of WEMF key figures. For the press, the parameter of “circulation” is used as the selection criterion. Here too, those media titles are selected which reach at least 0.5% of the local population in the three large Swiss language regions from the age of 15 years.

### **First findings**

*Greater concentration in the online market:* Fewer providers can offer an information range with a wide coverage online than in the offline sector. Contrary to the euphoric assumption noted above, we no longer see more media diversity but rather a greater concentration online among the wide-coverage offerings. The actors who dominate the press and radio market also rule the roost in the online segment. In addition, there is a lack of major press publishers with wide-coverage offerings (such as AZ Media AG, SüdostSwitzerland Media AG). Outside the established media companies, there are still no high-resource news alternatives with a wide coverage on the Internet apart from the offerings of the large online portals with their extremely scarce journalistic resources (such as msn.ch, gmx.ch, bluewin.ch). Not least due to the strong advertising competition, in particular from abroad, and the small Swiss market, there are no high-usage offerings drawing upon information journalism in Switzerland with an exclusive online presence. Due to their relatively short range, exclusively online offerings in Switzerland such as *infosperber.ch*, *journal21.ch* and *onlinereports.ch* continue merely to possess the status of exclusive niche products in the sector of online journalism.

*The competitive struggle for advertising revenues promotes the concentration of the online information offering:* In the online advertising market, providers from outside the industry intensify the competitive struggle and promote the process of concentration. The advertising revenues of the search engines, which essentially represent the revenues of *Google*, have grown far more in Switzerland since 2007 than the display advertising which is relevant to the information media. The latter cannot, however, compensate their press losses with this online growth. In addition to generally declining revenues, a concentration is taking place of advertising expenditures to a few providers. In 2012 the shares of the three largest controllers in the gross advertising revenues in the press sector exceeded 80% of the total. In addition, every second franc in both German and French-speaking Switzerland goes to *Tamedia AG*.

*Concentration is a threat to democratic opinion forming:* Whereas the tendencies to concentration and monopolization correspond to the prevailing economic logic, they are problematic for the diversity and quality of the offerings and thus for opinion forming. Concentration and monopolization reduce the diversity of the media offerings: indeed, this applies both to the diversity of independent providers and titles (external plurality) and – by way of the commercialization of news production – to the diversity and quality of the offerings within a title (internal plurality). In addition, the diversity of the offerings within the various (language) regions is also of importance in a federally organized and multilingual country such as Switzerland. Here we can observe another problematic effect of this concentration: the three largest Swiss media groups are all based in Zurich.

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### **The Need for Speed. How News Media use Push Notifications.**

This study examines the mobile news applications of media outlets and analyses their usage of push notifications. Our content analysis (n = 1.074 push notifications) focuses on the frequency and topics of these news alerts. Further, we analyse if and how push notifications refer to the uncertainty of breaking news.

#### *Considerations, State of Research and Research Questions*

Digital media have often been described as a potential threat to traditional news media outlets (e.g. Wikström & Ellonen, 2012; Pavlik, 2013). However, digital channels are not only competitors on the news market but also provide new opportunities for interacting with the audience (Picard, 2009), for investigating issues (Broersma & Graham, 2013; Reich, 2013) or for distributing content. Concerning the latter, reporters and news organizations increasingly use social media channels (especially *Twitter* and *Facebook*) to provide journalistic content (Hermida, 2010; Lasorsa, Lewis & Holton, 2012; Artwick, 2013; Ju, Jeong & Chyi 2013). Besides social media, mobile news applications for smartphones and tablets can serve as a further digital channel for communicating news (Schmitz Weiss, 2013). Actually, there is evidence that people increasingly use their mobile devices to get news (Sasseen, Olmstaed & Mitchell, 2013; Rosenstiel & Mitchell 2012). On mobile devices, push notifications are a convenient tool to provide *breaking news* (McDermott, 2013). However, media organizations seem to hesitate how exactly to use this tool. On the one hand, push notifications are considered a good opportunity to provide news and to retain users for the respective news application. On the other hand, “news publishers have long considered push notifications, which pop up on phone and tablet screens, too intrusive to use more than sparingly” (McDermott, 2013). Thus, our study investigates the amount of push notifications that are sent via the news applications of traditional news media outlets.

RQ 1: How frequently do traditional news media outlets send push notifications via their mobile news applications?

We further investigate what kind of content is sent via push notifications. Digital media channels “enable[.] written media to add a form of live coverage to their reporting that was in the past reserved for audiovisual media” (Broersma & Graham, 2013). However, research on ‘traditional’ media’s usage of digital channels has shown that they are not solely used to provide (breaking) news. For example, social media are also used to interact with the audiences or to promote the respective print product resp. TV or radio program (Broersma & Graham, 2013; Neuberger, vom Hofe & Nuernbergk, 2010). Thus, we examine the primary function of push notifications: Do media outlets primarily disseminate news or do they primarily promote their ‘regular’ platform? Concerning the dissemination of news we have a closer look at the kind of stories that are covered. In recent times, journalism has become more and more oriented towards the demands of its audiences. Especially push notifications or news items on *Facebook* or *Twitter* have to attract the interest of the audiences as they are supposed to follow the respective link to the news application resp. website. Here, “[s]oft news and ‘news you can use’ often generate more interest than hard news” (Hamilton, 2004). The journalistic news selection on social media channels or news applications has not been analysed so

far. However, research on online news sites has shown that in the US “journalists’ choices [...] are substantively ‘soft’ in terms of what the stories are about” (Bockowski & Peer, 2011).

RQ 2: What kind of content do media outlets provide in their push notifications?

We assume that push notifications are especially used to disseminate breaking news (McDermott, 2013). As breaking news frequently cover unfolding events (Snowden, 2012) uncertainty is one of their characteristic features. Moreover, in order to be the first to disseminate a news item, news organizations often cannot verify these “high-speed news” (Mitchelstein & Boczkowski, 2009; Gulyas 2013) properly. As the speed of the news cycle has accelerated (Snowden, 2008) the old UP slogan “Get it first, but first, get it right” is at stake. We presume that this might especially apply to push notifications as it is most likely that users have installed several news applications and can immediately compare which news outlet won the news race. Indeed, the coverage of the Boston marathon bombings has proven that “news organizations were quick to relay information later to be found inaccurate” (McDermott, 2013). So far, the coverage of uncertain issues has not been studied intensely. Most of the respective research deals with the handling of uncertain scientific evidences in science journalism. Here, results suggest that journalists tend to leave out references towards uncertainty and – hence – let their stories appear more certain than they actually are (Schäfer, 2011). Considering the uncertain nature of many breaking news and the accelerated speed of the news circle we examine if and how push notifications refer to the uncertain nature of breaking news. However, as we do not compare push notifications to the ‘real’ world we cannot determine how uncertain a news item actually is. Obviously, not every issue is uncertain.

RQ 3a: Do push notifications contain any information about the uncertainty of breaking news?

RQ 3b: How do push notifications hint at the uncertain nature of the respective news item?

### *Method*

To answer the research questions we conducted a content analysis examining all push notifications that our sample of news media outlets sent via their news applications in a period of one month (10/12/2013-10/01/2014). We investigated the news apps of all German news media outlets that were available in the news category of the Apple App Store or in the Google Play Store. For further analysis we only chose those applications providing push notifications. Besides these German news applications we investigated the applications of well-known US American and British news media. In total, our sample consists of 27 news applications<sup>1</sup> - 18 German, 6 US American and 3 British news media – disseminating N = 1.074 push notifications during our period of investigation. The unit of analysis was the individual news alert. Besides the respective media outlet, we coded the publication date, the main topic and the main function of the alert. We further coded, if the notification refers to uncertainty at all, what kind of uncertainty is communicated and through which means uncertainty is constructed.

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<sup>1</sup> *Germany*: Süddeutsche Zeitung, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, Die Welt, Bild-Zeitung, Tagesspiegel, Münchener Abendzeitung, Ruhr Nachrichten, Borkener Zeitung, Hannoversche Allgemeine Zeitung, Stern, Focus online, Spiegel online, N24, n-tv, Tagesschau, ZDF heute, SHZ.de, Euronews.de; *United States*: New York Times, Washington Post, USA Today, CNN, NBC News, FOX News; *Great Britain*: The Guardian, The Sun, BBC News.



## *Results and Conclusion*

Concerning the frequency of push notifications we found that news media employ highly different strategies. Whereas six news applications didn't send any push notification and three further apps only sent one or two news alerts, one media outlet (the website of the German news magazine *Focus online*) sent 450 notifications constituting 41.9% of our whole sample. *Focus online* sent five times more notifications than the news application of *CNN* ranked second ( $n = 89$ ). Not considering this statistical outlier, during our period of investigation the analysed media outlets sent 13.9 push notifications on average ( $SD = 8.0$ ). However – as the numbers differ considerably – each media outlet has obviously established its own strategy regarding the frequency of push notifications.

Regarding RQ2 our assumption was not confirmed. Among all push notifications political news have the highest share (28.5%). However, just distinguishing between hard (politics, business, science etc.) and soft news (sports, celebrities, crime, accidents etc.) a different image emerges: Push notifications cover soft news (47.3%) more often than hard news (43.0%). They are almost exclusively used to disseminate (breaking) news. Only occasionally they contain advices or are used to communicate directly with the users (“Bild wishes you a Happy New Year!”).

Regarding RQ3 we found that 132 push notifications (12.3%) refer to the uncertainty of the information. Uncertainty is most often mentioned when covering accidents or natural disasters (31.4%;  $n = 102$ ). Here, media outlets tend to point at the uncertainty regarding the number of victims by using hints like “about 400 people”. Another method of referring to uncertainty is the usage of questions instead of certain statements. This is especially the case when covering unfolding or future events.

In conclusion it is striking that – so far – media outlets have not developed similar strategies regarding their usage of push notifications. Especially, the frequency of sending news alerts differs considerably. Though they seem to be a convenient tool for traditional media outlets to disseminate breaking news, most news media use them quite carefully. Regarding the type of news our study does not reveal any dominance of soft news. Further, most of the messages do not refer to any kind of uncertainty. However, we have only analysed the news alerts and not the respective news article, where we might find more explicit references to uncertainty. In this respect, push notifications resemble headlines in print media. On the one hand they have to be short; on the other hand they have to attract interest. This leaves little space for uncertainty claims. However, this does not mean that the whole coverage intentionally conceals uncertainty or that journalists have not verified their information properly. Our study just gives a first insight into news media's usage of push notifications. Future research should especially focus on the editorial strategies behind these news alerts.

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## **Deciding on a course of action – Consequences of strategic choices in news organizations**

Since the turn of the millennium the news industry in Europe and North America has been tasked to re-invent itself - a process tied to the ongoing media crisis, which is felt especially within the print sector. In the context of the interdependent effects of economic, cultural and technological change journalists have lost their societal importance in many ways. Their output is no longer identified as necessary to keep the public informed, while at the same time a large number of people show willingness to provide journalistic products for free. In addition the number of people willing to pay for information is seemingly dwindling. Thus journalism is faced with a number of challenges that force the struggling media enterprises to develop new business strategies to accommodate this situation.

Currently those business strategies are often trial and error undertakings, with limited success at best, as macro level analysis attest (cf. Newman 2011 or Nielsen 2012). Furthermore comparisons show that different countries experience the changes with vastly different intensity. While the US and UK media are already facing tremendous challenges, the effects are felt less in countries like Austria or Germany for now (OECD 2010). But internationally oriented and comparative studies come to the conclusion that we are currently at the beginning of the changes and not the end. Thus they may reach the currently stable regions as well (Nielsen 2012, 63p). Against this backdrop the research team will present data from a third party financed project that aims to gain insight into those issues over the course of two years, starting in the summer of 2014.

The briefly illustrated, but well known developments in the field lead to the emergence of different kinds of business strategies under very different circumstances and possibilities. Thus our aim is to develop a tool that makes it possible to trace the consequences of these strategic decisions for journalism practice. The development of such a tool is necessary to gain a deeper understanding of how traditional, organization-based journalism is trying to survive under the current circumstances found in Europe and North America.

In the first phase of the project we collected a dataset of news-reports on journalistic practice and developments in the journalistic field that aims to broadly cover the recent developments in Europe and North America. This resulted in 160 pieces of information material that came from daily newspaper and press agencies as well as different professional organizations. This material is supplemented with 33 academic publications from 2005 onwards that cover the topic in a substantial way. The primary idea was to accumulate enough material for a theoretical saturation, so that a structured analysis of as many different strategies as possible could be made.

From both scientific and journalistic sources strategies were extracted and classified for comparison. With this we created a database in order to get insight on how different strategies surface under specific circumstances. Based on these results we summarize the strategies used by media companies in seven different categories. Those categories are not to be seen as exclusive. Indeed many strategies fall in more than one category and decisions must also be seen within the specific cultural and social context.

- 1) **Resource based strategies** that aim to reduce the number of journalists and transfer more tasks to the remaining staff or outsource journalistic work. Further examples would include contributor models, like the Huffington Post or Forbes, where bloggers are replacing traditional journalists. Prime example for strategies in this category is the USA, where the journalistic workforce dropped by 30% from 2000 to 2013 (Edmonds et al. 2013).
- 2) Strategies that are concerned with the **restructuring of the production process**, are subsuming strategies like newsroom convergence, the cooperation with citizen reporters, crowdsourcing or expanded usage of social media to create content (Bittner 2011).
- 3) **Innovations in distribution and marketing** that create attention and public awareness. This includes classic off-site-activities or on-going contact with readers, as well as social media activities to create specific star journalists or ongoing cooperation with search engines that may result in better visibility in online searches.
- 4) The expansion of business into **new business domains** that introduce products to reach new audiences and markets (Büschken & Von Thaden 2007, 610). This may include new product lines like books or the offering of concert tickets or travel arrangements.
- 5) **Product innovations and line extensions** address changes in the core product of a news provider. This includes the ideas of supporting alternate forms of distribution (e.g.: collected editions, E-Books, podcasts, archives etc.), as well as creating specific products for a specific target audience (e.g. hyper-local products or products tailored to very specific consumer needs).
- 6) **Finance strategies** that range from pay-walls and micro-payments towards different forms of crowd funding or sponsorship. Those are highly dependent on the cultural acceptance as different forms of financing strategies like pushing for philanthropy would not be appropriate in many countries.
- 7) Strategies related to the **quality of journalistic output** use concepts like media transparency, media accountability or the promotion of investigative journalism in order to raise a news company's public stock and create a unique selling proposition against the numerous web-platforms and content providers.

Looking at the strategies which are summarized in these categories we find that some of them are incomparable with each other. There are many possible examples to illustrate this point and we will provide insight into several of those during our presentation, that will tie to the aforementioned concepts of social media based strategies and paywall strategies. A premier example to illustrate our point for this abstract would be the case of pay walls, as they saw a problematic role-back in several media, after their experimentation with them failed. Paywalls – one of the more consolidated terms to describe a strategy – require the users' readiness to pay to gain access to the news, thus making it necessary for the company to provide some sort of exclusive content. This means that paywalls without a strong journalistic backing of exclusive content does not constitute a valid strategic choice: there needs to be a separation regarding the quality – how ever defined – in comparison to the content offered for free.

At the same time the establishing a paywall limits the amount of traffic and in the next step the revenue that can be generated with quantity based advertisement on websites. While videos of cute

cats may generate traffic it may not be the right choice for a publication that either is traditionally associated with quality news or aims for its customers to associate it with quality news.

This example shows that different strategies have to be followed by different forms of journalism, as journalism has to follow decisions that are made on a business level. This is further complicated by the fact that entrepreneurial strategies are often based on “gut feeling” decision making, despite the fact that one strategic choice may block out or enable the later use of different strategies.

In sum this presentation identifies various strategic choices that media cooperation can make within a given cultural and social context. It discusses both how different strategies interact with each other and how possible consequences arise with the deployment of these strategies. By doing so we will provide insights into the strategic choices identified in contemporary journalism and the question why seemingly indistinguishable strategies are bound to fail under specific circumstances while succeeding in others.

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# **Free versus Fee: Comparing Paid Content in Four Online Newspapers**

Abstract for “Re-Inventing Journalism”  
High density presentation/poster session

## **Research question**

The newspaper market is moving steadily towards paywall solutions for online news services provided by legacy media. To some extent, the strategy is seen to slow down the loss of regular subscribers in some markets, such as in Norway. Local and regional newspapers without direct competition in the market have been the first to move to the hard, metered or premium models, while omnibus national newspapers have opted for a liberal premium model, charging only for high-value exclusive content. In this context, the regional newspaper sector presents an interesting case. Not only do regional newspapers face competition from both above and below – from the national dailies and tabloids as well as smaller local titles – they also operate in markets with direct competition.

This paper investigates how the paywall strategies of the Norwegian media company Schibsted’ regional newspapers *Aftenposten*, *Bergens Tidende*, *Stavanger Aftenblad* and *Fædrelandsvennen*, who all erected paywalls during 2012-2013, impact on their content. The paper presents a longitudinal and comparative content analysis comparing the content profiles of the four papers before and after the walls were erected, and the content put behind the wall with the content that is open to the public free of charge. The research is operationalized as a question of monetization – what kind of content can online newspapers charge for, and what kind of content remains free? As this analysis demonstrates, the answers to these questions are not only linked to conceptions of news values, added value or traffic generation, they are also closely tied to the market position of the newspaper as a whole.

## **State of research**

The fairly recent introduction of subscription models for online news means there is not yet much research on digital paywalls. Studies are beginning to emerge that address the effect of paywalls on the more normative functions of newspapers (e.g. Pavlik 2013), but much of this research is still focused on paywalls as viable business models (e.g. Bleyen and Van Hove 2010; Graybeal and Hayes 2011), concern user studies (Goyanes 2014), or investigate peoples' willingness to pay for online news (Chyi 2012). As of yet, pessimism prevails as to the overall effect of digital subscription models on the financial situation of the news industry (e.g. Myllylahti 2014). Few studies find support for the notion that paywalls might be the saviours of the news industry, particularly as audience adaptation to fee-based online news seems slow (Collins 2011). Moreover, concerns have been raised regarding the effect that closed news might have on information divides in society (e.g. Grueskin et al 2011). The few content analyses that exist (e.g. Brandstetter and Schmalhofer 2014; Kvalheim 2013) investigate the added value of the content found behind newspaper's paywalls, and even fewer are comparative. This study seeks to fill this research gap by comparing between newspapers and subscription models, across time and across market situations.

## **Data and methodology**

The four titles included in this study all initiated digital subscription during 2012-2013. The different approaches to the metered and premium models that the four newspapers engage in offer comparative and contrasting cases concerning paid content strategies in competitive markets. The analysis compares longitudinal data from three years, 2012-2014. The data comprises one week of continuous coverage from each paper from each of the years 2012, 2013 and 2014, n=5174<sup>1</sup>. The unit of analysis is the article published as front-page story on the newspapers' online versions<sup>2</sup>. The data was collected as downloaded screenshots on average once every hour between 08.00 and 24.00. Units were analysed using the SPSS statistical programme based on a coding scheme of over 60 variables designed to register stories according to topical content<sup>3</sup>. The data

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<sup>1</sup> 23-29 June 2012 (n=1650); 25-31 January 2013 (n=1694); and 20-26 January 2014 (n=1830).

<sup>2</sup> [www.aftenposten.no](http://www.aftenposten.no); [www.bt.no](http://www.bt.no); [www.aftenbladet.no](http://www.aftenbladet.no); and [www.fvn.no](http://www.fvn.no).

<sup>3</sup> The categories were designed to be mutually exclusive and registered variations within the following broad topical categories: Politics; Crime; Economy; Social issues; Culture; Everyday life or consumer

facilitates a comparative quantitative content analysis measuring the content profiles of the news published for free (in front of the wall) and news published for subscribers (behind the wall)<sup>4</sup>.

### **Core findings**

The analysis shows that the news available to non-subscribers varies according to the market position of the newspaper. *Aftenposten*, the largest newspaper in the sample, is an upmarket regional title with national distribution and a metered access solution. Overall, its content profile has not changed with the introduction of the paywall. In other words, non-subscribers lose exactly what they once had free access to. This suggests that *Aftenposten* is fairly confident in its editorial identity, intent on keeping loyal audiences, and concerned with maintaining its market position as an omnibus newspaper. The two middle-sized titles, *Bergens Tidende* and *Stavanger Aftenblad*, reserve less of their content for subscribers only, 18 per cent and 34 per cent respectively. The smallest paper in the sample, *Fædrelandsvennen*, put 55 per cent of its online content behind the wall in 2014. Without local competition, this newspaper can afford to paywall most of its content, and therefore reserve its in-house production for subscribers only.

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issues; Sport; and Accidents (and Other); as well as according to local affiliation (local, regional, national and foreign).

<sup>4</sup> Inter-coder reliability was established using 2 independent coders measuring Cohen's Kappa (k). Reliability was measured on content: .92/93%, and geographic location: .81/85% (n=150).



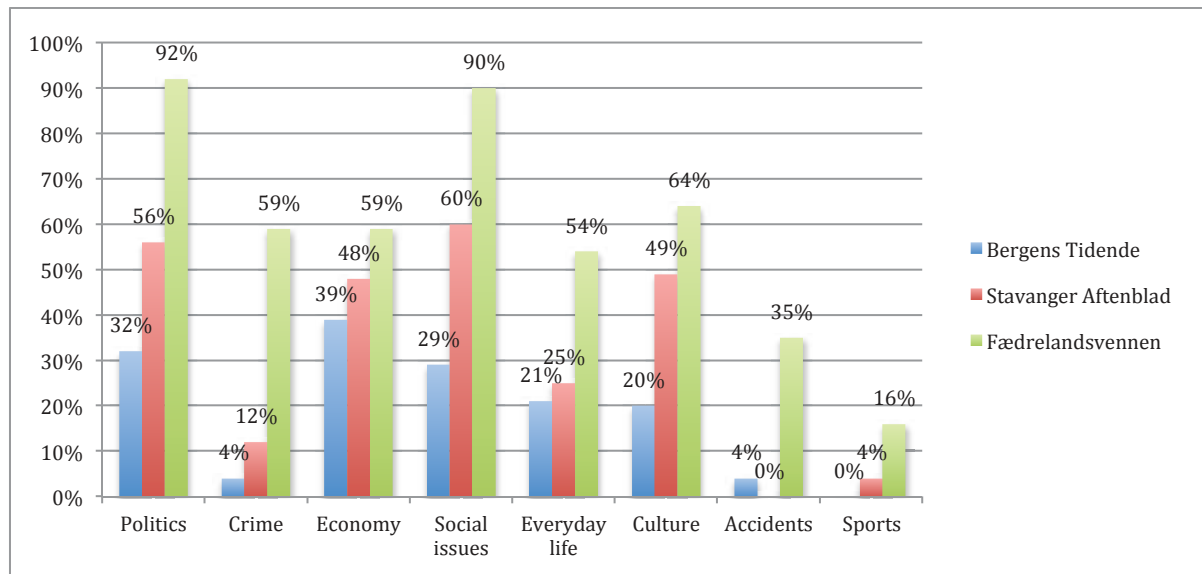


Figure 1: News behind the wall in the premium model newspapers *Bergens Tidende*, *Stavanger Aftenblad* and *Fædrelandsvennen*, 2014, n=1248.

While *Aftenposten*, with its metered access model, shows little change to its content profile as a result of the paywall, the three subsequent premium modeled papers offer interesting findings. Political coverage has increased since the walls were erected, in some cases significantly, while sports coverage has decreased significantly. Paid access is primarily reserved for in-house production and resource-demanding journalistic genres in the topical areas of politics, social issues, financial news and cultural features. Syndicated news, agency feeds and videos are open to all, while commentary, analysis and features predominantly remain closed to subscribers. Stories ported from – or shared with – the print edition are also reserved for subscribers, as is local and regional content. Accidents, weather reports and crime stories are open to all users, primarily because general disruption stories serve as traffic drivers and are freely available through most competing news outlets. Sports stories – especially in the two titles facing local tabloid competition – are open to all readers.

## Conclusions

The content analysis of the paywall strategies of these newspapers demonstrates that not all types of content can be monetized, and not all types of content can move audiences to paid platforms. Some of the most valuable niche content produced by these media houses – sports – cannot be walled for fear of free options moving in and capturing a valuable market segment. However, the paywall clearly serves to protect

high-value exclusive content produced within the home offices. The paywall therefore acts as a defensive strategy, demonstrating to readers that they have to pay for editorial content.

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## **What Negative Content and a Tabloid Production Style contribute to the Success of Television News**

In 2010 Jack Fuller, distinguished US journalist published a book about the information explosion and the crisis in journalism. Fuller argued that within a few decades, technological developments and fierce competition have made our information environment become saturated with messages. Moreover, these messages have become increasingly arousing, i.e., emotionally appealing and fast-paced. In Fuller's view, these developments have led to a news audience that is poorly informed, and that is consequently ill-prepared to fulfill its democratic function.

Such critical writings on increasingly arousing news are not new (McManus, 1994), and some of these describe more than just threats to the democratic ideal of informed citizenship (Baum, 2002). Scientific research on arousing news, in particular focusing on television news, is also not new. Two major research lines may be discerned, one describing causes of arousing news (Hendriks Vettehen et al., 2012; Slattery et al., 2001), and the other describing the cognitive processing of arousing news (Grabe et al., 2000, 2003; Newhagen & Reeves, 1992).

Considerably less is known about an important assumption in debates of arousing news; the idea that arousing news is capable of keeping viewers glued to the screen. Substantial viewing rates of arousing news programs may provide illustrative support to this idea, but no firm evidence. Also, a number of laboratory experiments have shown that arousing news is capable of eliciting attentional and arousal responses (Grabe, et al., 2000; 2003), but these are conceptually different from viewing behavior (Kleemans, Hendriks Vettehen, Beentjes, & Eisinga, 2012, p.681). This study therefore aims at answering the question whether arousing news is capable of maintaining the viewer's attention.

### **Arousing news and Viewing Time**

Two categories of arousing news stories have often been distinguished in the literature (Grabe et al., 2000, 2003). The first category consists of negative content (e.g., fire, accident, crime, or riots) and the negative pictures (e.g., fire, blood) that mostly accompany such stories, and is henceforth referred to as *negative content*. The second component is made up of

the flashy production features (notably a high number of camera shots, but also the presence of decorating editing techniques, sound effects, or music onsets). Following the literature, this category is henceforth referred to as *tabloid packaging*.

Specifically, this study asks whether these two components of arousing news stories contribute to an increased viewing time to the stories. Two recent laboratory studies are relevant for providing expectations, although each study had its limitation. Bailey et al. (2013) reported overall increased viewing times among their 40 participants for stories featuring negative content as opposed to stories featuring neutral content, and overall increased viewing times for tabloid packaged stories as opposed to standard packaged stories. More in detail, they found that tabloid packaged stories only increased viewing time when stories also included negative content. Kleemans et al. (2012) used considerably more participants, but only used proxy measures of viewing behavior (e.g., expectations of zapping). They also found positive effect of negative news, but it did not find effects of tabloid packaging, or an interaction between the two variables. Based on these findings, we pose:

H1: Viewing time is longer for negative content stories than for neutral content stories.

H2: Viewing time is longer for tabloid packaged stories than for standard packaged stories.

RQ1: Is viewing time affected by a combination of negative content and tabloid packaging?

Kleemans et al. (2012) also investigated whether younger viewers, being raised in an arousing, fast-paced world, would be more receptive to negative content news and tabloid packaged news than older viewers. They did find partial support to this idea: the impact of negative content was stronger for younger viewers, but no effect was found for tabloid packaged news. Still, we pose:

H3: The effect of negative content on viewing time will be stronger for younger viewers than for older viewers.

H4: The effect of tabloid packaging on viewing time will be stronger for younger viewers than for older viewers.

Finally, Kleemans et al. (2012) investigated whether male viewers would be more receptive to negative content news and tabloid packaged news than female viewers. Again, they found partial support to this idea: the impact of tabloid packaged news was stronger for male viewers, but no effect was found for negative content. Theoretically, these hypotheses

were largely inspired by Kamhawi and Grabe (2008). These authors argued that men have been evolutionary programmed to approach negative stimuli in an attempt to protect their offspring, whereas women because of their nurturing role have been evolutionary programmed to avoid negative stimuli. Even in 21<sup>st</sup> centuries' men and women, these predispositions may still somewhat qualify the overall impact of content and packaging features in the news. In all, we pose:

H5: The effect of negative content on viewing time will be stronger for younger viewers than for older viewers.

H6: The effect of tabloid packaging on viewing time will be stronger for younger viewers than for older viewers.

## Method

A web-based experiment was conducted in which participants were instructed to watch audiovisual news stories. They might watch as many of the 16 stories as they liked to watch within the limited amount of time that was given to them. A 2 (content)  $\times$  2 (packaging)  $\times$  2 (age)  $\times$  2 (gender) mixed design was used. Age (young versus old) and gender (male versus female) were between-subjects factors. Content (neutral versus negative stories) and packaging (standard versus tabloid stories) were within-subjects factors. In other words, the 16 stories consisted of four types: one for each possible combination of the two types of content and the two types of packaging.

A total of 190 highly educated participants took part in the experiment: 99 younger ones (15-25 years; 51 male and 48 female) and 91 older ones (26-55 years; 53 male and 38 female).

The viewing times per news story that had been recorded online served as a basis for the viewing times in each of the four content  $\times$  packaging categories. For each category, the mean viewing time of the stories in the category that had been watched for at least a second was calculated.

## Results

A full factorial 2 (content)  $\times$  2 (packaging)  $\times$  2 (age)  $\times$  2 (gender) repeated measures ANOVA was carried out. The findings directly bearing upon the hypotheses were the

following. In support of H1, a very strong main effect for content was found ( $F(1,184) = 1188.92; p < .001, \eta^2 = .74$ ). Viewers continued watching negative content twice as long compared to neutral content ( $M = 55.71, SE = .86$  versus  $M = 27.47, SE = .75$ ). In support of H2, a weak but significant main effect for packaging was found ( $F(1,184) = 14.24; p < .001; \eta^2 = .01$ ), indicating that viewers spent more time watching tabloid packaged stories than standard packaged stories ( $M = 42.73, SE = .76$  versus  $M = 40.45, SE = .75$ ). Answering RQ1, content and packaging appeared to interact weakly ( $F(1,184) = 41.63; p < .001; \eta^2 = .01$ ). As Figure 1 illustrates, participants watched longer to the combination of tabloid packaging and neutral content stories than to the combination of standard packaging and neutral content stories. In contrast, they watched tabloid packaged negative stories and standard packaged negative stories equally long.

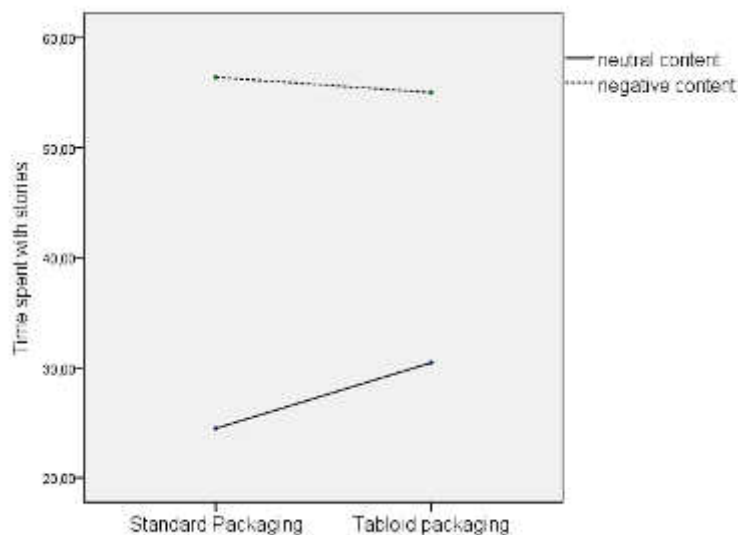


Figure 1. Interaction between content and packaging for time spent with stories

In support of H3, the effect of negative content can be further qualified by a weak but significant interaction with age ( $F(1,184) = 10.51; p = .001; \eta^2 = .01$ ). As Figure 2 illustrates, post-hoc analyses showed that older participants watched longer to neutral content stories than younger participants did. However, they watched arousing content stories equally long.

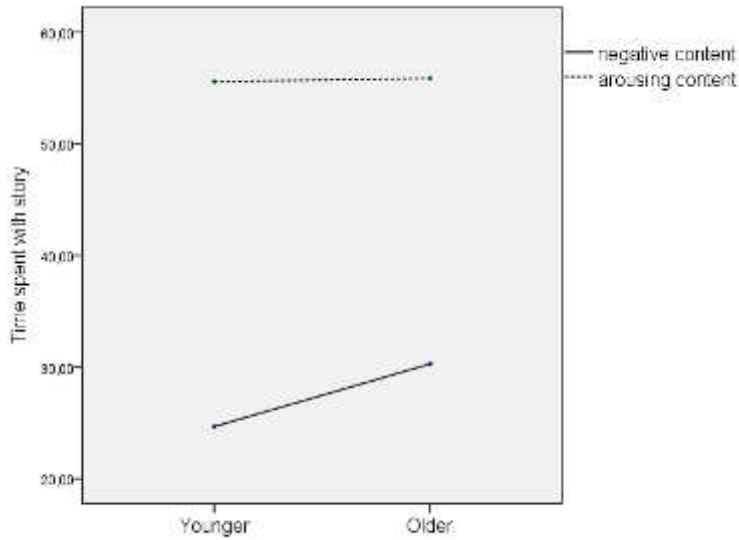


Figure 2. Interaction between content and age for time spent with stories

In support of H5, the interaction between negative content and gender, although only marginally significant and very weak ( $F(1,184) = 2.89; p = .091; \eta^2 = .002$ ), showed a similar pattern. As Figure 3 illustrates, female participants watched significantly longer to neutral content stories than male participants did. However, the difference for arousing content stories did not differ between women.

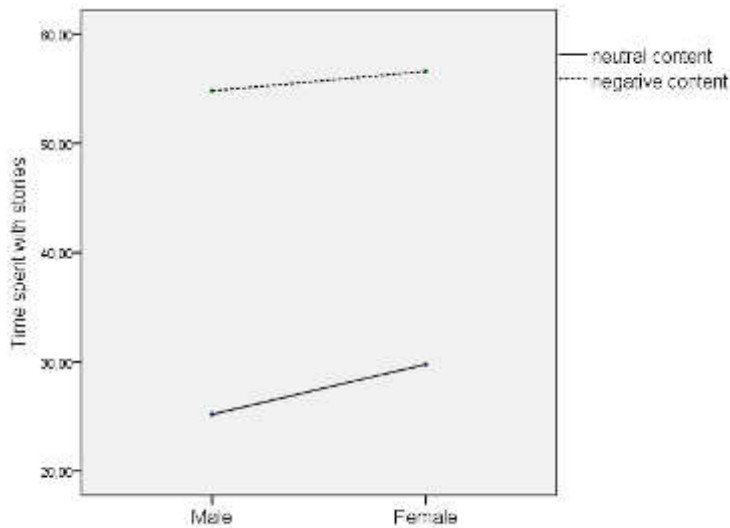


Figure 3. Interaction between content and gender for time spent with stories

Finally, the expected interactions between tabloid packaging and either age (H4) or gender (H6) were not found.



## Conclusion

This study is the first to test the impact of negative news content and tabloid packaging on viewing behavior (a) among different subsamples of the population, (b) in a controlled experiment, (c) using a behavioral measure. It shows that the presence of negative content is by far the most important contribution to the viewing time. Tabloid packaging matters a bit, and the same applies to age and gender of the viewers: Each of these variables provides some qualification of the huge impact that negative content has. In all, the old truism “if it bleeds, it leads” still held for highly educated men and women.

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Key words: television news production, journalistic field, user-generated content, technology, digital

This paper aims to contribute to the research literature and fill in the gap in examining the interactions between journalists, technology, and the public. By doing this, I propose a theoretical framework that will be deeply grounded in social, political, and economical aspects, but at the same time it will also try to make sense of the current specific transformations journalism is undergoing.

Addressing the transformations of journalism in the digital age, most of the studies have focused on the transition from print to online newspapers and the subsequently production practices (Boczkowski, 2004; Domingo and Paterson, 2008; Singer et al., 2011; Ryfe, 2012; Anderson, 2013). Instead, little attention is being paid to a legacy media organization which, apart from its medium specificity, deals with different production practices: the 24-hour news channels. Assessing the transformations at the level of the 24-hour newsrooms proves to be contradictory. Although some argue there is “business as usual” for the news television channels, such as BBC (Williams et al., 2010), more recent research contradict these findings (Vu, 2013).

Apart from paying little attention to the specificities hold by journalistic television production, most of the studies addressing journalistic transformations are being carried in the Western part of the world. The media systems in the Anglo-American spheres differ from those that are to be found in hybrid democracies. The proposed theoretical framework for analysing the professional transformations of the television journalistic professions is grounded in the hybrid realities of Hong Kong. Here, on one hand, the press enjoys a democratic practice (Chan and To, 1999). On the other hand, the political and economic factors exercise major influences on the way the local media system has developed ever since 1997, the handover of Hong Kong to China (Fung, 2007). In the following paragraphs I will explain why this special context is asking the scholars to go beyond traditional interpretative frameworks developed to assess the current transformations.

Lewis and Westlund (2014) argue it is difficult to make sense of the institutional news production practices and the widespread diffusion of digital information technologies. They propose a holistic approach, aiming to make sense of the complicated inter-relationships between actors, actants, audiences, and activities. Their framework looks to be very valuable for studying online journalism, but it has numerous shortcomings when trying to apply it to 24-hour news stations. First of all, the sociotechnical dimension has always been present in television production. Unlike newspapers, the journalistic production for 24-hour news stations has always relied on technological actants. Now, this is also available for online journalism. While the online journalism struggles to become a real-time conveyor of information in a multimedia manner by using text, photos, infographics and videos, the technological development exercised a completely different pressure on television journalism. Namely, a huge growth in the amount of video content available to the broadcasters. From an editorial standpoint, the growth of high-quality videos created by the active audiences has two distinct effects for television production. On one hand, the journalists can maintain their relevance by broadcasting videos captured by the audience minutes after the footage was captured. This means they can use the function of liveness, deeply imbedded in the television medium. On the other hand, the journalists – or human

actors as Lewis and Westlund call them - find it difficult to select, repackage, and redistribute the large number of videos uploaded on video platforms such as YouTube.

Therefore, the actants mentioned by Lewis and Westlund (e.g., algorithms, networks, and content management systems) do not alter the production for 24-hour news stations. Instead, of focusing on algorithms and CMS, the actants that one should analyse are videos, cameras, smartphones, and networks. The videos and the cameras were always in the realm of television journalists. The technological transformations are not replacing the previous available actants, but it changes their influence on the journalists' daily work.

Although not in their proposed form, I see Lewis and Westlund's theoretical framework very useful for the study of the current transformations. Their cross-work analysis cover human actors (e.g. journalists), technological actants (e.g. videos, cameras, smartphones), and audiences (recipients and active participants) and activities. In television, unlike in online journalism, the relationship between the human actors, actants, and audience is a tensed one. The journalists can secure their relevance only as long as they can make a good use of the actants. If not, the active audience can create, distribute and consume user-generated content outside the sphere of journalistic production. Take for example the videos captured by the surveillance cameras mounted on the cars of Russian citizens of a meteorite blast. The original videos gathered thousands of views, while the professional package by a legacy media institutions gathered tens of millions.<sup>1</sup>

Being aware of such strong interactions between the actors, actants, and audiences, the next step would be to ground these practices in Pierre Bourdieu's (2005) journalistic field theory. What Lewis and Westlund describe as activities, I will replace with Bourdieu's pole of professionalization. Again, unlike for online journalism, the television practices have been around for a long time. Professional practices previously acquired were not reinvented by the technological advancements. Instead, the television journalists are looking for ways to accommodate technical and participatory aspects to their daily work.

Apart from the pole of professionalization, the economic and political poles are extremely relevant for the daily production of television journalism in a place like Hong Kong. The journalists are under severe political pressure, and this was illustrated by a number of attacks carried out recently against local journalists. The journalists face indirect pressure from the Beijing government, who has a strong word to say in renewing and issuing the audio-visual licences for broadcasting companies. As well, being a financial centre, Hong Kong is prone to a severe economic competition between media outlets, all of them attempting to take hold of a bigger chunk in the market. This theoretical interpretations are based on Bourdieu's field theory and were previously applied to journalistic practices (Russel, 2007; Hannitzsch, 2011). However, they didn't take into consideration the role of the audience, or the role of actants in the journalistic practice.

It is necessary to go beyond traditional examinations of online newsroom and from there to draw generalizations regarding the "journalistic" transformations. Different mediums suffer different transformations in the digital age. Conflating television journalism with online newspapers and radio broadcasting makes us little aware of the actual transformations that are happening at newsroom level. By creating a synergy between long-standing professional

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<sup>1</sup> The videos can be accessed at [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5\\_1ytDqps8A](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5_1ytDqps8A) and [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=90Omh7\\_l8vl](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=90Omh7_l8vl)

practices, economic and political pressures, on one hand, and actors, actants, and audiences on the hand, the proposed theoretical frameworks aims to make sense of current realities present in the production of 24-hour newsrooms.

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Re-Inventing Journalism  
Winterthur, February 2015

Conference presentation proposal

## **Morphological and Biographical Adjustments in Highly Insecure Media Worlds**

### **A case study on french journalists' LinkedIn profiles since the 1990's**

In his 1919 conference on the politician's profession and vocation (« Politik als Beruf »), Max Weber refers to journalists using an enigmatic phrase. Pointing out that they lack « a fixed social classification », he compares them in his text to a « pariah caste » (Weber, 1946, p. 96). At that time many journalists were undergoing various forms of social and moral segregation, suffering from a situation of absolute job insecurity, at the mercy of the demands of what the sociologist then tentatively called, the « market », and suffering from frequent inner tension provoked by the contrast between this insecurity on the market and the common representations of the supposed power of this profession. Weber soberly concluded his presentation with the following words: « [Journalism] is not a road for everybody, least of all for weak characters, especially for people who can maintain their inner balance only with a secure status position.» (Ibid., p. 98).

Despite the fact that only few professional labour markets experienced, over the XXth century, a similar evolution to that which affected the journalists' work market, the journalist's social status is very similar today to the one described by Weber. The development of audio-visual then digital media, the expansion of the magazine and specialized press market multiplied the job opportunities in this sector throughout the XXth century. But at the eve of the XXIst, the crisis in the written press market (Meyer, 2004) and a reconfiguration of the relations between professional and amateur work (Leadbeater et Miller, 2004) again reduced the number of available positions. The simultaneous development of the communications field opened up job opportunities outside the profession for mid/end of career journalists (Davis, 2000). Meanwhile, the development of journalism training programmes considerably modified the profile of new entrants (more women entering journalism, higher levels of qualification, etc.), with no clear effect on the perseverance of those newcomers in media worlds. Most of all, the increase in freelance work (Baines, 1999, Storey, Salaman et al., 2005), the low pay levels in media outlets (Dear, 2004), and beginning to mid-career lay-offs have again turned the « market » situation of journalists into a highly insecure one.

Young men and women entering journalism thus face the need for a very strong biographical commitment to their vocation (Bastin, 2013b). In return, media worlds can be characterized by their varying ability to « attract » individuals and keep them in the long run to avoid divergence patterns due to the fact that journalists' career plans can end up distancing them from the central activities of the media worlds (because they have to enter into tournaments-like periods of internship before getting a real job, or multiply secondary activities to maintain their standard of living, etc.). This entails important issues linked to the continuity of this social world, such as the issue of young recruits' socialisation in organisations which lose — through divergence — their oldest employees (Grugulis et Stoyanova, 2011, Reinardy, 2011), the limitations to « personal branding » and « competitive ethos » behaviors (Ehrlich, 1995) or the quality

of production in these conditions as has been suggested by studies on the introduction of creative competition at the BBC (Ursell, 2001, Deakin, Lourenço et al., 2009, Turner et Lourenço, 2012).

This communication will be devoted to the mutual adjustment of the morphology of the media worlds and the biography of those entering them as journalists. A case study will be presented on the situation in France since the early 1990's. For that purpose, a new data set has been gathered using individual profiles published by journalists (or ex-journalists) on the professional social network LinkedIn (N = 10.573). Because most of the data currently available to describe journalists' careers stem from professional journalism organisations, they entail a rather restrictive definition of who works in the media world and who doesn't. They also lack information on people's full careers after they eventually quit journalism or before they enter it. Finally they do not document non-journalistic activities that people can have while being active as journalists. All the questions relating to journalists' careers thus need fresh data like the one people publish on LinkedIn (Bastin, 2013a).

Biographical divergence patterns in french media worlds will be described using a) the average age at which people enter journalism; b) the rise in internship periods; c) the number of multi-jobs periods and d) the average age at which people leave journalism as key variables. Eventhough some covariates (like the kind of education received for instance) have a positive impact on the convergence of individuals to the center of the media worlds (as measured by their access to central media outlets or editing positions), the general evolution can be described has a rise in job insecurity and divergence phenomena for younger journalists.

In conclusion I will highlight the fact that such phenomena require a new stance at journalism today. Because accomplishing journalism (Dickinson, 2007) has more and more to do with a question of « character », as would have Weber said, and not with professional or organization oriented issues such as ethical standards, « re-inventing journalism » needs a fresh look at who journalist are in the long run (meaning during their full professional career).

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**ECREA – Journalism Studies Section**  
International Conference “*Re-Inventing Journalism*”  
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**Abstract submission**

***Title***

**Tensions and disputes at the borders of journalism**

***Abstract***

Any occupation aiming to gain the status (and the corresponding public recognition) of an ‘established profession’ is confronted, at the earlier steps of this process, with the need to trace the borders of the territory over which it claims to have professional jurisdiction (Abbott, 1988). With the delimitation of the territory also comes the definition of the cognitive, evaluative and normative conditions (Larson, 197) that must be fulfilled by those who want to be ‘included’ – and this same movement implies that other neighbor activities/actors are ‘excluded’. But the borders of various professions are often somehow porous, and they evolve over time, according to different historical, political and cultural contexts. This happens either because the profession extends its jurisdiction over new activities located in the margins, or because competing occupations at the borders try to force the entry into the professional territory. In transition times, it is not difficult to find examples of the so-called ‘boundary work’ (Lewis, 2013) – work that disputes the right to be regarded as equally (or similarly) professional, but that is not accepted as such by the institutionalized professional group of that domain.

All this happened with the professional group of journalists – actually, it is still happening, and perhaps with more intense controversies than in previous decades. From the very beginning of their professionalization process, journalists tried to delimit an exclusive territory of news and information, handled with respect for some strict standards, values and ethical norms: discipline of verification, accuracy, objectivity, autonomy, fairness, accountability, pursuit of the public interest. In the meantime, some other activities also related to public communication, such as propaganda, advertising, marketing or public relations, were put apart from journalism – and in some countries (like Portugal) journalists are even legally forbidden to work in these activities. Eventually, this process led to a situation where the practice of journalism was restricted, in a kind of monopoly, to those who had the legal statute – and the social status -- of journalists, thus being the professionals defined mostly by the *category (to be)* rather than by the *activity (to do)* (Ruellan, 1997).

In recent years, especially in the sequence of the technological developments of the digital era – but also in the sequence of increasing demands for a more participatory public sphere – more and more persons involved themselves in activities somehow related to the diffusion of news and information, claiming to do some kind of journalism, even on an amateur, casual basis. And the emergence of the concept of ‘produser’ calls the attention for a new scenario where the traditional dichotomy of the mass-media process (producer vs. user) is being overcome.

On the other hand, the traditional separation between the editorial and the commercial divisions of media companies became weaker, and mixed products (such as ‘advertorials’, in-text ads or ‘native advertising’) began to more or less deliberately confuse with the territory of news, sometimes under the direct responsibility of journalists and/or editors.

At the same time, the need to gain audience shares in the fiercely competitive (and economically fragile) media market leads to the multiplication of light informative formats, to the dominance of soft news, to the mixture of news and entertainment – the so-called ‘infotainment’ – where it is not always easy to find out where journalism begins or ends.

‘Producers’, ‘advertorials’, ‘infotainment’: here we have three mixed new words pointing to three areas of mixed or hybrid activities in the domain of public communication, all of them somehow located at the borders of journalism and somehow disputing its traditional territory (and professional jurisdiction). In this paper, we intend to analyze these three main areas of tension, trying to understand what consequences they may bring to a re-definition of journalism and of journalists’ professional identity.

In different degrees, these examples of ‘boundary work’ have been regarded by journalists mostly as a *threat* -- ‘barbarians at the gate or liberators in disguise?’, how Singer (2009) ironically asked – although an increasing number of voices suggests that there is also an *opportunity* in the challenges brought by new movements around established journalism. The *threat* means that journalism will allegedly dissolve in the vast domain of communication, confusing with activities that only serve personal or commercial interests (rather than the public interest), forgetting the professional standards and ethical values that helped to shape its social legitimacy, and thus losing the specific markers of trust, independence and credibility that make it different. The *opportunity*, on the contrary, means that journalism and journalists may use the new possibilities for participation and interaction with the ‘people formerly known as the audience’ (Rosen, 2006) to leave the fortress where they often remained isolated and to overcome some corporatist trends that moved them away from the citizens they supposedly work for. This doesn’t necessarily mean that everyone now *is* a journalist, but the truth is that more and more people can *do* journalism, in the sense of performing acts of journalism (Stearns, 2013), in various contexts and through different channels. So the shift of the debate partly turns from knowing who is and

who isn't a journalist (the *category*) to the more relevant issue of knowing what is and what isn't journalism (the *activity*).

In our paper, we'll try to develop two inter-related arguments:

(1) The tensions and disputes at the borders of journalism raise different problems and should be regarded (and dealt with) differently. On one hand, the deliberate confusion between journalism and commercial or promotional activities may put the autonomy and credibility of journalism at risk, thus eroding the necessary trust it requires from the audiences. On the other hand, journalism has a good opportunity to be complemented and enriched with the collaboration of the many citizens that now also have the possibility of gathering, elaborating, diffusing and commenting news in the public sphere. This means that some traditional borders of journalism should be kept clearly closed, while others may evolve to a space of dialogue and interaction with all the partners of the information process.

(2) The standards, values and ethical norms associated to journalism play an important role in the definition of the activity and in its differentiation from neighbor communicative activities. They must be generally shared by everyone who involves, on a more or less regular basis, in the production and public diffusion of news and information. But the fact that everybody may now perform 'acts of journalism' – thus exercising the universal right to freedom of expression – doesn't mean that we no longer need professional journalism – in the sense of a public service intended to fulfill our also universal right to good, responsible and complete information about the world surrounding us. Journalism may be performed at different levels or layers (Ward, 2009), and we expect from the professional level a particular degree of know-how and of commitment – both in terms of expertise or team-work and in terms of pro-activeness, transparency and accountability – that can't be offered in the same terms by non-professionals.

The mostly theoretical design of this research project – highlighted by practical examples of what is happening in various countries and within media organizations – is complemented with an opinion survey that is being answered by a sample of Portuguese professionals who worked as journalists and now work in advertising, public relations or within communication agencies. Some preliminary results show fairly different feelings about the higher or lower level of compatibility between the two groups of activities, although there seems to be a strong consensual agreement about the need not to confuse them in the eyes of the public.

The ultimate purpose of this reflection is, after all, to contribute to the redesign of the journalistic field in accordance to the new social, cultural and technological contexts we live nowadays, trying to preserve, to foster and to develop the *best* that journalism has offered (and still may offer) to modern societies, but at the same time trying to correct the *worst* that some malpractices, elitist positions or misunderstandings about these new circumstances brought to it. In this sense, some of the disputes at the boundaries of journalism should contribute to a better definition of what really is and

what isn't journalism, thus opening or closing the gates of this territory according to the demands of trust, credibility and public interest that are its cornerstone.

### **Key-words**

Journalism; journalists; professionalization; identity; boundary work.

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## **“We can all make great things.” The potential of crowdfunding for the re-invention of journalism.**

With the unparalleled success of the upcoming video game *Star Citizen* (having raised more than 54 Mio \$ so far according to RSI, 2014), crowdfunding is often discussed in the context of gaming. In fact, seven of the ten most successful projects ever to appear on the leading crowdfunding platform Kickstarter are related to this economic sector. But projects like *Krautreporter* in Germany prove that crowdfunding might also be a useful tool for supporting journalism. Until the 13<sup>th</sup> of June 2014, 16.542 persons were willing to support the concept of a platform for independent online journalism with at least 60 euros – free from ads and the need to measure the benchmark of articles in pure numbers of page impressions. This appears like the antithesis to Hubert Burdas famous quote from 2009, criticizing online journalism as a business without working revenue model: „You get lousy pennies on the web“ (Kress Media Service, 2009). In contradiction to that, journalism needs considerably amounts of money in order to achieve its communication aims (Weischenberg, 2010) and is confronted with the fact that the audience will not pay for content like it used to in the age of printed media (Lobigs, 2013). But what is the current and future relevance of crowdfunding for journalism (RQ 1) and for media projects in general (RQ 2)? What are the necessary attributes of successful projects (RQ3)?

At least the advertising of the companies itself suggests that perspective. „We can all make great things“, reads the banner on the Kickstarter homepage (Kickstarter, 2014a). This promise is a hopeful one – not only for entrepreneurs with big ideas and small budgets, but also for the media industry. Journalism has not found a really striking way to re-invent its revenue model within the digital environment so far. This problem is connected to all levels of discussion brought up by the conference this paper is submitted to. On the systemic level, the possible marginalization of journalism and fragmentation of information sources and audiences might weaken democracy (Fewksbury & Rittenberg, 2012). On the organizational level, media companies and independent journalists are confronted with decreasing revenue shares from both traditional pillars advertising and subscriptions/sales. Due to the pressure of the dynamic technological development, they as well turn their focus partly on crowdfunding in order to

generate new sources of income (Kramp & Weichert, 2012). On the micro level, this fully audience-based way of financing media might in fact change established practices of journalism, preferring some sorts of public communication while neglecting others. For many decades, direct access to public communication has been a privilege for the few, only accessible with the help of large financial resources. This situation has changed on an overall basis with the rise of digitalization and social media, making it possible for recipients to become producers (O'Reilly, 2006). In order to initiate and fund alternative projects which are ignored by established companies inside or outside the media world, these prosumers (Toffler, 1980) have started to organize in crowdfunding platforms. Taking advantage of the long tail effect (Anderson, 2006), these platforms offer an ideal perspective for niche products to find a working economic base.

With the launch of Kickstarter in 2009, the most successful and important platform for crowdfunding appeared in the United States, followed by similar concepts all over the world. Kickstarter has reportedly received over \$1 billion in pledges from 5.7 million donors to fund 135.000 projects, which include films, music, stage shows, comics, journalism, video games, and food-related projects (Kickstarter, 2014b). People who back Kickstarter projects are offered tangible rewards and special experiences in exchange for their pledges (Walker, 2011). This model traces its roots to the subscription model of arts patronage, where artists would go directly to their audiences to fund their work (Garber, 2013).

Taking into account all these ongoing trends, this study compares the perspectives of media funding being generated by the crowdfunding platforms Kickstarter (USA), Crowdfunder (United Kingdom), Startnext (Germany), Pozible (Australia/New Zealand), Fundedbyme (Scandinavia) and Thundafund (South Africa). These six platforms have been selected in order to show national differences, but also international perspectives. All platforms are used for a broad variety of commercial projects.

The discussion so far clearly shows that journalism is a possible part of crowdfunding. In order to answer the research questions, we conducted a quantitative content analysis. One important aim of this study was the identification of funding proposals which can be identified as journalism in the broadest sense (RQ1), defining journalism as an activity of gathering, assessing, creating, and presenting news and information. In order to create a benchmark for the potential of journalism, media products in general and

other proposals, this study also examines the perspectives of media funding in general (RQ2). The necessary attributes of successful media projects (RQ3) are important as well because of the presumption that users will only spend money for projects that promise a certain value to them (categories: mode of communication, direction of communication, synchronicity of communication, communication channels, mode of reception, distribution strategy, revenue model, target group). One of these potential values might be the use of Web 2.0-potentials (RQ3a, additional categories: digitalization, interactivity), but also a very professional presentation of the project (RQ3b, categories: use of punchlines, logos, presentation tools, social networks). The field period started on the second of December 2013. All products being launched in the first week were selected for closer observation. This strategy generated a total number of 298 projects which were observed for further eight weeks until every project was successfully or unsuccessfully finished. The sample also contained products without any relation to the media sector in order to create a benchmark for the success of media funding. As expected, the most important platform proved to be Kickstarter (207 projects observed), followed by Pozible (48 projects), Startnext (19 projects), Crowdfunder (15 projects), Fundedbyme (7 projects) and Thundafund (2 projects). This tendency shows that crowdfunding platforms offer the best perspectives for projects which use the English language for communication, being able to relate to a very big audience.

The empirical results prove that there is at least the ambition to finance journalism by crowdfunding. 42 projects observed fulfilled the criteria of journalistic attributes. Compared to other media projects with non-fictional or fictional content, the success rate was rather low: Only nine journalistic projects reached the amount of money their creators aimed for (RQ1). This rather discouraging result shows that crowdfunding platforms tend to work like any other competitive environment. But the perspective for media projects in general is surprisingly good: 195 projects (including the projects with journalistic context) were started within the survey period (RQ2). Around two thirds of all projects were related to media in the broadest sense of the term, meaning that their creators wanted to shoot a movie, write a book or produce a CD. A cluster analysis shows that many of the successful media projects are characterized by a certain mixture of attributes. In 42 cases in total, they are media of individual communication that publish content in a linear and asynchronous way. The majority of these projects takes advantage of the potentials of audiovisual communication (RQ3). Apart from self-

created content, the other existing group of successful projects is not in pursuit of creating messages, but (mobile) media devices or gadgets instead. Apart from that group, the use of Web 2.0 potentials happens surprisingly seldom. Instead of funding interactive media projects, the majority of backers prefers very traditional media concepts like self-created videos or books. Consequently, these products often cannot be distributed via download (RQ3a) because their creators tend to publish their products on paper or data storage media. In addition to the nature of the project, the quality of the presentation proved to be a determining factor for its success: The more money a project could raise, the more often its starters worked with a logo and presented themselves as a capable (yet sometimes small) brand (RQ3b).

As a conclusion, it has to be stated that journalism has not taken the chance to use crowdfunding as a new means for generating money so far. This is true for all observed platforms. But the potential for its re-invention is considerably high, especially for niche projects or journalistic strategies willing to accept the parameters described. The broad support for old-fashioned non digital-media is a paradox of the system that could be turned into a strength especially by individual journalists willing to write a fact-driven book or shoot a background documentary on topics of relevance for society. Obviously, crowdfunding cannot be seen as the savior for the core of the existing media system. But it is a perspective for its re-invention at the borders and the possibility to experiment with new (and forgotten) techniques of storytelling without taking an incalculably high economic risk.

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# The Accountability and Transparency of Crowdfunded Journalism

## *A Case Study of the Dutch News Site “De Correspondent”*

### 1. Introduction and Problem Statement

Journalism is facing challenging times. Most notably the journalistic ecosystem is being disrupted given that traditional and previously reliable business models, grounded almost exclusively on advertising, particularly in the case of newspapers, seem no longer viable and thus undermine the commercial basis of news organizations (cfr. Siles/Boczkowski 2013). This is mainly due to three different economic aspects: one is cyclical and linked to the downturn in advertising income caused by the economic crisis in 2008/9. A second one is structural, given that newspaper readership has been decreasing, in many countries, since the 1960's (Brock 2013). Another one is related to the dramatic rise of new digital technologies – with the result that it opened the gates to competition, causing advertising prices to plummet and forcing many newsrooms to downsize and reconfigure (Kleis Nielsen & Levy 2010).

As the profits and the audiences of media firms began to decline, the pursuit of new economic revenue streams and alternative business models became one of the media industry's primary goals. Crowdfunding is seen as an alternative business model in which journalists rely – and depend – on (micro-)payments by a large number of supporters to finance their reporting. These circumstances not only depict the increasingly active role of consumers within media production, crowdfunding also requires journalists to redefine their professional role and identity (Aitamurto 2011). Journalists have to market their ideas from a promotional perspective in order to get their projects financed, depending from the users' willingness to fund their initiatives. This kind of “entrepreneurial journalism” can be regarded as a new and innovative way of doing journalism: journalists initiate their own start-ups and follow their own innovative projects, trying to be both entrepreneurs and journalists at the same time – not surprisingly crowdfunding is more often related to new online media start-ups, non-profit media or grassroots journalism projects rather than traditional news organizations (Carvajal, Garcia-Avilés & González 2012).

On the flip side, these alternative business models create new ethical issues, which were not quite present in the era of “analogue journalism”: financial pressures with regard to crowdfunding and news selection (Jian and Usher 2014), newly challenged professional ethics (Friend/Singer 2007; Singer 2010) or the raise of citizens' voices as part of the communicative process (Gillmore 2004; Schäfer 2011). However, these changes raise particular questions about the ethical implications in terms of (online) media accountability and transparency (Heikkilä et al. 2012; Porlezza 2012) in terms of rendering an account of their activities to their constituents (Pritchard 2000). While in the US the experience of Spot.Us has increased the academic interest in crowdfunding (Aitamurto 2011), Europe still lacks a thorough analysis in this field of research. The paper wants thus to shed light on the different practices of online accountability and transparency as well as on the different forms of user participation in crowdfunded journalism by presenting a case study of one of the most renown examples of crowdfunded journalism up-to-date: the Dutch news site De Correspondent ([decorrespondent.nl](http://decorrespondent.nl)).

## 2. The Concept of Accountability – Theoretical Framework

McQuail (2003) understands accountability as “voluntary or involuntary processes by which the media answer directly or indirectly to their society for the quality and/or consequences of publication”. Subsequently McQuail outlined two different components of media accountability: liability and answerability. While liability circles around legislation and sanctions, answerability focuses on the openness of news media organizations and journalists and their willingness to accept and to answer either internal or external criticisms – contributing in that way to the credibility and trust of news organizations. This perspective is consistent with Bertrand's (2003) assumptions, that accountability means evaluation, feedback and discussion. This concept entails that between media producers and recipients there is some form of communication, and “as any act of communication, media accountability, too, needs to be understood as a process” (Heikkilä et al. 2012).

But Journalism has not only a responsibility in terms of its obligation towards its publics and society at large. The concept of accountability embraces “the wider obligations media have to their stakeholders and the way in which they render the account for their performance” (de Haan & Bardoel 2011). In the special case of crowd-funded *journalism*, the relationship between the media and their funders is of particular importance, given that the community, which usually is offered membership or access to the site's content, has a high interest in the outcome of the project, being sensitive to provided information and expecting a close engagement (cfr. Cumming, Leboeuf & Schwienbacher 2014).

The study builds on current research with regard to media accountability and self regulation (cfr. Fengler et al. 2014), but transcends established notions and fields of application by focusing on a new and innovative field such as crowd-funded journalism. The grid of analysis is based on a model, which describes online media accountability as a three-step process in reference to different phases and aspects of production: a) *before* the act of publication by addressing norms and expectations of public communication (actor transparency), b) *during* the production by being transparent on selection and presentation processes (production transparency) and c) *after* the production (answerability and responsiveness) (Heikkilä et al. 2012). This last component in the accountability process is of particular interest given the potentials (e.g. the ease of use) of online based accountability practices in terms of accessibility and interactivity when it comes to render account of the journalists' performance.

## 3. Methodology

This case study uses a two-step methodological approach by first presenting the results from a document analysis with regard to their practices of media accountability and transparency, particularly after their recent one year anniversary reports of De Correspondent.<sup>1</sup> In this circumstance, the history and the recent development and reception of the whole project as a unique “success story” is described. Second, the contribution presents findings from in-depth interviews with selected journalists in reference to the ethical concerns of crowdfunding, what it means to be held to account, what practices they actually implement and the potentials and pitfalls of user interaction and participation. Thus, the study overcomes similar analyses (e.g. Heinonen 2010),

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1 See e.g. <https://medium.com/de-correspondent/heres-what-happend-to-that-world-record-in-journalism-crowdfunding-cc5bac50b812>

which excluded either aspects of online ethics or innovative fields of journalism (and business models) such as crowdfunding.

#### 4. Findings and Conclusion

The study provides evidence that De Correspondent can be understood as an example of good practise with regard to media accountability and transparency. This conclusion is based on different central articles about their philosophy, their published core principles and the fact that after their first year of existence De Correspondent published a thorough report, in which the journalists explained what happened with the membership fees of the funders. On top of that different strategies of sharing, marketing as well as corporate publishing are explained. The findings do not only reflect different practices of media accountability and transparency, but they are in line with what Meier and Trappel (2007) call corporate governance of media organizations: the need to be transparent in order to launch public debates about the quality of the media in general.

On top of that, De Correspondent has established a close engagement and interaction with its readership, based on the following rules: a) encourage journalists to work together with members; b) your members are your best ambassadors; c) reach out to people who already like you.<sup>2</sup> The contribution concludes with a discussion of best practice models in this peculiar area of supporter-financed journalism and demonstrates, grounded on the findings, what being held accountable implicates for crowdfunded journalism.

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## **Re-Inventing Journalism**

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## **Expectations on Digital Journalism: The Journalistic and Economic Potential of New Online and Mobile Storytelling Formats**

For two decades research on online (and mobile) journalism indicates that digital media mostly offer “shovelware” (Nel & Westlund, 2012) based on “repurposing content” (Erdal, 2009). With new storytelling formats like “Snow Fall” (NewYorkTimes.com, 2012), „Prison Valley“ (ARTE.tv, 2010) or „K2“ (National Geographic Tablet Magazine, 2012) the ascent of innovative online and mobile media schemes (here defined as macro structures for content and form of journalistic media formats; *Author, 2014a*) can be observed for the first time. This marks a renunciation from a primarily news-driven journalism to a topic- and story-based reporting of background information. This kind of journalism uses the technical potential of digital media for storytelling and is adapted to the usability of online devices (Neuberger, 2001; *Author, 2014a*). Although the amount of time, money and editorial resources for the production is high, many media companies in Germany started to produce web docus, scrollytelling and selective multimedia stories which magazines and researchers claim to be a journalistic and economic chance for the future of journalism (Schütt, 2014). Nevertheless, in the end the main factor for success is the user’s attention (Wolling, 2002). His decision to select, (re-)use and spend money on these formats is depending on expectations on the quality of digital storytelling (Wolling, 2006). At the moment, little is known about the usage of new storytelling formats (*RQ1*) and expected qualities (*RQ2*). Further, it affects the problem of the “for-free mentality” in digital journalism. Even though various authors state that internet users are interested in getting news online/mobile and are loyal to established brands (Hasebrink & Schmidt 2012; Neuberger 2012; Reuters Institute 2013; *Author, 2014b*), a small number of websites and apps published by legacy media is profitable. One reason for a missing willingness to spend money could be the fact, that media products have had few stand-alone qualities not taking advantage of the new media’s potentials (Barnhurst 2013; Himmelboim & McCreery 2012; Paulussen 2004; Stark & Kraus 2008; Quandt 2008; *Author 2010; 2012; 2014a*). Hence, focusing on adapted new storytelling formats, the question arises: Are users willing to pay for digital storytelling and what kind of revenue models are preferred (*RQ3*)?

### **Theoretical Approach and State of Research**

User’s expectations have been researched in different media contexts (Mehlis, 2014 for online news; Schumann, 2013 for games; Wolling 2002 and 2004 for TV- and radio news). This study relates to the

Theory of Subjective Quality Assessments (Wolling, 2009), which defines “quality” as content characteristics and technical aspects of media relevant for the selection. Further the concept assumes that recipients have expectations “that can be perceived and judged” (Schumann, 2013) and also articulated (Wolling, 2004). Mostly quality is defined as content quality, characterized by criteria of journalistic professionalism (e.g. periodicity, actuality, universality, variety, independence, truth, credibility; Neuberger, 2012; Wolling, 2002). Further, especially for digital products technical qualities matter, which is the internet specific quality (Mehlis, 2014) related to potentials like multimedia, interactivity, selectivity, utility and usability (Bucher, 2000; Meier, 2003; Neuberger, 2001; Sturm, 2013; *Author 2014*). Existing research on the user-centric quality of online and mobile journalism is focused on daily news (Mehlis, 2014, *Author, 2014b*) and the qualities of journalistic professionalism (Neuberger, 2012). Hence, items and results cannot fully be transferred to this study. Further, except for actuality, considering the user’s expectations on journalistic professionalism, no great differences are to be expected between news- and story-based journalism. Hence, this study focuses on internet specific quality.

For digital revenue models, research indicates lacking experimentation (Kramp & Weichert, 2012). Mostly media organizations still rely on traditional pillars, focusing advertising (Neuberger, Nuernbergk & Rischke, 2009; *Author, 2013*). In Germany, most of the journalistic websites (85%) and apps (61%) offer content for free (*Author, 2014c in print; Author, 2014a*). If not, they mainly don’t take advantage of the range of options (subscription, micro payment, social payment, etc.; Breunig, 2005). How users think about advertising and paid content in the context of new storytelling formats has not been researched yet.

## **Methodology**

To examine the awareness of new storytelling formats, the users’ expectations and their attitude towards revenue models, we conducted a quantitative face-to-face survey (n = 248, field period was 3<sup>rd</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> June 2014) among mobile internet users. We used a quota sample (age, gender, education) based on the data of ACTA 2013 (Institut für Demoskopie Allensbach, 2013), representative for German mobile internet users (table 1). An average standardized interview took 70 minutes.<sup>1</sup> The interviewers presented three prototypes for each format<sup>2</sup> and guided interviewees to use them via laptop (web docu and scrollytelling) and tablet-PC (selective multimedia story). To measure *awareness*, respondents were asked if they had used this or a similar story before. Consistent to other studies the *expected qualities* were operationalized by existing items (Mehlis, 2014) and the results of a qualitative analysis of n = 900 user commentaries on journalistic apps (*Author, 2014a*). In total, 29

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<sup>1</sup> The face-to-face survey contained questions to measure the whole media repertoire for background information (printed newspaper, printed magazines, radio set, television set, computer/laptop, mobile devices) and the habits for access to background information via online devices.

<sup>2</sup> Web docu: Argentinien – das schönste Land der Welt [Argentina – the most beautiful country in the world] (Arte.tv 2011), scrollytelling: 100 Jahre Tour de France [100 years of Tour de France] (Zeit.de 2013), selective multimedia story: Die Wand des Himmels [The Wall of Heaven] (Geo Tablet Magazin 2013).

items were used to measure utility, multimedia, linking, interactivity, participation, selectivity and usability (table 4).<sup>3</sup> Further, interviewees rated new specific elements (non-linearity, data journalism, 360° photography, hotspots, audio slideshows). The users' attitudes towards revenue models were measured by their willingness to pay and their attitude towards revenue models and advertising (table 5). Users have been asked for preferred topics for background information, so interviewers always related questions to their personal top-themes.<sup>4</sup>

## Findings

German mobile internet users on average are online via PC/laptop since more than ten years and three years via mobile devices (Smartphone, Tablet-PC, E-Reader). To receive background information they mostly gain access via smartphone (94%) or laptop (80%), 40 percent own a tablet-PC. Only half still has a desktop-PC (52%). More than a third of the sample is online several times a day with PC/laptop (35%) to get background information, almost two third use mobile devices several times a day (63%). For the top-3-topics "politics and society", "travel and tourism", and "sports" the stationary internet is the most important medium followed by television and mobile devices (table 2).

**RQ1 – Awareness:** Scrollytelling is the most known format (43%), followed by web docu (24%) and multimedia stories (17%). Specific elements of the stories are well known and except of "reading aloud by the author" well liked: Hotpots (50%), 360° photographs (47%) and data journalism (41%) have been used before (table 3).

**RQ2 – Expectations:** Recipients don't find all technical potentials important for a good story (table 5). Interactivity (forwarding, recommending) and participation (feedback, voting, comments, user generated content) are of lower relevance than multimedia elements and non-linear storytelling. Users want to choose the depth and direction of reception. Further, usability and utility matter for a positive user experience.

**RQ3 – Revenue models:** Compared to studies about daily news, the willingness to pay for digital storytelling is high and varies from over one third (selective multimedia stories 44%, web docu 38%) to 25 percent for scrollytelling. On average, users would spend more than two euros for a story they are interested in: The highest amount was stated for web docu (2,82 euro), followed by selective multimedia stories (2,70) and scrollytelling (2,25). Subscribing for the whole media product to use a

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<sup>3</sup> If a person used the format for the first time, the following explanation was added to the question: "If you would use a journalistic story again that – similar to the story you used before – is produced as a web docu: How important are the following aspects for a web docu? Please state the importance for the format independently from a certain topic."

<sup>4</sup> E.g., if the persons is mainly interested in "sports" and "travel and tourism": "You told me you are especially interested in 'sports' and 'travel and tourism'. Would you be willing to pay for a web docu/scrollytelling story/selective multimedia story on "sports" or "travel and tourism"?"



certain story is no option for the users; they prefer micro payment with unlimited access. Further, trailers or parts of the story for free are important. Advertising is not popular and should rather not be added to paid stories (table 5).

## **Conclusion**

The survey shows: Not all new storytelling formats are well known, most famous is scrollytelling. But it is the one the lowest amount of people wants to spend money for. Internet specific qualities play an important role for the recipients. However, especially those that don't afford additional work for editorial offices are not the most favorite ones. Users obviously have a clear perception of online media's possibilities and added value which for them means to implement multimedia elements, selective options and intuitive usability – and not to become part of the story themselves by interactive or participative features. If media companies put their attention to these expected qualities, it could further be possible to earn money: Users are willing to pay for background journalism that suits their interests, but media companies have to offer flexible payment models, that allow single purchase. The results once more show that advertising should not be the main pillar for revenues.

If and how digital storytelling products fulfill the recipients quality expectations and if producers know which options are important, is temporarily examined by a quantitative content analysis and a survey among communicators. For further studies the survey gives a useful instrument to measure internet specific quality: All scales are reliable (table 4) and hence can be used in other contexts.

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Table 1: Universe and sample

Socio demographics	Sample	Mobile internet users (ACTA 2013)
<b>Gender</b>		
male	54,8	54,9
female	45,2	45,1
<b>Age</b>		
14-29 years	37,9	37,4
30-54 years	50,0	50,9
55-69 years	9,7	9,7
70 and more	2,4	2,4
<b>Education</b>		
low	24,2	23,3
middle	41,9	40
high	33,9	34,9

n = 248, basis: ACTA 2013 (Institut für Demoskopie Allensbach), values are percentages

Table 2: Most important topics and medium used for background information

Topics	Importance			Top-3 media		
	m	sd	PC/laptop	Mobile device	TV	
Politic and society	3,4	1,17	44%	16%	30%	
Travel and tourism	3,4	1,20	73%	14%	9%	
Sports	3,3	1,51	48%	23%	22%	

Table 3: Usage of specific elements and resonance

	Used before	I like this format	
		m	sd
<b>Web docu</b>	<b>24 %</b>		
Choose parts/topics of the story myself	29 %	4,3	0,84
<b>Scrollytelling</b>	<b>43 %</b>		
Data journalism	41 %	4,2	0,90
<b>Selective multimedia story</b>	<b>17 %</b>		
Read aloud by the author	22 %	3,6	1,23
Hotspots	50 %	4,4	0,82
360° photos	47 %	4,5	0,71
Audio slideshow	17 %	4,0	1,02

n = 248, scala 1 = I don't like it at all, 5 = I like it very much. Questions: Have you used the shown story or a similar one in the internet/on mobile devices before? In the example shown you have seen [xxx] as a new specific element. Have you used something like that before? How much do you like this option?

Table 4: Scales to measure the user's affordances on digital storytelling formats

(A good web docu/scrollytelling story/selective multimedia story...)

Dimension	Items	Web docu item test				Scrollytelling item test				Selective multimediastory item test			
		m	sd	$r_{it}$	$\alpha$	m	sd	$r_{it}$	$\alpha$	m	sd	$r_{it}$	$\alpha$
Utility	... operates reliable and runs stable.	4,8	0,48	.532	<b>.755</b>	4,7	0,51	.574	<b>.720</b>	4,8	0,47	.581	<b>.733</b>
	... loads and starts quickly.	4,7	0,62	.636		4,6	0,59	.601		4,7	0,60	.632	
	... reacts without delay on input, e.g. scrolling.	4,6	0,60	.679		4,7	0,58	.629		4,8	0,51	.572	
	... shows content of high technical quality, e.g. high-definition photos or videos.	4,3	0,80	.442		4,2	0,84	.348		4,5	0,75	.401	
Multimedia	... integrates text.	3,7	0,99	.327	<b>.755</b>	4,2	0,83	.278	<b>.801</b>	4,1	0,86	.389	<b>.808</b>
	... integrates photo.	4,2	0,87	.550		4,4	0,72	.581		4,5	0,68	.538	
	... integrates audio.	3,6	1,11	.499		3,2	1,10	.675		3,8	1,01	.600	
	... integrates video.	4,2	0,85	.366		3,8	0,99	.598		4,1	0,82	.590	
	... integrates graphics.	3,5	0,99	.566		3,9	0,87	.534		3,6	1,01	.660	
	... integrates animations.	3,3	1,10	.526		3,2	1,04	.549		3,2	1,11	.614	
	... combines text, photo, audio, video and graphic.	4,1	0,88	.487		4,1	0,81	.596		4,2	0,84	.440	
Linking	... offers links to other sites related to the topic.	3,1	1,10	.698	<b>.830</b>	3,2	1,10	.698	<b>.830</b>	3,0	1,10	.702	<b>.887</b>
	... links on other content to the same topic within the media product.	3,0	1,10	.779		3,1	1,04	.799		3,0	1,10	.747	
	... suggests other content on cross-media platforms published by the brand (e.g. the printed newspaper)	2,8	1,10	.579		2,8	1,00	.579		2,8	1,10	.500	

Interactivity	... integrates interpersonal communication like a forum or chat for the topic.	2,1	1,02	.537	<b>.785</b>	2,1	1,02	.497	<b>.770</b>	2,0	1,02	.511	<b>.773</b>
	... links on social network profiles of the brand, e.g. on facebook or twitter.	2,1	1,16	.735		2,1	1,14	.710		2,0	1,11	.734	
	... allows me to forward the story or a links to it to friends via e-mail.	2,2	1,11	.379		2,2	1,11	.378		2,1	1,10	.365	
	... allows me to recommend the story to friends via social networks.	2,1	1,18	.748		2,1	1,18	.730		2,1	1,21	.723	
Participation	... allows me to give feedback or rate the story.	2,3	1,06	.721	<b>.816</b>	2,5	1,14	.717	<b>.784</b>	2,3	1,07	.717	<b>.801</b>
	... offers votings or polls.	2,2	1,05	.677		2,2	1,07	.614		2,1	1,03	.665	
	... allows me to comment.	2,3	1,07	.769		2,4	1,10	.708		2,3	1,09	.720	
	... integrates user-generated content (e.g. video)	2,2	1,05	.402		2,3	1,04	.349		2,2	1,04	.381	
Selectivity	... allows me to choose different ways through the story.	3,8	0,96	.783	<b>.878</b>	3,4	1,07	.744	<b>.853</b>	3,6	1,01	.819	<b>.899</b>
	... can be watched in any order.	4,0	0,92	.783		3,7	1,03	.744		3,7	1,09	.819	
Usability	... is clearly arranged.	4,8	0,50	.599	<b>.758</b>	4,7	0,52	.545	<b>.713</b>	4,1	0,86	.389	<b>.758</b>
	... is attractively designed.	4,6	0,59	.569		4,6	0,63	.467		4,5	0,68	.538	
	... is easy to use.	4,6	0,62	.591		4,5	0,72	.590		3,8	1,01	.600	
	... is easy to navigate with the mouse/gestures.	4,6	0,59	.579		4,6	0,66	.571		4,1	0,82	.590	
	... shows me where I am within the story.	3,9	1,06	.492		3,9	0,99	.326		3,6	1,01	.660	

n = 248; scale 1 = absolutely not important, 5 = absolutely important; question: [As required: If you would use a journalistic story again that – similar to the story you used before – is produced as a web docu:] How important are the following aspects for a web docu? Please state the importance for the format independently from a certain topic.

Table 5: Users' attitudes towards revenue models and advertising

Items	Web docu		Scrollytelling		Selective multimedia story	
	m	sd	m	sd	m	sd
<b>Paid Content</b>						
When I pay for a story, I want access to it without temporal limitation.	4,8	0,59	4,8	0,54	4,9	0,61
To use an interesting story, I'm willing to subscribe and pay for the whole media product.	1,6	0,96	1,6	0,90	1,8	1,31
I want to be able to buy an interesting story on its own.	4,4	0,93	4,4	1,01	4,5	0,95
Before I pay for a story, I want to use a part of the content for free (test version).	4,6	0,74	4,5	0,80	4,5	0,89
<b>Advertising</b>						
Advertising disturbs me.	4,2	1,10	4,1	1,11	4,3	1,12
To get the story for free, I accept advertising.	3,6	1,05	3,7	1,07	3,6	1,10
When a story contains advertising, it should be related to the story's topic.	3,4	1,34	3,3	1,35	3,5	1,54

n = 248, scale: 1 = doesn't match at all, 5 = does absolutely match; question: please rate the level the following statements match for you. We're talking about situations you use a story like the one shown before to a topic of your choice.

## **Seeking truth in changing journalism**

### **The discourse of Brazil's main television network on journalistic truth**

In a time when journalistic activity is being re-invented by the transformation of its practices and when its contents are permanently challenged, criticised and corrected by public (BRUNS, 2011), vehicles try to reinforce their institutional image through the recollection of values paramount to journalism. Considering this, the objective is to analyse how Brazilian television network Rede Globo comprehends the notion of journalistic truth in 2014's institutional commercials. Globo is the main television network of the country and operates since 1965, owned by Globo Organizations, 25<sup>o</sup> group in the ranking of the world's biggest media corporation (MEDIA DATA BASE, *online*, 2014).

Our corpus is composed of seven videos aired on Rede Globo during commercial breaks. They present images of their most recognized reporters, anchors and commentators, besides showing excerpts of national and regional news programs. In each commercial, one of the anchors of their four daily newscasts is the announcer. Morning and noon newscasters feature in one commercial each and the late newscast presenter in two. The night newscast *Jornal Nacional* is featured three times – twice in voice of editor in chief William Bonner, showing the significance of their prime time program.

To investigate the notion of truth presented in these pieces, we have worked with Discourse Analysis, methodological approach that understands operating discourse, questioning its transparency. According to Orlandi (2007), the aim is to understand meaning as a symbolic work, part of a general social work, constitutive of men and its history. It is through the repetition of meaning, in the operation of paraphrase as a concept, that the analyst can understand discourse by finding hegemonic meanings raised by determined subjects in determined subject positions. Discourse produces meaning not only in its verbal dimension, but also in all aspects of its non-verbal production. One of the determinants of meaning is the symbolic matter – the image, the verbal sign and the sonority that composes discourse.

It is in the intersection of verbal and non-verbal dimensions that we map meanings of how the Globo comprehends journalistic truth when representing itself in front of the other, constructing an image of the self (MAINGUENEAU, 2008;



BENETTI; HAGEN, 2010). The “other” refers to readers, announcers, journalists pertaining the vehicle, as well as journalists and entrepreneurs of rival vehicles.

We understand journalism as a particular discursive genre that, in order to take place, its interlocutors must recognize permissions and restrictions defining genre (BENETTI, 2008). So this recognition happens, subjects are bound to a communication contract, which implies the existence of conventions, norms and agreements that regulate discursive exchanges (CHARAUDEAU, 2007).

As a social institution, journalism has a specific social role that is not met by other institutions and that confers legitimacy to produce a discursive reconstruction of the world (FRANCISCATO, 2005). Historically, journalists and journalistic vehicles rely on a code of principles and values intended to govern the role of informing. Among these principles, “Journalism’s first obligation is to the truth” (KOVACH; ROSENSTIEL, 2004, p. 36).

Truth is a concept recollected in institutional discourse of vehicles, which the public recognizes as part of the communication contract. Lippman (2010) understands that, universally, public considers that journalism should serve the truth. Since the beginning of the activity, the promise of truth and accuracy has become important part of marketing journalism (KOVACH; ROSENSTIEL, 2004) and has always been linked to the profession as a commitment (SCHUDSON, 2010). According to Kovach and Rosenstiel (2004), the public expects information to be truthful since truth generates a feeling of safety and because news are what people rely on to get to know and to think about the world beyond their personal experience.

The institutional discourse of Rede Globo conveys the notion that all their news programs practice journalism according to fundamental principles of the activity: “From good morning to good night, we believe in what we do, we do what we believe in: journalism at Globo”. This sentence ends all seven commercials, during which truth is activated as one of journalism’s ideals, as we can perceive from the following example: “**Seeking truth**, we can make mistakes, but we can never let mistakes unamended”. During the intervals of this text read by one of the anchors, it is possible to see and hear other anchors correcting information in newscasts emissions, using expressions such as “actually”, “correction” and “err” to amend mistakes, conveying the meaning that journalism can never let go of truth as an ideal.

Another meaning conveyed is that in order to access truth professionals must be witnesses of events and will work to verify information no matter where. “When a fact

takes place, we must **be close to the fact** because closer we can **see better** and **report better** the fact we have seen”. Images of Globo’s international correspondents appear, while we hear words such as “Rome” and “Japan”. We can also see such correspondents in conflict and war zones, reinforcing the idea of witnessing the fact even in dangerous situations.

Other sentences dialogue with the challenges of verification, but now they are related to the idea of time and speed that pressure publication. “Agility is to **give the news quickly**, when the fact takes place. Responsibility is having **agility to check** the facts before they become news”. Once again, the focus is on international news, where correspondents and public figures such as Barack Obama and Nicolas Sarkozy appear. The underline meaning of ubiquity is conveyed, that when seeking truthful facts, journalism must be everywhere.

So far, truth appears as an ideal that must be attained by journalism through the witnessing of facts, agility to check them and ubiquity of the news channel. However, there is a division in the concept, which is sometimes presented as a unified entity and at other times as multiple. Both are conveyed when exposing the relation of journalists with sources.

In the first case, a single truth could be attained through professional competence. “All sources must be heard, but they must also be questioned and confirmed so that you have **a single source of news** and not only versions about them”. The images that accompany speech are of people giving interviews and of journalists reading documents on computers, reinforcing the steps of hearing, questioning and confirming information, related to a notion in which public must rely on journalism to make evaluations for them.

On the other hand, multiple truths must be judged by audiences and the role of journalism would be to mediate them in order for the public evaluate truthfulness. This meaning is prevalent, since it appears in three commercials: “**All sides** of news must be shown in depth so **you can choose one side** tranquilly”; “**The truth doesn’t have only a side, it has many**. All deserve to be heard and deserve to be listened so that you can **have truth on your side**”; “All serious opinion is made of lots of information. But **truthful information will never be constructed by a single opinion**”. Those sentences empower the public and recognize news as construction.

In both meanings, journalism mediates access to truth. However, we understand tension between single and multiple truths as a way to cover the complexity of the

concept and to bond with a larger number on viewers. If, on the one hand, journalism is discussed as a construction that could not reach a single and universal truth; on the other hand, there is the belief in truth that reinforces value of the activity in a crisis context. Both dialogue with transformations of journalism - challenged by new platforms, professional routines and business models - and the debate concerning journalism's social role. In an environment of information in abundance, the number of untruthful information increases and the need of journalism to verify believable and *truthful* information is highlighted.

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## **Separating the wheat from the chaff: a measure of partisan media bias in 24 EU countries**

Over recent decades the news media environment has changed dramatically in the Western world. Unlike the heyday of broadcast news, citizens can nowadays choose among a wide range of channels of information. Previously, a small number of television stations reached substantial proportions of society at the same time. Today the explosion of TV stations available through cable and satellite distribution (but also quality and free newspapers as well as web-based outlets) makes it exceedingly difficult to address and retain large audiences.

Higher competition within the media landscape has led some authors to point at partisanship as a successful strategy of product differentiation (*e.g.*, Hallin, 2006). Media outlets feel compelled to cater to specific groups of viewers and provide them with programs in line with their political preferences (Hamilton, 2004; Mullainathan and Shleifer, 2005). Political diversity among news media sources has actually increased, and so has selective use of these media sources by citizens (Mutz and Young, 2011).

At a time when most people rely on media for information, this new media environment has triggered a renewed scholarly concern on the consequences of media consumption patterns and exposure to likeminded news (Bennet and Iyengar 2010). Numerous recent empirical studies have investigated partisan selectivity in news exposure and discussed its link to audience polarisation (Prior 2013; Meffert and Hopmann 2012), political knowledge gaps, alienation from politics (Prior 2007; Nir 2012), or electoral participation (Brynin and Newton, 2003; Newton and Brynin, 2001).

Against this background, it has become increasingly relevant to investigate whether media favourability towards certain political actors over the others is an across-the-board phenomenon or not in Western democracies. This paper focuses on the main aggregators of citizens' political interests and preferences in nowadays democracies –political parties-, and operationalizes media favorability towards parties by combining (i) quantitative data on individual partisan preferences of news media users (EES 2009 survey), (ii) experts' assessments on media outlets

favourability (EMSS 2010), and (iii) content data on parties' visibility in political news (EES 2009 content data). These three approaches are combined in an innovative and integrated way that serve as a benchmark for future studies, and are applied to 24 EU countries<sup>1</sup>. By so doing, the paper sheds light on the extent and nature of partisan media bias in current mainstream media coverage.

To date, not only the concept of partisan media bias -as well as its antonym term "political balance"- has been problematic to define (Semetko, 1996) and operationalize (Norris, 2009), but it has rarely been cross-nationally analysed.

First, partisan media bias has been widely defined as the extent to which news media incur in a systematic distortion or imbalance towards one party over the others (d'Alessio and Allen, 2000; Waldman and Devitt, 1998; Williams, 1975). From all the systematic bias found in nowadays news coverage, however, some should be accounted as truly volitional, but some others may be grounded on non-partisan, non-ideological journalistic criteria e.g. the incumbency advantage. In an effort to fulfil the need for theoretical foundations underlying the definition of partisan media bias, Hopmann *et al.* argue that those non-volitional distortions favouring certain parties should be considered as "political balance". Therefore, Hopmann *et al.* (2012) deem distortions either from a political system perspective (where coverage results from politically defined norms or regulation, e.g. 5:5:4 shares for Labour, Conservatives, and Liberals in the UK) or a journalistic news-routine perspective (where coverage mirrors journalistic norms and values, e.g. relevant parties, charismatic or incumbent candidates) as benchmarks of political balance.

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<sup>1</sup> The following EU countries are considered: Austria, Belgium (Flanders and Wallonia), Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, UK, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, and Slovakia.

Second, the approaches of balance mentioned above has been difficult to operationalize. The difficulties in discerning whether news media outlets are selectively choosing and omitting information entail empirical limitations when gauging the true extent of partisan media bias. Not only partisan media bias results in a selection and presentation of news stories that favour certain candidates, ideologies and/or issues associated to them (Hopmann *et al.*, 2009), but media can also cause partiality or favouritism by selectively and systematically omitting information (Gentzkow and Shapiro, 2006). Groeling points out that assessments of media balance through content analysis –the method most widely used by previous empirical studies on media bias- entail some sort of unrepresentativeness of the sample of news stories one should consider to determine whether or not a source is politically balance. The analysis of balance in news media through content analysis makes it also difficult to elucidate the nature and the logic underlying such partisan biases. For example, some economists have made a distinction between “supply-side” stories –where bias stems from journalists and news organizations- and “demand-side” stories –where it originates from audience’s preferences (Prat and Strömberg, 2011).

Third, it is perhaps because of all these difficulties when measuring the degree of political balance in news media coverage that previous cross-national and comparative research has coupled content analysis of media coverage (*e.g.*, Semetko, 1996) with three other approaches, namely individual partisan media use (*e.g.*, van Kempen, 2007), expert surveys (*e.g.*, Toka and Popescu, 2012), and partisan affiliations of journalists (*e.g.*, Patterson and Donsbach, 1996). These four empirical approaches have yielded heterogeneous results with respect to the nature, level and direction of partisan media bias in different Western and Central-Eastern European democracies.

Firstly, within the strand of comparative analyses that deal with political balance in media coverage by means of news content analyses, Semetko’s (1996) research on TV newsmaking reveals different levels of media imbalances towards politicians of main parties at election times in the U.S., UK, and Germany. Semetko (1996) shows that while German coverage is strictly guided by news values and focuses on truly “new” events, the UK main

parties are almost equally visible in media content. Other studies focusing on framing of news (Entman, 2010), issue coverage and agenda-setting studies (Brandenburg, 2006), coverage of economic statistics in the news (Larcinese et al. 2011), visual bias (e.g. Barret and Barrington, 2005), or citation patterns (Gentzkow and Shapiro, 2010) find different levels of partisan slant in the US and the UK.

Secondly, some authors argue that the political parties for which media users vote contribute to explain how they are depicted in the media. Seymour-Ure (1974) and Hallin and Mancini (2004) point at partisanship of newspapers' readers as a way to operationalize the relationship between political parties and newspapers – *press-party parallelism* - or wider political trends and media outlets in a given country – *political parallelism*. Van Kempen's (2007) cross-national study based on political preferences of respondents of European Election Studies' 1999 survey shows that there are different degrees of parallelism between media and parties – *media-party parallelism* - within the major media outlets of 15 European countries. Goldman and Mutz (2011) compare 11 countries worldwide and find that TV-news parallelism is weaker and enhances less like-minded exposure than newspapers.

Thirdly, Toka and Popescu's (2012) preliminary work based on experts' assessments from 24 Western and East-Central European countries finds that European private media outlets – especially TV channels - display a slight right-wing slant, while public-service TV channels lean to the centre-left. The former finding would go in line with previous theoretical background on the presence of rightist media bias within Western media outlets (Herman and Chomsky, 1988; Sutter, 2001).

Finally, comparative studies on partisan affiliations of journalists (e.g., Patterson and Donsbach, 1996) show that individual journalists' political stances account only slightly for the variation in media content. Some of those studies support that differences across media outlets, and systems are larger than those journalists' individual partisan beliefs. Semetko (1996) points that the way journalists in U.S., UK and German TV deal with impartial reporting while

adhering to news values is influenced in each country by journalistic culture, institutional rules, and political culture.

In response to the need to systematize previous research on partisan media bias, and given the lack of large-scale cross-national data on the direction of journalists' partisan stands, this study merges the first three aforementioned approaches in a standardized measure, both relying on mainstream TV outlets and newspapers. By coupling and contrasting media content data with audiences' political preferences and experts' evaluations, this paper contributes to confirm the partisan and volitional character, and the origin of such media imbalances. The study also tackles empirical limitations of previous research by comparing the relative media coverage committed to each party in different national media outlets controlling for non-partisan bias resulting from incumbency (Mayhew, 1974) and size and resources of each given party (Danielian and Page 1994; Schattschneider 1960). By so doing, the eventual distortion from more newsworthy parties that make them more visible in news coverage is reduced. The three party-level measures are finally converted in a country-level variable by grouping the three indicators attributed to the parties of a given country in a single one. This allows for applying the measure to different political and social settings, and fulfil the need for updated analyses of the extent and origin of partisan media bias in different European countries.

Preliminary findings from news media audiences and experts' assessments show low though significant levels of correlation between both indicators of partisan media bias ( $r = .34^{**}$ ). The fact that they are neither leaning on the same methodology nor measuring exactly the same phenomenon makes this coefficient relatively low. My results also show consistent trends with previous literature regarding low levels of TV partisan bias and differences between TV and newspapers (Semetko, 1996 Van Kempen, 2007). TV partisan media bias is invariably lower than press partisan media bias in all the countries considered in this study. Finally, my indicators of partisan media bias score high for Italy, Latvia, Spain, Greece, and Austria, and yield their lower scores in Sweden, Finland, Slovakia, and Poland.



Overall, by shedding light on the extent and nature of media segregation across party lines in different EU countries, not only this paper brings a ready-to-use and updated operationalization of partisan media bias, but most importantly, it can contribute to identify the political, societal, and media factors shaping news media bias, predict media's chilling effects and needs for future regulation (e.g. on media concentration and ownership), and ultimately determine the role of the media on the distribution of political power in our democracies.

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# **Do User Comments create Social Value in Daily Newspapers? The Austrian Case**

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**Extended Abstract submitted for the workshop:**

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## **Extended Abstract:**

### **Do User Comments create Social Value in Daily Newspapers? The Austrian Case.**

**Introduction.** The presentation provides a literature review concerned with the analysis of user comments in the online editions of newspapers and proposes a new methodology aimed at assessing their potential for creation of social value.

Previous research mainly analysed the attitudes of journalists or participants with regard to User Generated content and its integration into news production processes. Editors (Nagar 2009; Franquet et al 2013) in most cases found that the integration of comments is a necessity; however, mainly for the reason of traffic generation (see Reich 2011). Moreover, Journalists often think that the quality of content of the newspaper and therefore, its brand image, is affected negatively by anonymity of the comments (Diakopoulos et al 2011, Nielsen 2014, Santana 2014). They basically remain of the opinion that some kind of control of the comments is necessary (Thurman 2008; Canter 2013). Because of the low quality of comments, journalists tend to ignore them and avoid participating in the debate (Mitchelstein, 2011; Nielsen 2014). For these reasons, pre-moderation of commenting is favoured, but not always possible, since it requires a lot of resources (Thurman 2008). An efficient alternative is post-moderation (Noci et. al 2010), outsourcing the comments to Facebook (Hille/Bakker 2014) or strict registration requirements (such as id number, full name and phone number) (Noci et al. 2010). Other research questioned the quality of online news comments; with a particular focus on their civility. Incivility, however, is mostly a characteristics of the sporadic commentator rather than a 'member of the community (Coe et al. 2004) and it very much depends on the subject and the source (Coe et al. 2004). The research results show that specific online news communities between organizations, journalists and participants, have not been built yet. However, users seem only to participate if they have a sense of online news community (Meyer & Carey, 2004).

The proposed research will attempt to add to that research and highlight the contribution of articles and user comments to the creation and gratification of values such as honesty, truth, understanding, identity, democratic participation, solidarity, and equality. **The first results from a pilot study in Austria will be presented.** Moreover, the methodology presented is a feature part of a project that aims at analysing the use of comment management systems and the attitude of journalists and users of the online editions of Austria daily newspapers.

Therefore, a secondary aim of the presentation is to discuss the impact of different types of user comments' management systems on social value creation.

**Research background.** Tensions between democratic and economic goals of news organizations have consequences for their ability to create value for society. The crisis of the media (Almiron 2010; Meier 2012) and the on-going technological changes (digitalization, convergence) are affecting daily newspapers; specifically, their commercial funding basis. This raises the concern that they are not able to adequately fulfill their democratic role. On the other hand, digitalization has also brought new possibilities: For example, the adoption of user comment systems generates additional advertising revenues, but also enables new possibilities to interact with the users/citizens (Reich 2011). Therefore, this form of social medium bears the potential for the creation of economic *and* social value.

A normative approach to news organizations' social value suggests that this has two components: A content-wise elitist and a quantitative-participative. Hence, on the one hand, user comment give news organizations the possibility of fostering the participation of users/citizens, and one could also argue that the larger is the number of participants, the more social value is created. On the other hand, one can assume that social value creation also depends on the quality of the content. However, criteria for assessing the quality of social value creation embedded in user comments are still to be determined, as the criteria that apply to news content (see FOEG 2013; Schatz/Schultz 1992) do not apply.

The description of these new criteria can start from an alternative definition of news organisations' value production. First, the term value has intrinsic and instrumental components. While the intrinsic component refers to the value of itself (e.g. truth, honesty, identity), the instrumental one is described as something useful for achieving another goal (democratic participation, correction of errors); both can occur on the individual as well as on the social level (Picard 2010: 50). We suggest here to consider social value as inclusive of individual and collective values, both intrinsic and instrumental. Moreover, we assume that the contribution of news to social value creation does not emerge until reaching the interpretation and deliberation stages. Therefore, the creation of social value by news organizations does not only include the choice of content or formats, but also the possibility to initiate and comment subjects. It can be an objective, which depends on a variety of decisions taken at different stages of the value chain (Wenzel/Sparviero/Trappel 2011). Previous research, for example, explained that newspapers tend to see user comments as an important tool for interacting and involving their readership, for fostering a debate around key and important issues and for promoting their brand and increasing the revenue from advertising. On the other hand, editors and journalists are also concerned with the quantity and quality of user comments that appear on their websites: These, in fact, can engender

important costs for monitoring and editing, or lead to lawsuits. Hence, because user comments are representative of their readership, if poor, they can negatively affect their brand image. Key decisions that concern the features available from a comment management system (pre or post-moderation, compulsory registration, etc...), can contribute to limit the potential shortcomings and/or favour the realisation of benefits (Hermida/ Thurman 2007, Reich 2011). However, they are also likely to have an influence on the creation of social value.

**Expected Outcome.** The research described here aims at improving the understanding of social value creation at the deliberation stage of daily newspapers by managing user comments. Also, it aims at providing some insights on the application of different features available for comment management systems. Therefore, it will contribute to clarify whether these types of participation rather enhance or hinder the positive impact on democratic and social values produced by daily newspapers.

**Methodology.** The project that provides the framework for this presentation includes three different actions. The first action consists of a content analysis of user comments in the online edition of three Austrian newspapers. Three different user comment threads will be extracted and archived every second day from four different sections: international news, national politics, chronicles and culture. First, the largest, new comment thread is archived. However, given that according to the literature (e.g. Heinrich/Holmes, 2013), readers tend to comment when they do not agree with an article (particularly when they are protected by anonymity) or other readers, the articles with the largest threads of comments can be the ones with most people reacting negatively or arguing between one another. Therefore, also less contested articles/threads (i.e. 50% of the size of the largest threads) will be taken into account in order to avoid a potential overrepresentation of negative reactions. The total comment threads will be 672.

Comments will be classified with regard to their functional or emotional expressions, and, second, with regard to their contribution to value creation. The social values tested and recorded are: (1) Honesty / Truth / Understanding; (2) Identity/ Community; (3) Democratic participation/ Self-Determination; (4) Solidarity; (5) Equality and freedom; (6) monitoring and control (watchdog role). On the other hand, emotional expressions are also coded as (1) angry, (2) disappointed, (3) worried, (4) amused or (5) concerned. The analysts conduct the analysis separately and meet on a regular basis to discuss the result and solve conflict.

The content analysis will illustrate whether social value is created in user comments, and if a particular set of values tend to be generated by the article and comments appearing from a particular section. Furthermore, it will analyse if the content of a particular section tends to



stimulate a functional or emotional response from its readers. Finally, this action will give some insight on the quality of the user comments' management systems used by the papers that are the subject of this study.

The second action of the research concerns the conduction of interviews with editors, journalists and other professionals involved with the management of user comments for online newspapers. The purpose of these interviews is the analysis of the attitude of these information workers towards the use of user comments.

The third action concerns the interviews of 'champion-commentators': These are users of online editions of newspapers as developers of a 'best practice` in social value creation. The purpose of these interviews is, on the one hand, to assess the quality of the scorecard used to code the creation of social value, but also, on the other hand, to attempt to understand more in depth the motivations and rationale of their behaviour. Actions two and three are still to be further developed.

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## “Free, but vulnerable. The Freelance Journalist in a changing work market”

### Introduction:

For several years, the number of freelancers and self-employed journalists has been increasing all over the Western World. Furthermore, the media crisis has made it even more difficult to gain permanent employment in the newsrooms. Still, self-employed journalists are seldom in focus of research (Edstrom and Ladendorf 2012:711). Journalism research tend to overlook particular categories of news workers (Hanitsch and Wahl-Jorgensen 2009:12). In the project *Free, but vulnerable – the freelance journalist in an changing work market*, we will shed light on the professional role as freelance journalists, and the job market conditions for Norwegian journalists working outside the established newsrooms. This is an ongoing research project, where we at present are involved in gathering data and analyzing it. According to this, we are not able to describe any findings in this extended abstract, but we certainly will in February, since we will be working intensively with this research during autumn and winter. Still, in this extended abstract we will describe the context, the methods and the research questions we are asking, as well as the theoretical framework. Furthermore, we have neither presented the project at any other conferences nor published papers from it.

### Context:

The media business is undergoing rapid changes. Economic cutbacks in the media sector diminish the chances of employment for journalists. Consequently the number of atypical workers in the media industry, such as freelancers, is growing worldwide (Edstrom and Ladendorf 2012:711, Deuze 2007). Freelance and other atypical work is on the increase (Örnebring 2009). Media business tends to be an early indicator of market changes in modern work life. A typical move in the era of globalization is the tendency to “slimming” media organizations; one of the goals with organizational changes towards convergence and cross media publishing being to keep up news production with a reduced number of journalists (Gynnild 2005:112). The various phases of the media crisis probably have made this even a clearer tendency. Through downsizing and more content bought from freelancers, the media companies obtain more flexibility, lower costs and less responsibility.

Freelance journalists are often engaged by verbal agreements, without contracts, and are paid by story or item. This makes freelance journalists a particularly vulnerable group in the media industries, and therefore well worth studying if one is interested in the changes in journalism (Ladendorf 2012:83).

There are several reasons for being a freelancer. Some journalist are freelancers by active choice, underpinning the professional freedom, flexibility and possibilities of combining family obligations and work (Massey and Elmore 2011). Others are freelancers unwillingly, unsatisfied with their situation and hoping for a permanent employment. Being a freelancer might be a lonely work-life, without security and colleagues, where income is unsecure and varying, and copyrights under pressure. Still, the life as a freelancer might also be a privileged professional life, characterized by professional freedom and possibilities for specialization and interesting work tasks. Furthermore, the life as freelancer also offers some specific ethical challenges. Working alone, the freelancer is losing the daily collegiate discussion within the newsroom, and more often has to trust his or hers own ethical judgments. Another challenge is inter-role conflicts related to public relations. In Germany, nearly half of the freelance journalists also do public relation work. Journalists with this dual role are exposed to contrary expectations and can evoke inter-role conflicts (Obermaier and Koch 2014). Freelance journalists are described as the outsiders on the journalistic field in the terms of Bourdieu, with low journalistic capital, and low identification with the journalistic profession (Hovden 2008). The International Federation of Journalists fears that employment changes and low payment for freelancers dictate a decline in critical and investigative reporting.

About ten percent of Norwegian journalists are freelancers; without permanent employment, and they are serving several principals at the same time. In Sweden, the amount of freelancers have been increasing from 10.4 percent in 1989 to 14 percent in 2005 (Nygren 2008). Atypical workers make up on average 30 percent of the membership in the International Federation of Journalists, yet the afiliates generally do not know a lot about these members<sup>1</sup>.Nygren connects this increased amount of freelancers and journalists without permanent employment to a de-professionalization of the journalist role, where

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<sup>1</sup> The Changing Nature of Work. A global survey and case study of atypical work in the media industry. Research report 2006. International Federation of Journalists.

market-forces are gaining increased influence on behalf of professional journalistic values. Nygren points that journalists without permanent employments often have less autonomy and have to adjust to the demands of the principals. He describes a new and distinctive journalistic role: the professional who “jumps in”, always available when the editor calls, and are accepting all conditions.

### Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework of this study is the sociology of profession (Abbott 1998, Freidson 2001, Nygren 2008, Evetts 2003), combined with theories about societal change and the flexibilization of working life (Beck 1992, Giddens 2007). Recent work from the sociology of work and occupations is essential for understanding the changes taking place within journalism (Örnebring 2009). According to Örnebring, the economic-structural changes taking place within journalism are a part of broader societal trends not only linked to the media industry, though the media industry provides some very illustrative case studies.

### Design and methods

The project *“Free, but vulnerable – the freelance journalist in an exchanging job market”* started in August 2014. The purpose of the project is to produce more knowledge about the professional role of freelance journalists: the self-understanding, the specific challenges, dilemmas and ethical considerations for organizationally independent journalists, furthermore how rapidly market changes and current development affect the working conditions for freelancers. How does freelancers comprehend their professional role? How do they adapt to market changes, and which considerations are the principals making regarding the flexible work force? Another purpose is related to education. The knowledge from this project will form the basis of a new subject in our journalistic education, focusing on freelancing, self-employment and innovation.

The project is raising two main research questions as follows:

1. What characterize the professional role as a freelancer?
2. How is the job market for freelancers developing?

According to research question 1, we are gaining deeper insight in the experiences of freelancers. In this part, we are investigating what the choice of being a freelancer is based on, and how the freelancers experience and cope with both market changes and ethical

dilemmas. We also investigate their affiliation with the journalistic profession. According to research question 2, the principals and the job market are important external factors affecting how freelancers may exercise their professional role. Describing the freelancers work life, also demands knowledge about the principals, and their judgments and priorities. In this part of the project, we are asking how the principals are experiencing the contact with freelancers. Which criteria do they attend to when hiring someone? What characterizes the freelancers that succeed, according to the principals?

The data is sampled among Norwegian freelance journalists and editors. The methods used are both qualitative and quantitative. We are doing a qualitative interview study with 15 Norwegian freelancers. The sample is made both random and strategic, to incorporate freelancers with various background regarding length of journalistic experience, geographical belonging and which part of the media business they take assignments from. Furthermore, we are doing a qualitative interview study with 10 Norwegian editors. These informants are strategically recruited from different types of publications and media platforms. We are also working with a quantitative survey among both groups of informants, recruited by the editors association and the Norwegian Union of Journalists. This will give us some answers about journalistic experience and seniority, income and education. The data sampling will be finished during this autumn, and the analyzing process during winter.

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## **FINANCIAL COMMITMENT VERSUS RESOURCE RIGIDITY**

### **Does an adaptive corporate mindset lead to better financial performance of media organizations?**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

After decades of successfully supplying news to the reader and advertiser markets, journalism recently underwent a disruptive period. Specifically, during the past 10 years, technological innovations and communication devices shifted young audiences, in particular, toward online sources. In addition, a financial crisis led to decreased advertising income for print media that online advertising income cannot balance out.

A challenge for once successful organizations is to adapt to changes in their environment. Media organizations have reorganized themselves in order to create and produce output for multiple platforms and to adapt their processes for producing content that meets online requirements. For such reorganization, a previous reallocation of resources is necessary. Resource management and allocation within the media organization influences the editorial outcome of the organization (Lacy, 1992; Lacy & Martin, 2004; Oliver, 2014; Russi, 2013).

This study's goals are: (1) to provide a theoretical model to explain change and inertia in media organizations, (2) to reveal to what extent Swiss and UK media organizations devote themselves to a rigid or adaptive mindset, and (3) to reveal whether a rigid mindset is connected to a worse financial performance of the organization. The overall research question is whether overcoming inertia in investment through an adaptive and innovative mindset lead to a better financial performance.

#### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

In organizational research, the environment is a direct setting of the company and envelops "change in customer tastes, production or service technologies, and the modes of competitions"

(Miller & Friesen, 1983, p. 233). Economic conditions or technological change causes uncertainty and pressures the organization to change as its practice becomes dysfunctional (Burke, Lake, & Paine, 2009, p. 2). Hence, “a turbulent environment triggers adaptive behaviour in organisations” (Blackmore & Nesbitt, 2009, p. 146). One response to uncertainty is described as an engagement in *tight coupling* with the environment according to rational-choice theory (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003) (i.e., monitoring and assessing customers and resources or sharing information across divisions within an organization). According to the idea of financial commitment (Lacy, 1992), the investment behavior of a media organization would reveal an increase in extension investment for additional technical applications and staff. And „[a]s the financial commitment to news increases, content quality, as defined by journalists, increases“ (Lacy, 1992, p. 8). In this manner, Oliver (2014) reveals for two TV broadcasters in the UK that a dynamic resource management leads to a better financial performance of the media organization.

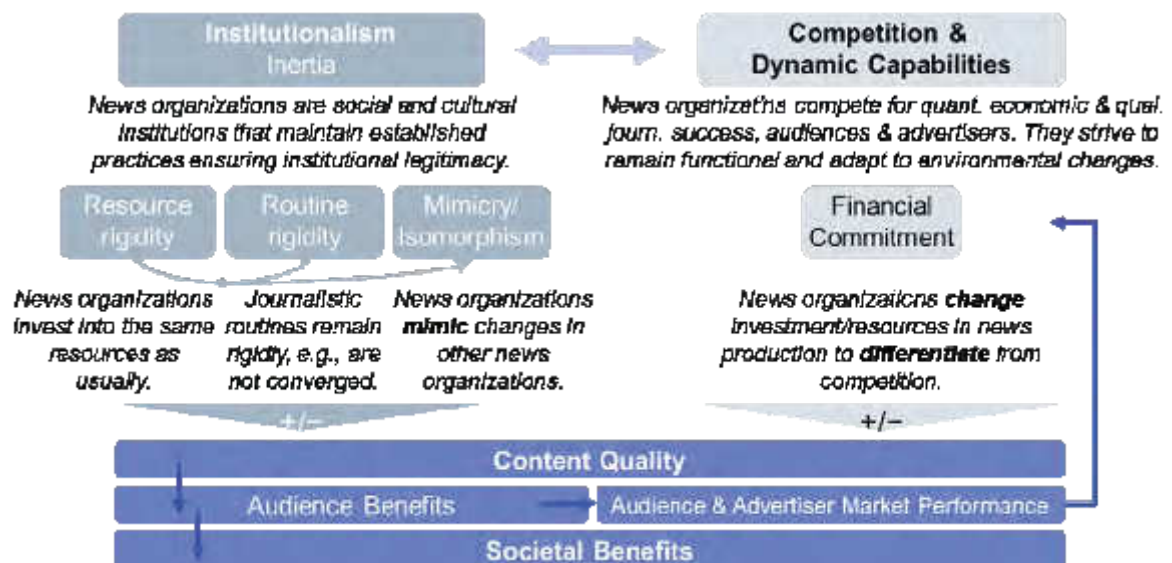
However, firms do not constantly adapt to their environment, since the “power of inertia” (Corstjens, Umbljjs, & Wang, 2011) is often more compelling. Structural inertia occurs when the speed of the reorganization is much slower than the change in environmental conditions (Hannan & Freeman, 1984). In a turbulent situation, it may be rational for decision makers, who wish to secure their career, not to apply disruptive (i.e., untested) technologies (Christensen, 1997). This is one explanation for inertia resulting in organizational stagnation. Another result is isomorphism because “organizations seek legitimacy by becoming more like others in their environments” (Lowrey, 2005, p. 497). In other words, these organizations maintain established practices that have resulted in institutional legitimacy (Zucker, 1987) because they “compete not just for resources and customers, but for political power and institutional legitimacy, for social as well as economic fitness” (Powell & DiMaggio, 1991, p. 66). Hence, in the face of disruptive environmental change, a rapid change in investment decisions of organizations may be unlikely.

Gilbert (2005; 2006) offers an explanation for this paradox of organizational change and rigidity. First, a new external context requires competency configuration (towards online

competencies) but come up against a certain historical context and traditional (print) competencies of the news organization (Gilbert, 2006, p.150). Gilbert (2006, p.151) argues that traditional competencies fit with the internal situation: “This internal coherence makes it difficult to change part of the capability set without pulling the system apart entirely.” One consequence is that incumbent firms invest “in their current market position and not in the new technology” (Gilbert, 2005, p. 742). *Resource rigidity* (Gilbert, 2005) likely takes place after long periods of success (Miller, 1994), which was the case for news organizations until the turn of the century.

These theoretical perspectives are summarized in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Theoretical perspectives on media organizations’ responses to environmental change



Source: Compiled by the author.

This study measures indicators of resource rigidity and financial commitment on the media organizational level and relates it to audience and advertiser market performance using financial performance figures. Content quality and audience benefits remain unknown in this study. However, one can differentiate media companies producing quality, regional, or tabloid news outlets based on previous research. Since publishers of newspapers may be affected most by the shift of audiences

towards online sources and a related decline in readership and may have partly employed the greatest resource managing and convergence efforts, this study will focus on publishing houses.

## **METHOD**

Data collection will be based on qualitative analysis of 2013 annual reports of major publishing houses producing print and online news outlets in the UK (e.g., Evening Standard, dmg media, Guardian Media Group, News UK, Telegraph Media Group, Trinity Mirror) and Switzerland (e.g., Axel Springer Schweiz AG, AZ Medien AG, NZZ Mediengruppe, Ringier AG, Tamedia AG).

First, the level of an *adaptive or inertial mindset* will be derived from the introductory statements of the publisher, CEO, or chairman of the board in the annual reports. Therefore, statements on chances and challenges of the organization or industry (Tripsas & Gavetti, 2000), investment in staff or processes (Winter, 2003), and product development (Eisenhardt & Martin, 2000; Helfat & Raubitschek, 2000) will be collected and evaluated.

Second, the dependent variable *financial performance* of the media organization will be measured using the indicator Return on Capital Employed (ROCE) following Oliver's (2014) financial performance study. ROCE is the ratio of earnings before interest and tax (EBIT) and capital employed, i.e., the capital investment that is necessary for the organization to function. ROCE measures how efficiently an organization uses invested capital.

Data collection and analysis will be conducted in November and December 2014.

## **RESULTS, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS**

Results, conclusions, and implications will be derived in January 2015 and will be presented on the conference.

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## **Incorporating native advertising: Assessing journalism's new trend of camouflaging church as state**

Journalism has several gears for motivating its existence, alongside with information, entertainment, and advertisement (McQuail, 1994). The conflicting powers that drive journalism are entangled within tensions between commercial logics and professional logics (Altheide & Snow, 1991; Karlsson & Clerwall, 2013), trying to dictate the future of the trade.

The professional logic, which regards audiences as citizens, is the driving force that nurtures the civic and democratic properties of journalism (Bennet, 1993; McNair, 2009; Merrill, 2011) and establishes the ideal-typical values of journalism as public service, objectivity, autonomy, immediacy, and ethics (Kovack & Rosenstiel, 2001). The commercial logic, which regards audiences as consumers, addresses the fact that most news outlets are subjected to commercial urges in the need for funding that help sustain the organization. This logic is widely regarded as the responsible for the decline within several fronts of the journalist profession such as work practices, output quality, and norms, leading to tabloidization, popularization, and commodification of news (Lewis, Williams, & Franklin, 2008; Bird, 2009; Örnebring & Jönsson, 2011, Reese and Lee, 2012).

Traditionally, even within the confines of commercial-oriented news outlets, journalists adopt the ideals of what journalism is supposed to be with more ease than the institutions they work for (Stensaas, 2005) calling for autonomy, keeping editorial lines independent from commercial influences. This has been historically named as the separation of *church* and *state*. While the general trend has been of keeping advertising and other forms of revenue separate from journalism, the attempt to keep these concepts on separate lanes has suffered a fluctuating degree of success, influenced by the conflicts outlined above. These tensions intensify within the current context of media convergence, digital and new journalism formats, audience reconfigurations, and sets the context on which legacy news media address the balance between editorial autonomy and funding sources (Deuze, 2004).

This paper examines the increasing trend of adopting native advertising in the digital fronts of traditional news media outlets. Methodologically, this study looks at news websites that are digital counter parts of 12 legacy newspapers from Sweden, Spain, the UK, and the USA, and analyses the adoption of native advertising during the span of a month. Consequently, these advertisements are analyzed in terms of content, format, and the degree of transparency when linking each piece to the marketer who pays for the ad. The study finishes with a brief comparison of the results in terms of country, specifically, in light of Hallin and Mancini's (2004) media systems composition.

For the purpose of this study, native advertising is defined as a form of paid media where the commercial content is delivered within the design and form of editorial content with the attempt



to recreate the user experience of reading news instead of advertising content. In terms of form native advertising matches the visual design of the main outlet they are placed in, and are meant to look and feel like natural content. In terms of function, it behaves consistently within the native modes of consumption while addressing themes and issues that are related to the paying advertiser. In other words, native advertising camouflages commercial advertising content as real news and editorial content in order to entice the user to read the news without becoming apparent that this is indeed a paid for commercial.

As regular digital advertising revenues plummet, and drawing from new configurations of digital journalism, where popularized news services and aggregators have found viable sources of revenue in in-feed and recommended content features within the frame of native advertising, legacy media started adopting paid inclusion of commercials within their own formats. One of the first cases, the inclusion in the news site of the Atlantic a native ad feature the Church of Scientology, raised controversy and concerns about placing advertising formatted and distributed in the same fashion as regular news (Carlson, 2014). Since then, several other major legacy media outlets such as *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times* have adopted similar strategies that blur the boundaries between advertising and editorial content.

Digital revenue has been growing steadily during the last years, and these new forms of advertising formats are in part responsible for this rise, especially because they are created by marketers, aiming to persuade consumers, but disguised as legitimate content (Tutaj & Van Reijmersdal, 2012; Cole II & Greer, 2013). Thus, the communicative ethos of journalism is immersed in a constant formative process similarly affected by technological configurations, institutional and organizational dispositions, professional practices, and economic and societal contexts (Ekström & Djerf-Pierre, 2013). A single factor cannot explain the meanderings of journalism practice. This constant re-conceptualization of journalism is what limits the formation of a common idea of what journalism is, and what journalism is supposed to be (Conboy, 2010).

It is clear that since the beginning of commercial journalism, news media have a dual goal to serve and satisfy both citizens and the entrepreneurs who own the media (Schudson, 1997). However, the preliminary results of this study show a steady increase of native advertising, tipping the scales towards a re-formulation of journalism that adopts commercial actors and marketers within the arena that used to be run by journalists. The unique economic and technological context of online news could lead to a compromised autonomy, independence and credibility for journalistic practice as the economic urges to attract revenue transcend the editorial lines incorporating advertising that looks just like news. If this practice proves to be a lucrative one in the long term, the new commercial journalism might be based on camouflaging church as state.

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## Re-Inventing Quality

### How Journalists in Two Swiss Quality Newspapers Change (and Maintain) Quality Assurance in the Age of Disruption

#### 1 Problem definition and research questions

In the last couple of years, several Swiss media companies integrated the print and online departments of their daily newspapers. They engaged in newsroom convergence (Brüggemann, 2002; Dailey et al., 2005; Quandt/Singer, 2009) and changed preconditions for journalistic quality (Wyss, 2002) on organizational level (Shoemaker/Reese, 2014). Here, journalistic quality refers to the ability of a journalistic product to fulfill specific goals. Accordingly, its definition is dependent on the strategy of certain decision makers (Rau, 2007, 86ff.). Quality assurance is defined as the formulation and implementation of the quality strategy (Bruhn, 2011).

Yet, how are newsroom convergence and quality assurance connected? And what does this mean for society? Research has provided insights on newsroom change processes (e.g. Singer, 2004; Lowrey, 2005; Gilbert, 2006; Meier et al., 2014). But there is hardly any research linking organizational change with quality assurance (e.g. Keel et al., 2010) and considering specific sections (e.g. Rau, 2009; Russ-Mohl, 2011). The following RQs are guiding this research:

- **RQ1:** Why do decision makers in media companies choose converged newsrooms as the structural alternative and what role does the intended quality strategy play in this choice?
- **RQ2:** What trade-offs do decision makers in media companies make while formulating and implementing the intended quality strategy in the course of newsroom convergence and what drives these trade-offs?

The goal is to contribute to theory building concerning organizational change of media companies from a quality assurance perspective.

#### 2 Theory

This project bridges (behavioral) economic theory with behavioral and management theories on organizational change in firms. According to Rational Choice Theory (RCT), individual decision makers have preferences for alternatives and they are constrained by restrictions on the meso level of organizations and on the macro level of markets. Their individual decisions have aggregated effects on both levels (e.g. Fengler/Russ-Mohl, 2005; Homann/Suchanek, 2005). Behavioral Economics (BE), however, shows empirically, that individuals are less rational and more pro-social than RCT states. And they may be extrinsically and intrinsically motivated (Frey et al., 2013).

Here, the Strategic Choice Theory (SCT) comes into play (Child 1972; 1997). It claims, that organizational change is the result of decisions made by members of a dominant coalition (MDCs) inside an organization who are constrained by internal restrictions – i.e. resources and structures (Grant, 1992); and who adapt to changing external restrictions – i.e. disruption of news markets (Christensen et al., 2012; Latzer, 2013). According to SCT, MDCs formulate and implement specific strategies – i.e. they formulate the (overall) quality strategy based on quality criteria which may differ between print and online news outlets (Dahinden et al., 2004; Schranz/Eisenegger, 2012; Arnold, 2013); and they implement this (overall) quality strategy by allocating editorial resources and designing editorial structures (Meckel, 1999).

This organizational change underlies a decision making processes that may run through different hierarchy levels (Bower/Gilbert, 2007) and different departments (Altmeppen, 2006) and that subsequently may result in intended (e.g. also formulated) or emerged (e.g. only implemented) strategic outcomes (Mintzberg/Waters, 1985).

All decision makers make trade-offs: They cannot implement all alternatives – i.e. quality strategies – at least at the same time (Porter 1996; Held/Russ-Mohl, 2000). Conflicting goals may be resolved and organizational ambidexterity enabled, if strategies get separated – e.g. structurally

(Cyert/March, 1992; Gilbert, 2006). Newsroom convergence, however, leads to the contrary – leaving MDCs to make trade-offs between exploiting i.e. maintaining and/or improving existing quality strategies and exploring i.e. implementing new quality strategies (Raisch et al., 2009).

### 3 Design and methods

An inductive, theory building case study design is applied (Eisenhardt, 1989). It investigates multiple (i.e. different newsrooms) and embedded (i.e. different sections) cases (Yin, 2009). Based on the preliminary theoretical framework (see chapter 2), questionnaires were developed. Different methods were applied in order to validate data related to RQs 1 and 2 (see Table 1)<sup>1</sup>. Both investigated nationwide Swiss quality newspapers are located in the German speaking part of Switzerland. Newspaper A has converged its print and online departments in 2012 and is part of a non-quoted media company. Newspaper B converged the departments in 2013 and is part of a quoted company. Both news outlets launched a paywall in 2012 and 2014, respectively<sup>2</sup>.

**Table 1: Methods of data collection**

RQ	Methods	Newspaper A	Newspaper B
1	Qualitative content analysis: internal (e.g. charts, reports) and external documents (e.g. articles)	√	√
	In-depth interview (I) with a media manager	√, Head of Digital in the media company	√, Head of Digital in the news outlet
	I: Editor-in-Chief	√	√
	I: Project manager of newsroom convergence	√	√
2	Qualitative content analysis: see RQ1	√	√
	Quantitative content analysis: e.g. Internet features	√	√
	I: Head of the Section	√	√
	I: former "print only" journalists, one in each section	√	√
	I: former "online only" journalists, one in each section	√, none in the science section	√, none in the science section
	I: freelancer, one in each section	√	√, no access in the business section
	Observations: one day in each section	√, in the science section restricted to editorial meetings	√

Two daily quality newspapers (focus on hard news, subscription based business models) are chosen in order to replicate cases (Yin, 2009), which are also relevant for society (Jarren/Vogel, 2011)<sup>3</sup>. This research focuses on Swiss newspapers in order to take into account specific market conditions (Hallin/Mancini, 2004) and newsroom cultures (Esser, 1998)<sup>4</sup>. In each newspaper two sections are investigated: *business section* as a bigger section, *science section* as a smaller section. In newspaper A access was also given to the *news section* (newsdesk, reporters).

Quality assurance was operationalized based on variables discussed in the literature (e.g. Picard, 2000; Wyss, 2002; Dahinden et al., 2004; Hermes, 2006; Meier/Reimer, 2011). Resources: It was investigated if the amount of editorial budget and staff did change in the newsrooms and sections in the course of newsroom convergence. Organizational structure: It was investigated if e.g. specialization regarding coverage of topics, speed of reporting, and the realization of multimedia (e.g. slide shows, self-produced videos, long-forms) and interactivity (e.g. Twitter of sections, journalists) did change. Incentive structure: It was investigated if e.g. proof reading, editorial feedback, and the practice of corrections did change.

In the Newspaper A, data collection took place mainly between May and November 2013, in Newspaper B mainly between May and June 2014.

<sup>1</sup> No investigated media company employed a quality manager (Wyss, 2002) who would be involved in the change process – and who could be interviewed.

<sup>2</sup> Data collection is not fully completed yet. Therefore, at this point, both media companies are mentioned anonymously.

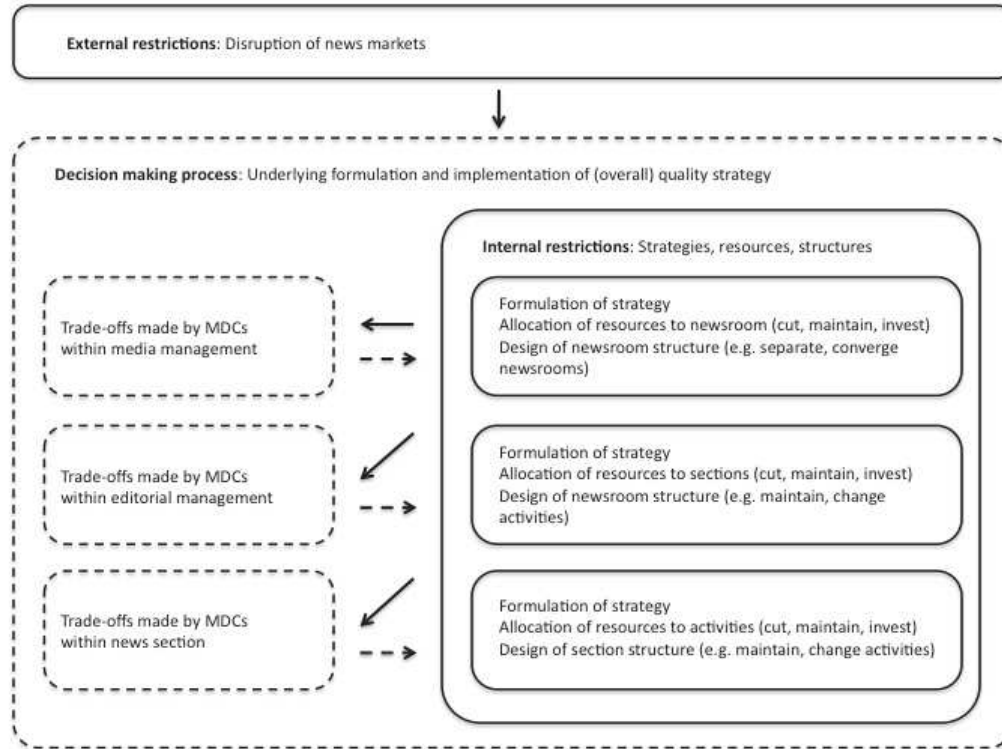
<sup>3</sup> This paper focuses on data from two media companies that publish a daily quality newspaper. However, the research project also included a family owned media company located in the German speaking part of Switzerland that converged its daily tabloid newspaper and the related news website, daily free paper, and Sunday paper in order to extend data derived from quality outlets. However, so far, access was limited to the news section and the science section.

<sup>4</sup> A cross-market comparison between Swiss and UK newsrooms is planned for an upcoming research project.

## 4 Discussion of results

From the interpretation of the data the following Quality Assurance Model can be derived (see Figure 1).

**Figure 1: Quality Assurance, Change, and Inertia**



Source: own figure.

External restrictions (i.e. disruption) triggered the decision making process underlying quality assurance which then run through three broad hierarchy levels. On each level, MDCs made trade-offs and thereby changed internal restrictions (i.e. resources, structures) for MDCs on lower hierarchy levels. In fact, on each level, MDCs made trade-offs related to exploitation and exploration of quality and thereby defined and assured (“their”) quality. These trade-offs were less obvious in the formulation process and more obvious in the implementation process<sup>5</sup>. Thus, in the course of this decision making process the definition of quality was emerging. Moreover, exploitation on the management level led to organizational change (newsroom convergence), while exploitation on the section level, led to organizational inertia (maintaining activities).

On the management level, MDCs of both media companies decided to increase the quality – defined e.g. as adherence to facts – of their online outlets and to maintain this quality in the print outlets (exploitation)<sup>6</sup>. At the same time, they intended to increase the online quality defined e.g. as multimedia and interactivity (exploration). This should not only increase profits (paywall, increased subscription rates), it should also be realized efficiently, i.e. without additional resources

<sup>5</sup> In fact, while in both media companies the (overall) quality strategy was formulated in editorial guidelines from the late 1990s (“Redaktionsstatut”), only Newspaper B had updated its quality strategy on the newsroom level with additional editorial guidelines considering both print and online outlets (“Redaktionshandbuch”) at the time of investigation. Moreover, in Newsroom B, Heads of the Sections (together with other journalists from the sections) had formulated concepts in the course of the change process that considered strategy aspects on the sections level.

<sup>6</sup> In Newspaper A, the Editor-in-Chief was (and still is) also member of the media management.

(Newspaper A) and with less resources (Newspaper B). This was implemented by converging the print and online newsrooms.

This meant, that former online only journalists got integrated into former print only sections. In both newspapers, former print only Editors-in-Chief and former print only Heads of the Sections kept their positions. Former print only journalists became the majority in the sections. Overall, former print only journalists became the dominant coalitions on editorial management and section (business, science) levels.

On the editorial management level, MDCs allocated online resources to the sections. In fact, in both media companies business sections got additional online resources, while science sections didn't. And they designed the overall structures of the converged newsrooms.

On the section level, MDCs made trade-offs focusing on exploiting quality: For instance, as far as possible they maintained their topic specialization, decreased speed of online reporting and decreased respectively constrained multimedia (videos, long forms) and interactivity (Twitter). In both media companies, this holds more for the science than for the business sections.

While theories on resource dependence and disruptive innovations explain organizational change (Pfeffer/Salancik, 2003) and inertia (Christensen et al., 2012) as outcomes of rational, extrinsically motivated decision making, bounded rationality may play a role, too: On the section level for instance, intrinsic motivation and the status quo bias of MDCs may drive exploitation and constrain exploration.

## 5 Conclusions

Digitalization and disruption of news markets and the subsequent newsroom convergence processes provide a setting to investigate how quality assurance evolves in media companies. Indeed, quality is a dependent variable (Russ-Mohl, 1992) that on organizational level gets shaped by a multi-hierarchy decision making process in which MDCs pursue their preferences under changing restrictions – and thereby also shape restrictions. In fact, quality assurance on the management level leads to organizational change (newsroom convergence), while quality assurance on the section level leads to organizational inertia (maintaining activities).

The resistance to explore quality strategies based on disruptive innovations by lower level MDCs has potentially positive effects for society since disruptive innovations are per definition of lower quality (Christensen et al., 2012). However, this holds only as long as higher quality journalism can be financed and maintained.

The goal of this inductive research is to contribute to theory building on organizational change from a quality assurance perspective. The developed model would need to be tested quantitatively. Individual motives are a further area for future research.

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# The limits of re-inventing journalism: structural causes of the crisis of information journalism

Proposal for a traditional conference presentation

(Willingness to do a high density presentation instead: No)

## 1. Starting point: stating the problem

The call for papers to this conference represents an invitation to *re-invent journalism* against the background of the current challenges facing the media industry. Although it may well be justified to urge media professionals to practice self-renewal and creativity at regular intervals, by introducing the concept of the re-invention of journalism we run the risk of forgetting that journalism by its very nature continuously reconstitutes itself in both intentional and non-intentional ways. By the same token, the term *re-invention of journalism* implies the possibility of a fundamental changeability brought about by correspondingly qualified, i.e. “creative and innovative”, actors alone, whereas the structural influences and constraints which also set limits to such a *re-invention* tend to fall by the wayside.

This paper asks – on the basis of an empirical research project on the long-term transformation of the Swiss media system – *which processes of structural transformation may be responsible for causing information journalism to be ever less capable of carrying out its functions, which are necessary for a functioning democratic society.*

We consequently focus our interest on central structural processes of transformation in the media system and enquire about their unintended effects on information journalism. On this basis, we may specify more precisely which processes restrict the scope of action of information journalism and where possible remedies must be applied. This leads us to the conclusion that the current crisis of information journalism or the conventional information media is primarily structural in nature, that any “re-invention” of journalism must be applied to these structural problems and that corresponding media-policy measures are also required.

## 2. State of research

A crisis of information journalism is widely diagnosed within the current discourse taking place in communication science (Luengo 2014; Mancini 2013; Young 2010). Moreover, the emphasis is increasingly placed on the structural causes of this crisis – as we will do in our paper. The following aspects of a structural crisis in information journalism are among those discussed:

- 1) The business model of journalism which has grown over time and whose performance has for many years been funded by advertising revenues is now coming into question (Kiefer 2011). Indeed, it has been permanently weakened by the culture of free content on the Internet and offline media. As other forms of funding have so far not been available to a comparable degree, publishers and media companies are responding to this development not least by trimming their costs. This is seen in personnel cut-backs, i.e. a reduction of their core editorial staff and outplacement to less expensive freelance service providers. But it can also be seen in the increasing multiple utilization of journalistic contents as well as in the widespread use of externally-produced contents.
- 2) This erosion of financial resources has the corresponding consequence that news agencies and the public relations activities of the most diverse organizations are gaining importance in media reporting. Journalism is being ever more strongly perturbed by professional communicators from external sectors (public authorities, businesses) who pursue partisan interests as well as by entertainment communications disseminated in non-linear ways (Bruns 2011; Lünenborg 2012).
- 3) The ubiquitous use of the Internet as a communication channel is jeopardizing the exclusive ability of journalism to carry out its functions. The web makes information based on algorithms available at no cost, thus threatening to obviate a part of the service performed by journalism and changing the relevant selection criteria (cf. Pariser 2011). News offerings from Google or AOL supply information with no added professional editorial input which is then used by individuals or professional editorial teams as free raw material. This environment makes it ever more difficult to defend journalistic performance as a service worth paying for (cf. Ruß-Mohl 2009). Indeed, Saxer (1993) refers to this transformation as a form of de-institutionalization of the media.
- 4) Journalism is losing reputation at the level of content (Young 2010). The growing journalistic offerings provided by sectorial channels, very-special-interest magazines, ever faster updating rates, dissemination of uniform and poor-quality contents centered principally on entertainment on several distribution channels – all this increases diversity primarily from the viewpoint of the entertainment industry (Lünenborg 2012). Journalism with its normative ideal of providing relevant information to the democratic community so that competent responsible citizens can act responsibly in society comprises only a minority of the total offerings.

In summary, we can note that journalism has lost in relevance, reputation and exclusivity against the background of these structural problems. The loss in quality of the social public

sphere is also being viewed with concern, and new ways of funding (cf. Habermas 2007) and of providing journalistic services (cf. Shirky 2008) are being sought.

### 3. Results

Our research project is based on a comprehensive and annually replicated design which links (A) the structural transformation of the Swiss media system (involving aspects such as changes in media utilization, media funding, media concentration and editorial production conditions) with (B) the transformation in reporting quality of the fifty largest-coverage information media in Switzerland (press, radio, TV, online new sites).

This study was conducted for the fifth time in 2014 (starting point: 2010), so that we now have a time series on the transformation of the Swiss media system which allows meaningful conclusions to be drawn. The project is based on an understanding of media quality in terms of a theory of democracy. Accordingly, the quality of the media is measured by how well the information media carry out functions which are of central importance to the overall social and democratic process.

The most recent study phase of our research project has produced the following key analytical findings. They refer to structural processes of transformation which fundamentally jeopardize the practice of information journalism:

*I. Entertainment offerings are gaining further in significance:* To begin with we can note that in recent years advertising revenues have preferentially and rapidly moved away from information journalism in favor of entertainment offerings and that the willingness of the public to buy these offers has increased. And although the media budgets of the consumers are indeed increasing, expenditures on information journalism are continuously declining. A very significant factor affecting this development is the culture of free content, which has largely dissipated the whole idea of actually paying for information journalism.

*II. Within journalism, coverage is increasing at the expense of quality:* The trend to entertainment is also continuing within the sector of information journalism. Advertisers favor those information offerings in print, TV and online which satisfy entertainment needs with brief soft-news content and achieve high coverage in this way. The more the information offer is skewed towards the tabloid angle, the greater the user reach and thus the advertising revenues. This development is boosted by the growth of mobile consumerism and human interest needs in the social networks: “viral news” is predominantly soft news. Behind the scenes therefore we are seeing a negative spiral which discriminates against high-quality information

journalism, which is struggling with continuously declining user reach and hence declining advertising revenues.

*III. Declining quality of the information media at both top and bottom ends:* Diverse and relevant information journalism is being starved of funds. This dynamic is leading to a decline in its quality as a whole. The low-quality information media (especially the free ones) do not need to worry too much about quality in view of the great demand for entertainment-centered offerings. As a consequence, the media quality of those offerings aiming to maintain high standards is declining under the pressure of cost-cutting, the loss of funds and the high demand for continuously updated information.

*IV. Growing concentration and diversification of publishers in sectors that no longer have anything to do with information journalism:* This tough income situation for diverse and professional information journalism is intensifying the concentration process on the market for information media. In Switzerland, the diversity of providers in the sector of professional online information media is even more restricted than in the press sector. At the same time, the few remaining publishers are developing into mixed providers in whose portfolio information journalism is losing importance in favor of more profitable business such as online financial markets.

*V. Erosion of professional journalistic culture:* In order to maintain revenues in the information market, repeated rounds of cost-cutting are going hand in hand with nothing less than the commercialization and market control of journalism. The production processes are being controlled by content management systems (CMS) in which journalists working in integrated newsrooms increasingly produce uniform contents for all channels and ever more media titles. Specialized remits and specific journalistic know-how are losing in importance in favor of the factory-like workshops of the new 24/7 all-round journalism. The sector of information journalism hardly sees itself any longer as performing key functions for society and democracy. This also leads to its erosion from within.

*VI. Loss of diversity, changing topic and actor resonance and agenda-building:* Because this development dynamics is propelled by declining revenues and coverage optimization, the agenda-building as well as the topic and actor resonances in the media arena are changing. Topics which used to be found in a niche of tabloid journalism are also taken up by media titles with a claim to high quality and are developing into short-term media hypes which dominate the whole media arena. In a political respect, those actors and topics receive the greatest

resonance which are most provocative and serve entertainment needs. This creates improved resonance opportunities for populist political actors in the structurally weakened media arena.

#### **4. Conclusion and derived recommendations for discussion**

Taken together, our research findings show that information journalism is exposed to a far-reaching structural transformation which sets limits to its ability to maintain its integrity. Accordingly, if this sector is to continue to perform its indispensable functions for the democratic community, it must be supported from both inside and outside, i.e. by means of appropriate media policies. In addition to other measures, we would propose non-governmental foundations and an advertising tax for discussion as ways of providing financial support to information journalism.

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Re-affirming the role of journalism in the global South:  
Professionalism and deviations from normative liberal values among South African  
journalists<sup>i</sup>

*Abstract*

Post-colonial societies stand apart from many other societies in the global South including other transitional societies in Eastern Europe in the way in which the news media has been shaped by legacies of colonialism, and as in the context of Southern Africa, apartheid and its aberrations. Media theory and in particular normative conceptualisations of the role of the news media have decidedly been underpinned by Western epistemologies and thought, and scholars have argued that this is making them ill suited to meet the demands of young democracies and transitional societies, particularly in post colonial societies in the global South. This has prompted scholars to call for a de-Westernization or an Africanisation of media theory.

The role of the news media in post-apartheid South Africa is hotly debated and contested, and the mainstream news media has often clashed with Government over how the public interest should be defined. While the African National Congress (ANC) led government has often asked for the news media to take a more developmental stance to journalism, urging journalists to be more supportive of their policies and achievements and acting as nation builders, the mainstream South African news media has emphasised their role as watch dogs of power, holding public officials accountable and exposing maladministration, facilitating debate and opening up the public sphere. A debate framed as whether the media should serve the ‘national interest’, as mainly argued by Government, or the ‘public interest’, as generally maintained by the media themselves (Wasserman and de Beer, 2006; Netshitenzhe, 2002a&b; Fourie, 2001; Jacobs, 2000).

Post –apartheid the South African news media has relied on a self-regulatory framework. The South African press code takes its preamble from the South African

Constitution of 1996, and also draws upon the framework of the international federation of journalists firmly grounded in liberal normative theories of the functions of the news media in society. This framework has however been criticised for perpetuating Western, euro-centric values that are unfit for local realities and cultural norms.

The paper does not provide an exhaustive outline of conceptualisations of professionalism in normative liberal traditions, instead it makes a few overarching observations about values that entrenched in many journalism frameworks, including press codes, world-wide. It is worth noting the following: Normative conceptualisations link journalistic professionalism to notions of impartiality, neutrality and objectivity, and the meanings ascribed to them (Harrison, 2006:59). Objectivity, in particular, is seen as a professional ideology of journalism (Tuchman, 1978). It is by invoking objectivity that journalism can claim to be truthful and accurate (McNair, 1998:65), and claim to have a “public service orientation” (Hallin and Mancini, 2004:36). And indeed international and comparative studies of journalists around the world show that journalists often share a sense of professionalism (see Weaver, 1998; Merrill, 1995; Splichal and Sparks, 1994). This might be related to issues concerning globalisation and even trends to increased ‘Westernisation’ (Williams, 2003:107), or to a ‘homogenisation’ of the media, i.e., of a common global media culture (Hallin and Mancini, 2004:251).

However, there are important variations in the degree to which distinct professional norms have evolved in different countries and systems around the world, and in the degree of consensus they enjoy among journalists and their influence on journalistic practices (McQuail, 2000:255). While some journalists might see themselves as neutral conveyors of information, emphasising speed, accuracy and accessibility as key determinants of professionalism, others see themselves as participants in politics and as having an advocacy role (Hallin and Mancini, 2004:251). A role often polarised as being either that of a neutral conveyor of information (a watchdog) or advocate (in the extreme, a lapdog), varies across cultures (Williams, 2003:107). Cross-national studies of journalists’ role conceptions show that that they are strongly related to political culture and the degree to which democracy is firmly established. This includes issues around professionalism, as well as issues around the



interpretations of objectivity, impartiality and neutrality in relation to role conceptions and news reporting.

In their study of normative frameworks underpinning the Western media Hallin and Mancini (2004: 39) highlight the concept of political parallelism, i.e. the idea of how closely linked the news media and individual journalists are to various sources of state power. They argue that it is not necessarily so that where political parallelism is high, professionalism is low (Hallin and Mancini, 2004:39). Hallin and Mancini (2004:39) quote Curry's (1990) study of journalists during Communist rule in Poland that showed that while journalists were working under conditions shaped by a strong political culture and an ideology upheld by an authoritarian regime, and while being mindful of journalism and its role in relation to the Communist agenda, they nevertheless developed a strong sense of professional culture (Hallin and Mancini, 2004:39). In this sense, journalistic and editorial commentary need not be contradictory to professionalism. In the notion of journalism as a public service function there might be room for social commentary in relation to politics (Hallin and Mancini, 2004:41).

In South Africa, as well as in the sub-Saharan region, issues of self-regulation and professionalism have increasingly made their way into debates around the role of journalism. The transition from authoritarian rule to democracy requires radical new role orientations and rules of interaction between the media and those in power (Voltmer, 2006:7), especially in relation to strengthening ethics and codes of conduct to counter partisanship and bias in the news media. During the years of apartheid, journalism was literally framed in black and white and played a role either as a vehicle for advocacy against the apartheid regime or as a subservient servant of the regime.

Ogola and Rodny-Gumede (2014:227) argue that the debate about professionalism and quality news in the developing world raises fundamental conceptual and practical challenges. The idea of quality often assumes a universal understanding, a position that is misleading as contextual factors for how quality is measured need to be considered (Ogola and Rodny-Gumede 2012: 227). The news media in Africa emerges from a history shaped by the continent's experiences with colonialism, and in

southern Africa, apartheid and its aberrations. While experiences have varied from country to country, Ogola and Rodny-Gumede (2012:227) argue that the news media was at once implicated in the institutionalisation of the colonial project as well as in its repudiation, these roles were ambiguous and have implications for what constituted and still constitute quality journalism.

Building on these ideas, I ask, if professionalism is always interpreted and executed according to the normative liberal values of the news media as thought to be the case in many liberal democracies, or are there local, national, regional, cultural specifics that play a role in the way that professionalism is conceptualised? Are there particular contextual issues regarding professionalism as conceptualised by South African journalists that differ from normative liberal ideals of journalistic professionalism and ethics? How do South African journalists conceptualise professionalism and how do they look upon their own role in society? Is it possible to articulate a unique way of conceptualising professionalism in South Africa that talks to the context of a young transforming society? And, maybe we should focus less on finding new models (re-inventing) than re-affirming the role of journalism in democracy.

The data that forms the basis for this article has been collected from a series of face-to-face interviews as well as telephonic and electronic qualitative surveys. The sample includes 23 responses from political and current affairs journalists with experience in the newsroom ranging from three to twenty five years. The research shows that while, at first glance, most journalists interviewed articulate ideas around their own role in society in ways that seemingly conform to normative ideas of the news media entrenched in many western liberal democracies. However, a closer reading of the responses gathered shows a slightly different take on what the role of the news media might entail in the still nascent democracy. Furthermore, the professional values articulated as core to journalism in South Africa points to a negotiation of wider set of interests and values than those articulated through liberal normative frameworks. This I argue points to how the role of journalism in democracy is re-conceptualised and re-imagined to talk to a particular political, socio-economic and cultural reality. Ultimately it points to how the role of journalism in society is being re-affirmed rather than re-invented.

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The PR Paradox: Reliance on news subsidies and Cognitive Dissonance in times of change

### **Extended Abstract**

The impact of PR practitioners on the news, and journalists' attitudes toward their involvement in it, is not only regaining its relevance, but has become a burning issue worthy of exploration, due to the destabilizing 'balance of power' between journalists and PR practitioners, following a series of occupational, economic, technological and cultural transformations (Broesma et al., 2012; Tandoc, 2014; Wall, 2014).

This shifting power balance has been triggered not only by the growing dependence of journalists on their subsidies, since fewer journalists are expected to do “more with less” in shorter news cycles (Davis, 2008; Ryfe, 2013), but also by the dwindling dependence of PR practitioners on their services thanks to ‘journalist bypassing’ options, such as social networks that allow them direct access to their audiences (Bakker et al., 2013; Broesma et al., 2013; Macnamara, 2014; Supa, 2014) and “native advertising” (Macnamara, 2014).

To paint a meaningful picture, one must explore not only the bottom-line impact of PR work, but also journalists' attitudes toward the involvement of these practitioners in the news, a combination that has scarcely been studied so far. Such a study may help determine the extent to which the culminating levels of PR influence represents an instrumental reliance on readymade copy in order to cope with growing journalistic workloads, or an ideological shift within the journalistic community, in which the traditional conflicts associated with the antagonistic cooperation between both

occupations are vanishing, partly due to the shift of Western media toward neo-liberal ideologies (Bennett, 2004; McChesney, 2010). Furthermore juxtaposing journalistic practices and attitudes can help detect whether reliance on PR involves a cognitive dissonance (Donsbach 2004; Donsbach & Brade 2011; Festinger, 1957; Festinger & Carsmith, 1959; Tilley & Hollings, 2008; Yoo & LO, 2014) that shapes not only the relationship between the parties, their exchanges and the cognitive mechanisms that drive them, but also the prospects for future change in their power balance.

The current paper explores the levels of reliance on PR among journalists in different news beats and media, and the extent to which this reliance conforms to or contradicts their attitudes toward PR practitioners and their contribution. More specifically, the paper explores the associations between reliance on PR and news item evaluation, in terms of importance and interest, comparing PR and other types of sources. Furthermore, the paper tries to detect who are the heavy users of PR and what their attitudes toward PR are, as well as the extent to which the potential cognitive dissonance of reliance on PR is mitigated by compensating practices, such as cross-checking and reliance on additional sources.

As a theoretical framework, the paper uses the classic Cognitive Dissonance theory alongside more up-to-date media-oriented PR and news subsidy theory (e.g. Davis, 2007; Esser, 2013). Despite its advanced age, Festinger's theory of Cognitive Dissonance (1957) has never lost its relevance for studying social processes, as manifested in political communication (Donsbache & Brade 2011) and more recently in neuroscience (Jarho et al., 2011; Van Veen et al., 2009). In the context of journalism and PR, cognitive dissonance theory contributes not only the juxtaposition of conduct and belief, but also elicits the dynamic relationships and pinpoints the mechanism through which journalists can reduce or mitigate dissonance

(Bacharach et al., 1996, Festinger and Carlsmith, 1959). Furthermore, focusing on cognitive aspects of reliance on PR illuminates some of what is “happening inside journalists’ minds” (Zhong & Newhagen, 2009: 589; see also Donsbach, 2004).

The paper explores four research questions:

1. How often do journalists rely on PR compared to other types of sources?
2. Are items involving PR evaluated by journalists as more, less or equally important and interesting, compared to items involving other types of sources?
3. Are there identifiable groups of heavy PR users among journalists, and do they evaluate their items as more, less or equally important and interesting?
4. Do journalists accompany their reliance on PR with mitigating practices such as more cross-checking, greater reliance on additional sources and allocation of less item space compared to other news sources?

### **Method**

To enable the juxtaposition of reporters’ reliance on PR on the one hand, and their attitudes toward PR practitioners and their contribution on the other, the study used a series of face-to-face reconstruction interviews, a method which has demonstrated its viability in exploring different facets of news processes (Albæk, 2011; Anderson, 2013; Boesman et al., 2014; Brüggemann, 2013; McManus, 1994). A sample of reporters (N=108) who cover a mix of news beats in leading national Israeli media, were asked to reconstruct their evaluations and news practices behind a random sample of their recently published items (N=862). For each item, reporters were asked to evaluate its levels of interest and importance, and detail the specific sourcing and reporting practices employed to obtain the information behind it.

The interviews, which took place during December 2011 and January 2012, were preceded by three consecutive stages:

1. Random selection of beats and reporters.
2. Identification of all published items during four weeks—long enough to supply a rich mix of stories, but not long enough to tax participants' memories.
3. Random sampling of news items: To limit interview duration to 60–75 minutes, the sample included 8–11 items per reporter (the exact number varied according to medium and size of organization).

## Findings

***Reliance on PR versus other sources.*** Journalists rely on PR significantly more often than on any other source type. According to journalists' own accounts, 38% of their contacts with sources involve PR practitioners, significantly more often than senior sources (26%), non seniors and lay people (27%) and expert sources (9%). PR practitioners were characterized as maintaining the most intensive contacts with journalists: 85% of them were regulars (contacted at least once a month) compared to 46-66% among other sources. ( $\chi^2_8=357.587$ ;  $p<0.001$ )

***Journalists' evaluations of PR.*** A significant negative correlation was found between reliance on PR and items' importance ( $r=-0.14$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) and interest ( $r=-0.168$ ,  $p<0.001$ ).

***Heavy users of PR.*** Three groups were identified as heavy PR users: Younger reporters (up to 12 years in journalism), reporters with more than one news beat, and radio and online reporters, who work under the most pressing deadlines. Journalists in all three groups evaluated their items as less important and interesting compared to other journalists, and in most measures the difference was significant.



*Employment of compensatory practices.* Significant negative correlation was found between the reliance on PR and the employment of cross-checking ( $r=-0.09$ ,  $p=0.007$ ) and reliance on additional sources ( $r=-0.19$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), however the space allocated to PR contributions was similar to senior sources (40%), although the former are contacted much more often than the latter.

### **Conclusion**

To explore how often journalists rely on PR in times of change, work overload and accelerating news cycles, and the prospects that this reliance may diminish in the future, this paper juxtaposes reporters' evaluations and actual practices in items that involved PR compared to other types of sources.

Findings show a clear dissonance between practice and evaluation. While PR is the most prevalent source, the items they are involved in are the least valued for their levels of importance and interest. This dissonance was significantly more acute among the heavy PR users; multi-beat, internet and radio reporters, and younger journalists, probably due to their limited access to alternative sources, as no generational difference of ideologies toward PR were identified (Wilson & Supa, 2013).

Despite the dissonance, when PR is involved in the item, the working process involves less cross-checking and less reliance on other sources. Yet the item space allocated was somewhat limited, considering the frequency of the contact with PR practitioners, compared to senior sources. This means that journalists do very little to mitigate the dissonance of reliance on PR, probably due to the high 'reward' of the PR subsidy, which is especially valuable for the heavy users of PR, due to their extreme pressures.

These findings have far-reaching implications on the standards of public information and the prospects for change in reliance on PR:

- PR infiltrates the news, despite the limited interest and importance of its information, affecting mainly reporters under increased pressure.
- News products that rely on PR are inferior in their source diversity and the level of skepticism invested in their reporting, while according to earlier studies, their involvement in the news remains invisible to audiences (Bakker et al., 2013; Reich, 2010).
- Since the reliance on PR is instrumental and half-hearted, as manifested in the lower evaluation of the items they are involved in, reduction of pressure may lead to a decreased reliance on PR in the future.
- News organizations wishing to decrease reliance of their reporters on PR may consider the following: 1. Reduce the number of beats per reporter. 2. Try minimizing layoffs of senior reporters. 3. In online and radio: release at least some of their reporters from the pressure of immediate deadlines.

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## **Patriotism in online journalism: Is it the same lady?**

Abstract

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There is an abundance of empirical evidence regarding the emergence of journalistic patriotic behavior during times of national crisis, and in military confrontations in particular. This evidence comes from various democratic countries in different parts of the world and in different points of time. In most cases, this shift from the traditional professional model of journalistic work – mostly based on objectivity, neutrality and impartiality – is welcomed by the public who considers the patriotic turn as an obvious and expected behavior of journalists when their country is involved in a military conflict or in any other kind of national crisis.

The phenomenon of patriotic behavior of professional journalists has been investigated mostly with regards to journalistic work in traditional media: print, radio and television. Accordingly, the responses of the public /consumers to such behavior of journalists were studied mainly through surveys and interviews conducted sometime after the event had occurred and after its coverage. Since journalism in recent years has changed its nature and rapidly moved towards the new media and the Internet in particular, the questions that the current study addresses are related to the coverage of national crises in the new media.

This study has twofold goals: first, we ask whether there are signs – and if yes what are they - of patriotic journalism in the coverage of a military activity on Internet news websites; do journalists working in the new media act differently than their counterparts from the traditional media in time of national crisis? In other words, do they act more professionally or do they follow a patriotic mode of action? Are objective and neutral coverage still seen as professional duties by online journalists? Second, we investigate the users' comments to a patriotic journalistic coverage. In this respect, one have to keep in mind that users' comments are immediate and therefore much more authentic than the delayed responses of the traditional media consumers. A third interesting issue – that was not directly addressed in this study but is tightly related to the other two – is whether online journalists, who are immediately exposed to users' comments regarding their reports, change their

behavior following these comments. It should be noticed that such changes in journalistic work might occur only several minutes after the first version of the report was aired.

In order to study these issues with regards to the new media, we first had to address the main features of patriotic journalism as they appear in traditional media. In a nut shell, these are the main features which were identified in many previous studies with regards to traditional media: (a) journalists adopt and present the governmental frame of the crisis and refrain from suggesting alternative reasonable frame(s); (b) journalists express solidarity with their nation/country and abandon the traditional detachment from the subjects of their coverage; by that, journalists do not behave in an objective and neutral manner; and (c) in their reports about the crisis, journalists do not fairly present the other side of the conflict ("the enemy"), its narrative and its positions. By employing these three features while reporting on a national crisis, journalists favor their national identity over their professional one. Several studies demonstrated that after the first (however undefined) period of time of the crisis, journalists return to their professional identity and act accordingly.

Our case study was the journalistic coverage of "Operation Pillar of Defense" (in Hebrew: operation "Amud Anan") which was conducted by the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) in Gaza during November 14<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> 2012. We investigated three central Israeli websites, which at that time had the highest public exposure: Walla! (40.9%); Ynet (34.9%); and Mako (10.1%).<sup>1</sup> The study consists of three planned research phases; however, during our work, we added a fourth phase: (1) in order to learn about the formal (governmental) framing of the military action, we analyzed three official texts: the first was the Prime Minister's announcement regarding the governmental decision to launch a military operation; the second was a speech given by the Minister of Defense in which he explained the operation's rationale; and the third was a written press release published by the IDF spokesman; (2) In order to realize whether the three websites echoed the governmental frame of the operation or suggested alternative one(s), we analyzed 126 articles that were published during the first three days after the three official texts had been published.<sup>2</sup> (3) In order to trace the users' views regarding the journalists' attitude towards the governmental framing of the event, as well as their views regarding the coverage of the operation in general, we analyzed all the users' comments to these 126 articles. There were 8,344 such comments, but only 269 of them

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<sup>1</sup> according to the Institute for the Study of New Media, Politics and Society in the School of Communication at Ariel University Center

<sup>2</sup> These 126 articles are out of 200 articles which include opinion and commentary columns which were excluded from the sample. Of the 126, 37 articles were taken from Mako, 48 from Ynet, and 41 from Walla!



(3.5%) directly addressed the way in which the journalists covered the event. because of this small number, we added a fourth phase: (4) we analyzed the discourse of all these comments in order to find whether the users merely followed the governmental framing of the operation or did they address alternative frames.

The findings were quite clear in all phases. The content analysis of the three governmental texts reveals a clear and predicted framing of "we (the Israelis) are the good and they (the Hamas) are the evil". This frame justifies the military operation based on phrases such as<sup>3</sup>: "Israel does not want this war", "we attack targets that are terror bases against Israeli civilians", "the Hamas harms the two sides: it launches missiles against Israeli children while hiding behind Palestinian children", etc. Then, we found that a vast majority of the 126 articles identified in the three investigated news websites followed the framing of the government regarding the military operation. In 99 of these articles (78.5%) we found that the journalists echoed the government terminology of justification for the operation. Only 10 articles (less than 8%) directly addressed the other side's civilian casualties, a topic which was not addressed in the three governmental texts. As to the users' comments, most of them (5464 comments = 65.5%) followed the governmental framing of the event, while only 12% (1006 comments) criticized the government, the journalists or the website. What was most interesting for us was that these readers' criticism was not directed by alternative framing of the crisis, such as understanding the Hamas' justification for launching rockets on Israeli targets, or suggesting that the Israeli government could make the Hamas' motivation for launching rockets not relevant anymore by changing its policy towards Gaza. Rather, most users' protest against the government was for its too soft reaction against the Hamas. The critics of the websites were held the view that the journalists undermine the national solidarity and the capability of the IDF soldiers to act freely in order to achieve the national goals. We found only few users' comments addressing the humanitarian aspect of injuring civilians in Gaza by the IDF (149 comments out of 1092 comments [13.5%] on articles that addressed the general issue of strikes against civilians).

Based on these findings, we conclude that – at least according to this case study – online journalism aligns with the traditional attitude towards patriotism in the coverage of military conflicts. This is true with regards to two main features of patriotic journalism: adopting the governmental framing of the crisis, and avoiding a fair (objective?) coverage of the other side. Furthermore, this study findings point to the fact that Internet users approve the

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<sup>3</sup> All these quotes are free translation from Hebrew, done by the authors

patriotic attitude of journalists during times of national crisis. Both findings – regarding the journalists and the users – demonstrate that online journalism follows the patriotic behavior and expectations that was empirically found with regards to the traditional media and its consumers.

## THE JOURNALIST'S TOUCH

### HOW SOURCE FRAMES ARE TRANSFORMED INTO NEWS FRAMES

When statements become news, they change. To be part of journalistic news coverage, official reports, elite comments, press releases, and other sources are subjected to a range of transformations designed to carve out the “relevant news” and render them meaningful for their audiences: Selected elements are extracted from their original context, and re-inserted into a news context – the news frame (Tuchman, 1978). While news frames have often been described and measured, existing analyses have mostly looked at news frames from a news audience’s perspective: They have investigated how journalists present a world structured by conflicts, horserace competitions, human stories, moral scandal, etc. (e.g., Iyengar, 1991; Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). Other studies have addressed when and why PR materials and politicians’ strategic frames are picked up and forwarded by the media (e.g., Sheafer & Gabay, 2009). Between the selection of elite statements as “relevant news”, and the presentation within a specific news frame, however, gapes a wide gulf that has rarely been addressed (Brüggemann, 2014): How does the journalist’s touch transform source frames into news frames? Somewhere between the cliffs of news selection and the shores of news framing, this paper addresses what we consider the essence of journalism as a profession (de Vreese, 2005): The alchemy of turning sources into news.

In order to investigate the reframing of information selected by journalists for publication, we analyze the news coverage of the kidnapping and murder of three Israeli and one Palestinian teenagers in June/July 2014: We select official statements by both Palestinian and Israeli sources that have made the front pages at least twice in the Palestinian and Israeli media. We then juxtapose these statements with all discernable (literal or closely paraphrased) representations in the Israeli (*Haaretz*, *Yedioth Ahronot*, *Israel Hayom*), Palestinian (*Al-Quds*, *Al-Hayat Al-Jadida*, *Felesteen*), and international news (US: *New York Times*, *USA Today*; UK: *The Guardian*, *Daily Mail*; Germany: *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, *Bild*). Next, we qualitatively analyze each dyad of source- and news-text to identify journalistic selections, additions, and transformations applied to the original content. Specifically, we compare the frames constructed by the respective sources with the resulting news frames, scrutinizing frame components carried over into the coverage as well as transformations applied to the selected content. To

systematize and interpret the findings, we apply an analytic grid based on a variant of Entman's (1993) frame definition, which distinguishes four frame dimensions: The definition of the concern in focus, an evaluative appraisal of this concern, attributed causes and responsibility, and future projections elucidating both what is expected to happen next, and what should be done about it. Applying the same structural perspective to both source and news frames, we trace how source frame elements lose, maintain, or change function and context during the transformation, and how coherence is re-instated through the addition of further information in the news frame. The paper argues that source frames can be taken over in four general ways in the news:

1. Source frames can provide the narrative structure of the resulting news story, resulting in limited and generally supportive transformation. Most or all dimensions of the source frame are taken over by the news frame, which elaborates on some aspects or shifts the emphasis, but essentially transports the source frame unscathed into the coverage. For instance, *Al-Hayat Al-Jadida* mostly summarizes and re-presents Abbas' comments about denouncing the kidnappings (19.06.14); *Bild* structures its article closely based on Netanyahu's statement after the bodies of the three Israeli teenagers were found, adding textual and visual illustrations (01.07.14); and *USA Today* cites Netanyahu that " Hamas will pay", continuing to list the ways how they are targeted by Israeli policy, police, and military operations (01.07.14).
2. Source frames can provide the focus, or part of the focus of the news frame: Shifting perspective, the news frames the fact that a specific source frame has been provided, and contextualizes the statement: News may explain the background of the source frame (elaboration on the causal attribution), or debate possible consequences of the framed statement (elaboration on the future projection), resulting in an analytic news frame (consequences frame, causal responsibility frames; Iyengar, 1991). For instance, the *New York Times* focus on Netanyahu's demands toward Abbas to explain their background and analyze likely implications (17.06.14). Analytic frames that attribute tactical motivations as causes and project victory or defeat as relevant consequences result in "strategy" and "horserace" frames (Lawrence, 2000) – for instance, explaining events as part of Netanyahu's efforts at sabotaging the Palestinian Unity government in *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (01.07.14). News may critically evaluate or endorse the statement and present specific conclusions for responding to it (elaborations on the evaluative and treatment dimensions;

morality/scandal frame, treatment responsibility frame; Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000) – e.g., Harel’s commentary in *Haaretz* challenging the governments’ blaming Hamas (16.06.14). When multiple source frames are reproduced as focal concern of the news frame, a conflict frame can arise which then explains, projects, appraises, and suggests reactions not so much to one specific statement, but to the clash of colliding views upon the same reality (e.g., a section entitled “the propaganda battle” in *Haaretz* (15.06.14)). In each of these cases, the source frame is retained more or less intact, but summarized and reduced to its key tenets. Its original meaning is carried over, while – depending on the applied transformations – the overall drift of the article may deviate considerably.

3. Source frames can figure as causes, consequences, or evaluative components of a larger news frame: The news article focuses on something outside the reported source statement, but the latter is presented as relevant for understanding the text’s focal concern. Often, reported statements serve to pass judgment on covered events or issues, enabling journalists to evaluate without assuming an explicit position herself: For instance, *Israel Hayom* cites Netanyahu to add the evaluation as terrorist act to a primary depiction of the kidnappings as tragedy (15.06.14); *The Guardian* cites Netanyahu to condemn the murder of the teenagers, thus avoiding a departure from its distanced, professional stance (01.07.14). Also commonly, reported sources are used to underline the dramatic consequences of covered news, for instance, by announcing drastic reactions or important policy changes: *Al-Quds* runs a story on US and international pressure on Israel, presenting the fact that Netanyahu and Abbas talked directly on the phone as one important consequence (17.06.14). Using source statements themselves as causes for focal news is somewhat less common – for instance, *Felesteen* presents a statement by an Israeli Arab MP as cause for harsh Israeli attacks, which are in focus (18.06.14). However, source statements presented as reactions to news often indirectly contribute causes by assigning responsibility and blame for the covered events, addressing both frame dimensions. In each of these cases, source frames are commonly truncated, retaining only those frame dimensions utilized by the news frame. The article’s meaning is far from the source’s initial intention.

4. Finally, source frames can appear as background information beyond the main news frame. Such uses, which are typically mentioned in passing and severely reduced if not mutilated, can take a huge variety of forms which defy categorization. For instance, *Yedioth Ahronoth* cites Netanyahu blaming Abbas to append a small political context to an essentially human-interest framed story about the abduction (15.06.14); the *Daily Mail* refers to the release of a phone recording only as an opener to justify the moment of reporting, while the article covers ongoing escalations in the Middle East (02.07.14). However, these news articles share that very little of the source frame's original meaning is carried over to the news.

The study sheds light on the specific journalistic contributions to framing the news, shifting the focus from the input and output to the practice of journalism. Thereby, it creates a bridge between the vast, but mostly descriptive range of news framing content analyses and those studies focusing on the provision and selection of frames. This bridge, crucially, enables importing research on journalistic cultures, newsroom practices, and other resources suitable for explaining *when* and *why* journalists apply certain frames to present the news: We can distinguish which practices of journalistic transformation result in what kinds of frames, and evaluate how such re-framing of news sources contributes to, or detracts from, the unique function of journalism in society.

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## ***Computational Visibility: How Algorithms Are Reshaping News Knowledge Production in the Digital Age***

As society's chief producers of news knowledge, journalists are broadly socialized to select salient information that the public needs to know. Journalists once had primary responsibility for *news visibility* -- the selection process of elevating information into the public consciousness. Consumers within today's news environment, however, no longer directly depend upon the active selection of information by newswriters. Given environmental shifts in news consumption, it is necessary to re-conceptualize how editorial selectivity plays into the process of news knowledge production.

Algorithms -- computational structures that rank and sort news knowledge -- are restructuring the process of news visibility by actively automating editorial selection. Such mechanization stands at odds with how media practitioners have historically viewed their role as news knowledge producers. At the micro level, the acceleration of algorithms into newswriting has led to a collision of cultures between programmers and journalists. To articulate this tension, this theoretical analysis introduces the concept of *computational visibility* -- the hybrid editorial practice of humans and machines filtering content. This synthesis also outlines a typology of how algorithms operate in the service of news, and identifies how automated editorial selectivity has altered the occupational roles and routines of newsroom practitioners.

### **JOURNALISTS AS NEWS KNOWLEDGE PRODUCERS**

According to Chicago School sociologist Robert Ezra Park, all knowledge -- including news knowledge -- can be placed along a continuum (1940). Information with which citizens possess a surface-level understanding or an "acquaintance with" rests at one endpoint of the spectrum (p. 669). Knowledge acquisition, in this case, occurs as part of environmental interactions. On the other end of the spectrum, is "knowledge about" -- complex information requiring significant study, skill and time to fully understand (p. 669). Technical and scientific works, for instance, would best be classified as "knowledge about." Park placed news as a form of knowledge at the midpoint between "acquaintance with" and "knowledge about." News does not require the same level of cognitive complexity as scientific knowledge, Park wrote. On the other hand, he argued that news knowledge acquisition does not occur by mere "acquaintance" -- for citizens in Park's day had to actively seek out explanations of news events.

For journalists, the extraordinary weight and responsibility to be society's central news knowledge producer is managed through the routinization of daily newswriting (Tunstall, 1971; Tuchman, 1978; Fishman, 1980). In practice, the transmission of such production practices is linked to newsroom socialization, through which journalists are indoctrinated into both the culture and thinking of newswriting (Singer, 2004). Journalists -- particularly leaders within the newsroom -- have traditionally controlled information entering the sphere of production through routines of editorial selection.

## NEWS VISIBILITY AND THE AMBIENT NEWS ENVIRONMENT

Park's original conception of news knowledge was largely predicated upon notions of strong editorial control (Park, 1940). Journalists, according to Park, are needed to focus the "public mind," which is "wavering, unsteady and easily distracted" (1940, p. 676). Historically, newswriters have selected the "objects of attention" that have reached audiences (McCombs & Shaw, 1993, p. 62). By choosing information to be highlighted, journalists and editors have -- at the same time -- made purposeful choices on what is excluded from public view (Fishman, 1982). *News visibility* -- epitomized by the theoretical constructs of gatekeeping (White, 1950, Shoemaker, 1991; Singer, 2014) gatewatching (Bruns, 2005) and agenda setting (McCombs, 2005) -- has historically encompassed routines of news knowledge production that highlight or shadow particular pieces of information from public view. But in the digital age, former conceptions of news visibility no longer fully explain the selection processes behind news knowledge production.

The explanatory power of news visibility is most significantly challenged by shifts within the larger environment in which news knowledge production occurs. Today's audiences - - who are constantly tethered to the web -- graze for digital content throughout the day. In dynamic, data-rich environments, users now monitor a steady stream of news knowledge, which encircles the consumer at all times (Hermida, 2010; Berry, 2011). Users expect just-in-time information that aligns with their habits of consumption, which have grown increasingly fragmented (Hills, Petit & Jarrett, 2013). *Ambient journalism*, as conceived by scholar Alfred Hermida, occurs in this "always-on" environment, in which the user is continuously surrounded with a general awareness of events and an *overabundance* of information (Hermida, 2010, p. 301; Sheller, 2014; Roberts & Koliska, 2014).

The ambient news environment starkly differs from the conceptualization of news knowledge articulated by Park. News knowledge today more closely approaches what Park termed "acquaintance with" -- knowledge that we stumble upon as part of our everyday engagement with the world. The sheer volume of content flooding into the news consumer's path, however, could lead to informational overload (Berry, 2011). As a result, today's audiences require expanded assistance from journalists in navigating the informational tide.

In this data-rich environment of omnipresent information, former theories of news visibility no longer adequately describe journalistic practice. Newswriters are no longer truly "selecting" the content that reaches the end consumer, but are filtering the outputs to align with user preferences and interests. Increasingly, editorial selection is a hybrid process integrating the shared intelligence of human journalists, programmers and machines.

## ALGORITHMS AS NEWS KNOWLEDGE FILTERS

Algorithms -- computational structures that are oriented toward step-by-step problem solving (Anderson, 2011; Diakopoulos, 2014; Gillespie, 2014) -- are increasingly



structuring the ambient news environment, providing a sense of order to the disjointed way that users consume news in the digital age. By their nature, algorithms are arranged to follow methodical, intricate patterns without sustained human engagement (Anderson, 2011; Diakopoulos, 2014; Napoli, 2014; Gillespie, 2014). Algorithms, in this light, actively shape the information the consumer receives (Hamilton, Karahalios, Sandvig & Eslami, 2014; Tufekci, 2014).

In the context of journalism, algorithms can be arranged into three primary categories. First, algorithms can provide order as *indexes* that organize news knowledge within broader taxonomies (MacCormick, 2012). Through processes of machine-learning, algorithms actively understand how pieces of information are connected, thereby mapping news knowledge together. Second, algorithms can act as *recommenders*, aggregating the personal insights of individual users and highlighting news knowledge that coincides with personal interests and desires (Berry, 2011). And third, algorithms can act as independent *news knowledge producers*, creating content on their own (Bunz, 2014). Within milliseconds, pieces of “robot journalism” can surface online, publishing detailed accounts of stock market transactions, sports contest recaps or up-to-the-minute election results without the involvement of a human reporter (Clerwall, 2014).

To many journalists, the act of automating newswork equates to a loss of editorial sovereignty, in which algorithms act as a “stand-in for journalistic judgment” (Anderson, 2011, p. 540; van Dalen, 2012; Gillespie, 2014; Bunz, 2014). As a result, tension exists between human journalists, programmers and the automated structures that are reformulating occupational roles and routines within newsrooms.

## **TOWARD COMPUTATIONAL VISIBILITY**

Broadly speaking, it is unclear to most journalists exactly how algorithms filter news knowledge. Globally, incumbent reporters have not been socialized into computational thinking, lacking the “knowledge about” or scientific expertise needed to understand how these structures operate (Royal, 2010; Parasie & Dagiral 2012; Anderson, 2013; Diakopoulos, 2014; Karlsen & Stavelin, 2014). Without direct knowledge, practitioners have generally marked the inner workings of news algorithms as opaque or “strangely magical” (Berry, 2011, p. 7). This oft-used “black box” metaphor in newsrooms (Anderson, 2011, p. 540), however, ignores the fact that finite, human inputs are prerequisites for any algorithmic outputs (Parasie & Dagiral, 2012; Hills, Petit & Jarrett, 2013; Bunz, 2014; Diakopoulos, 2014; Ananny & Crawford, 2014). Within newsrooms, programmers, coders and designers must make purposeful choices of exclusion and inclusion when calibrating an algorithm.

The emergent process of *computational visibility* -- the collaborative human crafting of algorithmic inputs designed to filter news knowledge outputs -- is redefining roles and routines for journalists. As automation accelerates, newswriters -- from computational and non-computational backgrounds -- will be increasingly required to work together in dissecting these algorithms, understanding how each piece operates in filtering news knowledge and shaping news visibility. For many reporters, computational visibility may

mandate a rewiring of journalistic practice, in that, “news itself should be viewed as computer-processable data, and not as a story hidden in the data” (Parasie & Dagiral, 2012, p. 10). Journalism schools, which are aggressively adapting curricula, will play a key role in this re-articulation of newswork, as will philanthropic funding for experimentation to support collaborative, intrapreneurial newsroom projects to bring newswriters together. Future research is needed to identify best practices that unify human efforts (of editorial writers, data visualization experts, programmers, coders) with the growing intelligence of computational structures.

As news visibility migrates from human to machine selectivity, algorithms are concurrently reorienting the ways audiences search, process and acquire news knowledge. And as the ambient news environment grows increasingly automated, newsrooms will need to invest significant energies into understanding and implementing the processes of computational visibility into the rhythms, roles and routines of digital journalists.

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## Algorithmic Journalism: Concept and consequences

“We think it is neither likely nor desirable that journalistic content is determined by algorithms” (DJV 2014). Contrary to this assessment by the German Federation of Journalists concerning the (non)influence of algorithms on journalism, “software has become our interface to the world, to others, to our memory and our imagination – a universal language through which the world speaks, and a universal engine on which the world runs” (Manovich 2012: 2).

While computerization historically shows that software is taking over routine tasks (Frey/Osborne 2013; Autor/Dorn 2013), the phenomenon of algorithmic selection as the technical and functional core of a multitude of algorithmic applications (Latzer et al. 2015) is leading to fundamental social, economic and political changes in journalism and underlines the importance of computation as a central element of news production in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. As Pavlik notes “[j]ournalism has always been shaped by technology” (2000: 229), however, novel transformations are identified at the level of information search (e.g. Google), algorithmically-driven news recommendation (e.g. reddit.com), news aggregation (Google News) and – of particular relevance for this paper – on the level of automated content creation, editing and publishing (see Mayer-Schönberger 2013; Steiner 2012; Anderson 2012/2013; Napoli 2014; van Dalen 2012; Clerwall 2014). Therefore, these algorithmic applications must be considered as a major influence on what scholars identify as “a silent marginalization of professional journalism within public communication” (for an overview, see Donsbach 2014: 661), where the processes of media production and consumption are increasingly being automated (Gynnild 2014; Mager 2012; Diakopoulos 2014; Chu et al. 2011; Lerman/Gosh 2014). These changes are reflected in the fact that algorithms are continuously acting as problem-solving mechanisms and are increasingly assigning relevance, reducing complexity and are taking over orientation tasks (Latzer et al. 2015) in different stages of journalistic work to enable an institutional-like scope of action (Napoli 2014). Therefore, it is necessary to discuss the role of algorithms in the journalistic work flow.

Firstly, this paper reconsiders and differentiates existing concepts of computation and software-based automation in journalism as well as the role of algorithms due to the fact that they are frequently labelled differently in academic literature. Gynnild’s (2014) notion of “Computational exploration in journalism” underlines the fact that it is uncertain “what a sustainable stable merge of computing and journalism will be” (Stavelin 2013: 27). Terms such as data journalism or data-driven journalism (Gray/Bounguegru/Chambers 2012), computational journalism (Hamilton/Turner 2009; Flew et al. 2012), journalism as programming, computer-assisted reporting

(Mayo/Leshner 2000), programming as journalism and programmer journalism (overview see Lewis/Usher 2013), big data journalism, robotic or algorithmic journalism (van Dalen 2012; Anderson 2012; Clerwall 2014) have all contributed to the general conception of what is happening at the intersection of new technology and journalism. Automation processes in general (e.g. from handwriting to printing) have historically always been part of news production routines. Consequentially, this analysis positions the new algorithmic processes at the input (accessing, selecting data/news), throughput (processing/editing/assigning relevance) and output (distributing/publishing) levels of journalism (also see Latzer et al. 2015; Lewis/Westlund 2014).

With the emergence of algorithmic content creation applications, journalism has reached an unprecedented level of automation. A recent report of an earthquake in Los Angeles was not written by a human journalist but was automatically generated by an algorithm that successfully replaced the primary journalistic tasks of researching, writing and publishing (Beaujon 2014). Media organisations such as Reuters, AP, Forbes, USA Today, Bloomberg, the LA Times or the Berliner Morgenpost have started integrating and experimenting with algorithms as content creators (Poynter 2014; Meedia 2014). Companies such as Automated Insights, Narrative Science (USA) or AXEA (GER) are expanding their business models to journalistic content creation. For the first time journalists are “migrating from a direct to an indirect role” (Napoli 2014: 350) or rather an obsolete role as media companies start rationalizing the human factor in journalistic news production. When algorithms become artificially intelligent and self-learning, they are not only able to create texts and news but can also decide when and where to publish.

This recent development is summarized under the concept of algorithmic journalism (Anderson 2012) and is here – for the first time – defined, distinguished, embedded and discussed within the framework and development of algorithmic content creation applications (e.g. for business reports, web analytics, fitness tracking or music composition) as a part of algorithmic selection on the internet and in relation to other concepts and the role of algorithms. To do so, this paper integrates and theoretically discusses algorithmic journalism and its impact on journalism from an institutional perspective. Following Kiefer (2010: 163) who defines journalism as a central and essential institution for democracy, and in the light of various different practical and theoretical approaches to the definition of “journalism” (Neuberger 2002; Neuberger/Kapern 2013; Malik 2004; Meier 2011), it is necessary to define algorithmic journalism based on an analysis of the basic functions, codes and norms of journalism. Consequently, algorithmic journalism comprises formal or informal routines, norms, rules, or behavioural guidelines that provide a framework and offer opportunities for coordination and increase the opportunities for individual and collec-

tive benefits (Jepperson 1991). The paper therefore includes and scrutinizes the levels of research, selection and publishing of relevant topics as well as the observation and creation of a public sphere that provide guidance through the construction of reality for a mass audience (cf. Meier 2011: 13).

Based on this institutional conception, algorithmic journalism is here defined as the (semi)-automated process of algorithmic content creation by the selection of electronic data from private or public databases (input), the assignment of relevance of pre-selected or non-selected data characteristics, the processing and structuring of the relevant data sets to a semantic structure (throughput), and the publishing of the final text on an online or offline platform with a certain scope (output). Whereas algorithms in other concepts are mainly used as tools for research or storytelling and the journalist is considered to be in control of the content, algorithmic journalism starts to change this power relations by enabling more or less independent content creation.

Thus algorithmic journalism has to be strictly distinguished from aggregated content creation (e.g. summy) and content aggregators (e.g. Google News) because they lack the element of original content creation. The assignment of relevance to certain topics as well as the observation and creation of a public sphere as a journalistic norm is strongly dependent on the quality and the source of private and/or public databases as the starting point of algorithmic content creation. Big Data is therefore the journalistic currency of algorithmic journalism and the functions of selecting, researching and publishing for a mass audience are increasingly provided by algorithms. It is argued here that if these premises are met and communicated to the public in a comprehensive, timely and transparent manner, algorithmic journalism can fulfil the functions, codes and norms of journalism. Dependent on this institutional functionalization, algorithmic journalism can be an addition to existing news and niche markets with highly specialized content (e.g. football matches in lower leagues, stock market news). Secondly, automated content production, research and editing may be seen as an opportunity that relieves journalists of routine tasks and allows them to devote more resources to time-intensive publication forms or investigative research. On the other hand, algorithmic journalism can also be perceived as a threat to journalists because human labour may increasingly be rationalized. Lastly, these technological developments and eroding boundaries between humans and machines lead to ethical questions concerning authorship and the role of journalists in public service or the issue of technologies as actants in news work.

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## THE VIRALITY OF NEWS IN SWITZERLAND – A CRITICAL PERSPECTIVE

### Summary

This paper looks at the consequences of information journalism based on the viral dissemination of news in social networks. Many publishers currently see this viral spread as a magic formula and central innovation in the context of *reinventing journalism* and as a viable alternative to the paid-content strategy. In contrast to the latter, which tends to create paywalls, and which in addition to advertising revenues continues to depend mainly on income from the sales of offline and online subscriptions, the viral strategy promises to assure success by attracting substantial advertising revenues thanks to a wide circulation. Moreover, its proponents expect this wider circulation to be realized predominantly by the sharing of journalistic contents via the social media channels. However, in view of the current media crisis, they consider this wider-coverage strategy too strongly as an unavoidable economic option for online journalism without reflecting on the social consequences of such a development. On the basis of empirical data, this paper shows firstly which Swiss news providers mainly pursue such a strategy, and which media contents in particular are spread virally. In a second part, the paper reflects major problematic developments in this context: media consumers who perceive news exclusively via the social media channels are confronted more strongly by entertaining soft-news contents than those who view the broader news offer directly on news sites. In addition, this *unbundling* of media consumption by digitalized information journalism undermines the orientation-setting function of the information media.

### State of research

The significance of social networks and the viral spread of news as a success factor for online journalism is increasingly a topic of scientific debate. A study by the Pew Research Center (2014) showed that the number of people in the USA who read media content via social media channels such as Twitter or Facebook has risen strongly. A UK study showed that Facebook is the most important channel of this selective media consumption (Newman 2011, pp. 16f). Within the scope of an online survey, Hermida, Fletcher, Korell and Logan (2012) showed the increased significance of news consumption via the social media in Canada. A US study by Hong (2012) of about 337 media titles also showed that those media which increasingly use Twitter as a distribution channel generate greater user growth than those which do not do so. In contrast, more critical studies which place the democratic functions of the information media at the center of their considerations warn of a boom in online metrics journalism, pointing out that marketing considerations could lead to the disappearance of relevant social topics in favor of stories which can be sold and taken up by the media (Tandoc, 2014; Tandoc & Thomas, 2014). In addition, the personalized news consumption via the social media does not necessarily serve the needs of its readership. Thus Groot Kormelink and Costera Meijer (2014) showed in a study that readers are not necessarily interested in this form of media consumption.

The question of viral spread is also seen against the background of the increasing use of mobile devices

as strategically significant for the survival of the news media in Switzerland. However, the discussion is conducted principally within the media. Scientific studies on this topic are still a rarity. Providers such as BuzzFeed or the Huffington Post, who depend strongly on the viral dissemination of news in social networks, are considered as examples to follow. Thus Marc Walder, CEO of Ringier, one of Switzerland's largest media companies, recently warned in a longer article in *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* that Europe is slipping behind the USA and social media channels should be used much more strongly to optimize the reach of media coverage ("The five-point plan for the future of the media", FAZ 30.9.2014). At the end of 2013 and the beginning of 2014, new widely available Swiss news offerings which make increasing use of the extended coverage achieved via the social media also went online, namely blickamabend.ch and watson.ch.

### **Research questions / methodology**

This paper focuses on three research questions:

- 1.) How great is the significance of the social media channels for the news site traffic of the Swiss information media? Which sites are principally accessed directly? Do these sites focus on information or entertainment journalism? Which news sites are increasingly being accessed via linked media contents in the social networks? How does this compare with internationally well-known media titles?
- 2.) Which topics gain entry to the social networks by going viral? Are hard news (politics, economy, culture) or rather soft news articles (human interest stories, sport, celebrity news; in general: entertainment) virally disseminated?
- 3.) What are the consequences of online journalism depending increasingly on the social media strategy and thus promoting the unbundling of media consumption?

To answer the first question, this paper uses an analysis tool from SimilarWeb.com, a web analytics company with an international scope of operations. With the aid of this tool, the routes taken by users to reach a particular website or an online information medium can be quantified and the importance of viral spread in this respect can be determined, i.e. the way in which social networks act as feed sources for the use of online information media. The data of SimilarWeb.com are based on a self-described representative panel study of Internet users from over 200 countries.

The answers to the second research question are based on the data from the Swiss analysis platform themenpuls.ch, which is freely accessible. Themenpuls.ch shows how strongly and via which channels (Facebook, Twitter, Google+ etc.) articles are virally disseminated or highlighted on the 29 largest Swiss news platforms.

### **Findings**

It became apparent that the social media play an above-average role as a feed-in source, especially in the lower-quality tabloid and free media, with a strong accent on episodic soft-news journalism (exception: Blick.ch). Thus about 20% of the articles fed-in for users of blickamabend.ch are disseminated via the social networks, whereas users access the news site directly in only about 40% of cases. The social media-induced access is lower on 20minuten.ch, but is still high at 7%. The even greater importance of viral spread in social networks as a feed-in source is seen on watson.ch. About 30% of its users are channeled via social networks (as against 47% direct access via watson.ch). The

effect of a strategy is thus seen on watson.ch which is oriented particularly strongly to viral spread as a success indicator, and this key figure is considered even more important than the online click rates. Compared to the news sites named above, direct access to the better quality online offerings with a greater focus on information journalism, like the subscription newspapers tagesanzeiger.ch or nzz.ch, is significantly higher (in some two thirds of all cases), whereas viral spread induced by the social media as a feed-in source has so far played merely a subordinate role. In summary therefore, it seems that the social media play a major role as feed-in channels especially for the entertainment-centered lower-quality news sites.

The second part of the analysis, namely the question of the significance of hard-news articles in the linking of media articles in the social networks shows a clear picture: 72% of the articles have the character of soft news with a focus on entertainment. Only 28% of them relate to more relevant hard-news content.

## Conclusions

The gate-keeping function of the media is coming under pressure from an increasingly digitalized media. Firstly because the number of market players has increased, and secondly because the viral spread of online news or the selective consumption of information media via social media channels, RSS feeds and search engines means that the consumers increasingly determine which contents they are presented with, and not the media titles. This change in media consumption from a push-mode in which the media agenda is imposed on consumers is becoming a pull-process in which free choice prevails: it is often falsely identified one-sidedly with a gain in freedom of media consumption. However, this view neglects the fact that the traditional general-interest media based on professional remits within clearly delimited sectors provide orientation on a daily basis by means of thematic structuring based on these remits. This form of journalism is more strongly at the service of the public interest and not of the consumer. Journalism within the scope of media organizations and individual media titles plays a central role in democracies. It not only creates sustainability by using specialists to cover and analyze relevant and highly sensitive topics over a longer period of time, but also guarantees that the public awareness is characterized by more relevant hard news in addition to entertainment topics. A breakup of this structure goes hand in hand with a weakening of its orientation function.

However, the more that an extended coverage is generated via the social media, the more are we seeing an unbundling of journalism and the more do the classical information media get sucked into the wake of entertainment needs. On the one hand, consumers now perceive a news brand only selectively via individual shared media articles which are fed to their networks via their peers. This in turn increases the danger of *echo chambers*, i.e. self-reflecting opinions that propagate by a process of resonance. On the other hand, the social networks boost the significance of entertainment. After all, the communications in social networks are more strongly community-oriented, particularistic, personalized and focused on entertainment (analogously to everyday gossip communications) (cf. Imhof 2014). In addition, readers who access content via social media channels or search engines spend a much shorter time on the websites than readers who access them directly.

Overall, the social networks are speeding up the erosion of quality in the media arena. Firstly because they give prominence above all to news sites focusing on episodic entertainment journalism, and secondly because those news-site elements are fed predominantly into the social networks and virally processed which have the character of soft news. Thus the more strongly that journalism is oriented to such viral spread characteristics, the more likely are soft news and entertainment to become increasingly important in the media arena.

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### **Reciprocal Me Journalists and the new engagement**

While the participatory potential of users to shape information production and journalistic processes has been widely touted for at least a decade (Gillmor, 2004; Jenkins, 2006; Shirky, 2008), the degree to which journalists have adopted those participatory practices and the norms behind them is notoriously uneven. Even as some news organizations are taking on new initiatives to open their work up to unprecedented degrees, user participation continues at many news organizations to be subjected to the norms of professional control and gatekeeping, practiced essentially as they always have been (Domingo et al., 2008; Jönsson & Örnebring, 2011; Thurman & Hermida, 2010). Many journalists have come to see openness and user participation as necessary elements of the news process, with potential for democratizing discourse and for users to connect with news organizations and each other (Lewis & Usher, 2013; Reich, 2011; Robinson, 2011; Singer, 2010). But within the same newsrooms, journalists also hold deeply constrained views of participation that conceive of it as a fundamentally one-way process that should remain under journalists' control and serve their ends (Jönsson & Örnebring, 2011; Usher, 2014).

This contradiction has largely been viewed by scholars as a result of the tension rooted in the collision between professional and organizational values and routines and the dominant norms of participation and openness on the web (Lewis, 2012; Singer et al., 2011). The differences in journalists' and news organizations' approaches toward participation can be found, then, in the varying blends of those competing forces. Where one or the other of those forces comes into the foreground, it takes on a primary role in

shaping the form of participation — or lack thereof. This professional and organizational lens has been a useful one for understanding journalists' approaches to participatory processes, capturing a fundamental source of their resistance to adapting their work to a more open and networked digital environment. Still, this view of the issue at the professional or organizational level could be sharpened by examining these factors in conjunction with individual-level attributes and attitudes. Specifically, what role do journalists' attitudes toward their audiences and interaction play in their participatory behavior, and how does the interplay of both organizational and personal factors shape those attitudes and behaviors?

This study examines these questions through reciprocity, a norm that underlies trust in a variety of both formal and informal relational contexts (Molm, 2010) and has the potential to serve as an attitudinal pathway leading to participatory behavior in journalism, itself influenced by both personal and organizational factors (Lewis, Holton, & Coddington, 2014). We employ survey data of American journalists (N=845) to explore structural and organizational factors as well as personal attitudes toward reciprocity in a variety of forms as explanatory influences for journalists' participatory behavior, finding that while journalists recognize the need for audience engagement, particularly through social media channels such as Facebook and Twitter, they remain somewhat hesitant to fully integrate these and other channels for engagement into their practice. Yet, journalists recognize the value of a deeper engagement with their audiences, noting broadly that they have become more transparent, less objective, and more reciprocal actors in the news process. The latter, according to journalists, represents a new audience expectation rather than one stemming from news organizations.



Previously, Lewis and colleagues (2014) conceptualized “reciprocal journalism” as an approach for understanding “how journalists might develop more mutually beneficial relationships with audiences across three forms of exchange—direct, indirect, and sustained types of reciprocity” (p. 229). Direct reciprocity, in this instance, is about one-to-one exchange with readers or followers (e.g., direct back-and-forth on Twitter); indirect reciprocity is a more generalized form of exchange, where journalists engage community members in give-and-take around shared interests or themes (e.g., sharing around a certain Twitter hashtag); and sustained reciprocity is about continuous forms of exchange that have an enduring quality, leading to the formation and perpetuation of community norms and dynamics (e.g., community Facebook pages organized by news outlets). To test these notions empirically, we conducted a survey of 6,000 U.S. newspaper journalists and editors in 2014, using stratified random-sampling methods to develop a representative sample, from which a nearly 20% response rate was achieved (N=845). Demographic and control information was collected from each of the respondents, who answered a variety of closed-ended questions regarding journalism practice and engagement along with open-ended questions about their perceptions of and engagement with audiences as well as their perceptions of and engagement in reciprocation with audiences.

This paper focuses primarily on the qualitative responses, but does so in light of the quantitative findings as well. Overall, we found that, while journalists did not typically identify their reciprocal efforts as direct, indirect or sustained, they nonetheless placed specific emphasis on direct reciprocation with audiences on social media. This included, for example, journalists thanking individuals for sharing or reposting their

content, responding quickly to messages from individuals (especially on public-facing channels such as Twitter), being transparent when asked for sources, and providing opinion when appropriate. Many journalists noted that while some tenets of traditional journalism have changed, public interest in journalists' sources and opinions has opened up new opportunities for two-way communication and, in some cases, community building. Journalists reported that while their news organizations and/or editors did not necessarily impress improvements in engagement upon them, they felt obligated to enrich their engagement habits in light of changing audience expectations. Those expectations included a more direct and sustained level of reciprocity in the form of news and information exchanges, hyperlink exchanges, praise for audience participation in the news process, and conversations on social media with individual audience members.

This latter point reflects a key outcome of reciprocation in journalism. The two-way exchange of information, whether news or otherwise, may contribute to deepening the connection between news producers and news consumers. When carried out on social media channels, other news producers and news consumers can witness that connection and its outcomes, opening up the potential for further forms of reciprocation and community building. Over time, this communal and reciprocal function can help journalists remain connected and engaged with their audiences while potentially building richer communities where news is produced and consumed. More broadly, these forms of reciprocity matter insofar as they encourage relationships of trust and connectedness, particularly at the local level—essential ingredients for community formation and perpetuation (Putnam, 2000). We conclude by discussing the implications of these

empirical findings for future research that might further explore the role of and purpose for reciprocity at the intersection of journalists and audiences.

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## **News preferences of journalists and their audiences:**

### ***How web analytics and social media are narrowing the divergence***

Scholars studying news content initially concluded that the relationship between journalists and their audiences exerted a relatively weaker influence on news work, especially when compared with other sources of influence, such as news sources or journalists' personal beliefs (Flegel & Chaffee, 1971; Gans, 1979; Shoemaker & Reese, 1996). A reason for this is that journalists used to ignore, if not reject, feedback from the audience (Gans, 1979; Schlesinger, 1978). But this apparently no longer holds true as news editors increasingly find it no longer possible to disregard the audience (Anderson, 2011b; Lowrey & Woo, 2010; MacGregor, 2007; McKenzie, Lowrey, Hays, Chung, & Woo, 2011). New audience information systems, particularly web analytics and social media, have provided new avenues for audience preferences to be communicated to the newsroom (Napoli, 2011; Tandoc, 2014a). And journalists are taking notice (Hermida, 2013; Lee, Lewis, & Powers, 2014; Vu, 2013).

In this age when information about the audience abounds in the newsroom through real-time analytics and feedback through social media, how journalists perceive their audiences should also be changing. Two scenarios can arise from how the newsroom has changed, with journalism now armed with such sources of information about the audience. First, journalists might perceive an increase in divergence, governed by their traditional news judgment, seeing what online readers are clicking on. Second, information about the audience can influence news judgment, so that as journalists start to unconsciously provide what the audience wants, their

personal news preferences also start to align with those of the audience. This paper is interested in investigating the impact of web analytics and social media use in the newsroom on journalists' perception of the similarity or difference between their personal news preferences and what they believe the audience wants.

### **Journalists and Audiences**

Journalists used to not know a lot about their audiences (Gans, 1979; Schlesinger, 1978; Wulfemeyer, 1984). Not knowing the actual audience also meant not knowing what the audience really wanted. For their news judgment, journalists relied instead on their “known” audience composed of family, superiors and fellow journalists (Gans, 1979). A plausible reason for this institutional rejection of audience feedback is that journalists and audiences have different preferences. Initial studies on the co-orientation of journalists and their audiences—or the extent to which journalists' preferences mirror those of their audiences—found mixed results (Atwood, 1970; Jones, 1993; Martin, O'Keefe, & Nayman, 1972; Wulfemeyer, 1984). Despite this inconsistency in earlier studies of audience and editorial preferences in traditional news media, recent studies of online news agree on the divergence in the preferences of journalists and audiences, with journalists preferring public affairs stories, and audiences viewing and sharing sports and entertainment stories the most (Boczkowski, 2010; Boczkowski, Mitchelstein, & Walter, 2011; Thorson, 2008).

But in this age of web analytics and social media—technologies that provide journalists with more information about audience preferences—how do journalists compare their own news preferences with those of their audiences? Thus:

*RQ1: How do journalists compare their own news preferences with those of their audiences?*

**Web Analytics**

Newsrooms around the world have embraced web analytics technology. Web analytics refers to “the measurement, collection, analysis and reporting of internet data for the purposes of understanding and optimizing web usage” (DAA, 2008, p. 3). Web analytics programs enable website owners to monitor how users of their respective websites behave online by providing *metrics*, which refer to “any quantitative measure of passive viewing or consumption of content by internet users” (Krall, 2009, p. 387). Having access to web metrics allows website developers to decide beyond their intuition (Duncan, 2010). A growing number of studies have established how newsrooms have institutionalized tracking audience metrics (Anderson, 2011a; MacGregor, 2007; Tandoc, 2014a, 2014b). News editors are now guided by web metrics in their decisions of where to place stories in the website (Anderson, 2011a, 2011b; Lee, Lewis, & Powers, 2012). But aside from influencing news production routines, web analytics is also linked to what journalists know about the audience (Tandoc, 2014a, 2014b). Therefore:

*RQ2: How does using web analytics influence how journalists perceive the similarity or difference between their personal news preferences and that of their audiences?*

**Social Media**

Many journalists have also embraced social media, although the extent to which they integrate it in their news work varies (Broersma & Graham, 2012, 2013; Lariscy, Avery, Sweetser, & Howes, 2009; Paulussen & Harder, 2014). A survey of 200 business journalists in 2008 found that many journalists turned to social media “for inspiration, assistance, and information in doing their jobs” (Avery, Lariscy, & Sweetser, 2010, p. 201). A survey of 129 television news editors in 2010 found that 98% of respondents used Facebook and 97% used Twitter (Lysak, Cremedas, & Wolf, 2012). Social media have the potential of generating traffic

to news websites (Hong, 2012). Though journalists across many countries have used social media mostly for disseminating and promoting their work (Gulyas, 2013), they also come across various forms of feedback from the audience through these social spaces, not only in the form of comments and shares but also through quantifiable metrics, such as lists of trending topics from Twitter and Facebook. This exposure to audience preferences might affect their own news judgment. Therefore:

*RQ3: How does using social media platforms influence how journalists perceive the similarity or difference between their personal news preferences and that of their audiences?*

## **Methodology**

This study is based on a web survey of online editors in the US. A random sample of 1,103 online editors was invited to participate in the survey. Of those invited, at least 206 completed the survey, for a completion rate of about 19%. An *a priori* statistical analysis using *G-Power* software showed the study required a minimum of 68 respondents to have a sufficient statistical power of .80 to detect small effect sizes of .15 using multiple regression analyses. The average age in the sample was 44.5 years (SD = 11.41 years). The youngest was 23 and the oldest was 68. Some 67% were males. The sample also represented editors from every level of the newsroom hierarchy. Some 32% were web editors while some 25% were editors-in-chief. Online newsrooms of different sizes based on traffic were also represented in the sample.

**Perceived similarity.** In the beginning of the survey, the journalists were asked to rate using a 5-point scale (from [5] very interested to [1] not interested at all) how interested they were in 12 different news topics: government, politics, environment, business, crime, science, health, arts, sports, weather, food, and celebrity. In the last part of the survey, the journalists



were again asked to rate the same set of news topics using the same 5-point scale, but they were asked to rate them based on how they think their audiences were interested in each. The ratings were subsequently compared for each journalist using correlations analysis, and each journalist was given a score based on the correlations between personal news preference and perceived audience preference. This variable was then used in the regression analysis.

**Web analytics use.** The journalists were asked how often they used each of the following software in their day-to-day work using a 6-point scale (from [0] not using the program to [6] several times a day): Chartbeat, Visual Revenue, Omniture, ComScore, Google Analytics, and another program if they are using one that was not listed. Since the variable seeks to measure the degree of exposure to metrics data, a summative index is more appropriate than averaging across different programs.

**Social media use.** The same procedure was done for social media use. The participants reported how frequently they used for their work each of the following: their personal Facebook account, their personal Twitter account, their company's official Facebook account and their company's official Twitter account.

### **Initial Results**

The journalists were mostly interested in government, politics, environment, and business news, while they believe their audiences were mostly interested in crime, sports, politics, and government news. But when it comes to comparing the degree of interest in each news topic, there were moderate but significant correlations between personal interest and perceived interest of the audience in 10 out of the 12 news topics (only excluding science and politics).

The next analysis involved using the correlations variable per journalist as dependent variable as a measure of perceived similarity of news preferences. Web analytics use was a

significant predictor while social media use was not. The regression model accounted for 14% of the variance, indicating that the use of web analytics is leading journalists into perceiving a convergence of their personal news judgment and those of their audiences. This has important implications on how journalism is changing.

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# Media criticism in Switzerland: Structural and contentual inventory - Yearly radar-monitoring

**Keywords:**

media criticism, media journalism, radar-monitoring, structural analysis, computer-aided content analysis

**Answer to the Call for Conference Submissions (extended abstract)**

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# Media criticism in Switzerland: Structural and contentual inventory - Yearly radar-monitoring

## **Theoretical considerations and state of research**

Journalism possesses substantial definatory power due to its selection of reality fragments and the resulting staging of it. But reality descriptions are always contingent (cf. Schmidt 2005: 28), which means society cannot go without a continuous publically-critical debate about journalistic performances (cf. Sutter 2010). Such a media criticism empowers the public to overcome its role as an exclusive consumer and to acquire its role as a media literate agent and citizen which shoulders responsibility for the media system's status quo and its quality (cf. Wyss 2009). Furthermore, a systematic, criteria-based journalistic media criticism is a matter of accountability and transparency. Media criticism has to be performed in a public sphere and needs the permanent reflexivity between those who observe and those who are observed. This in order to be able to monitor the media system as critical as journalism does with all other social systems. Understood as reflexive thematisation of media process routines of all relevant participants, media criticism includes observation, description and evaluation of media and their performance for society referring to accepted rules and standards (cf. Schmidt 2005: 23).

Since more than twenty years the relevance of media criticism performed by media journalism is emphasized (cf. Russ-Mohl 1994, Wessler 1997: 23). By making structures and ambivalences a subject of discussion, media journalism could act as the "fifth estate" (Weiss 2005, Beuthner/Weichert 2005: 47). It could contribute to journalistic quality assurance (cf. Malik 2004: 333, Russ-Mohl/Fengler 2002: 191) and demonstrate media's sense of responsibility towards society (cf. Beuthner/Weichert 2005: 47, Malik 2004: 197, Fengler 2003: 148f.). However, findings referring to Switzerland, Germany and the US suggest that editorial-based published media criticism leads a miserable existence due to hindering effects like the "Selbstbeobachtungsfalle", the "Glashaus-Dilemma" or instrumentalization through in-house PR departments (cf. Beuthner/Weichert 2005: 48ff; Walser 2012, Hickethier 2005: 61). As a matter of fact it always is quite difficult or even impossible to control itself in a serious and sustainable manner. Media journalists who criticize the national media system – or worse: their own employer – often are proclaimed as a traitor or "Nestbeschmutzer". The situation is probably deteriorating as media concentration in Switzerland is proceeding and reducing the number of potential future employers for journalists who dare to publish self-critical articles.

Concerning media journalism, researchers especially complain about the mainly episodic coverage lacking critical aspects and the degree of its editorial institutionalisation which becomes apparent in the advancing discontinuation of media journalism departments and a decreasing media-related coverage as a whole (cf. Straub/Schönhagen 2007, Beuthner/Weichert 2005: 44f., Porlezza 2004). Altogether, more theoretical-reflexive contributions searching explanations for the weak degree of institutionalisation than empirical ones can be found in the field of media journalism research. Moreover, the empirical contributions often are case studies (cf. Fengler 2001, Malik 2004). Even less frequent are content analyses and multi-methodical settings (cf. Lichtenstein 2011, Weiss 2005).

## **Research questions and method**

Speaking of the difficulties media criticism faces, on a systemic level it is unclear, whether media journalism is (still) able to fulfill its societal role. Currently, it is a matter of debate whether agents

who do not belong to the media organisations themselves – e.g. (media) blogs, social network channels or other critical organisations which screen the Swiss media landscape – could compensate media journalism’s deficits. If this turns out to be true, media journalism would lose much of its *raison d’être*. However, in this regard it is spotlighted in terms of Switzerland, that general public is hardly aware of such digital formats and exterior institutions because of poor resources and a deficient continuity of these agents (cf. Porlezza/Russ-Mohl 2011, Blum 2010, Walser 2012). Meanwhile, the initial euphoria concerning the revolutionary potential gets mixed with scepticism as far as their public resonance and sustainability is concerned. A lack of public awareness and therefore a lack of societal impact can also be assumed for independent agents within the media sector like press councils or labor unions (cf. Wyss et al. 2012: 368).

To the present day Switzerland lacks a systematic survey and empirical inventory of all the editorial-based media criticism as well as of the institutions which practise public media criticism besides. Which agents do exist? What is their yearly output? What is their content focus? What resonance do existing agents encounter in mass media?

I will report the findings of two pre-studies which analysed the structure and the content of the Swiss media criticism landscape in the years 2012 and 2013. They support the proclaimed need for action concerning media criticism. I will further present the project “radar media criticism Switzerland” which monitors on a yearly basis - starting in 2014 - the structure and the content of the published media criticism in Switzerland with recourse to a multi-methodical design for the purpose of a longitudinal comparative study. Preliminary results from the first data collection round in the last quarter of 2014 will be available. The focus lies on journalistic media criticism as systemic self-examination. This project works with a computer-aided survey instrument named WebLyzard which was designed by software specialists of the HTW University of Applied Sciences at Chur and allows detecting and explaining changes in national media criticism over time. The survey instrument is gauged by several hundreds of reference articles which allow finding suitable texts and assess their probability of being media critical by selected key words and parts of a sentence. The results of the computer-aided survey are compared and validated on the basis of a manual content analysis. Data are gathered for the German speaking part of Switzerland and – starting in 2015 – for selected media in Germany and Austria.

Three crucial points guide the project goals: Firstly, **scientific orientation**: The project will lead to the first broad quantitative data gathering of national media criticism in Switzerland and therefore to an inquiry of the status quo. Furthermore, it will provide a data base for further research (e.g. reception/perception studies or reputation studies). Secondly, **theoretical/definitional progress**: The project aims at a further development of the specific definitions for “media criticism” and “media journalism” which would lead to a more profound conceptual and contentual distinction between these two terms. Overviews of the scientific literature show difficulties so far to establish a precise determination (cf. Beuthner 2005: 20; Malik 2004: 183). Thirdly, **dialog and transfer**: According to the discussed aspects, an improvement of media criticisms situation in the near term can neither be expected to result from an initiative of the self-regulating media forces nor from the self-appointed media watchdogs (cf. Lüthi 2012). Therefore, communication and media science as independent observer of the sector proceedings has to be in charge as well. A periodical knowledge transfer of the radar findings to the public is planned through a yearly report. For that purpose, the project collaborates with the European Journalism Observatory (EJO) in Lugano (CH) which already translates scientific findings for media practitioners and the public for more than ten years. Only a public which is aware of the democratic importance of a functioning media criticism and its current

state is able to demand for an improvement of the situation and for more (editorial, political or economic) efforts to reach this goal.

### **Selected findings so far of the two pre-studies and further working assumptions**

Only few daily newspapers still allow themselves media journalism departments. Moreover, a distinct fragmentation can be stated as far as exterior critical agents in Switzerland are concerned. The currently existing associations do not seem to be able to compensate media journalism's deficits due to their lack of resources and an insufficient public visibility. Swiss media criticism mostly targets at micro-level, meaning a specific journalistic product, and less frequently at a structural level. Therefore, media criticism seems to practice short-term moaning instead of reflecting the true and profound problems of today's national media system. Results indicate that editorial boards with institutionalized media criticism report more frequently and with superior quality about media-related topics. Public broadcast stations get criticized more frequently than private broadcast stations, radio stations get criticized more frequently than TV stations and printed media. Surprisingly, today's media criticism seems to be mostly addressed to other media critics and not the general public. Swiss media criticism obviously depends on few (polarizing) and experienced personages who often refer to each other.

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## **From Text to Topics**

### **A Comparison of a Manual and an Automated Content Analysis**

#### *Relevance and research question*

Professional online journalism and alternative online news sources such as social media produce huge amounts of digital content every day. This wealth of information can easily be accessed from locations all over the world. However, the scientific analysis of this content does not become less complicated by easy access – as the size of the data to be retrieved and analyzed poses new problems to social scientists. To be able to describe and analyze this information, journalism scholars have to adapt to the rapid advancements and turn to research methods that originated in unfamiliar disciplines such as computer science and computer linguistics. Learning from their tools and resources, they have started to gain insights into the constant information flow and made “big data” a regular feature in the scientific debate.

There is no doubt that computers can be helpful in this process – and even surpass human coders when it comes to analyzing formal variables such as the date or length of a news article, or to count variables such as the number of times a person is mentioned. However, some doubts remain whether computers can compete with humans when analyzing content related variables, such as the topics of news. While human coders have an intuitive understanding of the concept of a topic and can rely on their world knowledge when classifying a text, fully-automated text analysis methods are mostly based on word frequencies. Can computers really be helpful in analyzing the content if they cannot “understand” it like a human being? In order to answer this crucial question for current and future journalism research and to get a better understanding of this research process, we present the results of a quantitative manual and a fully automated topic analysis, using the same data set of online news articles, and compare their results.

#### *Manual & automated topic analysis*

A manual content analysis usually follows a well-known standard procedure: Preceded by a qualitative analysis to identify relevant topics, the deductive manual content analysis is guided by a codebook with (more or less) fixed categories for the topics assumed to be covered. In contrast to this, automated inductive procedures typically combine both steps: In a fully automated

classification, categories are estimated within the process, with documents simultaneously being assigned to these categories (Grimmer & Stewart 2013). Hence, the topic structure is constructed within the process. In recent years, topic models such as the Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA) have emerged as powerful tools to organize content in large archives of digital texts (Blei & Lafferty 2009). LDA is a probabilistic model to uncover the hidden semantic structure in a collection of documents. Topics are defined as latent variables that become apparent in similar patterns of words used across documents. Each document contains a mix of latent topics, which manifest in the use of a certain vocabulary and are hence more likely to co-occur. LDA infers the hidden topic structure that likely generated the observed collection based on the observed documents (Blei, Ng & Jordan 2003).

In our case study we apply both typical manual coding and LDA – as an example of fully automated coding – in order to identify the merits and problems of each approach. We emphasize that this comparison is not meant to decide which of the approaches provides the “better” results, but to visualize resulting differences and their respective strengths.

### *Study design*

The case study is part of a larger study on analyzing social media and online news information collected since summer 2013. For the overall sample of German online newspapers, we rely on the key data provided by Schütz (2012), listing all print newspapers published in Germany in 2012. Using a custom web crawler, all sources providing a news website with an RSS feed focusing on the respective homepage were retained for analysis (28 websites, covering all major news outlets in Germany). For this case study, we focus on a selection of articles that portray the “energy turnaround” during two natural two-weeks time periods before and after the German Bundestag election campaign in 2013 (July 15-28, November 4-17, 2013). Topic-related articles are identified using a detailed list of 180 pre-defined keywords, of which at least three have to be contained within the text. This way, we receive a sample of  $N = 541$  news articles on the subject of the energy turnaround that will serve as the basis for the comparison.

We deliberately restricted the current analysis to a sample of several hundred news articles as the manual content analysis can only deal with a limited number of articles for economic reasons. Manually creating a detailed codebook for the wealth of topics available in the news every day is very time-consuming, even more so when considering the time it takes to train coders to apply it

correctly. In contrast to this, fully automated approaches such as LDA work best for large sample sizes. In order to find an adequate level of comparison, we have to make a compromise at this point, although we are aware that topic models such as LDA are built for corpus sizes much bigger than in our example.

The manual content analysis was conducted by two coders. For the 38 manifestations of the topic category, they achieved reliability of  $\kappa = 0.51$ .

### *Results and Discussion*

According to the manual content analysis, the topic that was mentioned most often within the articles is the *energy generation from renewable energies*, followed by the *realization of the energy turnaround* and the *energy prices* (see table 1).

*Table 1:* Most prevalent topics in the manual content analysis

	Topic	Share of documents (in per cent of all articles)
Man1	Energy generation from renewable energies	37,2%
Man2	Realization of the energy turnaround	22,4%
Man3	Energy prices	21,7%
Man4	Corporate policy	19,4%
Man5	State control	18,5%

$N = 541$ . Counting up to three topics per article.

The LDA 50-topic model finds similar themes in the document collection, although topics are represented in an uncommon way: for each “topic”, its most prominent keywords are used as labels (see table 2). With labels such as “EEG” (the German renewable energy act) and “European Commission“, the second automatically discovered topic *LDA2* is conceptually similar to the second manually coded topic *Man2 - Realization of the energy turnaround*. Labels of the third automatically detected topic *LDA3* are a mix of the names of the big German energy production and distribution companies and terms that refer to employment, which is similar to the fourth manually coded topic *Man4 – Corporate policy*.

Table 2: Most prevalent topics in the LDA 50-topic model

	Topic labels	Share of documents (in per cent of all articles)
LDA1	energy, more, Germany, year, new, renewable, percentage, should, cost, pay, first	71,5%
LDA2	green energy, industry, apportionment, Brussels, EEG (the German renewable energy act), companies, funding, SPD, energy, European Commission	19,7%
LDA3	RWE, Euro, billion, corporate, year, job, employee, e.on, power plant, EnBW	17,9%
LDA4	SPD, Union, grand, CDU, CSU, working group, coalition, negotiation, car, berlin	19,2%
LDA5	carbon dioxide, japan, per cent, emission, goal, Warsaw, climate protection, greenhouse gas, fukushima, carbon offsetting	14,6%

$N = 541$ . Counting the three topics with the highest probability per article.

While both approaches contain similar themes, the fact that LDA looks at topics from a mathematical perspective also leads to significant differences in the results. The most prevalent LDA topic *LDA1* is present in more than 70% of all articles; it does not bear relation to any specific real-world event, but rather contains the basic vocabulary of the energy debate. In LDA, every word in every document is assigned to one of the topics. Human coders select specific parts of an article and mentally skip the basic vocabularies that surround and organize them in order to identify the topics defined in the codebook. In LDA, these words are automatically extracted and joint into a “baseline topic” (see table 2). Furthermore, there are two topics among the top-5 LDA results (see table 2) that are not a part of the manual codebook: *LDA4* refers to politics in general, naming the major German parties in its labels, and *LDA5* seems to be about climate protection in general. As human coders only classify the categories defined in the codebook, more general topics that form the background of the discourse are not considered. While this is useful for some projects, researchers who are interested in the wealth of topics available in the document collection can benefit from the broad approach that LDA provides.

Our results show that a manual topic analysis cannot simply be translated into a fully-automated approach. If scholars already have knowledge on the topics they are interested in, the manual analysis will yield more specific results. In the face of the challenges that large collections of text pose to journalism scholars, topic models such as LDA offer valuable assets. The opportunity to quickly work through large amounts of text without prior knowledge and at low cost allows scholars to explore and structure corpora at a size beyond the capacity of any common manual content analysis. It is a valuable supplement to scholars' toolbox, both as a stand-alone analysis and as a preparatory step to filter text collections for following manual analyses. In our presentation, we will discuss further methodological implications for future research in the field of journalism.

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## Francophone narrative journalism as both a reaction to recent changes in journalism and the result of a complex heritage

### Extended abstract

For some years now, traditional news outlets, and especially newspapers, have been struggling to adapt to the new digital environment and to find new profit-making business models. However, in the mean time, some quite original new written media have recently been launched in Francophone European countries.<sup>1</sup> Called *mooks*, a contraction of the words *magazine* and *book*, they count 100 to 200 pages, come out only two or four times a year, contain no advertisement, and cost between 15 and 20 euros.

As most news media develop apps, mobile and tablet versions, mooks opt for a thick printed magazine with a refined lay out. While newspapers and news websites wrestle with both advertising and cost reduction, mooks bet that readers are ready to pay for quality information. Whereas online and, to a large extent, print journalism tends to get faster and shorter, mooks advocate slow and long journalism. Taking the opposite course to most media, mooks appear to be re-inventing journalism in their own very particular way.

Even if they are niche products, mooks are being successful. *XXI*, the first and most famous one, sells around 50.000 copies and Rollin Publications, *XXI*'s publishing company, had a turnover of 1.631.000 euros in 2013. Other publications rapidly followed *XXI*'s path and new mooks have regularly been launched since *XXI*'s creation in 2008: *6 mois*, *Feuilleton*, *Desports*, *Alibi*, *Long cours*, *24h01*, etc. Beyond the similarities of their business model and even of their lay out, most mooks opt for the same broad journalistic model: narrative journalism.<sup>2</sup>

Narrative journalism, however, is not new. The term comes from the United States where it coexists with several other designations: literary journalism, literary reportage, creative nonfiction, New New Journalism, etc. (Boynton 2005; Forché et Gerard 2001; Gutkind 2005; Hartsock 2011; Sims 2008). This particular kind of journalism can be broadly defined as “the genre that takes the techniques of fiction and applies them to nonfiction. The narrative form requires deep and sophisticated reporting, an appreciation for storytelling, a departure from the structural conventions of daily news, and an imaginative use of language” (Nieman Foundation for Journalism at Harvard 2014; see also Hart 2011; Kramer et Call 2007; Lallemand 2011; Vanoost 2013).

In the United States, narrative journalism can be traced back to the end of the nineteenth century with reporters like Stephen Crane and Lincoln Steffens – even if its origins are even more remote. It was then revived in the literary reportage of the 1930's, in the New Journalism of the 1960-1970's and then in what is sometimes referred to as the New New Journalism, at the end of the twentieth century (Boynton 2005; Connery 1992; Hartsock 2000; Sims 2007).<sup>3</sup> Nowadays Francophone mooks explicitly refer to this long American tradition as one of their sources of inspiration.

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<sup>1</sup> These are really new in the Francophone media world, even if they draw on existing outlets, such as *Granta* magazine in the United Kingdom.

<sup>2</sup> However it is important to emphasize that some mooks opt for different journalistic models. For example, *Usbek & Rica* is much more discursive and analytical, while *Le Tigre* offers a mix between narrative and analysis.

<sup>3</sup> As current Francophone narrative journalism appears to be a reaction to the current transformations of journalism, it is interesting to note that, according to Hartsock (2000), this American tradition developed as a form of resistance against the increasingly dominant value of objectivity.

Mooks also find models in their own journalism history, mostly in the genre of the *grand reportage* and its mythical figures, such as Albert Londres and Joseph Kessel (Boucharenc et Deluche 2001; Boucharenc 2004; Martin 2005) – even if the history of the relation between narrative and French journalism is older and more complex than this reference to *grand reportage* (Kalifa et al. 2012; Thérenty 2007; 2008; Thérenty et Vaillant 2001). The narrative journalism now developing in mooks seems thus to be making the synthesis of two different lineages.

Current Francophone narrative journalism constitutes thus a new original journalistic model flourishing in reaction to contemporary changes in the media world and within a complex history. It appears interesting then to better characterize this model, particularly in comparison to the American model. This is the aim of this paper. It is based on an analysis of 64 texts considered by practitioners as representatives of what narrative journalism is, both in the United States and in Francophone European countries, and on 25 interviews carried on with the authors or editors of the analyzed texts, both Americans and French or Swiss.

The results indicate that there exist two different versions of a same narrative model. In the United States as in Francophone Europe, narrative journalism presents the same central defining trait: it offers stories organized according to a temporal – though not necessarily chronological – progression, while “classic” factual journalism is organized according to the news value of the events that are told, following the inverted pyramid model. This shared characteristic appears thus to be what defines narrative journalism in comparison to other journalistic models.

But American and European practitioners nonetheless differ on the precise text structure they adopt. American reporters massively opt for a narrative arc featuring a well-defined complication and, at the end of the text, its resolution. Francophone journalists tend to prefer a simple progression from a starting point to an ending point, without stating a specific problem at the beginning, which would guide the story progression towards an answer at the end.

A second important difference concerns the way the story is told. In the United States, journalistic narratives purposely create a kind of vicarious experience for the reader, based on the felt experience of the subjects whose story is being told by the journalist. In Francophone European countries, the experience of the subjects is less central, while journalists are more overtly present in their narratives. It can thus be argued that American narrative journalism favors the *showing* while Francophone narrative journalism favors the *telling*.

In conclusion, this paper ends with a discussion of different historical and cultural factors that could explain the differences between the American and Francophone versions of the narrative journalistic model. It particularly notes the importance of opinion in the history of French journalism and the weight of the mythical figure of the *grand reporter*, who wrote using the first person, telling readers everything he saw, perceived, felt and thought. The paper also discusses the place of ego, as well as the place of notions such as tension and suspense, in American and French literature respectively.

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# Drawing the News: Comics Journalism as the New Subjective Journalism

## Introduction

A new emerging genre in journalism attracts more and more attention: comics journalism. The genre is a rapidly evolving form, which combines what seems to be impossible to combine: nonfiction storytelling in a medium predestinated for fiction. Authors like Joe Sacco, the pioneer of comics journalism, Dan Archer, Susie Cagle, Matt Bors, Patrick Chappatte and Erin Polgreen merge the affective power of comics with journalism while maintaining the journalistic standards. However, at the same time, the affective power of comics eliminates one of the significant principles of journalism: objectivity. No matter what form the comics journalists use to tell their stories – a reportage, a feature story, or a motion comic – comics journalism is intrinsically subjective, because it is drawn.

In our contribution, we will address the ontological subjectivity of the comics journalism by examining the narrative techniques and stylistic devices of the comics style. Further, we will point out the strengths and weaknesses of comics as a journalistic medium for reporting (news) stories, and discuss the relationship between comics journalism and new journalism resp. new new journalism.

## Methodology

The relationship between comics and journalism is still an under-investigated topic in academic research. Therefore, we conducted a profound literature review on scientific articles about comics journalism and nonfiction storytelling. Many scholars have examined comics as a visual-verbal medium and different aspects of its narrativity (Eisner 2008, 1996, 1985, McCloud 2006, 2000, 1994, Grünewald 2000, McAllister, Sewell & Gordon 2001, Goggin & Hassler-Forrest 2010, Packard 2006). However, few have concentrated their research on comics journalism. If so, they focus on the work of Sacco (Kukkonen 2013, Scanlon 2012, Nyberg 2012, Stafford 2010, Woo 2010, Walker 2010).

Secondly, we searched websites that address comics journalism or graphic journalism, videos of conferences like the Graphic Journalism Panel of the Online News Association (ONA 2012), interviews and articles in news magazines (e.g. Alverson 2013, Bandel 2010) as well as blogs on comics journalism<sup>1</sup>. Since comics journalism is highly topical and because of the little presence of comics within the academia, many blogs and discussion forums (for instance blogs written by comics journalists like Dan Archer or Erin Polgreen) offer a fruitful source.

Thirdly, we analyzed a corpus of comics published in the recent years in terms of the narrative and graphic devices, e.g. *Palestine* by Joe Sacco (1993, 1996), *The Photographer* by Emmanuel Guibert, Didier Lefèvre and Frédéric Lemercier (2009), issues of *Symbolia* (2013, 2014), Dan Archer's latest journalism project on *Human Trafficking* in Nepal (2013), *The other war, in Guatemala City* by Patrick Chappatte (2012), the motion comic

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<sup>1</sup> e.g. <http://www.hoodedutilitarian.com/>; <http://www.archcomix.com/> (retrieved 08.09.13)

*Haiti's Scapegoats* by Matt Bors and Caroline Bins, the motion comic *Mein Vater, ein Werwolf* by Cordt Schnibben (2014).

Fourthly, we took a look at forms and genres, which are related to comics journalism like animated documentary, graphic novels, and news games. In this sense, our paper can be seen as a first step in developing a framework towards comics journalism.

### **Subjectivity as a principle of comics journalism**

„There is nothing *literal* about drawing ... The journalist's standard obligations – to report accurately, to get quotes right, and to check claims – still pertain.“ (Sacco 2012) Sacco as well as Archer point out that comics journalists often have to stem the argument that their work is not objective, but subjective, “because it's drawn” (Archer 2011). Therefore comics journalism cannot be considered as journalism as Woo states, “Given the dominance of the discourse of objectivity and verification in the journalistic field, I maintain that the label comics journalism is misleading” (Woo 2010, 176). It is obvious that there is a conflict between the conventions of journalism (like truthfulness, authenticity, credibility, accuracy, impartiality, objectivity, fairness, and transparency), and the art form of comics. Nyberg specifies that “reporters who are also artists working in the comics form convey a sense of the constructed nature of news in a way that is unique to the form” (Nyberg 2012, 117). Comics journalism means: news drawn by hand. The inherent subjectivity<sup>2</sup> of comics journalism lies (i) in the graphic style of comics. Traces of the author can be found in the stylistic conventions like mark making<sup>3</sup> (e.g. graphic lines), hand-written lettering, the size and shape of the panels, the color design, or the page layout. By this “graphiation” (Kukkonen 2013a, 56) readers can recognize the author/artist. Other elements bearing subjectivity refer to (ii) the verbal narrative style, e.g. first-person storytelling, which is characteristic for a reportage, or to make the journalist a protagonist in his or her story.

Subjectivity as a principle of comics journalism leads us to the wider context of the current discourse in journalism on subjectivity and objectivity (e.g. Epp 2014). Social media, blogs, and citizen journalism have been changing journalism. The upcoming new journalism seems to emphasize opinion journalism and tends to be more personal in preferring transparency to objectivity. This raises questions concerning objectivity as a journalistic principle in general. In contrast to “traditional” journalists, the comics journalists are well aware about their subjective element in their work. They deliberately stress the reporter's perspective and therefore differ strikingly from the newsroom's objective and unemotional tone (Williams 2005). Sacco states: “The fact is that no one can tell an entire story, everyone concentrates on what they want to, details are cropped out of photographs, stories go through an editing process. Every portrayal is to some extent a filter, and on that level,

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<sup>2</sup> Subjectivity in comics journalism as discussed here is related to two different kinds of subjectivity: to the subjectivity of the author and to the subjectivity of a character or narrator (cf. Mikkonen 2013, 101). In the case of the comics by Sacco, Archer or Chappatte the comic author/artist and the narrator are one and the same person.

<sup>3</sup> The term *mark making* describes the different lines, patterns, and textures in an artwork.

something that someone might find problematic. I'm not making things up even though there is an interpretive element to my work" (Jenkins 2007).

Readers tend to forget that the work of print, radio and TV journalists also bears silent subjective traits because reporters can show only one segment of the reality. They have to select between different sources, different locations, different interview partners, and despite their efforts to write objectively, they believe something and have their own opinions that might impact what stories they tell and how those stories are told. Photographs are manipulated as well in order to dramatize images by changing the contrast, saturation, hue etc., coupled with the pressure to embellish photos to become more dramatic, aesthetic or newsworthy, and the effect the presence a camera has in changing the dynamics of any situation notwithstanding the intentions of the photographer (Campbell 2011). However, due to its documentary character photographs do not reveal their constructed nature. Moreover digital imaging techniques have opened the door to nearly limitless possibilities to manipulate photographs to achieve a false impression of "reality". In this sense, comic journalism appears honest and transparent since it has never claimed to be objective. Like animated documentaries, instead of attempting to hide its inherent subjectivity, comics journalism embraces it, emphasizing the journalist's perspective by often visibly incorporating the reporter in the story. The honesty of comics journalism lies in the fact that the recipients are conscious that the comic truly is but an interpretation of the subject.

The true essence could be the criterion of journalistic transparency instead of objectivity vs. subjectivity. One way to achieve transparency in comic journalism is to show the comic author/artist at work. As such, he or she can be present as a talking head or a narrator, visually and verbally, so that the readers realize that journalism is made, and does not just happen (cf. Nyberg 2012, 118). Another way to show transparency is to document research strategies by providing fact boxes, adding information graphics, linking the stories to articles on renowned news sites. In addition, by providing original (scanned) photographs the comic journalist reveals his or her artistic transformation from the photograph to the drawing (Fig. 1).



Fig. 1: Screenshot taken from the iPad version *Mein Vater, ein Werwolf*. Spiegel online, April 2014. <http://www.spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/nazi-werwolf-spiegel-reporter-schnibben-ueber-seinen-vater-moerder-a-963465.html> (retrieved 23.9.14)

## Conclusion

Comics journalism is a complex genre with multiple variations in form, graphic style and narrative techniques. It combines accurate and well-researched facts with literary elements in the form of sequential art. Like the new journalists, comic journalists challenge the conventions of journalism, question its rules and routines, and uses unconventional techniques for news reporting. Like new journalism, comics journalism qualifies to provide the private story behind the public story. In this way, comic journalism stands in the tradition of *the new journalism* and can be seen in the context of *new new journalism* (Boynton 2005). Whether comics journalism has the potential to re-invent journalism, is to be discussed at the conference.

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## **Empowering or Impoverishing? Science News, Scientists and the Public**

Scientists often see mass media as an efficient tool to reach decision-makers and those in power. For the general public, media should serve as a platform for the deliberative reasoning behind the personal choices in everyday life, and particularly on occasions of political engagement, such as referendums on techno-scientific issues or uses of scientific knowledge and new technologies. News media use facilitates and fosters «systematic reasoning», which is not only a basis for informed choices, but helps us to make sense of different information we receive in different contexts. Therefore, news characteristics are crucial in modern life. They should ensure that the news we are exposed to or we gather with a specific purpose, enable us to function properly in our social context. The same is with scientists' efforts to gain visibility and a desirable image in the public.

There is another, more general aspect, which is of our interest here, and it is the position of the print media, particularly daily newspapers, on the media market. In the digital media environment and in the new circumstances of media convergence, and with the change of the habits of the media audiences with particular respect to the social media, theoreticians often see the quality of the print media content as the guarantor of the future of print media. In-depth analysis, investigative approach, additional information or perspectives as well as the style that offers pleasure of reading, are seen as *conditio sine quae non* for the print media and their survival on the market. Our goal is to analyse and to describe some of the characteristics of the present print media outlets as the possible factor in the public sphere. Also, the goal is to detect some aspects of the print media in the new media market. In this presentation we will focus on the media coverage of science. Science is one of the fields of the human life with which lay publics rarely have a direct contact, and therefore it relies on the mass media as a source of information. Scientific information is complex and sometimes hard to understand. It is often written in the scientific jargon, and it needs particular media attention and intervention to come closer to the general publics. The information about science can also be ambivalent or contradictory,

and more and more often it comes to the public in the times of crisis and risk, that needs more than the routine reporting.

### Method and sample

In this presentation, we analyse trends and changes in the recent media science coverage in Croatia, with particular regard to the sources, style of news presentation, and science news characteristics, such as information about the scientific process, method, authorship, etc. We are looking at the four-year period between 2009 and 2012, using the method of content analysis. Our sample consists of 1'049 articles published in the main Croatian newspapers, with the largest circulation: *Večernji list*, *Jutarnji list*, *Novi list*, *Slobodna Dalmacija* and *Vjesnik* (which ceased publishing in April 2012, but was included in this analysis because it contained the major part of the articles about science published in the analysed period and thus represents an important part of the media coverage of science in Croatia). We did not analyse articles published in the *24 hours*, which has the highest circulation in the period we analysed, but it is somehow more similar to the free supermarket newspapers, due to the fact that it is distributed for free in Croatia's capital Zagreb, and also due to its tabloid nature.

There are two hypotheses that we test in this presentation:

1. The science coverage in the daily newspaper serves to the general public as a platform for the deliberative reasoning behind the personal choices in everyday life, and news media use facilitates and fosters «systematic reasoning» and reflecting on the positive and negative sides as a result of choice.
2. In the digital media environment and in the times of media convergence, print media and daily newspapers focus more on the quality of reporting and the quality of information in order to survive on the media market.

### Results

The content analysis shows the change in science coverage in the Croatian daily newspapers. Croatian dailies publish mainly short and «simple» scientific news, written in the style of news reports. Very rarely, scientific news is written in the



analytical or in the investigative style, or in the form of commentaries. The analysis shows that the differences between two cultures, scientific and the mass media culture still exist, primarily in the different perceptions of what kind of information newspaper reports should contain. Science stories published in Croatian dailies do not consider to provide information on new scientific processes or scientific methods, and usually do not mention or reflect on the nature of scientific processes or the reliability of scientific information in their reports.

The news about science is found distributed over the entire newspapers and not in sections dedicated to science. However, they are often found concentrated in the inner politics sections, but also in those for life style or entertainment. Science stories can also be found more often in other supplements and rarely in those dedicated to science and technology. The style of presentation is adequate to the type of the basic news reports and newspaper sections, both in terms of the selection of the information presented and its sources, but also concerning the layout and the overall news presentation. There are differences in science reporting between Croatian dailies, but we also detected some changes over the four analysed years. Most obvious differences can be found between broadsheet and other newspapers. Quality media were bringing science stories more often and on the regular basis. After the only Croatian broadsheet newspaper ceased publishing, there are no statistically relevant differences between science coverage and frequency of science stories published in the various daily newspapers. This, together with the general trend to bring more simple news about science and technology, or optimistic news reports about the «successes» of Croatian scientists abroad and home, leaves the impression of an overall trend of equalizing of the science coverage of different dailies

Nevertheless, during the analysed period of the four years there is an evident trend in the change of the interest in different scientific fields. There is a decline of interest in biomedicine, which is usually one of the most covered scientific fields globally, for which there is, well-documented media interest as well as a considerable public interest. At the same time our analysis shows an increase of

interest in the social sciences and humanities as well as in the natural sciences in the analysed period.

## Conclusion

Our conclusion is that the present newspaper science coverage in Croatia is more impoverishing than empowering the public, and in some cases also the scientists, as we will show in our analysis. This is a consequence of the lack of authenticity, analytical approach, as well as the lack of more complete and documented information and news. In general, this is caused by the specific media market (as the result of the difficult social and economic circumstances) and the state's attitude towards newspapers (e.g. the lack of interest to rescue the quality and possibly independent newspaper *Vjesnik*), in which the newspapers are either over-controlled, and thus unpopular in the public, or they are left to the voluntaristic market-guided will of a few media moguls. Therefore we can conclude that science coverage in the Croatian daily newspaper is not primarily intended to serve to the general publics in the deliberative processes. Science and its (possible) application are present in the newspaper, but very rarely analysed, and they are almost never discussed or challenged.

Croatian dailies do not see original and authentic science reporting as its comparative advantage on the market. They rather follow news services or other media coverage and bring short news that can be used to fill in blank newspaper space independent of «classical» news values like novelty, proximity or prominence. In present-day newspaper's science coverage, the quality of information, the analysis and the evaluation of the scientific results are not always seen as a chance and means to attract a broader readership or as a tool to gain comparative advantages in the convergent media market.

## **Innovation or tradition? Young German adults' conception of journalism**

Academia has produced a host of theories on what journalism is or is not. Action theories linking journalism to what journalists do (e. g. Paterson/Domingo 2008) and systems theories assigning functions to journalism (e. g. Gurevitch/Blumler 1990, Görke/Scholl 2006) are full of insights, though they neglect what the actors themselves think is journalism. This paper deals with the definition of journalism from a social constructivist perspective (cf. Berger/Luckmann 1966, Tuchman 1978), arguing that what journalism is, is a question of attribution by various stakeholders, including journalists, media users, scientists, advertisers etc. Arguably, journalism producers and recipients are the most important stakeholders in defining journalism. But while the production side has received extensive attention (e. g. Dahlgren/Sparks 1992; Deuze 2005; Lewis 2012), the reception side has been neglected. This presentation thus takes a look at how young German adults conceive of journalism with a dual aim: Firstly to see what criteria and distinctions they make and how they structure the journalistic field, and secondly to see whether the digital natives' different patterns of media use have any effect on their conception of journalism.

Eight focus groups were conducted amongst young adults aged 16 to 30 (n = 78 participants) in 2013. The participants had different education backgrounds and were recruited in a metropolitan city in north-east Germany (Berlin) and a small urban agglomeration in south-west Germany (Ulm/Neu-Ulm). All group members also took part in a survey. Three methods were used to find out the participants' take on journalism. During the focus groups, the participants were asked to define and elaborate on what they think journalism is. The questionnaire requested the participants to categorize a list of media products as journalism, part journalism or not journalism at all. And finally, the groups took part in a structural mapping assignment. They were asked to sort a number of cards with the names of media products on them according to which of them they considered to belong together. Due to the exploratory and mainly qualitative character of the research, no hypotheses were posited.

When talking about media topics as well as good and bad information media in general during the focus groups, the participants very seldom made reference to journalism or journalists. In fact, only two groups mentioned journalists or journalism more than once without being asked to do so explicitly. Only two higher educated groups (students, alternative baccalaureate scholars) did reflect on journalism without being asked to do so. This finding seems to imply that the objectification of journalistic media in everyday life leads to them being taken for granted rather than being seen as the result of human labour. In other words, for young adults topics drawn from the media are treated as if they were topics drawn from their own lifeworlds. There was little reflection on how these topics come about. Epistemologically, the young adults expected journalists to reflect the world as it "is".

In academia, definitions of journalism and of quality in journalism are kept analytically separate. This is not the case with the focus group participants. When asked explicitly to define what they understood as journalism, they drew extensively on normative concepts such as objectivity, truthfulness and relevance. Over and above normative criteria, several groups also differentiated between certain types of journalism. So for example the newspaper "Bild" was seen as a prototype of tabloid journalism, while public service broadcaster ARD's news programme "Tagesschau" was a prototype of quality journalism. The same applied to topics, with soft news being distinguished from

hard news journalism. While tabloid journalism and soft news topics were seen as peripheral, quality journalism and hard news topics were seen as the core of what journalism is about. This was also in line with the fact that the participants emphasized the information function and scarcely went into the entertainment side of journalism and that factual reporting was mentioned far more often than opinative forms of journalism.

Another interesting finding from the focus groups is that the young adults seemed to prefer micro rather than macro descriptions of journalism. They tended to break the definition of journalism down to what journalists do and only few (well educated) groups went into the implications of journalism for politics or society as a whole. Journalism was seen by most as a professional job that requires special skills and resources such as techniques of investigation, political knowledge and a network of sources. One group argued journalists are either of the “paparazzi” or of the “war reporter” type, a differentiation corresponding to the dual typology between tabloid / soft news and quality / hard news varieties of journalism mentioned above.

When asked to identify media offerings as pure, part or not journalism at all, the groups opted to choose classic, quality, hard news media as representing pure journalism. These included public service broadcaster news programmes and websites, news magazine “Der Spiegel” and local newspapers. Tabloid (e. g. “Bild”) and amateur (e. g. school newspaper) journalism as well as some instrumental communication offerings (e. g. pharmacy magazine) were seen as only partially being journalism. The same held true for Google News, indicating that news distribution was not considered to be sufficient to be labeled fully-fledged journalism. Neither two other types of instrumental communication, nor microblogging service Twitter and video portal Youtube were granted journalistic status. These results support the focus group findings, that young adults draw distinctions between core and peripheral types of journalism. Better educated groups were more exclusive than the less educated ones. So the apprentices also saw Google News and the political party newspaper as being fully-fledged journalism, while the alternative baccalaureate groups excluded all but one form of amateur journalism from being even partially journalism.

Finally, the results of the structural mapping technique delivered additional insights into what criteria the participants use to structure the journalistic field as a whole. Firstly, fictional TV programmes and entertainment shows were grouped together under the heading of “entertainment” and declared to be non-journalistic. This included a “Daily Show”-style comedy format called “TV total”, which one might argue includes elements of journalism (e. g. interviews). Secondly, types of media (TV, radio, print media, internet) played a more important role in structuring the field than quality assessments. Nevertheless, thirdly, quality assessments also played a role in associating journalistic media offerings which each other. So tabloid type media were grouped together with instrumental, amateur and entertainment media more readily than quality media.

Interestingly, though the young adults saw quality journalism, information and hard news at the core of journalism, when asked at the beginning of the focus group sessions what news topics they had heard of recently, a lot of groups mentioned mainly soft news topics. In the survey, while the better educated participants mentioned a lot of quality news media they use, the less educated ones either mostly mentioned tabloid media or were unable to name journalistic media at all. One might see this as an indicator of social desirability. While the participants expressed views adhering to the norm of quality journalism in discourse, many did not adhere to them in practice. But what does social desirability mean? It at least means that the young adults were aware of societal norms and were

able to differentiate between what they themselves use and what is quality journalism. The label journalism to most groups was associated with reporting of a specific kind and they themselves felt that a lot of media they use do not deserve to be called journalism. As one participant put it, "I think the best news are broadcast on channels we don't use".

The findings, however, do not indicate that young adults' take on journalism is much different from older media users' views. Although there was ample evidence of them using media differently, such as extensive use of Facebook as a news filter, they defined journalism according to classic criteria and common sense prototypes.

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## Reinventing audience engagement in the Finnish press

### Abstract

As citizen journalism and social media challenge and mix the relationships between professional journalists and citizens, practices of interaction between professional journalists and audiences is a question of major importance both to media industry and research on journalism. Research has indicated that while professional journalists welcome amateur journalism, their own gatekeeping position vis-a-vis citizen journalists is being reinforced (e.g. Domingo et al., 2008; Thurman, 2008; Singer, 2007 & 2010; Soffer, 2009). However, Twitter and other social media platforms constitute a more neutral space. Clear structural boundaries between the Web sites of news organizations and the blogs and collaborative spaces of citizen journalism are increasingly difficult to draw (Bruns & Highfield 2012). Shared spaces for professionals and amateurs make it difficult for professional journalists within mainstream media to attack and dismiss these platforms. Furthermore, as professional news media increasingly make use of user-generated content it is not possible for them to undermine the role of audience.

The paper examines how the challenge of participation is becoming a part of journalism culture in Finnish newspapers. The focus is, first, on press journalists' perceptions of the roles and practices of professional journalists and audience in newspaper production. Second, the paper examines how the ideals and practices of modern newspaper journalism are present in the reinvention of journalism practice from the viewpoint of audience engagement. Of special interest is how the ideals of objectivity and autonomy of journalism affect the invention of participation in the Finnish context. The conceptual framework of the paper relies on the sociology of the news, theorizing of journalistic ideals and practices, with a focus on the notions of participation, objectivity and autonomy (e.g. Schudson 2001; Tuchman 1972; Deuze 2005; Singer 2007 & 2010), and Critical Discourse Analysis, CDA (Fairclough 2003). This study assumes that the reinvention of journalism culture cannot be understood without examining the interwoven culture of structures, resources, histories, and discourses as well as the practices that the people engaged in journalism exert on it and on one another.

Finnish media companies and newspapers are an interesting locus for the study. The ideal of autonomy in journalistic work has been stressed in Finland. Newspapers have been the paradigmatic institutions, within which the professional culture of Finnish journalism emerged. Even with the diffusion of professional practices of journalism, the identity of journalists has espoused a modernist ethos, including the right and obligation to criticise elites and to independently set the news agenda. However, in the media saturated, digitalised and globalised consumer culture, newspapers face challenges that call for a re-evaluation of professional cultures of journalism. Finnish media companies suffer from growing economic pressures and renew their operations during a transformation of the whole media sector. The problem in achieving gains in digital revenue is one of the major challenges.

In the context of changes, novel news policies and management cultures have been introduced into dailies. The media aim at increasing interaction with local people to articulate their interests, and dailies have launched projects towards citizen-based and/or audience-oriented journalism. Dailies have also had projects inspired by public journalism which challenges the professional idea of journalism as an autonomous mediating public process between the political elites and citizens. According to public journalism, journalists should perceive their audiences as citizens who compose *publics* (Rosen 1991) and possess legitimacy to participate in the political processes. Journalism, instead of being independent from publics, becomes their resource in participation and deliberation.

The data consists of in depth interviews with journalists from four newspapers. The interviews were conducted on two occasions and in four different papers. The first set of the interviews was gathered 2010–2011 from *Etelä-Suomen Sanomat* and *Savon Sanomat*. They represent regional dailies which at the time of the interviews stressed they apply increasingly audience oriented news policy. The second interview data was gathered three years later, 2013–2014, from *Helsingin Sanomat* and *Metro*. *Helsingin Sanomat* is the leading and only national newspaper in Finland. *Metro* is a free paper published in Helsinki. It actively engages readers in news production. The latter interview data was gathered in a situation of an accelerating technological change, economic pressures, changes in people news media uses towards mobile platforms, and media houses' active development of journalism practice.

The analysis is inspired by CDA and the data is analysed using analysis of the discourses as a method. For analytical purposes, discourses can be defined as different ways of representing the world – particular perspectives adapted to particular domains. The discourses occurring in the interview can be seen as ways of representing aspects of journalistic ideals from a particular perspective, but also as assuming and offering particular tasks for journalists and publics.

Three discourses were found: the Discourse of Professional News Production, the Discourse of Controlled Citizens' Debate and the Discourse of Interactive News Media Making. In the first mentioned discourse, 'professional skill' of journalists is valued high. Professional skill is not connected to journalism education but to the experience of pursuing journalism which follows the modern idea of 'good' journalism. A demarcation is constructed between professionals and amateurs and between journalism, 'non-journalism' and citizen debate. Participating local people are positioned as backups and recourses in the news work but also as a threat for the objectivity norm and for the need for professionals.

The participation of the audience is associated in the Discourse of Controlled Citizens' Debate with discussion forums and is represented as a needed but a problematic conversational recourse. Within the discourse, audience engagement must not harm Finnish newspapers' reputation as trusted news providers. Accordingly, the practices of the audience need to be controlled. This reproduces the ideal of professional journalists as gatekeepers and creates a need for time, personnel and up-to date tools to manage new audience practices.

Within the discourse of Interactive News Media Making, interactive practices between professional journalist and audience are represented as a focus of current and further innovation. The interactive or participatory practices are connected to mobile platforms. They can vary from tests and games to data journalism and collaborative news making. Within the discourse, readers are portrayed as a community of local reporters who provide the media with an additional workforce to pursue better (local) journalism. The role of the community of reporters includes tasks that used to belong to professional journalists only, for example, to provide the newsroom with photos or with ideas of alternative news sources. A demarcation between social media and news media becomes more difficult to draw within this discourse. Instead, news media is portrayed in the discourse as a semi-social media and news making as a collaborative practice between professional journalists and a community of reporters. Even though the questions of credibility and quality of journalism are present within the discourse, discursive boundaries between possibly unreliable user comment and trustworthy editorial material are faded.

In the light of the study, we see contesting and conflicting discourses emerging and a construction of hybrid news ideal which resonates with the ideals of objectivity and autonomy as well as participation and collaboration. Hybridity and merging of the discourses can be seen in the

construction of practices which could be called collaborative journalism, moderated conversation and controlled polyphony. This may indicate a slow re-articulation of the logic of control in relation to participatory ideal. The study suggests how the notions of participation, autonomy and objectivity need to be explored further as historical, contextual and intertwining constructions which are contested and evolve in time.

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## **Motivations to comment on online news: A civic voluntarism perspective**

### *An Extended Abstract*

The Internet has become one of the main sources of news. A survey by Pew Research (2012) found that it has surpassed newspapers and radio as sources for current information among Americans. Television remained the primary distribution system for getting news (55%), but the Internet (39%) is closing in (Kohut, Doherty, Dimock, & Keeter, 2012). In addition, online media are not only places where information about current affairs is acquired. They are also platforms that allow political conversations and opinion formation through the provision of a diversity of voices, providing a venue for democratic processes (Anderson & Dardenne, 1996; Ciofalo & Traverso, 1994; Kim, Wyatt, & Katz, 1999). As a result, the Internet has been proposed as a tool for fostering democracy since the beginning of its widespread public use (Benson, 1996; Dahlberg, 2001; Downing, 1989). It was said to counter the speculated decline in face-to-face political discussions (Coleman & Gotze, 2001; Papacharissi, 2002; Putnam, 2000) by providing a forum for exchanging ideas in a variety of formats (Papacharissi, 2004). While face-to-face interactions remain important, political conversations and socialization increasingly take place within electronic networks (Howard, 2011). With the implementation of interactive features, such as commenting sections, online news sites are offering places for individuals to engage in discussions (Diakopoulos & Naaman, 2011), providing opportunities for readers to receive information about current events while being exposed to a diverse set of viewpoints potentially different from their own (Eveland Jr, Hayes, Shah, & Kwak, 2005).

### **Feedback from the Audience**

This ability of online media to provide platforms for comments and discussions is consistent with the communitarian role of journalism (Tandoc & Thomas, 2014). Readers' comments represent a form of feedback to the newsroom. Feedback from the audience is not a new concept in journalism. In the pre-Internet age, journalists usually received feedback from readers through letters to the editor that range from expression of community values (Reader & Moist, 2008), of community concerns (Pritchard & Berkowitz, 1991), and even of criticism (Thornton, 1998). Feedback from the audience influences journalists to a certain degree. Pritchard and Berkowitz (1991) found that attention to crime by letters to the editor predicted the editorials the front-page content of some newspapers. Feedback also came in the form of phone calls to the newsroom (Gans, 1979; Schlesinger, 1978). But the coming of the Internet provided journalists an easier and faster way to receive feedback from their readers not only for direct contact (Quandt, Löffelholz, Weaver, Hanitzsch, & Altmepfen, 2006) but also for possible story leads and fact-checking (Robinson, 2010). A case study of one news organization found a tug-of-war for authority: reporters looked at commenters as fact-checkers while commenters saw a chance to "change the direction of the journalist-initiated dialogue" (Robinson, 2010, p. 140).

Newsrooms still tend to not pay close attention to readers' comments (Tandoc, 2014), but a news organization that seeks to fulfill journalism's communitarian role will pay closer attention to feedback from the audience that is now communicated faster and easier through online comments (Braun & Gillespie, 2011). It is equally true, however, that readers' comments still come from a self-selected group, and while comments provide a window into public opinion, they remain to be unrepresentative of the general public. Thus, it is also important to study what factors affect people's decision to participate in such online commentaries and discussions.

### **Comments as Engagement**

The expression of one's ideas and opinions about contemporary issues through comments to news stories online is a form of civic engagement—a way for an individual to join a rhetorical community bounded by a particular issue of public interest. A useful framework to examine what influences a reader's decision to participate through posting comments online is the civic voluntarism model (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995). CVM explains that four factors influence civic participation: resources, psychological attributes, mobilization, and issue engagements (Barkan, 2004; Hoffman, Jones, & Young, 2013). Resources refer to factors such as time, money, or education that “allow people to overcome barriers to participation” (Hoffman et al., 2013, p. 2249). Psychological attributes refer to motivations, such as interest in politics (Barkan, 2004). Mobilization refers to interpersonal influence, such as being encouraged by others to participate (Hoffman et al., 2013). Finally, issue engagement refers to interest in a particular issue (Barkan, 2004).

This study, arguing that commenting online is a form of civic engagement, uses the CVM framework to examine factors influencing people's decision to comment online. This study builds on previous literature on motivations to contribute to online communities and applies them to the context of political news online. Employing a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, a framework is established that uncovers novel motivations and uses those categories to predict individuals' commenting behavior.

## **Methodology**

An online survey among Internet users ( $n=593$ ) in the United States was conducted through Amazon's Mechanical Turk service. The participants received a monetary incentive of 76 cents for participation, which is slightly higher than the average running rate for participation on Mechanical Turk and was intended to increase participation and quality of the results.

The average participant was white (80.5%), about 37 years old, had a 4-year college degree (40.2%), and reported a combined household income between \$25,000 and \$49,999 (34%). The sample is almost evenly split in terms of gender (50.9% female). Some 60% indicated identification with a liberal political ideology (59.9%). This sample generally matches the general US population well, as a comparison with census data reveals.

The participants completed a set of questions, part of a bigger experiment, asking for demographics, news consumption behavior, and how frequently they engage in commenting behavior related to the political information they consume online. In addition, depending on whether they had previously indicated that they do or do not frequently engage in commenting behavior online, participants were asked to respond to either one of two open-ended questions. Participants that had indicated that they usually commented online were prompted to: "Please indicate briefly why you usually post comments when you consume political news online" Participants that had indicated that they don't frequently comment were prompted to: "Please indicate briefly why you usually don't post comments when you consume political news online".

The qualitative analysis takes a constant comparative approach that allowed patterns to emerge from the data (Tracy, 2012). The first stage is the open-coding phase, where the researchers read all responses for a preliminary soak in the data, before proceeding with line by line coding (Saldaña, 2012). Consistent with the constant comparative approach (Glaser, 1965) each response is compared with the preceding response as codes began to emerge. Axial-coding, or when the codes start to link together under unifying conceptual bins, follows after this step (Lindlof & Taylor, 2010). This is when the related codes are combined to form categories. Once the categories are fully developed, narratives are constructed around them.

The reasons for commenting that emerged from the qualitative analysis are used to code the entire dataset using quantitative content analysis (Riffe, Lacy, & Fico, 2014). In this process, a participant's response serves as the unit of analysis and can include multiple reasons for commenting. To determine the reliability of the coding manual, two coders familiarize themselves with the definitions of the categories that emerge from the qualitative coding and code 10% of the data. Krippendorff's Alpha, Cohen's Kappa and Scott's Pi are calculated for all coded variables in the dataset (Riffe et al., 2014). After reliability is established, the two coders divide the remainder of the responses and code the dataset. Finally, two regression models are computed to with participants' likelihood to a) comment and b) not to comment as the dependent variables to show the influence that the individual motivations exert on participants' reported commenting behavior. The implications of the findings on news commenting in particular and the platform's role in political expression and participation in general will be explored based on the findings.

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## Poster presentation

### WOMEN JOURNALISTS IN ALBANIA

#### *Between Empowerment and Obstacles*

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#### **Abstract**

Albanian journalism has traditionally been male-dominated since the early 20th century, during the communist era and afterwards. The development of commercial media in the mid-1990s and the demand for "soft news" has increased the number of women in journalism, from 1% in 1990 to 52% in 2012 (Godole 2014). While this "gender switch" (Creedon 1989) has resulted in offering more perspectives to female journalists, here we pose the question: *Do these changes tell us about the real empowerment of women in the Albanian journalism?* The study focuses on the challenges faced by female journalists in the newsroom, based on their gender. It also tend to explain the nature of the journalism field and its historical development as a contribution to the current literature on journalists' gendered relationships in the context of a post-communist society and media system. The study examines also the complex relationship between male and female journalists in the post-communist Albanian media environment. A nationwide survey of 295 journalists found that professionalism does not favour women, even though they are more educated and specialized. Positions in the newsroom are divided among men, while women work in the commercial pole of the field. They suffer obstacles in career, the lack of professional networks and traditional constrains that dominate the journalistic field. Therefore the paper argues that women journalists assume more of a secondary, complementary role to their male counterparts.

#### **Keywords**

Gender, Cultural Capital, Habitus, Post-Communism



## **Studying the audience of online journalism through a survey experiment**

Journalism is currently being forced to reinvent itself – thereby forcing scholars of journalism to reconsider how they examine their area of interest. One such area is the changing interactions with the audiences of online news. We propose that one possible direction for reinventing journalism research is to borrow from fields such as social psychology and political communication – to utilize the combined strength of experiments and surveys. In this paper, we present such a combination. As part of a large scale national survey (the Norwegian Citizen Panel) constructed specifically for academic research purposes, we use unique survey data regarding people’s news reading habits and political preferences in combination with an experiment.

In this study, we will bring together the insights on selective exposure (see for instance Stroud, 2008; 2010; 2011) and negativity (see for instance Soroka, 2006) in the news, and show how experimental design can give new insights on what type of stories the audience of online, tablet and mobile newspapers prefer to read (over others). By randomly assigning respondents to one out of several groups (or subsets), we can investigate whether variations in the questions we pose affect the responses of the audience. This strengthens the internal validity of the study. Because the experiment is a part of national representative survey, the result is to a large extent also generalizable to the population in a country. Thus, there is also the added benefit of external validity of surveys.

Over half a century of research has found that citizens prefer to encounter news that is supportive or consistent with their existing (political) beliefs, a phenomenon known as selective exposure. On the other hand, this literature suggests that both the press and the audience – or people – to a larger degree select negative information over positive. To illustrate how experimental design can be of value to journalism studies and the changes journalism faces, we have conducted a survey experiment that investigates whether online, tablet and newspaper audiences is guided by political preferences or negative information when selecting to “click” and read news stories.

### **Hypothesis and research design:**

Following the literature on negative information seeking, our first hypothesis is: *citizens should be more inclined to seek negative news on parties they do not support, as opposed to seeking positive information about their own party.*

However, when people are faced with negative information about the political party they support, we assume that people will be guided by their political party preference. Thus, following the literature on this subject, our second hypothesis is: *citizens should be less inclined to seek positive news on parties they do not support, as opposed to seeking negative information about their own party.*

The experiment is divided in four subsets, where participants must choose one out of two constructed online news articles placed on the top of the front page of a Norwegian online news outlet.

Because we are interested in testing whether the effects of the different frames (negative/positive) vary depending on the party portrayed, we have constructed the following conditions: a negative tone for one political party and a positive tone for another political party – and vice versa. In

addition, to control for and separate the framing and party effects, we have constructed two articles with a neutral framing for each party, as well as two negatively and positively framed party-neutral articles.

Subset one must choose between an article framing a positive outcome of an opinion poll for the Progress Party of Norway or an article framing a negative outcome of an opinion poll for the Norwegian Labour Party. Conversely, subset two must choose between a negative framing of the Progress Party of Norway and a positive framing for the Norwegian Labour Party.

Subset three and four are control groups. Subset three must choose between an article framing a stable outcome of an opinion poll for the Progress Party of Norway, or an article framing a stable outcome of an opinion poll for the Norwegian Labour Party. Subset four must choose between an article framing a positive news story about the economy, or a negative news story about the economy.

This experimental design enable us to measure the effect of positive/negative framing of two different political parties by comparing the statement answers among participants exposed to the same news article, but with different political parties and different framing (negative/positive). In order to measure selective exposure we intend to use the questions regarding voting behavior and liking or disliking political parties.

A possible bias is that the respondent simply does not enjoy reading news articles that use public opinion polls. Thus, it is necessary to control for (dis)interest in such news. Thus, both of the subsets are faced with a question measuring this. In addition, both of the subsets are faced with a question measuring time spent on the selected online news outlet.

#### **Selection and case:**

We have chosen the online news outlet VG-NETT because this is the most visited website in Norway and has no direct historical ties to a political party, and is not a partisan news outlet.

The two political parties, the Progress Party of Norway and the Norwegian Labour Party, are in the right and left political wing and in political disagreement. We selected these parties because the Progress Party has formed a rightwing minority government with the Conservative Party of Norway, while the Norwegian Labour Party is the largest party in the country and led the former left-leaning coalition in government. We assume that this will spark political polarization. Furthermore, the parties selected garner a substantial share of the popular vote.

We have chosen to use a constructed, but realistic article about public opinion polls. This makes the experiment relevant for the literature on horseshoe framing (or game frame) and theories of political cynicism. The headline is constructed to avoid the possible bias of functioning as “click bait” – luring respondents to “click” for other reasons than what we want to measure.

The texts in all four constructed articles exist as real life news stories. In addition, most news articles using opinion polls use both a negative outcome for one party and a positive outcome for another in the same article. However, we have chosen to separate it in to two different articles because we want to isolate the negative and the positive message as much as possible.

## Discussion

The results of our survey experiment will be collected and ready in December 2014. No matter the result, we believe that this study can illustrate in some way, the added value of survey experiments and such interdisciplinary thinking within journalism research. These kinds of experimental designs can for instance be beneficial to the study of audiences in several ways. One example is the emerging trend of “content marketing”. Do readers consider such content as news, or as advertising? Do they see the difference between editorial content and content marketing? A commonly heard argument from publishers is that advertising and content marketing is unproblematic as long as it is thoroughly branded as such. Is this correct?

Another example is the now common practice of online pay walls. Are readers less inclined to read, or seek news behind such walls rather than news that are freely accessible, or more inclined? How do readers evaluate the importance and value of news behind pay walls as opposed to the ‘free news’?

One way to explore this is of course through qualitative interviews, or a conventional quantitative survey. However, since this survey experiment is designed to measure behavior instead of attitudes and evaluations, it can be a welcome addition to further a better understanding of the complex interactions taking place between news outlets and their audiences.

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## **Political influence upon journalism: A comparison of its perception by elite journalists in France and Germany**

### *Research questions and hypotheses*

Against the background of a permanent siege of political journalists by political PR staff, this paper investigates how high-ranking political journalists perceive the strength of political influence on political coverage and their relationship with political actors. Perceived political pressure in their job makes news people more likely to develop cynical attitudes towards politicians (van Dalen, Albaek, & de Vreese, 2011). That is problematic given that the democratic function of the news media ultimately depends on how independently journalists can do their job. Furthermore, if journalists feel they are subject to substantial political influence, they may have less ambition to investigate claims and actions by political actors. Political influence upon journalism can take a variety of forms. For example, it can pertain to the political content as well as the interactions between journalists and politicians. We focus on the strength of three different forms of political influence: (1) influence on the political coverage, (2) the chances of journalists getting valuable political information, and (3) the general interaction between journalists and politicians. As indicators we use elite journalists' subjective perceptions, which were measured in a survey featuring closed-ended questions with five-point-answering scales on which journalists had to rate the strength of each particular form of political influence (5 = strong, 1 = weak).

Because the strength of perceived political influence has an impact on how journalists actually do their job, it is important to explore the amount of perceived influence as well as to garner an understanding of where this perception comes from. Given the different histories of Western European media systems and political communication cultures, the national context might play a strong role here, and this calls for a comparative design including at least two media systems which reflect different structural conditions constraining the politics-media interactions (Hanitzsch, & Mellado, 2011; Pfetsch, 2014). The media systems of France and Germany fulfil this condition (Hallin, & Mancini, 2004). Moreover, since we are interested in the subjective perception of political influence, individual variables might have an impact. Such factors include (a) a journalist's personal status, (b) his or her attitude towards professional role models, and (c) the frequency of being targeted by PR staff, spokespeople and politicians (Reich, & Hanitzsch, 2013).

As regards the influence of the national context, media system structures and long-lasting traditions of how political elites relate to the media set France and Germany apart (e.g. Esser, 2008). In France, the institutional connections between the government and state-owned television are closer than they are in Germany; Gaullist president Nicolas Sarkozy had particularly strong personal relations with big owners. Moreover, the French elite culture is generally more marked by a belief in statism than the German is and that might reduce the protection against attempts at political influence (e.g. Kuhn, 2005). Taken together, this means that the conditions are more suitable for exercising political influence on journalism in France than they are in Germany and the perception of political influence should thus be stronger among the French journalistic elite than it is in other European countries (H 1). Furthermore, we hypothesize that the frequency with which journalists are contacted by political PR professionals and politicians also spurs strong perceptions of political influence (H 2). Thirdly, we expect that the strength with which political journalists adhere to different professional role models, such as being a mediator of objective information or being a political advocate, impacts how they perceive political influence (H 3). Fourth, personal status might also impact perceived political influence because journalists in leadership positions have more autonomy, which means that they can better protect themselves against lobbying attempts by political interests (H 4). Lastly, the type of medium in which they work might also impact their influence perception. For example, journalists employed at public or state-owned television networks may experience more pressure (H 5).

### *Findings and preliminary conclusions*

Hypotheses were tested with data from an international survey gathered within the framework of an ESF-funded research project. From this large dataset we took only the French (n = 99) and the German respondents (n = 185) and re-analysed certain answers for the purpose of this study. Journalists were sampled using a positional approach. They are all salaried journalists working in the political sphere and in the most significant news media outlets of both countries. A large portion of the respondents held leadership or senior positions. Data collection took place in May and June 2008 in Germany and from November 2009 to January 2010 in France using CATI and ordinary telephone interviews. Response rates were 57.7 per cent in Germany and 25.4 per cent in France. The elite political journalists were on average 47.4 (France) and 46.3 (Germany) years old and had 22.3 and 21.4 years' work experience, respectively. The majority was male (73.7 per cent in France and 77.8 per cent in Germany)

and 44.4 per cent of the French and 40.5 per cent of the German respondents held leadership positions.

Regarding the perception of political influence on news coverage and on the politician-journalist interaction, we found considerable country differences: Perceived influence on media coverage was rated significantly higher in France ( $Mean = 3.53$ ,  $SD = 0.90$ ) than in Germany ( $Mean = 2.58$ ,  $SD = 0.74$ ;  $t = 6.22$ ,  $df = 277$   $p < 0.05$ ). The picture changes, though, when we turn to the interactions: German journalists perceive the impact of having similar political attitudes on their chances of getting information from political actors as significantly stronger than their French counterparts do ( $Mean = 3.38$ ,  $SD = 0.79$  vs.  $Mean = 2.38$ ,  $SD = 1.08$ ;  $t = 18.63$ ,  $df = 277$   $p < 0.001$ ). Almost no country differences were shown, however, for the perceived general impact of political convictions on interactions. Moreover, the last form of political influence was rated weakest in both countries.

Furthermore, linear regression analyses were run to assess the effect of a range of predictors on the assessments of influence. The predictors included the journalists' national context, medium, frequency of contact with politicians and PR staff, status, adherence to professional values, and controls like gender and work experience. Results from the regression models indicate that *perceived political influence on news coverage* was significantly fostered by frequent contact with PR staff (not with politicians, though), adherence to professional norms like fast and objective mediation of political news, being employed by a news magazine, and working for a French medium. This influence is significantly reduced by working in radio, though. The model accounts for a significant share of variance ( $R^2 = 0.33$ ;  $F = 6.54$ ,  $p < 0,001$ ). Furthermore, we found that journalists' conviction that *political actors prefer to pass information to journalists with similar political orientations* was positively (but not significantly) influenced by adopting the role of a political advocate ( $p = 0.111$ ) but negatively (and significantly) by adopting the role of a neutral mediator. Working for a French medium also had a positive effect. The overall explanatory power of the model was again fully satisfactory ( $R^2 = 0.22$ ;  $F = 4.15$ ,  $p < 0,001$ ). The impact of a journalist's formal position (being in a leadership role) on the dependent variables did not reach significance in either of the models, though.

At this stage of the analysis, with the statistical analysis of interaction effects still ongoing, we can only draw a very preliminary conclusion. It seems that political influence on journalism, according to the perceptions of the journalistic elite, primarily targets media coverage and the exchange of information between politicians and news people. However, the strength of the respective form of influence depends on the national context. In France, where

certain media have tight institutional and/or informal linkages with state actors, especially in the government, a rather strong political influence on media coverage is felt by the journalistic elite. On the other hand, in Germany it seems necessary for journalists to have a congruent political attitude to get information from politicians. This may be a reflection of the significance of party allegiance in the German media system. On the individual level, the findings indicate that journalists differentiate between the influence exerted by personal contacts with PR staff and the influence of personal contacts with 'real' politicians. It is noteworthy that they associate political influence only with being contacted by PR staff. One reason may be that PR staff threatens journalistic autonomy by giving spin without much background whereas political decision makers provide journalists with the background information they need to better understand political processes.

WikiLeaks has inspired a constellation of websites which are operating having Julian Assange's platform as a model (Chen, 2011; Greenberg, 2012). A growing number of independent journalists groups, NGOs and traditional media companies have launched whistleblowing platforms trying to solicit leaks submissions online by whistleblowers willing to keep their anonymity safe. Following Fuchs (2011) definition of WikiLeaks, a digital whistleblowing platform can be defined as online websites where "documents can be uploaded anonymously by making use of an online submission form" by potential whistleblowers to stimulate possible journalistic investigations.

Micah Sifry (2011) has described the evolution of WikiLeaks in different phases: a) WikiLeaks as a journalistic source; b) WikiLeaks as a content producer; c) WikiLeaks as a partner for traditional media outlets. The new digital whistleblowing platforms launched in Europe and in the USA have proposed different editorial approaches which are compatible with Sifry's framework.

In the last two years, three different digital whistleblowing platforms have been launched in Italy: IrpiLeaks.it, MafiaLeaks.it and ExpoLeaks.it. In all the three mentioned cases, the platforms are the result of the cooperation between The Hermes Center for Transparency and Digital Human Rights and some independent investigative journalism organizations. The Hermes Center is responsible for GlobaLeaks ([globaleaks.org](http://globaleaks.org)), an open source online software which can be freely embedded on websites to create digital drop boxes for whistleblowing. All the three Italian platforms are currently running this software on their sites.

The aim of this proposed paper is to investigate IrpiLeaks, MafiaLeaks and ExpoLeaks' editorial strategies and the way they perceive their own work: do they perceive themselves as journalists or rather as hacktivists? At the same time, the perceptions of journalists who collaborated with the platforms in regards of the journalism/hacktivism question will also be analyzed. The proposed paper will then try to answer the following research questions:

- RSQ1): How many stories have been published thanks to a leak received by the digital whistleblowing platforms?
- RSQ2): To which extent do the digital whistleblowing platform pursue the cooperation with external media organization?
- RSQ3): Do Italian whistleblowing platforms perceive their work as "journalism" or rather as "activism"?
- RSQ4) Do journalists involved in the publication of some articles to perceive the work of the whistleblowing platforms as "journalism" or rather as "activism"?
- RSQ4: How do Italian whistleblowing platforms consider their work in relationship with WikiLeaks?

In order to gather first hand and relevant information to answer the proposed research questions, in-depth interviews with people responsible for the three whistleblowing platforms, coders of the GlobaLeaks software and - where identified - journalists involved in some of the publications will be made.

With the help of the data and the insights gathered with the interviews, this paper aims to create a first comprehensive picture of the digital whistleblowing phenomenon in Italy and its own peculiarity. A second layer of analysis of the phenomenon, based on the diffusion of innovation theory (Rogers, 1965) will be carried out in order to individuate the extent of the diffusion of the phenomenon at the current stage of evolution.



### **Journalism education redefined: Immersing students on (and for) the job.**

News media outlets throughout the world are trying to adjust to a digital and mobile environment in which traditional news media still have a place, as long as there is flexibility to reach audiences on a variety of platforms. This has led to cross-platform convergence in many newsrooms, although to varying extent and success. Importantly, that has led some people within the industry and academia to question the necessity for a central place to create content: Should the newsroom remain the most important place where journalism happens?

For the College of Communication, Information, and Media at Ball State University the answer is simple: Yes!

In fact, a central newsroom on a college campus provides the excellent opportunity to train the next generations of journalists—skilled to produce high-quality cross-platform news and storytelling experiences, independently and within production teams, which makes them marketable in a competitive and changing media industry. Joining broadcast, digital, and print journalism education programs in a shared curriculum and co-locating student media to provide a framework and space for coordination and collaboration is an alternative to the “teaching hospital” model of experiential learning of journalism (where an academic program partners with a single professional news and information provider to provide “hands on” experience to students).

This presentation focuses on three components of the future-oriented journalism education approach at Ball State University: 1) the shared News Curriculum in which students are “double majors” in Telecommunications and Journalism, 2) the Unified Media operational model and facility for collaboration between previously “siloed” student media, and 3) an emphasis on immersive learning field experiences that create an educational experience in which journalism students can bridge education and practice. It allows them to develop critical-thinking skills to identify real-world problems and solutions within the communities in which they work, as well as the storytelling skills to craft journalistic works that can reach audiences through different channels.

(1) The News Curriculum provides students a well-rounded journalism and telecommunications background with an emphasis on multimedia (including “digital first”) reporting. Students can still specialize in print, magazine, broadcast, graphics, and photography. But they all are exposed to the basics, if not more, related to all areas of the modern newsroom so that they can apply their skills across different platforms.

(2) The Unified Media Lab is a large newsroom that includes a high-definition television studio, dozens of computer workstations, editing and recording booths, conference rooms, office spaces for faculty advisers, and a classroom area. Across the hallway is an advertising sales and

creative suite that houses the team providing advertising strategies and sales for multiple student media platforms.

The newsroom houses a variety of student media organizations that collaborate together to provide the latest news and media coverage for the campus community in a variety of platforms and publications, such as broadcast, print, digital, mobile, and tablet. Those organizations used to be scattered throughout several buildings on campus, which contributed to a minimal amount of synergy and multi-platform reporting.

Even though the news outlets still operate with their own staffs (there is still a printed daily newspaper, a printed quarterly magazine, daily television news programming, a radio station, online properties for each of these, etc.), they now create most of the content within the same space and all provide content for a central news website that contains breaking news, feature stories, commentary pieces, and all kind of other multimedia content about campus life and surrounding communities. The central site also serves as a portal to websites for each student media. This overall convergence within the newsroom provides opportunities to collaborate on stories with representatives from the different media organizations. This exposes students to a variety of reporting methods and skills through these multimedia endeavors, even when they initially have the intention to become a news reporter solely focusing on print or broadcast. In fact, it has allowed them to become confident in skills that they initially never conceived as possible.

The iDesk is a centralized assignment command center within the Unified Media Lab. iDesk editors work with all student media outlets to curate content across all platforms and are responsible for updating the main campus news website. Through this model, students from various journalism and telecommunications disciplines are trained to apply their education about the integrated nature of today's news environment.

(3) This newsroom model fits well within university's long-standing emphasis on "immersive learning" to provide professional experience and intangible skills such as critical thinking and working well in teams. Immersive learning can be considered the hallmark a Ball State education and is reflected in the adoption of the university advertising motto "Education Redefined" to emphasize the addition of practical real-world projects to traditional classroom instruction.

A major difference is that the instructor only serves as a facilitator for immersive learning courses, leaving interdisciplinary student teams in charge to reach a tangible outcome or create a product (such as a business plan, policy recommendation, book, play, or DVD) for a community partner, which could be non-profits, businesses, government agencies, and other entities.

Since its introduction, eight years ago, as a central part of the university's curriculum, about 20,000 students have completed more than 1,000 immersive learning experiences throughout Indiana and as far away as Hong Kong, Venice, and Malawi. Featured projects include transforming hospital gowns into cozy, dignified apparel for patients with cancer; converting elaborate statistics into dynamic informational graphics about water scarcity; and bringing history to life through educational computer programs for elementary schools.

Students with a well-rounded communication background, including journalism students, have played important roles in those high-impact learning experiences for their knowledge to construct, design, and distribute information messages effectively to reach specific audiences. Journalism students need to participate in at least one immersive learning course to graduate. Faculty members of the journalism and telecommunication departments (all students in the news, graphics, magazine, and photo journalism sequences are double majors) have developed a large list of immersive learning projects in the past few years. The main goal for those courses is to allow students to practice storytelling techniques with other students within their major (although with different backgrounds such as print and broadcast) as well as majors from other disciplines to form interdisciplinary research and production teams.

An example is the "Water Quality and Media" course, which is a cross-college immersion experience for students who expressed interest in issues of water quality, environmental regulation, and communicating science to the public. Co-taught by faculty members of the journalism and geology departments, the class allowed student reporters to interact with science majors to collaboratively analyze the water quality around Ball State's campus. This included canoe trips on the weekends throughout the state to test the water quality and observe environmental threats to the streams that are tapped for drinking water systems.

Another example of such immersive learning projects includes "BSU at the Games," sending news teams to the 2012 Summer Olympics in London and 2014 Winter Olympic in Sochi, where dozens of students published news stories through outlets such as The Spokesman Review, Chicago Tribune, Denver Gazette, USA Today, WTHR, and CNN. A similar project, reporting from last summer's Indiana State Fair, led to publications for 40 professional media outlets, including a video about a charity fundraiser for a humane society shown on Good Morning America.

All those projects had their own newsrooms, from a trailer in front of the main stand of the Indiana State Fair to a docked cruise ship in the Black Sea to cover the Sochi Olympics. Those were central hubs where students worked together and learned from each other to become more knowledgeable and skilled in areas in which they had less confidence in their abilities. As a result,

the students became more comfortable in a news environment with an increasing demand for people that can switch from one platform to the other in a heartbeat, recognizing the strengths and weaknesses of those platforms, and provide news content catered to various news audiences.

This shows the essence of newsrooms as learning laboratories for not only campus media, but also professional outlets. A newsroom is a place where storytellers with all kinds of specialties come together to advance their product, as the whole is greater than the simple sum of its parts. A loss of newsrooms, therefore, especially in a time of a shrinking news budgets, could further deteriorate a news product that is already hurt by the declining number of jobs available within the industry. That makes a collaborative newsroom even more important than it used to be.

## WORKSHOPS

<p>Workshop A1 Sven Engesser</p>	<p>Journalism has always been a key concept of mass communication research but there has hardly been any consensus about what it actually is. Therefore, this workshop gathers various definitions of journalism from all over the research field and prepares them for critical assessment. It distinguishes approaches that are based on content, individuals, organizations, institutions, systems, and cultures. The workshop will address the commonalities and differences between them and identify their advantages and pitfalls. The main goal is sensitizing the audience for definitional problems and preparing the ground for future research on the very nature of journalism.</p>
<p>Workshop A2 Urs Dahinden</p>	<p>Whistleblowers are informants that pass information on misconduct within an organization to third parties, both inside and outside the organization (e.g. media, law enforcement institutions, internal compliance officers etc.). In the past few years, some whistleblowers (e.g. Edward Snowden, Julian Assange, Chelsea (Bradley) Manning) have received very high media attention on an international level.</p> <p>What is the current practice of whistleblowing in Swiss media? This question is addressed in an ongoing research project from an empirical perspective. Preliminary results from this project will be presented in the panel. Further points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do whistleblowers choose between the competing reporting systems (run by the media, governmental and non-governmental organizations or by companies (internal reporting systems)?</li> <li>• How are whistleblowing messages processed in media organizations? How often are they initiating a journalistic output?</li> <li>• Do journalist feel responsible and are they able to protect whistleblowers from various sources of pressure?</li> <li>• What measures have to be taken in order to improve the cooperation between whistleblowers and the media?</li> </ul> <p>The panelists will discuss these and further questions that are of importance for communication researcher, journalists, managers and also whistleblowers.</p>
<p>Workshop A3 Thomas Birkner</p>	<p>In this interactive workshop session we want to introduce our project to research the diffusion of new paradigms in journalism studies with the help of citation analysis and crowdsourcing and invite other scholars to join our project. We propose to use citation analyses to describe international discourses in the field of journalism research. We are particularly interested to find out if and how theory impulses as Cultural Studies, Bourdieu's Theory of Social Fields or Giddens' Theory of Structuration are taken up in an international context. The project then uses network-theory based concepts to describe the diffusion of new theoretical concepts in the journalism research discourse, both in</p>

	<p>the dimension of involved actors as well as in the dimension of cited concepts. Coding and analyzing the publications are challenging tasks, which one team of researchers could only handle spending an enormous amount of time and resources. Therefore we suggest to apply a strategy of information gathering, which has become quite common in the journalism field, in journalism research, too: crowdsourcing. We would like to discuss the opportunities and constraints of using the “wisdom of the crowd” to get deeper insights into the structure of scientific discourses in journalism research.</p>
<p>Workshop A4 Lea Hellmueller</p>	<p>The digital news environment offers new ways to produce news and raises questions about how <i>journalistic role performance and other issues concerning journalism culture can be measured and studied</i>. The main goal of our session is to critically discuss new methodological advancements and challenges for the empirical study of journalistic role enactment and role performance and, particularly, journalistic performance in the digital age. In a first step, our panelists offer methodological discussions of how to approach the study of professional roles from local and international perspectives, bringing together scholars from Chile, Denmark, Germany, UK, and the US. In a second step, our panelists focus more generally on advanced methodological research inquiries. Questions addressed are: How can normative approaches benefit from a mixed-method design to understand empirical questions, such as how normative ideals manifest in practice? What are the benefits of mixed qualitative methods and visual analyses to elicit rich data about journalistic cultures in a rapidly and dramatically changing media environment? What are the potentials and pitfalls of measuring and attempting to compare issues of journalism across national cultures? Collectively, our session will pay particular attention to issues raised through combinations and comparisons, of methods and of journalistic cultures.</p>
<p>Workshop B1 Stijn Joye</p>	<p>In 1965, Galtung and Ruge initiated a rich strand of academic research on the notion of news values and the practice of gatekeeping in a context of international news reporting. Since its publication, many scholars have criticized, revisited, and put their findings to the test, often leading to somehow conflicting conclusions. In general, some studies tend to confirm their findings while others have uttered their methodological concerns or came up with new or additional sets of news factors, hence arguing for a further specification of the concept. In recent years, scholars also pointed towards the increasing impact of digital media on journalistic practices of news gathering and selection. Likewise, new perspectives on global journalism were introduced into the debate.</p> <p>In this workshop, we aim to bring together these different perspectives in order to inform a broad discussion on Galtung and Ruge’s legacy for the field of journalism studies in general</p>

	<p>and studies on international news selection in particular. What did fifty years of scholarly criticism learn us? Did their seminal work pass the test of time or should we rather regard it as a 'child of its time', hence outdated in terms of its appropriateness to today's (digital) news ecology?</p>
<p>Workshop B2 Annika Sehl</p>	<p>In times of change in journalism, the durability of norms is questioned as new occupational norms emerge in various areas: rapidly changing developments in technology, economy, media ownership and editorial structures as well as in media usage, exert influence on changes in normativity and norms. Furthermore, economic pressure requires a shift of normativity in journalists' daily work and behavior.</p> <p>Normativity appears at all three societal levels: At the macro level it is connected to the new digital media environment; at the meso level organizations imply changing normative demands on their employees; and at the micro level journalists are challenged to either stick to "old" norms or to adapt to new ones that are more and more frequently imposed by the audience. Not only do we want to discuss relevant aspects in regard to societal levels, but moreover we want to shed light on three fields of journalism, i.e. journalism studies, journalism education and the transfer of scientific knowledge into journalism practice. Taking into consideration normative "re-inventions" at all three levels and fields, our interactive workshop session will focus on the following specific question:</p> <p><b>What role do norms and normativity play in the re-invention of journalism?</b></p>
<p>Workshop B3 Yael de Haan</p>	<p>Topic:</p> <p>Journalism today and in the near future is entirely different from what it used to be. While we all know that journalism education cannot lag behind in a changing journalism landscape, journalism schools across the world are struggling to find the most suitable way to meet the changing needs. Several studies emphasize new skills journalism students should learn such as new technologies and converging skills, while others put more emphasis on critical thinking and attitude.</p> <p>This panel provides a discussion for journalism researchers and educators about the future of journalism education, discussing new skills and knowledge to be taught and proposing new didactical methods to suit the 21<sup>st</sup> century journalism student.</p> <p>In this panel we will focus on the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Which skills do future journalists need to comprehend?</li> <li>- How to teach both old and new skills in a high dense curriculum?</li> <li>- Which didactical methods best suite to teach the 21<sup>st</sup> century journalism student?</li> </ul>

<p>Workshop C1 Rasmus Kleis Nielsen</p>	<p><b><i>How do we analyze cross-media news use in a hybrid media environment and what does it mean for journalism and journalism studies?</i></b></p> <p><b>Rasmus Kleis Nielsen (moderator), Irene Costera Meijer, Sascha Hölig</b></p> <p>Patterns of media use are changing today, with substantial consequences for how much people know about public affairs, the degree to which news connects them to civic life, and for the institutional foundations of professional journalism (in terms of economic sustainability of commercial media and political legitimacy of public service media).</p> <p>These issues have substantial implications for journalism, and for how we understand journalism and its social role. They also present us with theoretical, methodological, and data-collection challenges.</p> <p>This workshop focuses on various methodological approaches to analyzing cross-media news use in a hybrid media environment where digital media play a larger and larger role but legacy media remain important, and include discussion of the role of survey research, interviews, and focus groups.</p> <p>The panel presenters will open the workshop with short presentations of the theoretical, methodological, and data issues faced in (1) designing recent studies comparing media use across countries, (2) identifying media users' perception of quality and (3) detecting people's news repertoires in a convergent and cross-media environment. After that, we proceed in an <a href="#">open fish bowl</a> format.</p>
<p>Workshop C2 Josef Trappel</p>	<p>Crisis and innovation can be considered two sides of the same coin. Scholarly economic thinking frames innovation as follow-up from crisis with a potential to create new opportunities of doing business better. In this workshop the notions of <i>crisis</i> and <i>innovation</i> are critically reflected and applied to the ongoing changes in journalism. The guiding question is: <i>Does journalism innovation follow from journalism crisis?</i></p> <p>In this workshop the three participants will start out by providing their understanding of crisis of journalism and journalism innovation. Is there – despite the economic crisis – still room for high quality professional journalism? Should there be a distinction made between economic crisis of the incumbent media's business model and the development of journalism? To what extent can the amalgamation of professional journalism and social media be considered an innovation? Can whatever changes in journalism be considered innovative? Do the scholarly definitions of innovation apply to journalism? What are the consequences if we as communication scholars accept that whatever changes is considered innovative? These are some questions to be raised in the workshop.</p>



Workshop C3  
Marlis Prinzing

Title: **What kind of journalism education do we need in order to be prepared for re-invented journalism? (And how the transfer between key findings and practise might be improved)**

**Targets: Re-inventing journalism education – improving transfer between research and practise**

(211 words)

The process of “creative destruction” characterizing journalism since years has arrived in journalism education. Vice versa re-inventing journalism cannot be “done” without re-inventing journalism education. Starting point of this workshop is that journalism and in particular journalism education have to reflect social change as well as challenges of “updating” professional standards and skills in journalism. Therefore a closer look at the economics of innovation in journalism education is urgent.

Leading questions:

1. To which extend do journalism education programs implement innovations that seem to be meaningful consequences in the wake of the economic crises and of the challenges of reloading journalism?
2. How could journalism education be reshaped under the conditions
  - of a shrinking market,
  - of convergence, digitalization, the Internet and social networks
  - of value-orientation (which means a stronger demand for media ethics) and
  - of internationalisation?

Which kinds of innovation are urgent and necessary?

3. To which extend does journalism education adapt these challenges?
4. How do latest concepts bridge the gap between economics and social responsibility, in particular of journalists in democratic societies?
5. Are the “old” players in the education market ready for reinvention? *Which kind of players do we need?*
6. How could and should we educate the educators? *How could we initiate a successful process of change?*

Workshop C4  
Manuel Menke

At the beginning of a young scholar's career one is cluttered by possibilities to specialize in communication studies. We want to discuss what is shaping these decisions in contemporary academia and what this means for journalism studies.

Academia is not a path with simple rules to success. It is determined by a "do-it-all" paradox: be international but connect with your national community, be innovative but mainstream enough to be published, learn from your supervisors but don't copy them, collaborate but also show you can work independently, find your one true topic but have a diverse portfolio to fit almost every position on the job market.

Under these circumstances the role of young journalism scholars needs to be revisited. Do they still feel affiliated to journalism studies or are they wandering on its blurry boundaries overlapping with other fields such as political communication, media economy or media policy? Does researching journalism allow being innovative and collaborative? Which research questions are likely to be addressed while others remain unanswered? Against this background, we want to discuss how the new generation of young scholars could provide alternative lenses on current and future questions in journalism studies and where this might lead the field.

## **What is Journalism? The Need for a Re-Invented Definition**

Sven Engesser, Christoph Neuberger, and Armin Scholl

Journalism has always been a key concept of mass communication research but there has hardly been any consensus about what journalism actually is (Esser & Wessler, 2002). One could reasonably argue that there is no need for a universal definition of journalism but that does not necessarily mean that there should be no scientific discussion about it either. On the contrary, facing the dynamic changes in journalism such as the collapse of the upmarket press in most countries of the Western world (e.g. Blum et al., 2011; Levy & Kleis Nielsen, 2010; McChesney & Picard, 2011), the increasing convergence of information and entertainment (e.g. Brants & Neijens, 1998; Delli Carpini & Williams, 2001), or the rise of participatory journalism (e.g. Allan & Thorsen 2009; Engesser, 2012; Singer et al. 2011; Lewis 2012) definitional questions raise themselves with particular urgency.

One of the main reasons why there is no consensual definition of journalism is that journalism research is a very heterogeneous field (see the various contributions in: Allan, 2009; Esser & Hanitzsch, 2012). In an overview, Löffelholz (2004) identifies eight heuristic types of journalism research while Löffelholz and Weaver (2008) portray six national paradigms. There are at least three explanations for this plurality: First, journalism research can be regarded as an integrative subject between sociology, psychology, literature studies and other fields (Hanitzsch & Engesser, 2013). Second, it is located at the point of intersection between scholars, educators, and practitioners (Zelizer, 2008). Third, it has to cope with accelerating professionalization and internationalization (Hanitzsch & Engesser, 2013). Therefore, in order to discuss the existing definitions of journalism, the present workshop follows Meyrowitz's (2008, p. 644) call to "draw on multiple perspectives across research camps". It gathers various conceptual approaches from all over the field and prepares them for critical assessment.

In order to systemize the different theoretical approaches the workshop presents a heuristic that is inspired by a concentric multilevel model (Shoemaker & Reese, 1991; Weischenberg, 1992). In the center of this model there is an approach which conceives journalism as a special form of media *content* that can be empirically analyzed by criteria of quality (Engesser, 2012). Subsequently, one could move on to the *individual*-based approach which basically argues that 'journalism is what journalists do'. This idea is part of many lay theories but has also been adopted by empirical journalism research for operational reasons (e.g. Weaver & Wilhoit, 1996). On the one hand, the *organization*-based approach regards journalism as product of an editorial unit, such as a newspaper or TV channel. It has strong roots in the German newspaper science (e.g. Dovifat, 1941; Groth, 1960) but it has been modified and used throughout the field (e.g. Neuberger, 2009). In contrast, followers of the *institution*-based approach conceive journalism as a set of practices or routines (e.g. Cook, 1998; Jarren, 2008) which can also be professional norms such as objectivity (Tuchman, 1972). The *system*-based approach is informed by the fundamental works of Luhmann (1984). It assigns journalism with the roles of observer of society or mediator between social systems. Finally, the broad spectrum of the *culture*-based approach ranges from regarding journalism as interpretive community (Zelizer, 1993) or as something that everyone does (Hartley, 1991).

This brief overview is far from being exhaustive and the categories are not mutually exclusive. The above mentioned approaches are merely supposed to serve as thought-provoking impulses for the workshop. For this purpose they will be introduced and juxtaposed in the three kick-off statements delivered by Christoph Neuberger (LMU Munich), Armin Scholl (University of Münster), and Sven Engesser (University of Zurich). The subsequent discussion will be moderated by Sven Engesser. It will address the commonalities and differences between the theoretical approaches and identify their advantages and pitfalls. The main goal of the workshop is sensitizing the audience for definitional problems and preparing the ground for future research on the very nature of journalism.

# Conference: Re-Inventing Journalism

5th- 6th of February, 2015, Winterthur, Switzerland

Submission of Abstract for Interactive Workshop Session

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*Version 1.0 (2014-10-01)*

## What is the current practice of whistleblowing in Swiss media?

### Introduction

Whistleblowers are informants that pass information on misconduct within an organization to third parties, mostly outside the organization (e.g. media, law enforcement institutions, etc.). In the past few years, some whistleblowers (e.g. Edward Snowden, Julian Assange, Chelsea (Bradley) Manning) have received very high media attention on an international level. Such prominent international and also national cases have raised a number of important questions that will be addressed in this pane, with a focus on empirical findings from Switzerland.

### Theoretical background

The topic of whistleblowing is of interest for several scientific discipline (law, business administration, sociology, journalism and communication studies etc.). The vast amount of literature is focusing on whistleblower legislation (Imbach Haumüller 2011; Lewis 2010; Wyler 2012). Furthermore, some prominent whistleblower cases were described in the format of cases studies (Dunn 2013; Baur 2011; Diermeier 2003). There are also a few studies investigating the representation and framing of whistleblowers in the media (Thorsen/Sreedharan/Allan 2013; Wahl-Jorgensen/Hunt 2012). However, very little is known from an empirical point of view about the practice of whistleblowing, say the interaction processes between whistleblowers and the media. This research gap will be addressed in this workshop session.

### The relationship between whistleblowers and the media

On the one hand, the relationship between whistleblowers and the media can be described as a win-win situation:

- Whistleblower have access to exclusive information that is attractive for media.
- In many countries (including Switzerland) journalists are better protected against legal attacks than whistleblowers. Therefore, the cooperation with journalist allows whistleblower to publish the controversial information and at to protect at the same time their anonymity.

On the other hand, there are some risks and challenges.

- The cooperation with the media is risky for a whistleblower because his or her anonymity can be broken in the public. The negative consequences of such a loss of anonymity can range from a lower social reputation, to job loss, to imprisonment or even threats to the whistleblower's health and life.
- Whistleblowing includes the publication of confidential or even secret information. On that background, the journalistic quality control of that information is especially challenging and can be misused by false whistleblowers

## **Online whistleblowing reporting systems as a technical innovation**

Online whistleblowing reporting systems (e.g. Wikileaks) are an important technical innovation that is used also by Swiss media organizations for establishing contacts and exchanging documents with whistleblowers. It is obvious that these whistleblowing reporting systems have a number of advantages (e.g. speed and amount of data to be transferred, technical options for cryptographically secured exchange of information that allows to maintain the anonymity). However, there are also a number of specific challenges associated with these reporting systems (e.g. increased amount of information, more challenging control of the authenticity of digital documents etc.).

### **Questions to be discussed**

The following main question will be discussed in that workshop session:

- What is the current practice of whistleblowing in Swiss media?

Further subquestions:

- How do whistleblowers choose between the various reporting systems (run by the media, governmental and non-governmental organizations or by companies (internal reporting systems)?
- How do journalists and whistleblower manage to create mutual trust? Is anonymity the rule or rather the exception in this interaction?
- Which technical channels (e.g. cryptographically secured e-mails, phone calls, face-to-face meetings etc.) are used how often in the interaction between whistleblowers and the media?
- What topics and organizations are subject to whistleblower reports by the media?
- How are whistleblowing messages processed in media organizations? How often are they initiating a journalistic output?
- Do journalist feel responsible and are they able to protect whistleblowers from various sources of pressure?
- What measures have to be taken in order to improve the cooperation between whistleblowers and the media?

Answering these questions is of importance for both communication research and the practice of journalism and whistleblowing. To our knowledge, no study has yet addressed these research questions from an empirical perspective, neither in Switzerland nor in another democratic country. This research gap will be closed with an ongoing research project that is the scientific base for this interactive workshop session.

### **Research methods**

These research questions will be answered with a combination of multiple research methods (literature review, expert interviews, content analysis of reported cases). In this panel, the focus will be on the results of some 20 expert interviews. These experts will include representatives from all those Swiss media that are running whistleblower reporting system (“Beobachter”, “Sonntagszeitung”, “Kassensturz/Espresso” and “Verein Öffentlichkeitsgesetz”). Further experts will be interviewed from governmental and non-governmental organizations with whistleblower reporting system, journalism schools and also some publically know whistleblowers.

### **Panel participants**

The panel will consist of the following members:

- Journalist working for a media whistleblower reporting system (e.g. "Sonntagszeitung": Oliver Zihlmann (invited))
- Representative of a governmental or non-governmental whistleblower reporting system (e.g. (to be invited))
- Christian Hauser (Prof. Dr.; researcher in international management; member of the project team; expert for anti-corruption)(confirmed)
- Urs Dahinden (Prof. Dr.; communication researcher and member of the project team; panelist and moderator of the workshop) (confirmed)

The members of the project team will present a short summary of their research findings. All panelist will be invited to present three provocative statements that are able to stimulate the discussion both on the panel and with those people who were formerly called the audience.

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*Proposal for an INTERACTIVE WORKSHOP SESSION for the*

## ***Re-Inventing Journalism-Conference***

*5th-6th of February, 2015, Winterthur, Switzerland*

*Convened by the Journalism Studies Sections of ECREA and DGPUK*

*Co-Sponsored by the Journalism Studies Sections of ICA, IAMCR and SGKM*

How do new paradigms spread in international journalism studies? –  
Introducing a citation analysis and crowd sourcing project

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*Proposal for an INTERACTIVE WORKSHOP SESSION*



## How do new paradigms spread in international journalism studies? – Introducing a citation analysis and crowdsourcing project

As journalism itself is evolving and should be reinvented from time to time, journalism studies are also an evolving field. We are interested in the evolution of international journalism studies. With this proposal for an interactive workshop session, we want to introduce our project to research the diffusion of new paradigms in journalism studies with the help of citation analysis and crowdsourcing and invite other scholars to join our project.

We propose to use citation analyses to describe international discourses in the field of journalism research. With the means of citation analyses, the protagonists of the scientific discourse can be identified, as can be identified, in which scientific networks new approaches diffuse. Current examples are the proceedings of Domahidi/Strippel (2013) and Potthoff/Weischenberg (2013). Particularly diachronic analyses qualify for the description of type, dimension, and driving forces of change in communication science, which might even lead to paradigm shifts (cf. Kuhn 2006/1969).

We are particularly interested to find out if and how theory impulses as Cultural Studies, Bourdieu's Theory of Social Fields or Giddens' Theory of Structuration are taken up in an international context. Our first aim is to describe the „career“ of such approaches. Moreover it should be analyzed with qualitative methods if typical pioneers are to be identified, who introduce new ideas in national discussions, and how the dynamics, that these pioneers initiate, are influenced by senior researchers with an extraordinary standing.

Regarding the theoretical background, the outlined project is linked to innovation research, which analyzes the development and diffusion of new ideas and products. Different concepts could be useful in this context: for example concepts from management oriented innovation research, that ask for success factors in innovation processes (cf. Stern/Jaberg 2010), as well as concepts from diffusion research (cf. Rogers 2003), which describe the diffusion of new services or products in consumer markets. The proposed project then uses network-theory based concepts (cf. Gamper/Reschke/Schönhuth 2012, Häußling/Stegbauer 2010) to describe the diffusion of new theoretical concepts in the journalism research discourse, both in the dimension of involved actors as well as in the dimension of cited concepts.

As a starting point, we suggest to analyze the discourse in journalism research back to 1986. The study „The American Journalist“ (Weaver/Wilhoit 1986) is a milestone in empirical journalism research, inspired, among others, the German JourID-Studies (Weischenberg/Löffelholz/Scholl 1993; Weischenberg/Malik/Scholl 2006) and leads to the integration of different international journalism studies in „The Global Journalist in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century“ (2012). Thus, the Weaver/Wilhoit-Study influenced the international discourse on journalism research and marks a caesura in two respects, on which our empirical project can be build upon.

Furthermore, we suggest to analyze international and national journals only, because journal articles reflect the state of the art of the scientific discourse, reach a broad public of scientists and are accessible.

Coding and analyzing the publications are challenging tasks, which one team of researchers could only handle spending an enormous amount of time and resources. Therefore we suggest to apply a strategy of information gathering, which has become quite common in the journalism field, in journalism research, too: crowdsourcing. We would like to discuss the opportunities and constraints of using the “wisdom of the crowd” to get deeper insights into the structure of scientific discourses in journalism research. Comparable to crowdsourcing in journalism itself, crowdsourcing in journalism research is assuming a change in the perspective from the result to the process of professional work.

We would like to discuss crowd sourcing on two different levels, using the citation analysis as a case study. On the first, conceptual, level we would like to pose the question, how we could involve a crowd of researchers to define the material to be analyzed exactly and to validate the final selection communicatively. On a second level we would like to discuss about crowdsourcing during the field work of a citation analysis. From our point of view, sharing the burden of coding the material is the key driver to realize citation analyses or other in-depth-projects in an acceptable period of time under budget constraints. We are facing a lot of important questions on this level: Which online tools could we use to organize collaboration in field work? And in which way have existing tools to be customized for the scientific use? In which ways could colleagues be motivated to take part in a crowd project? And what are the particular requirements regarding the management of a crowd based analysis? Or, as a last example, could it be successful to integrate a crowd funding tool?

We are convinced that a workshop on a crowd based citation analysis could generate valuable results both on an analytical level regarding the reconstruction of scientific discourses in journalism research and on a methodological level discussing new approaches of collaborative (field) work.

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Panel proposal for Traditional Paper Presentation  
Re-Inventing Journalism, 5th- 6th of February 2015, Switzerland

**Title:** **Journalistic Role Performance in the Digital Age:**  
*What methodological advances can we identify?*

**Organizers:** **Lea Hellmueller, Texas Tech University (USA)**  
**Claudia Mellado, Pontificia Universidad Catolica de Valparaiso (Chile)**

**Chair:** **Wolfgang Donsbach, Dresden University of Technology (Germany)**

**Panel participants:**

**Erik Albaek, University of Southern Denmark (Denmark)**  
**Wolfgang Donsbach, Dresden University of Technology (Germany)**  
**Lea Hellmueller, Texas Tech University (USA)**  
**Claudia Mellado, Pontificia Universidad Catolica de Valparaiso (Chile)**  
**Jane B Singer, City University London (UK)**  
**Arjen Van Dalen, University of Southern Denmark (Denmark)**

**Rationale for the panel:**

The digital news environment offers new ways to produce and consume news and raises questions about how *journalistic role performance can be measured and studied*. The main goal of our panel is to critically discuss new methodological advancements and challenges for the study of professional roles and journalistic performance in the digital age. The panel offers methodological discussion of how to approach the study of professional roles from local and international perspectives, bringing together scholars from Chile, Denmark, Germany, UK, and the US. We specifically focus on advanced methodological research inquiries. How can normative approaches benefit from a mixed-method design to understand empirical questions, such as how normative ideals manifest in practice? What are the benefits of mixed qualitative methods and visual analyses to elicit rich data about journalists' professional roles in a rapidly and dramatically changing media environment? What are the potentials and pitfalls of measuring and attempting to compare professional role performance across national cultures? Collectively, our panel will pay particular attention to issues raised through combinations and comparisons, of methods and of journalistic cultures.

## **Individual Presentations (abstracts)**

### **Mixed Quantitative Methods Approach to the Study of Professional roles and Journalistic Performance**

*Arjen Van Dalen*  
*Erik Albaek*

This paper introduces a mixed-method approach to the study of professional roles and journalistic performance, combining survey research and content analysis. The paper presents the strengths and weaknesses of the two methods and argues why they are complementary. Combining the two methods in an integrated design offers good possibilities to study the relation between ideals and practice, but also has implications for the design of the study (selection of concepts, choice of research population and order of data collection) as well as the comparability of scales and interpretation. Concrete steps are presented which should be taken to make sure the methods are complementary and integrated. These steps are illustrated with our study into the relation between roles and content of political journalists in Germany, Denmark, the United Kingdom and Spain. Special attention is given to the question how to integrate survey and content data at different levels of analysis.

### **Visual TV analysis of Journalistic Role Performance**

*Lea Hellmueller*

The goal of this study is to empirically test and validate a codebook for the visual analysis of journalistic role performance in TV news in the United States. As a first step, based on the codebook used to measure journalistic role performance in print, we developed a comprehensive codebook to visually content analyze journalistic role performance in TV news. Thus, we conducted a visual content analysis of mainstream English-speaking television outlets (Fox, ABC, MSNBC, CNN) as well as mainstream Spanish-speaking media outlets (Univision, MundoFox, Telemundo) targeting audiences in the United States. While most comparative research focuses on the distinction between culture as well as language, our approach takes into account the emerging importance of Spanish-speaking channels next to English-speaking outlets in the United States, distributing news to the growing numbers of Hispanics who are becoming important political decisions makers in the digital media age. We thus present findings on variations in journalistic role performance based on the distinction in language and audience, but within the same national context.

## **Assessing Professional Role Conceptions and Journalistic Role Performance Cross-nationally in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

*Claudia Mellado*

*Lea Hellmueller*

This paper presents the study design, issues of comparative concept equivalence, reliability, and multi-level data challenges of the Journalistic Role Performance Around the Globe (JRP) project. This international project involving 25 countries empirically addresses the disconnection between ideals and practice in journalism, providing a comprehensive understanding of methodological problems and solutions in comparative settings when studying journalism culture in an emerging digital news environment. In particular, it presents potentials and pitfalls of measuring professional roles and journalistic performance, as well as how to assess the validity and reliability of multidimensional scales cross-nationally.

## **Triangulating Methods in the Study of Journalistic Role Performance**

*Jane B. Singer*

Using examples from recent research, this paper outlines the benefits of triangulating qualitative methods with other approaches to elicit rich data about professional roles and journalists' performance in a rapidly and dramatically changing media environment. Techniques discussed include in-depth interviews combined with content analyses; in-depth interviews combined with nonrandom surveys of interviewees, and the incorporation of extensive open-ended questions on traditional survey instruments. Triangulated research commonly affords prominence to the quantitative findings, with scholars using interview quotes primarily to add life to the numbers. But this paper suggests that foregrounding the qualitative findings may be more valuable with a subject as nuanced as the ways in which roles no longer unique to newsroom practitioners are both conceptualized and performed. Ongoing challenges to their occupational turf – touching on everything from their place in society to their day-to-day practices – raise existential questions for today's news workers that cannot be easily addressed through a Likert-scale response. However, statistical data can help qualitative researchers identify significant themes, clarifying why individuals behave as they do in carrying out their contemporary roles.

## **INTERACTIVE WORKSHOP SESSION**

### **50 years of Galtung and Ruge: did something change?**

(Proposal by ECREA's International & Intercultural Communication section)

While there were some predecessors, it was the seminal and widely cited research article by Johan Galtung and Mari Ruge (1965) that really kick started a very rich and relevant tradition of academic discussion on the notion of news values and the practice of gatekeeping in a context of international news reporting. Since its publication in 1965, many scholars have criticized, revisited, and put their findings to the test, often leading to somehow conflicting conclusions. In general, some studies tend to confirm the original set of twelve news factors that are used to define newsworthiness (cf. Golan 2008, Joye 2010). Others eventually came up with new or additional sets of news values and have argued for a further specification of the different aspects of the news process to which the broad term of 'news values' refers to (cf. van Ginneken 1996, Harcup & O'Neill 2001, Brighton & Foy 2007, Caple & Bednarek 2013). Following this, others have uttered their methodological concerns about an overall sense of "uncertainty surrounding the empirical validity of both hypotheses and factors" (Hjarvard 2002: 94, cf., Harcup & O'Neill 2001, van Ginneken 2005). In recent years, scholars also pointed towards the increasing impact of digital media on journalistic practices of news gathering and selection (Heinrich 2011), confer the emerging idea of gatewatching (Bruns 2005). Likewise, new perspectives on global journalism (Berglez 2013) and globally responsible journalism (Ward 2011) were introduced into the debate on news values and the practice of gatekeeping in the context of international news reporting. Beyond the debate on news values, international migration processes of the last decades have not only changed the social and cultural composition and integration policies of European societies but they also form an increasingly relevant structural context for the analysis of national and international news media coverage (Bayer 2013).

**In this session, we aim to bring together these different perspectives in order to inform a broad discussion on Galtung and Ruge's legacy for the field of journalism studies in general and studies on international news selection in particular. What did fifty years of scholarly criticism learn us? Did their seminal work pass the test of time or should we rather regard it as a 'child of its time', hence outdated in terms of its appropriateness to today's (digital) news ecology?**

Contributors to the workshop session are Dr. Ansgard Heinrich (PhD in Media and Communication - University of Groningen, The Netherlands), Dr. Stijn Joye (PhD in Communication Sciences - Ghent University, Belgium) and Dr. Romy Wöhlert (PhD in Sociology - University of Klagenfurt/Austrian Academy of Sciences, Austria). The moderator of the workshop will be Stijn Joye.

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Interactive workshop session at the conference “Re-Inventing Journalism”, Winterthur 2015

## **The role of norms and normativity in the re-invention of journalism**

*Workshop organizers: Liane Rothenberger (TU Ilmenau), Annika Sehl (University of Hamburg) and Claudia Riesmeyer (LMU München)*

*Moderator of the discussion: Annika Sehl (University of Hamburg)*

*Experts: Wolfgang Donsbach (TU Dresden), Klaus Meier (Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt)*

In times of change in journalism, the durability of norms is questioned as new occupational norms emerge in various areas: rapidly changing developments in technology, economy, media ownership and editorial structures as well as in media usage, exert influence on changes in normativity and norms such as new regulations of data privacy or difficulties in the distinction between traditional journalism and user-generated content (Lewis, Kaufhold & Larsosa, 2010). Furthermore, economic pressure requires a shift of normativity in journalists' daily work and behavior. Freelancers, for instance, are more and more inclined to work for traditional media whilst also working in public relations (Obermayer & Koch, 2013).

Normativity appears at all three societal levels: At the macro level it is connected to the new digital media environment; at the meso level organizations imply changing normative demands on their employees; and at the micro level journalists are challenged to either stick to “old” norms or to adapt to new ones that are more and more frequently imposed by the audience (Meyen & Riesmeyer, 2009). Taking into consideration normative “re-inventions” at all three levels, our interactive workshop session will focus on the following specific question:

### **What role do norms and normativity play in the re-invention of journalism?**

Not only do we want to discuss relevant aspects in regard to societal levels, but moreover we want to shed light on these three fields of journalism, i.e. journalism studies, journalism education and the transfer of scientific knowledge into journalism practice. In all these three sections developments and re-inventions of norms and normativity can be revealed. However, the changes were not always linked and did not always occur simultaneously.

The panel will consist of the following members who are experts for the respective fields:

- *Wolfgang Donsbach* is an expert in theoretical approaches to normativity in journalism studies (Donsbach, 2006). He will talk about possible sources from which norms for journalism research can be derived and what these norms can focus on.
- *Klaus Meier* will speak about new norms in journalism (e.g. transparency; Meier & Reimer, 2011) and the challenges of transfer of scientific knowledge to newsrooms, especially methodological problems and possible solutions (Meier, 2011; Meier, 2014), which has impacted on journalism studies and the education of journalists.



Our experts come from different universities and have different backgrounds. They have been selected as they combine long-time expertise on a variety of issues relevant to the field of journalism studies. In order to structure the workshop we present a selection of possible questions that show a close connection to the conference theme and deal with the overall topic of normativity in journalism studies, journalism practice, and journalism education:

- Is there a re-invention of norms in journalism? (journalism practice)
- Is this reflected in journalism education? (journalism education)
- How can we conceptualize normativity from a theoretical point of view? (journalism studies)
- What can we learn from historical developments? (journalism practice, journalism education, journalism studies)
- Which innovative methods do we need to discover changes in normativity in journalism education/studies/practice? (journalism studies)

The interactive workshop will raise conceptual and methodological issues in which the audience is welcome to participate. The aim of the session will be to discuss the state of the art in regard to normativity in all the three fields mentioned above. According to current literature in journalism studies, up to now, there has been a lack of discussing normativity (Rothenberger & Auer, 2013). This also seems to hold true for the fields of journalism practice and journalism education. Therefore, it is time to think about innovative approaches in order to assess and to implement concepts of normativity.

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## **Panel proposal for Re-inventing journalism, Winterthur, Feb. 2015**

### **What about journalism education?**

#### **Preparing students for a new era of journalism**

##### *Question:*

How can we educate journalists to be ready for a journalism that is in constant change?

##### *Abstract:*

Journalism today and in the near future is entirely different from what it used to be. In the Netherlands the expectation is that 70 per cent of journalists will not be fully employed at a major media corporation. Journalists will become freelancers working for varied and multiple platforms, and will be employed in other capacities as well, sometimes outside the realm of journalism (Bakker, 2014). The new journalist will utilize multimedia and social media tools and will be characterized by creativity, flexibility and an entrepreneurial spirit. Most schools for journalism have not renewed their educational model to correspond with these changes. We use yesterday's models to train for yesterday's media. While we all know that journalism education cannot lag behind in a changing journalism landscape, journalism schools across the world are struggling to find the most suitable way to meet the changing needs (Hirst & Treadwell, 2011; Newton, 2013).

Several studies emphasize new skills journalism students should learn such as new technologies and converging skills (Hirst & Treadwell, 2011; Huang et al., 2006; Newton, 2013). A recent study at a journalism school in the Netherlands among supervisors of interns pointed out that newsroom supervisors see a lack in creative and critical thinking among the students (De Haan, Bosch, Bakker, 2014), while another study showed the need for students to reflect more on their own profession (Drok, 2011)

Studies on journalism education do not only focus on skills, knowledge and attitude, but also challenge conventional didactical methods and propose new initiatives. Educators are experimenting with new didactical approaches such as pop-up newsrooms, where students learn mobile journalism and to collaborate across borders to spur the kind of innovation necessary to respond to today's liquid journalism environment (Baines et al., in press; Wall; 2014; Franklin & Mensing, 2011). Some state that the classroom and newsroom should be much more connected, proposing new didactical models in which students produce directly for a general audience (Francisco, Lenhoff & Schudson, 2012). The idea of a 'teaching hospital', using the analogy of a student doctor learning while working real-life at the hospital, is also used in the journalism field. Journalism students and the news industry working more closely together (Newton, 2014).

This panel provides journalism researchers and educators a discussion about the future in journalism education, discussing new skills and knowledge to be taught and proposing new didactical methods to suit the 21<sup>st</sup> century journalism student.

*Contributors:*

- Yael de Haan, senior researcher and lecturer at the School of Journalism, the Netherlands
- Marco van Kerkhoven senior researcher and lecturer at the School of Journalism, the Netherlands
- Melissa Wall, professor at Northridge California State University and initiator of pop-up newsrooms
- David Baines, Journalism lecturer at Newcastle University

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***How do we analyze cross-media news use in a hybrid media environment and what does it mean for journalism and journalism studies? (Interactive workshop session proposal)***

**Panel speakers: Rasmus Kleis Nielsen (moderator), Irene Costera Meijer, Sascha Hölig**

Today, both journalists and journalism studies scholars need to pay more attention to audiences and media users to understand journalism and where it is heading. The move from a low-choice (supply-driven) to a high-choice (demand-driven) media environment means that individual users' habits, preferences, and interests become more and more important drivers of news consumption.

Patterns of media use in turn have substantial consequences for how much people know about public affairs (Prior 2007), the degree to which news connects them to civic life (Couldry, Livingstone, and Markham 2010), and for the institutional foundations of professional journalism (in terms of economic sustainability of commercial media and the political legitimacy of public service media) (Napoli 2010).

Current debates over news use focus on substantially important issues in journalism studies—and media and communication research more generally—including the “news gap” between producers' and users' preferences (Boczkowski and Mitchelstein 2013), potentially profound generational differences in media use and media perception (Mindich 2005, Meijer 2007), concerns over the consequences of partisan news consumption (Arceneaux and Johnson 2013, Levendusky 2013) and self-selection more widely (Bennett and Manheim 2006, Stroud 2011).

All of these issues have substantial implications for journalism, and for how we understand journalism and its social role. They also involve theoretical, methodological, and data-collection challenges for researchers that this interactive workshop is designed to facilitate discussion around.

These questions include the relatively recent ones like how we operationalize our theoretical understanding of audiences' “inherently cross-media” repertoires (Hasebrink and Popp 2006, Schrøder 2011, Hasebrink and Hölig 2013), how to deal with the erosion of previously taken-for-granted distinctions between producers and consumers (Bruns 2008, Domingo et al 2014) and between exposure and engagement (Napoli 2010, Livingstone 2013).

They also include older and more well-known questions concerning how to integrate qualitative and quantitative methods (Jensen 2002), how to deal with the increasing difficulties of conducting traditional survey research when land-line penetration and response rates declines (Johnston 2008), how to build research designs for more robust cross-national comparative research on news media use (Curtice 2007) and how to pursue more effective interdisciplinary collaborations to leverage increasingly powerful tools from the information sciences for dealing with so-called “big data” for automated content analysis, social network analysis, and patterns of online sharing without compromising transparency, reliability and validity (Parks 2014).

The purpose of this interactive workshop is to discuss various methodological approaches to analyzing cross-media news use in a hybrid media environment where digital media play a larger and larger role but legacy media remain important, and include discussion of the role of survey research, interviews, and focus groups.

The panel presenters will open the workshop with short presentations of the theoretical, methodological, and data issues faced in designing recent studies comparing media use across countries (Nielsen), identifying media users' perception of quality (Meijer) and developing approaches to analyzing audience behavior in a convergent and cross-media environment (Hölig).

Proposal for the Conference Re-Inventing Journalism  
Feb 5-6, 2015, Winterthur

Interactive Workshop Session

**Question:** Does journalism innovation follow from journalism crisis?

**Participants:**

- Karin Raeymaeckers, University of Gent, Belgium
- Helle Sjøvaag, University of Bergen, Norway
- Josef Trappel, University of Salzburg, Austria (moderator)

**Abstract:**

Crisis and innovation can be considered two sides of the same coin. Scholarly economic thinking frames innovation as follow-up from crisis with a potential to create new opportunities of doing business better. In this workshop the notions of *crisis* and *innovation* are critically reflected and applied to the ongoing changes in journalism. The guiding question is: *Does journalism innovation follow from journalism crisis?*

According to Neo-Schumpeterian thinking, capitalist economy provides solutions to all kind of economic crisis. Whenever “something of sufficient importance goes wrong” (one way of defining crisis; Schumpeter 1976 [1942], 40), new ideas will be “successfully applied” (one way of defining innovation; Dodgson/Gann 2010, 13). In its most basic understanding, innovation is just another word (synonym) for change (Küng 2013, 11).

Some scholars argue that journalism is facing a constant crisis and that crisis is an intrinsic element of journalism (Almirón 2010, 10). And indeed, news media in the Western world are suffering from advertising slumps, decreasing audience attention (in particular the press) and a crisis in revenue generation. Consequently, this has led to journalists being dismissed, to extended expectations regarding the job profile of journalists and generally to higher workloads for those remaining in the job.

At the same time, new forms and formats of public communication have developed at the periphery of what has once been considered professional journalism. Citizen journalism, blogs and social media apparently play an increasing role within the news (and entertainment) diet of a growing segment of the population (mostly younger generation). These new forms of communication complement – and possible substitute – legacy journalism and provide for changes of the input into the process of public deliberations.

In this workshop the three participants will start out by providing their understanding of crisis of journalism and journalism innovation. Is there – despite the economic crisis – still room for high quality professional journalism? Should there be a distinction made between economic crisis of the incumbent media’s business model and the development of journalism? To what extent can the amalgamation of professional journalism and social media be considered an innovation? Can whatever changes in journalism be considered innovative? Do the scholarly definitions of innovation apply to journalism? What are the consequences if we as communication scholars accept that whatever changes is considered innovative? These are some questions to be raised in the workshop.



The final aim of the workshop is to develop a better understanding of the notions of *crisis* and *innovation* in the context of journalism and to discuss critically whether any change is necessarily innovative.

The panel participants represent three distinct areas of Europe: Karin is Professor at the University of Gent in Belgium and concentrates her research and teaching on the development in journalism. She will report on journalism development in the Low Countries and beyond. Helle is a post-doc researcher at the University of Bergen in Norway, representing the Nordic region in Europe, which is characterized by a population that reads more than others and which (still) has a relatively diverse media landscape. Josef holds the Chair in media policy and media economics at the University of Salzburg and will report on the development in Central Europe where the crisis has left significant traces in quality journalism and he will critically reflect on the strength and weaknesses of the concept of innovation.

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Re-Inventing Journalism – 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> of February, 2015, Winterthur, Switzerland.

### **Proposal for an interactive Workshop Session**

**What kind of journalism education do we need in order to be prepared for re-invented journalism? (And how the transfer between key findings and practise might be improved)**

#### **Essential targets of our workshop:**

##### **Re-inventing journalism education – improving transfer between research and practise**

The process of “creative destruction” characterizing journalism since years has arrived in journalism education. Vice versa re-inventing journalism cannot be “done” without re-inventing journalism education. Starting point of this proposal is that journalism and in particular journalism education have to reflect social change as well as challenges of “updating” professional standards and skills in journalism. Therefore a closer look at the economics of innovation in journalism education is urgent.

Leading research question of the workshop are:

1. To which extend do journalism education programs implement innovations that seem to be meaningful consequences in the wake of the economic crises and of the challenges of reloading journalism?
2. How could journalism education be reshaped under the conditions
  - of a shrinking market,
  - of convergence, digitalization, the Internet and social networks
  - of value-orientation (which means a stronger demand for media ethics) and
  - of internationalisation?

Which kinds of innovation are urgent and necessary?

3. To which extend does journalism education adapt these challenges?
4. How do latest concepts bridge the gap between economics and social responsibility, in particular of journalists in democratic societies?
5. Are the “old” players in the education market ready for reinvention? Which kind of players do we need?
6. How could and should we educate the educators? How could we initiate a successful process of change?

Until now there is a lack of research on journalism education, particularly in different educational systems.

Starting point of the workshop is latest research about journalism education referring to the labour market, the media change (expressed in digitalization, transformation, networking, the need of management skills and of an ethical compass including orientation how to handle the challenges of the internet), internationalization and increased social responsibility – concluding with considerations about a Hippocratic Oath for journalists and educational excellence which might survive in niches. The theoretical approach leads to system theory. Journalism education has to react on system changes, which means to be the place of innovations that do justice to these demands. So far, research has paid little attention to journalism education, particularly to the economics of educating journalists and it is obvious

that educational systems differ strongly – e.g. in the Western world (Russ-Mohl 1994, Hallin / Mancini 2004, Prinzing, 2009, Terzis 2010). Renewing out-dated structures is a challenge and it offers chances to renovate systems. In this contribution we start with “education stocktaking” and we take a look to the future. We will use science in classical economics, e.g. rational choice theory, and from behavioural economy. We look at basics (Russ-Mohl 1994, Fengler / Russ-Mohl 2005, Schudson 1998) and at latest research about journalism education (Stark 2010, Nordenstreng 2010, Servaes 2010, Bigi 2012, Francisco et al 2012, Poynter 2013, Picard 2014.) referring to the expectations of the market and of the media change that is especially expressed in digitalization, transformation and networking and in the need of management skills, internationalization and social responsibility – concluding with considerations about a Hippocratic Oath for journalists and with concepts for excellence in the niche.

The aim of the session is to show the state-of-the art as well as core points for reinvention and departure in journalism education. We want to discuss how to initiate a sustainable process of change in journalism education and how this might be financed. Political discussions might set the ball rolling – for example discussions in summer 2014 about a new media act in the German state North Rhine-Westphalia and about the foundation “Partizipation und Vielfalt”, to whose aims it belongs to give grants to journalism education; however, the concrete objectives have to be defined. And in their latest report in September 2014, the Swiss Media Commission (2014) suggested the support of journalism education, too.

As thought-provoking we invite inputs dealing with latest research and experience, amongst others with the hospital model, a newer development in the United States: This means a combination of real-life training and research. Core point is the integration of medical education, access to advanced research and technology, and expert care for critically ill patients (Lenhoff 2011). In the US there are some transfer projects to journalism at least to help students as well as professional journalists to serve democracy and journalism in the digital age (Downie 2011, Francisco et al 2012). One contributor should represent present journalism education, desirably on an overview level.

Moderators/input: Marlis Prinzing & Stephan Russ-Mohl (background: practise, research, journalism education, G/CH)

Further contributors / input statements (subject they finally agree to be there):

1. One or two of them: Hugo Bigi or Hannes Britschgi (Switzerland) or Daniela Kraus (Austria) or Wilfried Ruetten (Netherlands) (background: international journalism education (schools)) – tba
  2. Beatrice Dernbach (background: university journalism education, G)
  3. Robert Picard (background: social science, UK)
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**Conference *Re-Inventing Journalism*** (Convened by the Journalism Studies Sections of ECREA and DGPUK)

**5th- 6th of February, 2015, Winterthur, Switzerland**

SUBMISSION FOR AN INTERACTIVE WORKSHOP SESSION

Contributors & moderators:

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### **Abstract**

Journalism in Western countries is widely held to be in serious crisis today, in particular because of the rise of the internet (Picard, 2010). It is argued that online news outlets lack working business models and newsrooms are often under-financed and thus hardly able to provide comprehensive information and profound analysis (Curran, Fenton, & Freedman, 2012). And since online news is an important source of information for many citizens, this potentially has alarming consequences for the functioning of democracies (Nielsen, 2012). A growing amount of research observes this development and deals with the transformed information environment. However, Mitchelstein and Boczkowski (2009) observed in their meta-analysis of studies on online journalism that many studies apply ‘existing lenses’ to this topic. Furthermore, those authors argue that future research in this field should investigate trends that lead to re-thinking the understanding of journalism and its role in society instead of continuing to adopt a phenomenon-centered or a theoretically tributary stance. As the re-invention of methods, theories, practices and strategies are a fundamental requirement to fulfill such a claim it is of importance to identify the driving forces of re-invention and to discuss where and by whom re-thinking is fostered. This should not be misunderstood as a quest for shallow dichotomies like: old vs. new or innovative vs. traditional. On the contrary, with the prefix “re-“ in “re-inventing” or “re-thinking” the bond between the former and the latter and their reciprocal relation is explicitly articulated. It might not always be necessary to abandon ‘existing lenses’ when they can be grinded or pointed at a phenomenon from a new enlightening angle.

Against this background the question arises whether a new generation of journalism scholars can follow this path by combining knowledge of current technological developments with

new and established methodological approaches and rethink and advance theoretical approaches. We invite young scholars to discuss how research on the transformation of journalism can be conducted in different ways in order to not just understanding the dynamics of current journalism, but probing critical intellectual foundations and unresolved dilemmas in the larger field of communication and media.

The aim of the interactive workshop session is to discuss how re-inventing journalism research can contribute to re-inventing journalism and whether knowledge exchange between journalists and scholars can foster this development. The main question of this interactive workshop session is:

*„How can we make a difference?“ What can young (journalism) scholars and journalists contribute to the re-invention of journalism?*

We will focus on three aspects which will be presented by the contributors at the beginning of the session. These aspects are outlined in the following:

*Methods* in journalism research: Do we need to open up to different methods? Can mixed methods be useful? Are our results (and their implications) determined by the methods we choose? Where are the blind spots? What are chances and what are risks in adapting new methods? How can we enhance methods by combining the old with the new?

*Networking* and transfer between practice and research: How can both scholars and journalists profit from knowledge transfer between each other? How could this knowledge transfer be intensified or even institutionalized? What can scholars do for the re-invention of journalism and what can journalists do for the re-invention of journalism research?

*Technical* aspects and the *content* dimension: Technical aspects are increasingly important, but only play a minor role in both academic and journalistic education: Do journalism scholars have to open up to techniques like programming, big data analysis, etc.? Should journalistic education include training of social media usage, e.g. user comments, Twitter and Facebook, etc.? Do young scholars and journalists apply different lenses on current developments compared to their older colleagues and how can they benefit from each other? And finally, how can aspects of content still play a role in a changing and profit-oriented media system? Do we see alternative models of (for example) financing high quality investigative journalism?

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