TITLE: Travel Journalists and Professional Identity: Ideology and evolution in an online era
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Introduction

In the 19th century, a limited group of elite men from England traveled through Europe on their Grand Tour. Today, according to the United Nations World Tourism Organization, more than one billion people trek the globe annually (UNWTO Annual Report 2013). In the span of just over a century, travel has transformed from a luxury adventure to a commercial product, available even to modest budgets. The information used to plan these excursions has also evolved, helping to shape the way individuals travel (Steward 2005). Once confined to travel guides and agencies, travel planning tools are available online, from booking sites to review websites like TripAdvisor. Now, 21st century travelers have more information than ever before at their disposal. Still, finding and identifying useful, pertinent, and credible information is no easy feat when researching a destination, especially one like Paris, which boasts countless blogs, news articles, and forum posts that address multiple facets of tourism.

Travel journalism, as opposed to non-professional publications like blogs, still features prominently for tourists who research online (Author 2015, McGaurr 2015). While TripAdvisor and blogs provide free, user-generated content to help evaluate spending decisions for consumers, established publications continue to attract readers. Magazines like *Condé Nast Traveler* and travel sections in *The New York Times* produce articles and critiques that carry weight, but what are the essential differences between these journalists and the countless amateurs and non-professionals who publish on the same topics? What makes a journalist's article different from a blog post?

This research seeks to build upon existing literature on travel journalism by exploring the practices of professional travel journalists as compared to bloggers who write about the same city, Paris. Identifying their values and habits will allow for a better understanding of their occupational ideology. The results suggest that normative interpretations of journalists in a travel context need to be re-evaluated in order to account for the prevalence and influence of online publications like blog in the 21st century.
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Theoretical Framework

Travel journalism often finds itself lumped into a broader category of lifestyle journalism, marked by "dimensions of review, advice, and consumerism" according to Elfriede Fürsich (2012). She builds on Fiske's notion of "popular news" and how broadcast journalism's goal "should not be to disseminate information considered to be socially necessary, but rather to make such information *popular*" (1989, p 193). The consumer aspect of lifestyle journalism, however, has changed significantly at the end of the 20th century, with certain authors lamenting the lack of the watchdog function that once guided it (Lieberman 1994). Instead, today, as Kristensen and From argue, cultural, lifestyle, and consumer journalism are all burred and constantly being negotiated by journalists (2012). Travel journalism fits into this ever-changing, yet poorly defined genre, which struggles for recognition from an onslaught of bloggers.

Over the last two decades, works by Fürsich and Kavoori (2001) and McGaurr (2012, 2015) have addressed travel journalism. A 2014 collective work addresses various aspects of the profession. The authors propose a working definition of travel journalism that guides the research presented here:

factual accounts that address audiences as consumers of travel or tourism experiences, by providing information and entertainment, but also critical perspectives. Travel journalism operates within the broader ethical framework of professional journalism but with specific constraints brought on by the economic environment of its production (Hanusch and Fürsich 2014, 11).

This definition, however, does not clearly exclude bloggers who may adhere to all of its criteria.

While few studies seek to compare travel blogs to journalism, there are numerous studies that examine the often tense relationship between blogging and journalism and general. A study on American political blogs describes how ideas of professional journalism are constantly negotiated because of blogging (Le Cam 2006). Another study showed that bloggers often lack credibility when considered as sources by journalists, ultimately leading them to be distrusted (Volker and Firdaus 2013). Scott Rosenberg traces the history of blogs, describing how journalists now work "in a new environment where who you worked for mattered less than how good you were, and how good you were became a question anyone could argue" (2009 p 282). Some researchers, however, suggest that using blogs in the classroom to train future journalists might be a way to prepare them for the 21ˢᵗ century media landscape (Hodgson and Wong 2011). The opposition between these two groups, however, has led to a nebulous grey zone where journalist bloggers exist on one end, and bloggers contributing to the press exist on the other (Hermida 2011, p 25; AUTHOR 2014)

We look then to the concrete practices of travel journalist in order to help identify the elements of their ideology, which, we argue, include both elements of "traditional" journalism and blogging. Discourse theory states that "there is no inherent meaning to the concepts and practices of journalism, but that it acquires these in the process of articulation (Bogaerts and Carpentier 2013). Through interviews, we look then to the various practices embraced by travel journalists, in order to understand how they contribute to an occupational ideology. Such practices have been evolving for years, and include normative journalistic routines like citing sources and striving for objectivity (Wahl-Jorgensen and Hanitzsch 2009).

Understanding the occupational ideology of travel journalists requires discussing interpretations of its definition. While Fürsich and Kavoori (2014) identify the role of fixing the Other as part of the travel journalist's ideology, we are interested in how these actors perceive their own occupational ideology. We consider the ideology that Deuze (2005) identifies as cornerstones of journalism. He suggests that a journalistic ideology exists "as a collection of values, strategies and formal codes characterizing professional journalism and shared most widely by its members" (Deuze 2005, 445). Basing his research on the work of other authors (see Kovach and Rosenstiel 2006, Golding and Elliot 1979, Hanitzsch 2013), Deuze identifies five main elements that represent a journalistic ideology: public service, objectivity, autonomy, immediacy, and ethics. But he suggests that such categories are far too restrictive to understanding journalism:

> The analyses of the ideal-typical values of journalism, and how these vary and get meanings in different circumstances, have shown that any definition of journalism as a profession working truthfully, operating as a watchdog for the good of society as a whole and enabling citizens to be self-governing is not only naive, but also one-dimensional and sometimes nostalgic for perhaps the wrong reasons (Deuze 2005, 458).

Instead, we can consider that specific groups – like travel journalists – have their own specificities, distinct not just from non-professionals, but also from hard news or political journalists, as Hanusch and Fürsich state (2014). Like Deuze, we argue that these five elements are not applied uniformly across various genres of journalists. We can use these cornerstones as building blocks to understand travel journalists' unique ideology. We can nuance the elements, for example, by questioning if travel journalists are necessarily acting in public service as much as they serve consumers. Is objectivity a real goal for travel journalists? Are these individuals truly autonomous and free in their work, or do external factors like freebies and public relations weigh on them as Hanusch (2012b) and McGaurr (2015) discuss? Does travel require the same notion of immediacy as political or local news? While ethics remain important for all journalists, do travel journalists have unique concerns for their profession? Through this research, we argue that travel journalists publishing online embrace a specific ideology, not entirely different, but unique from the ideals Deuze identifies, and in part influenced by their competitors, bloggers.

Such ideologies among journalists have been evolving for years as the profession itself has changed. Since the early 20th century, modern journalism was asserting itself in places like the United States and France, the latter only creating the professional press card in 1936 (Ruellan 2007). The concept of who a professional journalist is has been the subject of much debate over the decades, with numerous works addressing the topic by American and European authors (Schudson 2011, Kovach and Rosenstiel 2007, Ruellan 2007). At the beginning of the 21st century, conversations turned towards changes prompted by the internet, notably those allowing participation by readers (Singer, Hermida, Domingo, et al. 2011). Journalists seemed to be losing control of the mass media as participatory sites, blogs, and social media became commonplace (Gant 2007). Traditionally, the media dictated which stories and news reached the public. This historic roll of the gatekeeper, dating back to 1943 (Lewin) has morphed into what Axel Bruns describes as "gatewatchers" where journalists work more to identify quality information instead of only producing it (2005). Jane Singer furthers the conversation, discussing her idea of "user-generated visibility," wherein the public shares and promotes articles that it deems worthy, bypassing the gatewatching of the journalists (2014).

These changes can be attributed in part to technological advances and the democratized ability to publish online. As a study on entrepreneurial news site *Mediapart* illustrates in France, traditional journalistic values are not incompatible with innovation and change (Wagemans, Witschge, and Deuze 2016). Researchers discuss how the site reinvented journalism in France by rethinking how founders finance its articles and videos. Researchers say that "it becomes clear that challenging the status quo by reverting to traditional values (such as truth-telling in the context of complete editorial autonomy and independence) becomes one of the most important resources available to Mediapart" (2016, 173). Such statements open up discussion about other players online, namely bloggers, who can adhere to similar ideologies while fighting for recognition (Gant 2007). Are these ideologies and discursive practices, however, laid out in journalism manuals and books (see Kovach and Rosenstiel 2007, Wahl-Jorgensen and Hanitzsch 2009) unique to journalists? Journalists, as opposed to bloggers, apply "professional practices within recognized codes of ethics" (Knight, Geuze, and Gelis 2008). But blogging becomes more muddled in a travel context since blogs are often considered useful and trustworthy sources of information (AUTHOR 2015). These non-professional authors have developed their own identifying features, like a reliance on the first person and personal experiences, which set them apart from mainstream journalism (Cardon and Delaunay 2006, Duffy 2014).

What is clear is that professional journalism is evolving, with greater participation by citizens who work almost in tandem with journalists towards what Sue Robinson calls

"journalism as process" (2011). In her study of a local American newspaper, she explains that "people have come to accept that they must bypass mainstream news outlets and use the original article only as a step along a path of knowledge construction" (2011, 163). For better or worse, the public is both an active member and consumer, or prosumer, of information (Toffler 1984). Axel Bruns again takes the concept one step further, labeling today's web users as produsers, creating content online that is "neither production nor service provision, then, but a hybrid process which – as it is carried out by users who are also producers – can be described as produsage (2008). Still, professional journalists are holding their ground as Singer explored in a study on political blogs written by journalists. Whereas journalists adopt the blog format, they still maintain many traditional, pre-internet journalistic practices (Singer 2005).

Journalists are continually learning how to react to this ever-changing media environment. As Dickinson, Matthews, and Saltzis suggest, however, little research focuses directly on the journalists themselves and how they cope with these changes (2013). Furthermore, the idea of a specific *travel* journalist has not been overly explored by academics. Many studies address the changes that the internet has brought to the travel industry (eg: Gretzel 2007, Sotiriadis and Van Zyl 2013, Cardon 2014). Researchers suggest, for example, that newer players like blogs have less impact than traditional word of mouth, though they are still important marketing tools for destinations (Mack, Blose, and Pan 2008). We suggest studying how travel journalists are faring this professional identify crisis.

This research seeks to explore how 21st century travel journalists consider their own ideologies. By comparing their opinions as well as their work to those of bloggers, this paper will identify the particularities of professional travel journalists and help better understand the practices they employ as they are developing in an internet age.

Methods

In order to explore these questions, it is necessary to speak directly with those who are producing travel information to understand their practices. Interviews, according to Lindlof and Taylor, are "ports of entry into a person's worldviews or ideologies" and allow researchers to observe that which cannot be observed by other means (2011 p 174, 175). To that end, we used started with criterion based sampling mixed with snowball sampling to organize interviews in Paris in 2014. One group consisted of those who publish regularly for major outlets – those who identified as travel journalists. A second group consisted of those who blog regularly about Paris. We used Paris as a control to ensure geographical feasibility for face to face interviews, while also enabling a focus for the content analysis. As a top world destination, Paris provides a wide range of media coverage, especially considering that tourism accounts for 7.4% of the gross national product of France – nearly twice that of agriculture. The media environment in Paris is rich and multifaceted, though the research presented here focuses on English-speaking authors. We complemented the interviews with a content analysis of their articles and posts, in order to identify journalistic practices found in their work, as defined by various authors and journalism manuals.

The first step was to create our sample of interview subjects. While this research seeks to understand more clearly the profile of a travel journalist, we began by contacting individuals who work for traditionally journalistic publications, including newspapers, magazines, and guidebooks. While McGaurr (2015) does not consider guidebooks as journalism, we argue that travel guides are created within editorial and temporal constraints and often include websites that are regularly updated with new content. We sought those who identify as journalists and who contribute either as freelancers or as regular contributors to publications online or offline. Sampling began by emailing journalists who had bylines in

established travel sections and publications. By asking journalists for contact information in their networks, snowball sampling allowed us to collect additional subjects, resulting in 12 interviews with professionals who contribute to *The New York Times, Travel+Leisure*, *USA Today*, *Fodor's*, *The Guardian*, *Time Out Paris,* and *France Today* among other publications. While some journalists did produce occasional radio programs, we focused on the written journalism that they produced, which was by far more prevalent. Similarly to Hanusch's findings, the group was mostly women, with only one male travel journalist identified for interviews (2012a). The respondents ranged in age from 29 to 63 years old and had expatriated to Paris from the United States, England, or Canada. Most were regular contributors or freelancers who have at least 5 years of experience, with the most experienced journalist working for over 40 years. The interviews lasted 1-2 hours in Parisian cafés and were transcribed afterwards.

For bloggers, we selected subjects by mapping the blogosphere. Using a navicrawler tool, an application that scans the links between websites, we were able to scan thousands of websites to identify and map the connections between Paris-based blogs written in English that had been updated at some point during 2014. The tool allows researchers to choose which sites to include in the sample by eliminating any websites that dealt with topics beyond Paris. Instead of choosing blogs randomly, we contacted the bloggers of highly linked websites, as indicated by the mapping. We theoretically were accessing some of the most consulted blogs, since traffic statistics are rarely available or reliable. At the same, time, we mixed these highly linked sites with a few blogs that did not rank highly by the navicrawler, in order to have a wider scope of the Parisian blogosphere. After contacting about 20 active blogs identified by the navicrawler, all focusing on Paris, we conducted interviews with bloggers who responded favorably to interview requests. We retained 12 interviews with expatriate bloggers, by chance all female, who ranged from 22 to 57 years old, mostly from the United States, with one Swedish and one British blogger. Each blog was generally produced by one person, without an editorial team. While not a random sampling of bloggers, this method ensured that the research focused on content specific to Paris, though is by no means representative of all travel bloggers.

Following the interviews, we were able to collect recent articles from journalists and bloggers, published mostly at the first half of 2014. We selected 69 journalistic articles produced that discussed Paris as a destination, written by the journalists interviewed. For blog posts, we selected 123 written by bloggers interviewed, choosing those that addressed specifically travel written in 2014, ignoring any overly-personal reflections or giveaway promotions that did not directly include information for travelers. We then applied a coding schedule to each publication, seeking the presence of basic journalistic practices as described by various authors (Neveu 2009, Rieffel 2014, Kovach and Rosenstiel 2007). For example, we searched for the presence of any sources cited, the introduction of facts as opposed to opinions, and the presence of an angle that rendered each piece of content newsworthy. We also examined the use of first person narration, typically not found in traditional news stories – a glance at the Reuters style handbook confirms – but that is arguably important in travel writing (Youngs 2013, p 173).

This analysis is a first look that allows us to compare professional and non-professional practices on a basic level among individuals contributing to travel publications.

Results

An analysis of these interviews revealed many different facets of these authors, and help to compare travel journalists to bloggers – despite significant overlap between the two. We present the key findings in three parts. We first deal with how travel journalists see

themselves as fitting into the normative role of a professional journalist, as opposed to bloggers. In the second part, we see how travel journalists diverge from these norms, perhaps leaning more towards bloggers with regards to certain practices. In a third and final part, we observe how journalists refuse certain changes and evolutions in their profession, namely those due to the largescale adoption of the internet in travel planning and information dissemination.

Professional journalists and attitudes

First and foremost, the interviews reveal that there is an aspiration among journalists to assert themselves as distinct from – and somewhat above – bloggers and other non-professionals. The overall sense is that to be a journalist is something very different from blogging. One journalist said, "In the same breath, it's unfair to me and the blogger to be compared. I think that's a very important distinction" (April 24, 2014). While a few journalists did admit that the democratizing power of the internet allows for more points of views, most agree that bloggers are somehow below journalists in terms of the information they provide. They are professional in the sense that they are paid for their work and that they have some sort of training – either on the job or formal education. Furthermore, they cite their position, their ethics, their dedication to readers, and their publications' reputations as ways that they distinguish their work from blogs and other websites.

Local authorities

Part of the reason travel journalists assert themselves as professionals is that they are authorities on their locations – in other words, they maintain Paris as their journalistic "beat." By living in Paris as expatriates, they have a deeper knowledge of what is going on in the city. As one journalist said, "The advantage of being in Paris is that you see firsthand what's going on now" (September 15, 2014). Similarly, another journalist underscores her expatriation as a key factor in her authority, saying, "I underscore all the experience I have in Paris, the years here, that I am an authority, that I am steeped in this stuff all day long. My journalism degree might not matter as much" (April 30, 2014). The journalists cited various ways that they can get insider scoops, notably through understanding the culture and the language, as well as being able to follow the local press with ease.

Bloggers adopt a similar mentality in terms of having authority. Internet technologies allow individuals to publish their own posts about a destination, something that has been adopted by a large community of expatriates in Paris – our cartography identified more than 200 active blogs about Paris. While expatriate bloggers create content aimed at "helping expatriates deal with their experiences of uncertainty, ambiguity and anxiety," they provide the same sorts of services for travelers (Nardon, Aten, and Gulanowski 2014). Their presence as boots on the ground has led many bloggers to assume authority on topics surrounding Paris. One blogger said:

> I was talking to a journalist from a big UK paper and she was doing research and was talking about the mayor and about what he was doing. And I said, well, "she" is doing some great things. And I felt like, you're the travel journalist for this big paper in the UK, and I don't think you can ever have as much authority as someone who has their nose to the ground (May 5, 2014).

While bloggers are encroaching onto territory once reserved for professionals, journalists as a group are changing, at least in Paris. The decrease of funding for journalists' trips (McGaurr

2015) has led to much travel journalism being produced by expatriates who do not require paid travel, a question to be explored in more detail in future study. As expatriates, the journalists interviewed say that this intimate connection with place is something that helps justify their positions as journalists in their minds, even if bloggers feel similarly.

Ethics of transparency

Throughout the interviews, however, journalists were unable to articulate *exactly* how they differentiate themselves from bloggers who can very much become authorities in a similar fashion. While most bloggers reported no aspiration to become a professional reporter, journalists see themselves as a group distanced from these non-professionals. Their arguments became clearer when pressed for more specific examples of how they distinguish themselves.

One norm, for example, that journalists respect was one that bloggers clearly did not acknowledge as consistently – the idea of transparency. As Greenman discusses, being clear and honest with readers about how travel articles are produced is essential for journalists (2012). With so many "freebies" and press trips circulating among travel writers, it is difficult to know when an article has been sponsored by a tourism board or company, essentially rendering it as a marketing tool more than a work of journalistic integrity (Hanusch 2012b, McGaurr 2015). Hanusch's study on Australian travel journalists reveals that this group is aware of the pitfalls of public relations, but also understands the necessity to work with marketing teams from time to time (2012a).

For the journalists interviewed, while accepting free experiences is sometimes necessary, it is paramount to disclose these acts to readers. One journalist accepts free hotel stays and other experiences that are more expensive than the wages earned for articles, therefore justifying the need to receive "freebies" if she is to write about travel at all. She said, "The question is, did you write something favorable influenced by the freebie? I refuse. If there's something negative, I'll put it in the review. Anyone who doesn't do that is unethical and they are only then in it for the future freebies they can get" (May 1, 2014). Another journalist, in the same vein, discussed how she would accept freebies with no guarantee for coverage. She said, "I had to be very upfront with them and say I didn't have a publication besides my blog that I could offer coverage" (March 24, 2014).

Few bloggers interviewed fully grasped the importance of transparency in their blogs – and none actively acknowledged any "freebies" in their blog posts according to our content analysis. Several bloggers interviewed admitted to publishing sponsored content without any sort of disclaimer, even as the US Federal Trade Commission requires bloggers to disclose their gifts and invitations. For the bloggers, sponsorships and gifts aren't an ethical issue. As one blogger said, "It's a side point that there was a kickback. It's nothing that great anyway. I don't think I'm selling out because I wouldn't write about it unless it was worth it" (May 5, 2014). Those who do consider disclosing only do to benefit their blog or their personal brand, as one blogger explained: "If I am hired to shoot for Gucci or invited, I think that's good for your brand that they want to work with you" (June 6, 2014).

Journalists interviewed criticize bloggers for not respecting this norm. One travel journalist said, "Bloggers are not as closed off to PR companies as journalists. It should be an adversarial relationship, journalists and PR people. Bloggers are the opposite. It's a totally different way of looking at things" (April 24, 2014). Though while most all journalists agree that they need to be honest and open with their readers, another journalist doubts that readers are as concerned with ethics, asking, "How many people who read this stuff even know this problem exists?" (April 29, 2014). Intrinsically, however, journalists understand the

importance of being transparent and doing more than to "gild the lily of those who have invited them in," as this journalist said.

Brand loyalty

Journalists also reported a strong adhesion to the brands of media that they work for, be it a specific newspaper like *The New York Times* or a travel guide like *Fodor's*. As one journalist reported, "It does kind of give you an authority, the fact that they chose you to write for them" (May 6, 2014). While both newer and established bloggers spoke about their own obligations to create their own image on their blog, journalists are more than happy to allow their publication's brand speak for them. As one journalist said, "Clearly, the *Wall Street Journal* reporter or a *New York Times* reporter or from a similar well-known global news organization is going to have more access. You don't have any explaining to do" (April 29, 2014). There is a level of pride associated with working for a major brand among those interviewed, echoing McGaurr's idea that the brand relates directly to the value derived from a publication (2015, 116).

For the bloggers, the only brand concerning them is their own. Each blogger has their own vision of Paris and of what they want their blog to be, allowing their personalities to dictate their brand. As one blogger sums up, "It's not actually my entire view of Paris but it's a view that I think attracts people. I allowed the image of the blog to follow a certain track." (June 2, 2014). Bloggers are calculated in their selection of topics and writing, contributing to their personal brand, but are free from editorial limitations.

Diverging from the norm

While travel journalists still adhere to their brand name media and their status as something set apart from bloggers, their practices do not line up perfectly with traditional journalistic values. While diverging from journalistic norms, they often share much in common with bloggers who are also writing about Paris.

Newsworthiness

For example, journalists reveal that their idea of "news" and what is "newsworthy" differs from traditional journalism. While the idea of what constitutes a newsworthy story has evolved, authors agree on a few key justifications, including frequency, threshold or scale, proximity to the event, negativity, and predictability (Harcup 2015, Branston and Stafford 2003). In a travel context, however, the idea of what is newsworthy isn't always as clear, especially since travel will always be a new experience for some, and old news for others. One journalist explained, "In travel writing it's not really that useful to be writing about the hottest, trendiest restaurants. Travelers haven't been to any restaurants yet, so why do they care what's new?" (April 24, 2014). Events and happenings that are "new" for expatriates become less important for tourists arriving at a destination for the first time. Keeping them abreast of the latest occurrences or openings in Paris isn't necessarily important for travel journalists who sometimes write articles about long-standing museums and institutional restaurants that are "musts" for travelers. Several journalists expressed that it is usually necessary to find a news peg for a story, in order to give a fresh take on an otherwise mundane topic, like the Eiffel Tower or the flea markets, which are not prone to changes important to visitors.

One journalist, however, said her editors did not want anything new or trendy, in order to preserve the timeliness and accuracy of the guide they were producing (April 30,

2014). While of course travel guide writing does not follow the same production schedule as newspapers or magazines, it is still interesting to observe how journalists straddle a line between promoting fixtures in the tourism industry while also trying to inject new or fresh ideas into the mix.

Bloggers, on the other hand, report sometimes looking for the newest events in Paris immediately, rarely covering topics like major museums or monuments in Paris (Author 2015). Blogs are easier to update and are not consulted as a repertoire of things to do in a destination like a travel guide or magazine might be, so having ephemeral or timely topics isn't as much of a problem for bloggers (Cardon and Delaunay-Teterel 2006). As one blogger put it:

> I also think in comparison to *Condé Nast* [*Traveler*], just because it's so big and takes so much time for an idea to get published, that a new place opens and we can publish in a week or less potentially. In that sense, blogs could be a lot more up to date and reliable and insider than *Condé Nast* (April 22, 2014).

Interestingly, however, many bloggers explain that they don't feel pressured to be the first on the scene, even if they acknowledge the possibility. As one blogger explains, "If it's a new place that opened a few months ago, it's still new. It is important to me for the whole voice of the blog. I don't care if it's a day old or a week old – I don't have to be the first one on the scene" (May 5, 2014). The content analysis illustrates these statements. While just 40% of blogs related to actual news events, only 55% of articles did the same. Timely news events do not seem a total preoccupation for either travel journalists or bloggers.

First person narration

Secondly, while travel journalists are by no means sharing as much information as their blogger counterparts about their personalities and lives, there are indications that they are moving towards a more personal, opinion-driven style of writing. The use of the first person dominated in blogs, with 92% of posts using "I" or "we" as opposed to only 33% of articles. At first glance, bloggers overwhelmingly share their personal anecdotes on their sites, seeking interaction and dialogue with their readers either on the blog or through associated social media accounts. As one blogger explain:

> I try to put myself in the text. That's one thing actually that people say, they want more of me. They want to see me. I can relate because when I read blogs I want to know more about the person and you become a bit obsessed (June 6, 2014).

Journalists, however, generally agreed that they seek to avoid the first person, with one journalist saying, "I'm writing for a publication that has their own thing going on. It's not objective and dry, but it's not about me ultimately" (April 23, 2014). This tradition, detailed in numerous handbooks, is evolving, especially with the New Journalism of the 1960s (Wolfe 1996).

In practice, however, these travel journalists increasingly realize that they are travel writers as well as journalists, and need to insert their own voices into their work. One journalist explained, "[Readers] want to know you've been there and you've experienced it and they can trust you, that you haven't just written from a press release" (April 23, 2014). She continued to share how her editors asked for more personal opinions from journalists. "You can use 'I' and 'we recommend' this or that – they wanted us to be opinionated and

outspoken in our reviews," she said. Despite some resistance, first person narration is becoming a more accepted for travel journalists online.

Relaxed reporting

A final difference emerging for the travel journalists interviewed is the rigor for facts and sources (Berkowitz 2009). While citing sources has been a distinguishing feature of Anglo-Saxon journalism, travel journalists do not see themselves as attached to government or official sources (Chalaby 1996, Schudson 2011). Travel journalism falls under the umbrella of lifestyle journalism, according to Hanusch, which differs from traditional "hard news" journalism (Boczkowski 2010, Hanusch 2012c). A few of the professionals interviewed maintained that sources and thorough reporting are important. One journalist, for example, criticized the current state of travel journalism, saying, "When you compare what has been produced in the past, there is a huge difference between what you got then and what you get now" (April 3, 2014). Several other journalists interviewed lament the lack of citing sources and research in published travel journalism, though most agree that they do not research as exhaustively as they could.

Despite recognizing the importance of sources, the content analysis revealed that 29% of journalists' articles cite any sort of source or individual. Only 7% of blog posts contained any such sourcing. One journalist explains that while pay has decreased and demands have increased, she has found ways to fulfill her duties with less work. "One of the ways I've lowered my standards in writing is to reduce the number of sources that I interview. In the past I might interview ten people, now I'll do two and pick the best quote and it's a way of cutting corners," she said (April 30, 2014).

This lack of research rigor corresponds to the general view of bloggers who focus more on storytelling than on reporting. Few bloggers affirm that they engage in active reporting, interviews, or other sorts of fact-checking. A few bloggers suggested that they don't speak about facts and figures to avoid committing errors, while others cite a lack of resources. The primary way most bloggers do offer information is through links. One blogger stated clearly, "Whenever I can I add links to museums or anything associated with the activity I am going on" (October 7, 2014).

Resisting new practices

While embracing their own developing ideologies, the professionals did report resisting certain practices associated with journalism in the 21st century. Audience interaction, social networks, and additional responsibilities were just three facets that journalists preferred not to incorporate into their routines that have become commonplace among bloggers.

Audience interaction

First, even though they report writing primarily for their audiences, journalists do not seek to interact with their readers after the article is published. The idea of participatory journalism, or at least contributing to news stories in comments, has been explored by several authors who note that most participation only occurs in what they dub the interpretation phase of a story, and not in its creation (Singer, Hermida, Domingo et al 2011).

For travel journalists, however, there is little desire to respond to emails or comments from readers. For one journalist who has experience at an agency, it is strictly an engrained professional issue. She said, "When you work on a staff, it's not you it's the company doing

the article. You can't just say whatever you want" (April 3, 2014). Most travel journalists interviewed, however, work as freelancers, and thus don't have to worry as much about office hierarchies. Still, they don't embrace the interaction made possible online. One journalist, for example, said, "I think people come and get what they want and leave, but they don't think that [I am] their pal" (April 24, 2014). She, like the other journalists, does not actively respond to commentary or social media interactions for her online publications. They consider their obligation fulfilled upon publishing their article, unlike bloggers who seek to interact more intimately with readers through their websites and social media accounts (Beuscart 2008).

Bloggers, however, fully embrace audience interaction. Many bloggers respond to comments because they are themselves blog readers. "I feel more loyal to blogs where I know the person writing it is interested in his or her readers, so that's the sort of blogger I'd like to be" (February 7, 2014). In general, however, blogger interactions have increasingly moved to social media associated with their blogs.

Social media

Social media, a distinguishing feature of the journalistic landscape today, does not interest the travel journalists interviewed. Users are increasingly dictating which articles are shared and promoted, under what Singer labels user-generated visibility (2014). For professionals, however, such promotion doesn't figure into their routines. While networks like Facebook and Twitter facilitate research, interaction, and sharing for journalists today, those working for travel publications largely ignored the potential. A few journalists recognized the positive aspects of social media for journalists and are slowly adopting it, but most refuse, even if their publications are active on social media under the guidance of online editors or community managers.

One journalist, for example, hesitates to include social media in her routine. "Journalists tell me that Twitter is a brilliant resource for journalists. I'm afraid that I'm already overloaded and this will be even more," she said (May 1, 2014). Most look at social media as an annoyance or as something "extra" that hinders their routine. They don't look at it as a useful tool that could help them. Another journalist chose not to adapt to social media, failing to believe in its potential. He said, "So you have to tweet your stories and build up your own personal brand. Big name journalism was never about your personal brand, it was about the story" (April 29, 2014).

Bloggers, however, are well established on these networks, allowing them to share their posts and reach a larger readership. While they all use networks to varying degrees, in general, bloggers embrace at least Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and increasingly Snapchat. Interactions on social networks are becoming more important, as one blogger stated, "On Facebook it's more public so I respond. Twitter, I'll respond to tweets in varying degrees of exhaustively. But the whole issue of blog comments, the blogging world in general has changed. People are more interested in shares." (May 30, 2014).

Additional tasks

Social media, however, is just one part of other various tasks added to the travel journalists' routines. While they overwhelmingly refuse to interact with their readers or engage on social media, they also feel the burden of other responsibilities that were not assigned to journalists even two decades ago. Such questions did not arise with bloggers, who naturally take responsibility for all aspects of their blogs.

For example, one journalist lamented concerns over search engine optimization (SEO) for her publications that largely dictates which types of stories are produced. "The type of content and the way in which we present it online – there are formats known for getting bigger amounts of traffic," she said (September 9, 2014). Another journalist similarly felt that her writing style was being compromised for the sake of SEO. "You can't have play on words in titles anymore. And part of the pleasure for me is play on words and trying to be clever with sentences. And all of that is being gradually evened out," she said (May 6, 2014). As some researchers point out, however, SEO is inseparable from journalism and forces writers to think about questions of relevance (Richmond 2008).

In addition to SEO, travel journalists today must also think about their stories as packages, providing not only text, but often photography and sometimes video or sound bites. Many of the professionals interviewed feel that is unfair to ask journalists to provide photos with their articles, especially when photo budgets no longer exist at many publications. One journalist said, "I never expect to take my own photos. They should pay for a photographer or have press photos provided" (April 23, 2014). Most journalists agreed, though the reality remains and they must find ways to source photos, either directly from establishments or from other online sources like Flickr Creative Commons or Facebook. One journalist even went so far as to place the blame on bloggers, clearly illustrating how journalists feel infringed upon by blogs. She said, "I believe photographers should be doing photography. I shouldn't have to do that. This is what blogging has created, where you have to do everything yourself. It has changed the journalist culture. People are getting paid less, people are expected to do everything, and the budgets reflect that" (May 5, 2014). Once the package is assembled, editors then expect journalists to distribute their own stories via social networks. A veteran journalist criticizes the click-culture that predominates the media industry. "Today they're paying these young writers by how many clicks they get. It's a factory," he said (April 29, 2014). All of these tasks, while seemingly mainstream practices in today's evolving journalism culture, face stiff resistance by many professionals who consider them supplementary. They consider them additional work that should be remunerated as such, even if they are just changes to how journalists function in the 21st century.

Discussion

These results begin to identify the practices found among travel journalists, situating them apart from other genres. Comparing a travel journalist to a financial or political journalist is akin to comparing a podiatrist to a cardiologist – both are doctors, but they perform very specific duties. In the same way, journalists, while much more versatile in their profession, are not all equal, especially when on their beat (Schudson 2011, p 130). A travel journalist as Hanusch describes, performs a very specific task that, while similar to those of traditional journalists, is not identical (2012a). Furthermore, while journalists are slowly adopting blogging formats, they still maintain notions consistent with journalistic practice (see Singer 2005).

What, then, distinguishes the ideology specific to travel journalists? While either symptomatic of overall shifts in journalism or because of changes brought on by the internet, their ideology also includes values and practices more associated with bloggers.

Shifting ideology?

Despite these evolving values, travel journalists insist that they are not bloggers and that their work has an intrinsic value beyond blogging. Travel journalists write for their publics, consistent with Kovach and Rosenstiel's affirmation that journalism's first loyalty is

to its citizens (2001). This ideal is the one that travel journalists adhere to faithfully, putting their readers first. Bloggers do not consistently feel the same, often blogging for personal or financial reasons. While this difference between travel journalists and bloggers is clear, practices become less rigid in other aspects.

While bloggers can – but don't always – cover local events and openings more quickly than the press, travel journalists do not seem too preoccupied with the latest breaking news. Furthermore, when it comes to the ideal of objectivity, travel journalists aren't nearly as "impartial, neutral, objective, fair and (thus) credible" as they could be (Deuze 2005, p 447). Like bloggers, journalists are not always removed from their articles, with first person narration and opinions accepted and even encouraged. Also like bloggers, travel journalists are not always as rigorous with their reporting as their news counterparts may be, continually blurring the lines between lifestyle journalism and blogging. We can observe an ideological shift from objective reporting to more critical or even anecdotal storytelling among travel journalists.

When it comes to autonomy, travel journalists readily admit to accepting freebies and press invites. While they may be impartial in their articles, they are nonetheless dependent on public relations to an extent (McGaurr 2015). Travel journalists are very often freelancers, like those in this group, and are adapting to the market realities of a freelancer life (Balbastre 2000). Of course there are journalists who travel abroad as part of their job for short trips, but this system is becoming less the norm in the industry (Marthoz 2012). Today, editors can cull stories from writers already on the ground, easily – and cheaply – communicating back and forth, at least in destinations with reliable internet services. This shift from actual traveling writers to expatriates could also be an ideological shift for more local and authentic perspectives promoted by travel journalists.

Where travel journalists stand out from bloggers is their adhesion to transparency. While bloggers generally do not require themselves to disclose any freebies, news reporters do not routinely come across such issues. Travel journalists adhere strongly to ethics of transparency and disclosure, which, while important to all journalists, is a marked difference between travel journalists and bloggers.

Self-identification and nostalgia

Despite these apparent shifts in ideology, what truly seems to distinguish journalists from the bloggers is, almost too simply, a willingness to be identified as a travel journalist. Throughout the interviews, journalists dissociated themselves from bloggers, but were not always able to explain clearly what sets them apart. This historic separation, "us and them," has been part of the debate around the professionalization of journalism since the 19th century (Ruellan 2007 p 63). In France, for example, the easy response would be to claim a professional status because of the professional press card recognized throughout the country. None of the journalists interviewed carried such a card, which does not preclude them from identifying as journalists. Still, not all countries have a national press card.

Moreover, there is almost nostalgia for travel journalists who pine for a time before blogging and the internet. They actively resist engaging in social media, they begrudge editors for requiring them to find photos, and they reject having to write for SEO purposes. Whereas bloggers naturally engage in these practices, travel journalists have not yet fully adapted, resisting the multimedia changes that Deuze suggested would challenge historic journalistic norms (2005). All journalists, paradoxically, ignored many of the beneficial changes in their profession that have been facilitated by technology. For example, the internet has made it possible for them to publish online and correspond easily with editors in foreign countries, and to work as correspondents for a profession that once required constant travel.

In general, travel journalists are trying to maintain a code of ethics and a level of quality because they are held accountable by the very brands that empower them (Bogaerts and Carpentier 2013). Being a professional journalist seems contingent on having a strong branded publication, whose reputation depends on the quality content that these professionals are hopefully providing. They are not sharing too many personal details or continuing the conversation on social media – yet. They offer a very finite product and are unwilling to provide photos or media beyond their text, nor do they seek the interaction that bloggers experience on their websites.

Implications

What this research does raise as an issue, then, is the specific role that professional journalists play in the flow of travel information, especially for readers. Readers are looking for verified information, and they trust the brands implicitly (Broesmera 2013, McGaurr 2015). Travel journalists writing for major publications fulfil this need. While bloggers tell more personal stories and interacting with readers, journalists are more often getting to the point to give honest information about experiences in Paris. Only slowly are they moving towards a more critical and anecdotal approach. Readers are looking for a well-packaged and readable resource, much like the consumer journalism described by Lieberman (1994). This is exactly what the travel journalists interviewed said they provide – well packaged information, a product, with no post-publication responsibilities.

A journalist's article as a final product, however, does not fit into the way journalism is evolving today (Witschge 2013). In the travel realm, the effect on consumers is evident when observing how professional and non-professional sources intertwine during the travel planning process. As Duffy explains, "if truth is relative, and the objective norms of journalism are challenged by blogs and [online user review sites], then there is comfort in reporting on personal experiences that writers know to be true, so that authenticity takes the place of empirical, confirmed 'truth'" (2014, 107). As research on tourist practices shows, consumers have diverse ways of getting their information (e.g. Gretzel 2007). No one source is an ultimate authority, and readers reach conclusions "based not so much on objectivity as on collective subjectivity" (Duffy 2014, 103). What we begin to understand, then, is that a form of "journalism as process" described by Sue Robinson plays out in a travel context, where readers are suddenly vetting and crosschecking news articles with TripAdvisor reviews and blog posts. The news is never finished, and stories are always continuing on social media, in the comments section, or through other means. As Robinson states, "people have come to accept that they must bypass mainstream news outlets and use the original article only as a step along a path of knowledge construction" (2011, p 163). Travel journalists have not yet adapted their ideology to include values that will address this information environment. A question for further study is whether or not travel journalists actually *need* to become more conversational, or if they can continue to avoid engagement embraced by bloggers.

While this was just one example of travel information – Paris seen by English-speakers – it is indicative of current trends in tourism communication. How a place, establishment, or business is perceived no longer rests in the hands of professionals, be they ethical professional journalists or offices of tourism, but ultimately it's up to the individual travelers to sift through the endless stream of content to make up their own mind. Journalists, however, play a role in offering what is perceived to be verified and ethically-produced information published by trusted brands, as benchmarks and touchstones for travelers. Identifying the practices and values that contribute to their ideology is essential to understanding the role that these travel journalists play in the mix of travel information available online.

Conclusion

Travel journalists are their own breed. They respect some traditional journalistic practice, but have evolved on others, especially with the web. At the same time, whether because they feel underpaid or overworked, they resist an accumulation of tasks that are becoming norms online. They may, however, be an endangered species on their way towards extinction, or at least a drastic evolution as their ideologies shift with influences from the blogging and other user-generated content online. What's important is not who is a journalist in the end, but that those who assert themselves as such, working for professional media, stick to the ethics – especially transparency – that mark travel journalism. Travel information as a process, however, is larger than just these professional journalists. The contributions of bloggers, reviewers, and forum commenters are not to be ignored, and create a culture of "collective subjectivity" that guides travelers (Duffy 2014). While this paper seeks to determine the practices manifested by travel journalists, future study can detail how bloggers and other non-professionals function and what very valid and important contributions they bring to the conversation about a place or destination.

While frustrating to professionals, almost anyone can become a travel writer today, with bloggers editing their own blogs and occasionally contributing to major publications. Instead of considering who is a journalist, it may be useful to rethink travel journalism in terms of the individual products themselves, or as Josh Stearns calls them, "acts of journalism" (2013). Authors have discussed this functional view of journalism, with arguments for and against with regards to shield laws and rights (Gant 2007). Lacking most contentious issues that call into question such protections, lifestyle journalism is largely liberated from the legal repercussions that political or business reporters may face. Why, then, make the distinction at all between a professional travel journalist and a non-professional? What real value do professional media bring in the long run? Travel information is made up of storytellers (bloggers), fact finders (professional journalists), reviewers (on TripAdvisor for example) and various other types of contributors that we could explore. A bold, yet worthwhile question then is whether those who call themselves professional journalists are truly contributing something unique and irreplaceable to travel information, or if they are clinging to values of a pre-internet ideology that no longer applies solely to one group?

Further research is needed to understand more fully the role of travel journalists, especially since Paris may be an extraordinary example due to the number of tourists and writers it attracts. Do the same conversations and attitudes prevail in other cultures, destinations, and languages? This is just a first look at journalistic practice among travel writers who publish for media brands in an attempt to identify what sets them apart. In the end, there is very little that a travel journalist does that a non-professional who steps into the same role cannot do. Ethics and allegiance to their branded publications seem to be two of the only values that distinguish the travel journalist's ideology in a digital age.

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