

Abstract: This chapter presents a snapshot of the main characteristics of 21st-century journalism, examining changes in its organization, practice, and performance. It also contributes to the book's main themes by outlining links between structural changes in the news industries and shifts in journalists' activities, attitudes, and self-perceptions. Of particular concern is the impact of the internet and more generally of digitalization. This is considered in relation to traditional print media, television, radio and also with regard to journalists' practices, which have undergone dramatic, rapid change and disruption. The chapter then focusses on journalistic content, where according to some critics, traditional journalistic standards have been weakened by the growing ascendancy of entertainment values and by the financial need for advertising revenue. Finally, the chapter discusses identity and how journalists' traditional concepts of self-identity have responded to the pressures described previously.

Keywords: news production, media industry, journalism, journalistic practice, print, radio, television, globalization, internet, digitalization

Chapter 2

Journalism in the 21st Century

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C2.P1

‘The news business . . . is going out of business’, declared Wolff (2007). Well, not quite, not all, not yet, but that aphorism captures a period of unprecedented turbulence. Waves of disruption have pummelled islands of news-making, ripping through business models, working arrangements, settled practices, and identities of journalists alike. In the United States, newsroom employment fell by 23% between 2008 and 2017, a loss of approximately 27,000 jobs in one decade (Greico, 2018). In newspaper newsrooms, the decline was 45%, and in radio 27%, but employment levels in television and cable news remained stable. In the decade since Wolff’s pronouncement, news businesses have indeed been going out of business, but not all, not yet.

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Across most countries, journalistic media forms have struggled with diminishing advertising revenues, falling fee-paying audiences, reduced operating budgets, and intensifying competition from online media and platforms that are undermining the business models and structures of the older,

‘legacy’ news companies—ones that existed prior to the digital age (Weaver & Willnat, 2012). Yet, for news journalism the pattern is highly uneven. The collapse of legacy newspaper businesses has accelerated alongside growth in digital-only journalism, albeit with fewer paid jobs than those lost. Across the many debates about what kind of journalism is developing, or possible to develop, under current conditions, there is a full range of perspectives and also emotions, from anxiety to elation.

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This chapter presents a snapshot of the main characteristics of 21st-century journalism, examining changes in the organization, practice and performance of journalism. It also seeks to contribute to the themes of this edited collection on the psychology of journalism by outlining links between structural changes in the news industries and shifts in journalists’ activities, attitudes, and self-perceptions. The chapter first outlines changes in industries and then changes in journalists’ practices. Next, it discusses issues affecting content and, finally, questions of identity.

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Journalism, the American Press Institute (2019) states, ‘is the activity of gathering, assessing, creating, and presenting news

and information’. Yet, Anderson and Ward (2007, p. 8) caution that conventional definitions of ‘the practice of news gathering and presentation’ are unsatisfactory, ‘telling us little about the sophistication of much modern-day journalism’. The focus of this chapter is on news journalism, to the neglect of myriad specialist domains of communication that journalism as a whole encompasses. We will, however, trace how news journalism has expanded and how it blurs into and merges with other forms of communication. The demarcation lines separating journalism from other communication forms and practices, such as advertising, have sometimes been tenaciously upheld, albeit with mounting difficulty, constituting an important part of the ‘boundary work’ (Carlson, 2019) of professional identity formation.

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A hundred years ago, the contours of a modern form of journalism were being espoused, and slowly institutionalized in the United States, around ideals of objectivity, neutrality, and serving the public interest, in a manner that influenced the self-conceptions of journalists worldwide (Hallin & Mancini, 2004; Waisbord, 2013). There was a struggle to secure the new journalism, but core values were advanced with confidence. A

hundred years on, at the start of the 21st century, many advocates of those values are more troubled and cautious of their realization. Increasingly, more journalists work as freelancers or otherwise outside traditional desk-based jobs. Multiplatform journalism, and the rising influence of social media in particular, ‘has led many to question the very basic concept of who journalists are and what qualifications they should have’ (Weaver & Willnat, 2012, p. 1). Changes in journalism are always changes that involve psychological processes: identifications, anxieties, aspirations, adaptability, and instability. The story of 21st-century journalism interweaves the structural, institutional, cultural, social, and personal dimensions of uncertain paths and prospects under constant repair and refashioning.

C2.S1

Industries

C2.P6

In 1994, news publishers were experimenting, sometimes disastrously, with the creation of online supplements, some 400 worldwide. In the quarter century since, the industrial production of news has faced unprecedented disruption, with the ruins of both legacy media and new business models ‘piling wreckage upon

wreckage’, as before Walter Benjamin’s angel of history, in his evocative response to Paul Klee’s painting *Angelus Novus* (Benjamin, 1970, p. 259). I outline key changes, but two preliminary statements are necessary. First, context matters. The ‘crisis’ of news media identified in advanced media systems is far from uniform worldwide, even if some factors have global relevance and reach. Long-standing structural decline in print readership in advanced economies sits alongside print growth in several regions, including Latin America and Africa. Second, all changes must be reviewed in the context of contested explanations of the problems, and opportunities, for journalism today. Key components of change are widely recognized and broadly agreed. The media, including journalism, has been profoundly affected by a series of transitions: from analogue to digital, and from stationary to mobile platforms (McNair, 2009). Consumers with internet access can pull content whenever they wish, from available sources, transforming patterns of scheduled supplies of professionally mediated journalism. An ever-increasing share of news is now accessed online. In a survey of 26 countries, 44% of news readers used digital and traditional sources equally, while

23% used digital channels only as their main source of news (Newman et al., 2016).

C2.P7

Digitalization has profoundly affected all aspects of the creation, circulation, and consumption of content. In the pre-digital era, most print publishers and broadcasters competed in spatially confined market sectors, sharing advantages of economies of scale and scope, and with legal–regulatory requirements, that created barriers to market entry. The growth of internet communications enabled all those conditions to be undermined, although crucially the resulting pattern is one mixing sustained advantages for large firms with ongoing disruption for all market actors. The most straightforward and significant impact has been the shift of advertising revenue from news publishers to other content suppliers and increasingly to platforms (Bell & Owen, 2017). Online advertising became the leading advertising medium worldwide in 2017 (ZenithOptimedia, 2018).

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However, it is important to deconstruct simpler narratives and explanations of change, as Benjamin’s angel of history reminds us. The narrative of relative stasis before disruption has credence—things have got considerably more challenging after

digitalization—yet it downplays the significance of pre-digital changes, including those that help explain the roots of current predicaments. Paid consumption of printed news was declining from its peak in the late 1950s in the United Kingdom, with local daily papers gradually losing readers as mass industry employment and commuting patterns changed. Focussing on digitalization also occludes longer term shifts during the 20th century from the written word toward image and sound: from print to radio and television news. Boczkowski (2005, p. 4) traces the development of online newspapers to ‘broader socioeconomic trends’ originating in the 1960s, including ‘rising newsprint and distribution costs, growing segmentation of consumption patterns, and the increased appeal of audiovisual media among younger generations’. In order to grasp the patterns of disruption and continuity, the next section summarizes key changes in news media markets: digitalization, globalization, and financing.

C2.S2 Digital Plenitude

C2.P9 Pre-internet news businesses generally required large capital outlay. New technologies, contract printing, and other developments enabled production costs and, to a lesser extent,

distribution costs to fall, but labour costs and promotional costs remained prohibitive, making news publishing a risky business venture requiring deep pockets. Economies of scale and scope arising from large-scale, multi-paper publishing benefited newspaper chain owners and constricted market entry.

Digitalization undermined some of these advantages and introduced a greater diversity of online news reporting, commentary, and storytelling—enabling more multidimensional perspectives and voices.

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The digital era has seen a proliferation of news providers and platforms, but the most profound change, arguably, has been disintermediation; the removal of intermediary editorial functions between readers and content. Although Negroponte (1995, p. 57) was spectacularly inaccurate in his prediction in *Being Digital* that the media giants would dissolve into an array of cottage industries, he was right to highlight the significance of the removal of gatekeepers, of editors and managers, and of journalists as mediators, with possibilities of unmediated communication scaled up between millions of people. Historically, those with the ‘means of publication’ have been few in number. From Web 1.0

publishing from 1994 to Web 2.0 social media and beyond, there has been a massive, unprecedented expansion of the presence and share of mass self-communication (Castells, 2009) activity and consumption of disintermediated content: images, video, blog postings, and commentary. This ever-growing share of communications production and consumption exists alongside legacy journalism, digital ‘native’ publishing (those originating in digital environments), and ‘owned media’—communications self-published by corporate, public, or civil society organizations.

C2.P11 In 2019, approximately 2 billion people accessed Facebook worldwide, and 1.8 billion people accessed YouTube. A survey of UK news audiences found that 43% used social media sites for news (Ofcom, 2015). Half (51%) of those using the internet/apps for news used the websites/apps of television and radio companies, so legacy media types have retained a significant share but now compete with a greater range of sources. A 2018 survey found that over half of adults prefer to access news through search engines, social media, or news aggregators, interfaces that use ranking algorithms to select stories, rather than interfaces driven by humans such as homepages, email, and mobile

notifications (Newman et al., 2018). There is a greater opportunity for readers to check between alternative sources of information, including fact-checking services, to assess the validity of news sources, although the percentage doing so is generally very small. Only 1 in 10 US adults fact-check information read on social media, according to one survey (Brown, 2017). With greater access to original sources, and alternative accounts, the nature of newsgathering is more exposed than ever before, putting claims of objectivity and impartiality under greater scrutiny (Fenton, 2010, p. 560). Within this environment, it has become more difficult for journalists to perform and claim privileged status as providers of information and arbiters of truth. The impact of these changes on journalists' attitudes and identities is explored further later. Here, however, the complex patterns of media concentration need to be added to amend the story of digital plenitude. More voices, more providers exist alongside ongoing, and in some instances increasing, concentration of ownership. In the United Kingdom, three companies control 83% of national newspaper circulation (Mediatique, 2018); 81% of local newspaper titles are owned by five firms (Media Reform Coalition, 2019).

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Internationally, wholesale news is dominated by three corporations—Associated Press, Thomson Reuters, and Agence France-Press—that supply most of the source material for international stories carried on television and the internet (MacGregor, 2013). A handful of multinational conglomerates own the majority of major news websites, commercial television, and newspapers worldwide (Bertelsmann; Comcast; Disney, including Twenty-First Century Fox; News Corp; Time Warner; Vivendi; and Viacom). Although processes of consolidation in news have been underway since the 19th century, they intensified with the growth and dominance of transnational media conglomerates in the 20th century, facilitated by advancing neoliberalism in policymaking (Hardy, 2014).

C2.P13

Until the 1980s, the newspaper industry was largely owned by national capital, but since the 1990s, it has been increasingly part of global merger and acquisition activity. Thus, while news brands continued to serve predominantly national and regional markets, their ownership and management became integrated into transnational capital (Picard, 2008; Compton, 2010). The largest news companies by market capitalization are concentrated in the

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United States, including News Corp (\$7.48 billion), the New York Times Company (\$4.21 billion), the Tribune Media Company (\$3.39 billion), Daily Mail and General Trust (UK-based; \$2.82 billion), E. W. Scripps (\$1.38 billion), and Gannett (\$1.12 billion) (Seth, 2018).

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The expansion of voices, information, and opinions facilitated by the internet has impacted on all forms of journalism. A series of studies have, however, cautioned that more content and communication exchange does not necessarily equate to more journalism. A Pew Research Center report (Pew, 2006) found that only 5% of US blog postings sampled matched the criteria of ‘what journalists would call reporting’. A later report (Pew, 2008) concluded,

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Even with so many new sources, more people now consume what old-media newsrooms produce, particularly from print, than before. Online, for instance, the top 10 news web sites, drawing mostly from old brands, are more of an oligarchy, commanding a larger share of audience than they did in the legacy media.

C2.S3

Globalization

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More affluent and connected users have unprecedented access to news from throughout the world. The advances of satellite telephony and audiovisual communications, alongside cable, and transportation systems, have enabled the increasingly rapid circulation of news and overcome barriers of space and time on which traditional news markets were predicated (Sparks, 2004; Elliot, 2008). Twenty-four-hour news channels, such as CNN, became a feature of national and international cable television services from the 1980s and then reached growing audiences online as broadband and mobile data capacity became more widely available. International news journalism grew within internet-enabled publishing from the mid-1990s, online radio, and podcasting. Nevertheless, news has remained ‘stubbornly local’ (MacKay, 2000, p. 48), both in provision and in content and orientation. In content, research shows that foreign news tends to be filtered through news prisms shaped by dominant national geopolitical concerns (Lee et al., 2005). This pattern, associated with major national newspapers and broadcast news, is also replicated in internet news, countering the optimistic assumptions

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of more globalized and cosmopolitan reporting (Curran et al., 2013). Worldwide, television remains the most consumed form of journalism (Kennedy & Prat, 2018; Cushion, 2012). Nonetheless, news consumption of older formats and platforms is declining. Audiences for evening newscasts on network television in the United States have declined by 1 million per year while increasing across cable news channels (Fox, CNN, and MSNBC) (Pew, 2010). Terrestrial news audiences are shrinking and ageing, albeit with much cross-national variation.

C2.S4

Financing News: Sales, Subscription, and Advertising

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As former *Guardian* editor Alan Rusbridger (2018) conveys in his autobiography, newspapers faced an agonizing set of challenges at the onset of digital publishing. Traditional paid newspapers relied on a mix of sales and advertising revenue with modest supplementary income. With financing firmly rooted in the mix of paid sales and advertising (display and classified), moving to digital publishing was expensive and risked cannibalizing revenues for highly uncertain rewards. As is now much debated,

the floods of free news content, including from newspaper groups following business advice on ‘building scale’ and achieving ‘first mover advantage’, meant that most digital news offered publishers a quick way to spend money for little, if any, direct return on investment. In this context, the reallocation by marketers of their advertising spending had a crucial impact.

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Initially, the challenge of digitalization was to classified ads as online markets blossomed. The internet’s share of classified advertising in the United Kingdom increased from 2% in 2000 to 45% by 2008. In the same period, the local press share declined from 47% to 26%, while national newspapers’ share of classified declined from 14% to 6%. The lucrative display ad revenue also gradually eroded. The deal whereby advertisers paid for journalism to attract readers who would see their ads has been unravelling since the early 1990s, as marketers found more direct, information-rich, and cost-effective ways to track and target consumers online. UK local papers had reaped profits from their quasi-monopoly control over local advertising for vehicles, housing, and jobs into the mid-2000s, only to see that model collapse as classified ads moved online and advertisers followed

users to Facebook and Google. Advertising revenue for the three largest UK regional publishers declined from £2.8 billion in 2006 to £832 million in 2016 (Waterson, 2019a). Online advertising revenue for publishing has become a significant revenue stream for some, but for the majority of news publishers, the ‘dollars’ lost from print advertising have been replaced by ‘cents’ earned from digital advertising (McChesney, 2013). Globally, 93% of all newspaper revenues in 2015 came from print [[World Association of News Publishers](#) (WAN-IFRA), 2016]. According to UK trade body News Media Association (Deloitte, 2016, p. 8), 81% of revenue comes from the print side of business and just 12% from digital.

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Efforts to make good the loss of advertising by more effective retailing, through paywalls, micropayments, and subscriptions, have so far had only modest success. *The Guardian* had 500,000 regular subscribers worldwide in 2018, a significant achievement but one outweighed by continued heavy losses as the paper struggled to break even (Waterson, 2018). Successful monetization online has been mostly restricted to products serving elite or specialist audiences, where there are attributes of high-

value content (relatively nonreproducible and/or fast), scarcity in supply, a valued user interface, and enhanced cross-platform availability. The Nikkei-owned *Financial Times*, which introduced a metered paywall in 2007, announced 1 million subscribers in 2019, with most growth in international markets in which it competes with *The Wall Street Journal*, which has 2.5 million subscribers (Greenslade, 2019). Yet, while subscriptions secured the *Financial Times*' profitability, print advertising declined by 5% and digital advertising declined by 3% in the previous year.

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For newspapers overall, in the absence of significant growth in subscriptions, 'news organisations are focussing on maximizing revenue from those who are prepared to pay' (Newman & Levy, 2015, p. 12). A Reuters Institute (2018) study found that 66% of the 171 most important news organizations in 6 countries (Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Poland, and the United Kingdom) operated a pay model, with charges for premium content most common, followed by metered paywalls. For general, public-facing journalism, cultures of 'free' prevail and are expected to continue (Chyi & Lee, 2013). A survey by the Internet

Advertising Bureau (Jackson, 2015) found UK adults were prepared to pay only 92p a month to access news websites, less than they were prepared to spend on email, search engines, or online video. In a 10-country survey (Newman & Levy, 2015), only 11% of respondents reported they had paid for digital news in the past 12 months. A more recent cross-national study found that the average number of people paying for online news has edged up in many countries, especially in small markets where a majority of publishers pursue paywalls, yet in more complex and fragmented markets many publishers continue to offer free news online (Reuters, 2018). Pay models have tended to stall after reaching a small segment of their total consumer market willing to pay for content.

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Thus, news revenues have been affected by the increased availability of free online content. Digital readership has increased, but digital revenue growth has largely failed to compensate for print decline, while adding to costs (Pew, 2015). Any increase in reader revenue is often offset by continuing declines in print and digital advertising (Newman et al., 2018). In most markets in Europe and America, printed newspapers sold to

the public have seen an inexorable decline in sales and, with that, advertising revenue. The main exception has been free newspapers distributed in urban areas, which have provided a profitable advertising vehicle reaching commuters, including those whose consumption of other offline media tends to be light.

C2.S5 **Assessing the ‘Crisis’ in News Businesses**

C2.P22 Between 2008 and 2017, an estimated 39,000 US newspaper jobs were eliminated—a 45% decline (Greico, 2018). Across the five news industries, there were 114,000 newsroom employees—reporters, editors, photographers, and videographers—in 2008; by 2017, this workforce had declined to 88,000 (Greico, 2018). In the United Kingdom, the number of workers describing themselves as journalists declined by 11,000, from 84,000 in August 2016 to 73,000 in August 2017, according to Labour Force Survey estimates (Ponsford, 2017). The survey found a modest increase in the number of employed journalists, but a sharp decline among freelancers. One freelance journalist, Paul Donovan, described how the internet ‘has generally meant more work for journalists but less pay’, with publishers either not paying for online journalism or offering lower rates than 10 years ago: ‘My own

experience has been very much of seeing journalism go from my main job, earning a reasonable living, to hobby status' (as quoted in Ponsford, 2017). Across UK print as a whole, the number of journalists declined by more than a quarter, from 23,000 in 2007 to 17,000 in 2017 (Mediatique, 2018, p. 5).

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Against these downward employment trends, digital news publishing has been a source of jobs growth. Start-ups such as BuzzFeed, Huffington Post, Vox, and Business Insider were the generators of most new jobs in the US news industry (Jurkowitz, 2014). Between 2008 and 2019, approximately 6,000 jobs were created in digital-native newsrooms, a 79%. However, 'too few newsroom positions were added to make up for recent losses in the broader industry' (Grieco, 2018). Digital native publishers have themselves faced considerable turbulence in recent years, after initially strong growth. A Pew Research Center report found that nearly one-fourth of digital publishers laid off workers during 2017 and 2018, despite the increase in employment in this sector overall. At the start of 2019, BuzzFeed laid off 220 staff, approximately 15% of its total workforce, and Vice cut 10% of

staff in a restructuring of the business after missing revenue targets in 2018 (Willens, 2019).

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Debates about the ‘crisis’ in news media intensified in the mid-2000s. Since then, some aspects at least are clearer. First, variability across countries and regions challenges ethnocentric generalization and requires more fine-grained analysis. For example, a survey of 10 countries (Newman & Levy, 2014, p. 55) found economic disruption was greatest in countries in which the majority of sales were from newsstands or shops (the United Kingdom, Spain, Italy, and Brazil) compared to home delivery via subscription (Japan, Denmark, Finland, and Germany). Secondly, Euro-American literature has tended to ignore the growth of paid newspaper markets across fast-growing economies in Asia, Africa, and Latin America (Franklin, 2009). Global printed newspaper circulation (including free titles) was 7.7% higher in 2009 than it had been 5 years previously; declining circulation in mature markets was countered by growth in Latin America, Africa, and in Asian markets, notably India (WAN-IFRA, 2009, 2016). An estimated 40% of the world’s adult population read a newspaper on a regular basis (WAN-IFRA, 2016, p. 6). Global audience

revenues grew by 7% between 2012 and 2016; although global advertising revenues declined by 21% overall in the same period, rates of decline varied greatly across different markets (WAN-IFRA, 2016). Third, even across advanced economies, the general trend has been decline and restructuring rather than collapse, which highlights the importance of differentiation between news sectors and competing enterprises (Franklin, 2009). The crisis debate tends to conflate print-based and broadcasting-based media, which makes some sense in examining trends across the convergent, commercial media of the United States but less so when addressing the mixed systems of Europe with relatively strong public service media alongside commercial publishers. Nevertheless, the common feature across media systems whose newspaper market was larger before digitalization has been an irreversible decline in print revenue, accompanied by cost cutting to manage that decline. In the United Kingdom, circulation declined by 25% between 2005 and 2010 in the ‘quality’ press and by 17% in the popular press (Enders Analysis, 2011).

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Explanations for the crisis of the press indicate a range of perspectives on the various causes, and possible solutions, with debates reflecting

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not only different degrees of real impact by the crisis and national policy traditions but [the diffusion of . . .] an evolving transnational paradigm that dominates public discourse. [. . .]

The state is supposed to play the role of a benevolent but mostly passive bystander, while commercial media outlets should tackle the problem by developing innovative content and business strategies. (Brüggemann et al., 2016, p. 547)

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If internet disruption has been the chief explanatory narrative of commercial business managers, underinvestment has been the counternarrative of their critics. Owners were maximizing profits by cutting staffing and production costs while revenue declined, allowing newsbrands to plummet in a spiral of neglect. Critical scholarship highlights the processes by which corporations have come to dominate markets and pursue profit maximization at the

expense of public interest news provision (McChesney, 2013).

The literature describes the advancement of market values within commercial news media, what McManus (1994) calls ‘market-driven journalism’ and McChesney (1999) ‘hypercommercialism’.

The balancing of commercial and journalistic imperatives in for-profit news businesses, present since the 17th century, tilted toward profit extraction under corporate and investor pressures, within conditions of increasing market volatility, acquisitions activity, and financialization. In corporate decision-making structures, news editors and journalists formed a ‘shrinking proportion of corporate personnel’ (Anderson & Ward, 2007, p. 23). Commercial news owners ‘privileged profit over reinvention’ (Carlson, 2017, p. 181). Waves of corporate consolidation, aided by liberalization of ownership regulations, left commercial news production in the hands of debt-laden, financialized corporations with decreasing tolerance to subsidize loss-making reporting and whose corporate logics undermine journalistic independence and investigative capacity alike (Almiron, 2010).

The US newspaper market entered a ‘death spiral’, summarized by Rusbridger (2018):

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Circulation decline led to advertising decline. Management cut back editorial employees to stem declining margins while, at the same time, asking them to work harder and adding new digital requirements to their roles. Newspapers shrank and became less compelling. Readers found less of interest and stopped buying them. With few readers came fewer advertisers. The margins declined further. Managements made further cuts. (p. 74)

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As profitability declined, capital began to abandon news journalism, shifting to more profitable activities, including classified advertisement websites (McChesney, 2013). The crisis, critics argued, laid bare fundamental tensions between capitalism and democracy, between ‘communication groups subject to financial logics and who can, and indeed do, exercise political action, and . . . the need that democracy and society have for an independent, rigorous and professional journalistic practice’ (Almiron, 2010, p. 158). In debate were two principal causes of cuts: profit maximization on behalf of shareholders and the collapse of profitability as advertising migrated online. Although

the cause for the decline is contested, the outcome was downsizing the journalistic workforce combined with intensifying productivity across always-on, converged newsrooms, leading to reductions in the breadth and depth of commercial news output (Anderson & Ward, 2007, p. 23). In the United Kingdom, local papers declined from 1,687 in 1985 to 1,286 by 2005, with 242 closing between 2004 and 2011, while leading newsgroups maintained substantial profit margins averaging 15–20% (Ramsay & Moore, 2016). By 2017, the majority of UK adults (58%) subscribed to no local daily paper.

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For audio and audiovisual news, there are some similar patterns, but also differences in market conditions. Common features were increasing commercial pressures, increasing competition to secure audience share, and increasing engagement in an ‘attention economy’. For public service media (PSM), insulation from market pressures eroded as financial and political settlements weakened. The rising tide of neoliberalism meant that the defence of nonmarket provision was pushed back. PSMs were increasingly ‘disciplined’ (Freedman, 2008) and subject to marketization and corporatization—the incorporation and

privileging of private sector management goals into public institutions. However, these pressures were mitigated by generally healthier market conditions than commercial newspapers experienced. While the share of news viewing on the internet has increased annually, television remains the dominant news source in most advanced economies. In the United Kingdom in 2015, television was the principal platform for news consumption (67% of UK adults), followed by the internet (41%), radio (32%), and newspapers (31%, Ofcom, 2015, p. 5). Television news also saw a significant expansion of outlets across transnational services and, to a lesser extent, local news services. The internet has supplemented, but not simply replaced, legacy platforms of television and radio, both of which remain very strong in global reach and influence. With the ongoing convergence of ‘post-broadcasting’ on-demand and streaming video services, there are ever-evolving forms of news capturing audience attention, from 360-degree storytelling to short-form and vertical video. However, beyond subsidized (or cross-subsidized) content, monetization remains challenging.

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The industrial and market changes outlined previously have all had an influence on journalistic practice, considered in this section, and in turn on journalistic identities and psychological makeup. The overriding themes are intensification of work and increasing uncertainty, including less secure and stable boundaries. What journalists do has undergone dramatic, rapid change and disruption. Up to the 1990s, most journalists worked in-house and produced content for a single outlet, in a single format, and honed their storytelling craft skills within a single mode of expression: print, photojournalism, radio, or television reporting (Singer, 2011). Newsroom ‘convergence’ was much discussed, and more tentatively applied, from the 1990s until becoming pervasive in the 2000s. News media businesses began creating ‘converged’ newsrooms and developing ‘multimedia journalism’, while print-based publications expanded their audiovisual content. Businesses that were wholly or principally mono-media up to the late 20th century have, of necessity, become multimedia and increasingly multiplatform operations.

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Larger media companies brought together journalists from very different cultures in print and broadcasting to produce from

these platforms and from the Web. Digital production entailed speeded up publication; scanning and responding to competition; truncating processes of origination, writing, editing, and layout; and reducing or removing the former divisions of labour across journalism, subediting, and layout. Within so-called desktop journalism, journalists may combine writing, sub-editing, page composition, as well as other tasks such as meta-tagging for search engine optimization. In audiovisual production, journalists have had to add recording, editing, tagging, uploading, disseminating, and promoting work. Under convergence, formerly separate tasks and work cultures were brought together and new ones added, such as social media production, optimization, and analytics. As well as institutional reorganization, journalists developed innovative multimedia storytelling (Singer, 2011). Multimedia production has also contributed to wider shifts toward increased personalization in journalism. Star writers and columnists have to maintain self-branding, as well as corporate promotional work, through blogs, postings, and other content production in addition to traditional reporting formats. This has created new opportunities, pressures, and conflicts around the

intellectual property ownership and obligations of such communications. Yet core craft practices remain and inform self-identities; journalists are storytellers. Overwhelmingly, news journalists self-identify as truth-seekers and truth-tellers.

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Interactivity with readers and users has been one of the most discussed changes, although the anticipated and actual impacts need to be carefully sifted in any specific analysis. Digitalization certainly facilitated a revolution in responsiveness. Up to the 1990s, interaction between journalists and readers was rarely direct and mainly ritualized through designated activities such as readers' letters, radio and television talk shows, sparse audience feedback programmes, public events, and complaints mechanisms. With digitalization came accessible, real-time comment and interaction. This meant another demanding role for many journalists, now required to respond or undertake online moderation. More profoundly, it meant open, publicly accessible, critical engagement with journalists' work in a manner that rarely existed in pre-digital environments. In television and radio, there was always a stronger, regular connection with audiences, but interactivity was challenging and often managed by incorporation

into established journalism practice (Cushion, 2012, p. 27). The gains of deepening democratic engagement were qualified by the mobilization of hate. Like other public figures, journalists were targeted by ‘trolls’, as well as by organized ‘flak’ or more spontaneous, shareable protesting. A *Guardian* analysis (Gardiner et al., 2016) found that women were subjected to much more vilification than men, with misogyny and sexism commonplace, and that writers from ethnic and religious minorities and LGBT+ people suffered the greatest abuse, in efforts to undermine their confidence and capacity to speak out. As well as managing the labour, including emotional labour, of interactivity, journalists are also under mounting pressure to engage as part of the overall effort to build traffic and page views that could be monetized. This, too, generates resistance to what some journalists describe as ‘traffic whoring’ (Singer & Ashman, 2009).

C2.P35 Journalists are obligated, or incentivized, to engage in a broader range of extra-media activity. For instance, *The Guardian* engages its journalists in training events for aspiring writers and talks and conferences on direct revenue raising and to build the affiliation of readers and convert more to become subscribers in a

manner akin to practices in relationship fundraising. Overall, there have been a series of added tasks on top of the routine work expected of pre-digital news journalists (Singer, 2011).

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Journalism became more networked. This in turn contributed to the displacement of traditional forms of authority. Online news tended to include hyperlinks to other sources, with the news publisher ‘becoming in effect a network of a variety of news sources, rather than the undisputed bearer of “the news” or “the truth”’ (Hargreaves, 2003, p. 53). Journalists are facing challenges from across an increasingly diverse range of communicators that erode their privileged gatekeeping role (Bruns, 2005; Deuze, 2005; Carlson, 2017). Those changes in production were then extended and accompanied by the further revolution in data about readers and users, and engagements with them. Datafication, the transformation of social activity into quantified data, allows for a displacement of decision-making from journalists and editors to action derived from signals of audience engagement and editorial ‘effectiveness’. This presents another form of disintermediation, generating concerns such as those expressed by Carroll (2006):

C2.P37

Disintermediated news is . . . not selected by editors. [It is news based on the assumption that] markets are capable of making better decisions about news than editors. We're getting this from two sides. First, there are the Web people, who have ingeniously figured out how to decide what's important by tabulating the collective wisdom of online readers. How galling for us—to be replaced by algorithm. Second, we're getting it from our own corporate leaders, who believe in market research. Why not just edit by referendum? They wonder. Why not just ask people what they want and give it to them? (p. 5)

C2.P38

Google and Yahoo developed personalized news, with content customized by algorithms, based on user preferences and search history. A 26-country survey of news consumers found that 40% of consumers discovered news via search engines, approximately 33% via social media and approximately 12% through news aggregators (Newman et al., 2016, p. 93). Later studies found that the move to distributed content via social media and aggregators

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was stalling in some areas, with a decline in the discovery, posting, and sharing of news on Facebook (Newman, 2018). Nevertheless, increasing numbers rely on news that is curated by algorithm, personalized based on information about the individual user and not as a result of a human editor's selection decisions (Haim et al., 2018). As a consequence, human editorial agency, although still critical, is diminishing in parts of news production. Some filtering is regarded as essential in helping users manage relevance, while algorithms are being developed to help identify 'fake news'. The shifts to personalization and algorithmic selection raise profound issues regarding news diets and diversity amid strengthening concerns surrounding 'filter bubbles' (Pariser, 2011); echo chambers; confirmation bias; and the reinforcement of prejudices over information exchange, dialogue, and mutual understanding. Joining established critiques of the ways commercialization undermines news values (Bennett, 2016) are those that concern the dynamics of monetizing digital journalism. One report (Silverman, 2015) finds

the business models and analytics programs of many large news websites create an incentive for

them to jump on, and point to, unverified claims and suspect viral stories. This approach is receiving some pushback and is by no means universal, but the sites pursuing this strategy are large and drive a significant number of social shares for their content. (p. 144)

C2.P40

Artificial intelligence-assisted news consumption is increasing. The market growth of voice-activated digital assistants such as Amazon Echo and Google Home opens new opportunities for audio news. The vast majority of respondents (65%) in a Reuters survey (Newman et al., 2018, p. 7) prefer to get news through a side door rather than going directly to a news website or app. More than half (53%) prefer to access news through search engines, social media, or news aggregators—interfaces that use ranking algorithms to select stories—rather than through interfaces driven by humans (homepage, email, and mobile notifications). The demographic push from people younger than age 35 years remains toward greater use of mobile aggregators and social platforms and less direct access to news providers' outlets.

C2.S7

Working Conditions

C2.P41

Changing working practices have been summarized in the adage ‘speed it up and spread it thin’ (Fenton, 2010, p. 562). News journalists have been under increasing pressure to release and update stories online (including without adequate checks). Given the changes outlined previously, it is not surprising that these are accompanied by an increase in occupational precarity. Firms have responded to the disruption and ‘crisis’ in news sectors by seeking ways to reduced fixed labour costs. Flexible labour arrangements have been introduced in the wider context of deregulation and de-unionization in labour markets (Ursell, 2004). There has been a rise in subcontracting and tertiarization (Quintanilha, 2019). Of course, such general trends need to be assessed within specific contexts. In a survey of journalists in Portugal in 2016, nearly 90% ‘agreed with the idea that journalistic work is going to be increasingly precarious and uncertain in the future; only 2.6 per cent of respondents disagreed’ (Quintanilha, 2019, p. 11). The professional insecurity was reflected in low expectations concerning employment: 41% of journalists thought it likely they would become unemployed in the future, and 80% believed that,

once unemployed, they would be unlikely to secure a new journalism-related job.

C2.P42

Some scholars argue that journalism is undergoing a process of ‘de-professionalization’, reversing the processes underway through the 20th century (Örnebring, 2010). This de-professionalization is evident in the weakening of media trade unions, with declining membership, a shrinking proportion of unionized media workers, and erosion of employer recognition and bargaining power. While the applicability of de-professionalization is debated, an even stronger version advances the proletarianization of journalistic labour. Recognizing that most journalists self-identify as information professionals, the charge is that they misrecognize their decline in status, agency, and autonomy. By contrast, other scholars identify a restructuring of the division of labour, but one that involves new challenges for journalists, including having to ‘cover more fields of knowledge, perform more tasks and become more versatile’, requiring ongoing self-education (Quintanilha, 2019; see also Compton, 2010). There is broader agreement that these higher skills are adopted in conditions of disciplining labour (Franklin, 2008):

C2.P43

Virtually all print journalists are now required to work across multiple media platforms which involves not only delivering copy for print and online editions of their newspapers, but also shooting brief video clips, reading pieces to camera, as well as recording podcasts. (p. 635)

C2.P44

Publishers are increasingly adding short-form audiovisual content, while ‘58% of publishers say they’ll be focussing on podcasts, with the same proportion looking at content for voice-activated speakers’ (Newman, 2018, p. 5). Journalists face growing demands for multiplatform, multifunctional work. For Compton (2010), ‘These changes work to discipline labor and threaten communal professional standards’ (p. 598).

C2.P45

Changing employment conditions have affected the already slow pace of advancement of greater diversity in the workplace. A 60-country study found that women held only 27% of top management jobs and 41% of senior professional positions in journalism (International Center for Journalists, 2011). Another global survey (Weaver & Willnat, 2012) found women better represented in some countries (China, Finland, Malaysia, Russia,

Singapore, and Slovenia), yet the estimated proportion of women in journalism overall only increased from 33% in 1998 to 41% in 2012. The typical journalist, according to Weaver and Willnat (2012), 'is still primarily a fairly young college-educated man who studied something other than journalism in college, and who came from the established and dominant cultural groups in his country' (p. 544). In the United Kingdom, the proportion of Black and minority ethnic workers in the creative industries has barely risen and in some instances has fallen despite the pervasive assumptions of an open, egalitarian, and cosmopolitan sector. The class composition of journalism in the United Kingdom is also hugely unrepresentative of the population. Approximately half of journalists received a private education, enjoyed by approximately 7% of the total population (Martinson, 2018).

C2.P46

The changes outlined previously have also created new divisions of labour and new classes of workers who do journalistic-type labour without enjoying the status and conditions of their journalist colleagues. The Press Association, Britain's oldest domestic news agency,

C2.P47

has sharply differentiated between their newsgathering operation and their news processing operation—news process employees, or ‘production journalists’, are tasked to convert gathered information into saleable news products, and are not required to have journalism training (but must have good writing skills and be proficient in digital production technologies) (Örnebring, 2010, p. 571; see also Ursell, 2004).

C2.P48

Cost-cutting regional papers in the United Kingdom introduced ‘hubs’ or ‘print centres’, where junior staff repackage stories for multiple editions and formats. Journalists have been defined as those who have at least some ‘editorial responsibility’ for the content they produce (Weaver & Wilhoit, 1986, p. 168). Such demarcation lines have become more blurred with the growth of ‘content farms’, such as Demand Media (now Leaf Group), involving various forms of content production, including content recommendation engines and brand-sponsored editorial content (discussed later). Altogether, there has been a proliferation of various sub-journalisms. ‘Professional’ journalism, taking place

within institutional and payment-based arrangements, now blends with commercial sub-journalisms and with the expanding sectors of civil society journalisms, including citizen journalism, hyperlocal reporting, blogging, and occasional writing.

C2.S8 Content Issues and Problems

C2.P49 Traditional journalism, argues Elliot (2008), took time:

C2.P50 It took time to fact check a story. It took time for editors to review stories and determine placement in newspapers and broadcast news programs. But, every technological advance, from the Guttenberg press to computer to satellite, has cut down the time that journalists thought that they needed to do their work. (p. 29)

C2.P51 As this reminds us, we are describing an intensification of processes that long predate the 21st century. Any positing of a slow-paced, well-resourced past would be an injustice to the historical record and experience of journalists. Yet a common theme in many of the discussions of problems in journalism today is the intensification of pressures on output as time, labour power,

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and other resources decline. A chief casualty, according to numerous studies, has been the resources and support for investigative journalism. As a UK Parliamentary report (House of Lords Select Committee on Communications, 2008) summarizes,

C2.P52 The result of these pressures is that newspaper companies are having to make savings and this is having a particular impact on investment in news gathering and investigative journalism. The number of foreign news bureaux is decreasing, and there is an increasing reliance on news agency feed and information derived from the public relations industry. (p. 7)

C2.P53 In place of in-house investigative reporting, there has been growing reliance on news agencies and other supplied sources. Serving a 24-hour news operation, many journalists are deskbound, producing copy for multiple media platforms, with no time to source or research news stories themselves. In what Davies (2008) calls the 'news factory', reporters are forced by workplace conditions and control to depend on public relations (PR) suppliers for their leads. As a consequence, the PR industry exerts

increased influence over the news agenda, yet the public lacks ready means to identify which news items have originated as press releases, reproduced in whole or part. The recycling of information produces ‘churnalism’, described as ‘a news article that is published as journalism, but is essentially a press release without much added’ (Media Standards Trust, n.d.). Researchers found increasing dependence by journalists on ‘pre-packaged news’, with one UK study finding 60% of press articles and 34% of broadcast stories came wholly or mainly from PR or news agency sources (Davies, 2008).

C2.P54

What such tactics mean for journalism is illustrated by the influence of fossil fuel companies on the discussion of climate change. Davies (2008) describes how the European Science and Environmental Forum, a ‘pseudo-group, created with the help of two PR agencies (APCO Worldwide and Burson-Marsteller) with the specific intent of campaigning against restrictions on corporate activity’ (p. 193), was reported favourably in a series of pieces denouncing the concept of man-made climate change by *Daily Mail* columnist Melanie Phillips, without readers being made aware that its work was funded by Exxon. Against the significant

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reduction in professional investigative and reporting capacity, however, are some countertrends, including the rise of enterprises, often low-profit or non-profit, dedicated to longer form investigative reporting, such as the Bureau of Investigative Journalism, openDemocracy, and Byline in the United Kingdom.

C2.P55

The boundaries of journalism are challenged by the fuzziness and encroachments at border points, but also by the fact that these incursions contribute to the questioning and undermining of core values and assumptions. Principles of balance, objectivity, and impartiality have been under increasingly critical scrutiny. In the United Kingdom, strict rules of impartiality in broadcasting have coexisted with a highly partisan tabloid and midmarket ('red top') press, with broadsheets occupying a space in between, balancing editorial lines with commitments to objectivity norms in reporting. Both the efficacy and the presumptions of this traditional governance have come under increasing scrutiny, in part as political dissensus widens. In a study of BBC television news coverage of immigration, the European Union, and religion, Berry (2013) found that party political sources dominated, accounting for 49.4% of all source

appearances in 2007 and 54.8% in 2012. Conservative politicians featured more frequently than Labour ones (24 vs. 15) across the two time periods on BBC News at Six. Reporting on the financial crisis, business spokespersons outnumbered trade unionists by more than 5 to 1 in 2007 and 19 to 1 in 2012: ‘The fact that the City financiers who had caused the crisis were given almost monopoly status to frame debate again demonstrates the prominence of pro-business perspectives’ (Berry, 2013).

C2.S9 **Tabloidization**

C2.P56 A key term, *tabloidization*, carries accumulated baggage that needs unpacking. At a denotative level, it can refer to the reformatting of larger, broadsheet papers to smaller tabloid formats. At a connotative level, it refers to the expansion of editorial values associated with mass, popular orientation across journalism as a whole. Tabloidization is associated with ‘the sensationalization of news, the abbreviation of news stories, the proliferation of celebrity gossip, and the more intensive use of visual material such as large photographs and illustrations’ (Rowe, 2010, p. 351). In debates on tabloidization in newspapers, attention focussed on the diminishing space devoted to ‘hard’

news; the privileging of sensationalist storytelling over ‘serious’ analysis; and concerns about ‘dumbing down’, ‘infotainment’, ‘newsak’, ‘PR-isation’, and the like. This critique of the privileging of entertainment values, celebrity and scandal-rich content is answered by others, notably cultural studies academics, who offer more positive accounts of the shifts in news values and editorial tone (see Pilvre, 2012). Discourses of ‘dumbing down’ advance cultural elitist views that offer an imprecise, romanticized, constructed past as the basis for a narrative of decline that fails to recognize the positive gains of a more engaged, accessible communication. Critical-cultural scholars counter that much of the optimistic reading of tabloidization endorses an uncritical cultural populism and fails to address how capitalist dynamics shape and limit the capacity of journalism to serve audiences and privilege commercial over societal interests. Studying tabloidization in Estonia, Pilvre (2012) argues the media position was ambivalent, shifting public–private topic borders but reinforcing prevailing patriarchal gender patterns.

C2.P57 For some critics, the weakening of journalistic standards is attributed to the ascendancy of entertainment values. In the United

Kingdom, several newspaper editors reached seniority having previously worked on entertainment and celebrity sections. The charge is that they brought with them values derived from sensationalism, looser adherence to rigorous standards of fact-checking information,+ and cultures of image trading with PR, paparazzi photographers, and others. Such explanations, however, can detract from the more impersonal pressures and constraints shifting news journalism toward provision ‘rewarded’ by readers and marketers in economically significant and measurable ways. Economic pressures arising from increasing competition for revenue have led to increasing dependency on ‘agency and other swap agreement products and more “saleable” news focussing on lifestyles and celebrities’ (Anderson & Ward, 2007, p. 23).

C2.P58

Television journalism has also been accused of forms of tabloidization, adopting more entertainment-oriented styles, shifting from ‘hard’ news (politics, economy, business, and international affairs) to ‘soft’ news (entertainment, celebrity, lifestyle, and sports) as competitive pressures increase in commercial market environments (Cushion, 2012). For public service media,

there has been a deepening set of problems finding ways to maintain and engage their national and regional audiences and so retain the legitimacy conferred by doing so. For Rowe (2010),

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The tabloid phenomenon can be read as both a sign of critical and professional anxiety about finding a media audience without substantial loss to a sophisticated political democracy, and a product of that anxiety when converted, in the media industry, to systematic attempts to connect with audiences by all available means. (p. 359)

C2.S10

Branded Content and Native Advertising

C2.P60

If digital advertising is required to subsidize digital journalism, the poor performance of some ad formats has been a problem for both publishers and marketers alike. Declining click-through rates and ‘banner blindness’ encouraged advertisers to test other formats such as pop-ups and interstitials and then animated advertisements, pre-roll and other video formats. These formats, however, have also generated negative responses from consumers and ad avoidance strategies, most notably ad blocking. This has

been among the factors leading to a rise in advertising integrated into content and ‘disguised or camouflaged’ to blend into editorial environments. This includes ‘native advertising’, described as ‘content paid for and controlled by brands, but which looks like news, features, reviews, entertainment and other content that surrounds it online’ (Parker, 2016). Sponsored editorial content is material with similar qualities and format to content that is typically published on a platform, but which is paid for by a third party. Advertising that resembles editorials long predates the digital age, but brands are increasingly involved in the production of publisher-hosted branded content, such as the Netflix-sponsored *New York Times* cover story on women inmates in 2014 to promote *Orange Is the New Black* (Johnston, 2018), including material described as paid content, sponsored content, native advertising, programmatic native, content recommendation, and clickbait. Amid declining display advertising and subscription revenues, brand-sponsored content has offered publishers the potential for increased earnings, and it has offered marketers a means to tackle ad avoidance and boost engagement (Harms et al., 2017). Sponsored content is now the second most important

revenue generator (44%), after advertising (70%) and ahead of subscription (31%), according to a worldwide newsroom survey (International Center for Journalists, 2017). A cross-national survey of publishers found that 10% were preparing for a future with little or no display ads (Newman, 2018, p. 22).

C2.P61

The growth of native advertising reflects new pressures and opportunities, shifts in governing values across established media, and the spreading influence of formats and business models from the inaptly named ‘pure players’—digital-only publishers such as BuzzFeed, Vice, Vox, and Huffington Post that attract a younger audience via social media and mobile (Nicholls et al., 2016). BuzzFeed built its audience through a combination of shareable entertainment content and listicles (articles using lists as their structure) sponsored by brands, with no display advertising until it introduced programmatic ads on BuzzFeed News in 2018.

C2.P62

These new editorial and business activities are impacting on the role and practices of journalists and creating hybrid spaces and identities for sponsored content producers. Publishers offer the expertise of their editorial teams to serve paid advertisers, deploying editorial staff directly or developing more quarantined

units such as the *Guardian*'s Guardian Labs to create brand-sponsored content (Hardy, 2018).

C2.P63

The most pertinent charge against brand journalism is that there is a powerful imbalance in the resources to fund effective public communications. Professional journalism promised to ameliorate that imbalance by producing communications according to values that serve democratic and cultural life, including accuracy, balance, and editorial independence from vested interests. Yet, branded content favours resource-rich, commercial sources; sponsor-friendly coverage; and 'best-selling' stories and soft news. The central dilemma of native advertising is that revenue gain comes at the expense of eroding reader trust and undermining core jobs for news media (Piety, 2016).

C2.P64

Among researchers who have examined the adoption of sponsored content in newsrooms, Carlson (2014) examined 'norm entrepreneurship' among professionals adopting more affirmative perspectives of content curation against critical conceptualizations such as erosion of the 'firewall' between 'church' and 'state'; that is, editorial and advertising. Others have examined the emergence of 'hybrid editors' (Poutanen et al., 2016), working at the

intersection of brand promotion and journalistic work. The expansion of ever-evolving forms of branded content creates a blurring of storytelling craft and journalistic purposes that was more rigorously demarcated under previous governance arrangements.

C2.S11

Identities

C2.P65

Governance encompasses all the rule-making processes that influence behaviour, from formal law and regulation to norms, cultures, and practices. Increasingly, argues Singer (2011), journalists are ‘defining themselves in terms of professional norms, standards, and practices that, they say, are only sporadically shared by those outside the newsrooms’ (p. 105). These practices and norms are sources of social identity and self-definition for journalists, across personal, institutional, and media sectoral levels. Governance is one of the bridges between responses across societies to what journalism is and does and the self-perceptions of journalists.

C2.P66

Journalism is subject to a complex patchwork of legal controls, public regulation, and self-regulation by publishers and

providers, members of professional associations, and trade unions.

The various international organizations monitoring media (see <https://ifex.org>) highlight the formal and informal means by which states, political parties, media owners, and other powerful interests exercise controls on reporting and communications worldwide.

From 2013 to 2019, more than 600 journalists were killed worldwide, including anti-corruption activist Daphne Caruana Galizia, murdered in Malta, and *Washington Post* journalist Jamal Khashoggi, assassinated at the Saudi consulate in Istanbul. High-purpose and deadly seriousness constitute part of the image repertoire shaping complex and contradictory identities for journalists, most of whose work does not engender the same risks. Yet the pride in, and defence of, journalism remains important and a widespread source of identification and affiliation. In response to President Trump's attacks on 'fake news' and condemnation of the media as 'the enemy of the American people', some 350 US newspapers collectively published editorials in defence of press freedom (Reuters, 2018).

Against positive affirmation, journalists must also contend with plummeting public trust in many regions. The Edelman Trust

Barometer of public attitudes found the media was the least trusted institution in 22 of 28 countries studied (Edelman, 2018). More granular-level analysis shows differentiation, with popular newspapers the least trusted source among legacy media, and television news ranked higher. Television journalism in advanced democracies is subject to public service requirements, impartiality rules, and other regulations that have tended to ensure more balanced than partisan coverage, with the United States being the major exception, after public interest obligations, including the Fairness Doctrine introduced in 1949, were rescinded in the 1980s. The level of audience trust and engagement with television tends to reflect audiences' assessment of channels' performance over longer periods and those channels' associations, whether with statist control of programming, staid programming, or a lack of appeal to ethnic or other minorities.

C2.S12

Journalistic Authority

C2.P68

The dominant normative model for journalism in the 20th century was 'a trained professional delivering objectively validated content' (McNair, 2009). This ideal-type model of 'Anglo-American' journalism began to break down under multiple

challenges in the second half of the 20th century. One factor was the rise of 'new' literary journalism, within Anglo-American journalism, although this has been a feature of other journalism cultures, notably Southern European (Hallin & Mancini, 2004). Across North America and Western Europe, trends include the weakening of authority and legitimacy for public voices with the erosion of consensually accepted forms of status derived from politics, public institutions, and culture. Within these wider shifts, journalism's legitimacy has become, more than ever, open to dispute. As media historians show, journalism has been contested at various 'critical junctures', notably in the 1900s, 1930s, and 1960s, as well as in the current phase of digitalization (McChesney, 2007). Yet, the processes of disintermediation outlined previously in this chapter contributes to a profound shift from journalists' control over the flow of public information to breaking news 'as likely to come from the cell phone camera of a participant or an accidental observer as it is from a journalist employed by a news organization' (Elliot, 2008, p. 29; Singer, 2011). Journalistic authority is subject to questioning, challenge, threat, reconfiguration, and relocation; as Carlson (2017) writes in

a book-length study, ‘This environment strikes fear in the hearts of many journalists, but it is also a moment of opportunity to think about what we expect from the news’ (p. 26).

C2.P69

Citizen journalism is associated with untrained amateurs performing below professional standards, yet the phenomena includes practitioners and groups motivated by criticism of the poor standards of ‘professional’ journalism and efforts to raise standards in investigative journalism, provide longer form reporting of thematic over episodic news, and strengthen fact-checking. Together, this poses fundamental challenges to the self-confirmatory discourses of ‘professionalism’. Professional journalists can define themselves in terms of professional standards, from broad norms of accuracy and ethical responsibility to specialist legal requirements such as those surrounding judicial processes and court reporting. However, it is precisely these values that critics argue are being flouted and undermined (Singer, 2011). For instance, much criticism has been directed at the mobilization of hate speech within mainstream journalism in the United Kingdom. In 2019, the new editor of *The Daily Express*, Gary Jones, condemned the paper’s Islamophobia and announced

an abrupt shift in editorial policy on anti-immigrant stories for a paper that ran 70 front pages featuring migrants in 2016 (Waterson, 2019b; Stop Funding Hate, 2019).

C2.P70

The unsettledness for some journalists arises from the challenge of assumed authority and ‘balance’ as partiality, whether of white male subjectivity, shared elite perspectives, or other delimiters of experience and insight. The long revolution in tackling racism, sexism, and other forms of discrimination and celebrating difference has been aided and influenced by the opportunities for more diverse, multivocality across communications exchange. The progression toward more enlightened, inclusive, and diverse journalistic voices is very far from assured, however. For instance, the values of ‘neutral’ fact-based journalism in America were challenged by new forms of advocacy journalism, from shock-jock radio hosts to right-wing punditry on Fox News and other cable channels (Hallin & Mancini, 2004, p. 286), marking a revival of partisanship that has intensified across the supply, if not consumption, of digital news.

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How journalistic authority is being reconfigured and how this may be assessed in relation to qualities of voice, access,

reporting, and communication exchange need careful, situated examination. What is clear, however, is that journalistic identities are subject to a series of conflicting pressures. There is a blurring of boundaries between journalism and other communications; between professional and amateur; and between producers, prosumers, and users of content. There is blurring between human-based and automated journalism. There is blurring across content and between a journalism of information and entertainment in particular. There is blurring between journalism and paid (advertising), earned (PR), and third-party-owned communications. A host of other boundaries are dissolving or being reconfigured, including convergence across platforms and forms as well as across specialisms and subgenres of journalism. The condition has been described as one of increasing ‘liquidity’, drawing on Zygmunt Bauman’s (2000) influential concept, not only of rapid change but also of the inability to form more stable identifications in response to such change. Bauman (2005) describes

a society in which the conditions under which its members act change faster than it takes the ways of

acting to consolidate into habits and routines.

Liquid life . . . cannot keep its shape or stay on
course for long. (p. 1)

C2.P73

For Singer (2011), increasing ‘fluidity’ is applicable across the whole enterprise of journalism, from structures to products and processes. Deuze (2005) examines journalism in the context of shifts from solid to ‘liquid modernity’ (Bauman, 2000), where arrangements and identities, such as those of professional and amateur, blur and merge. Deuze (2005) notes, ‘The high modernism of journalistic professionalization has moved to a liquid modern state of affairs of feverish journalistic differentiation across media genres (including popular, tabloid, and infotainment journalisms), platforms, and industries’ (p. 450).

C2.P74

It is important to avoid an overly generalized account of liquidity. Not all boundaries are blurred; some remain sharp, and many are defended in ways that sustain collective values and identity-work. Singer (2011) highlights efforts to shore up identities: Journalists ‘have sought to define who they are and what makes them distinct’ and asserted ‘boundaries between themselves and other content providers in the open environment of

the Internet'. Another route taken has been to embrace changing self-perceptions and definitions about what journalists do and their normative role in the world (Singer, 2011). This embraces shifts from gatekeeping to sense-making roles, or from notions of strict objectivity toward more personal, engaged, interpretative roles, involving greater reflexivity toward source information supply.

C2.P75

Journalism cultures are formed through the negotiation of professional standards, common practices, and shared values. Such cultures are 'constituted on the basis of a particular set of culturally negotiated professional values and conventions that operate mostly behind the backs of the individual journalists' (Hanitzsch et al., 2012, p. 474). Surveys of journalists' attitudes worldwide show broad ideological consensus around core propositions: 'Journalism is (1) a professional service to the public that (2) is carried out in organizational contexts, (3) is mainly oriented toward facts, (4) provides timely and relevant information, and (5) requires at least some intellectual autonomy and independence' (Hanitzsch et al., 2012, p. 474; see also Deuze, 2005). Alongside these collectively shared values, dissensus is identified in three main areas: role perception (the normative and

institutional role for journalists in society), epistemology (access to reality, acceptable evidence, positivism, and relativism), and different responses to ethical dilemmas (Hanitzsch et al., 2012). Key divisions form around intervention, from socially committed and engaged journalism to detachment. Journalists' personal identifications are also affected by widely divergent normative models, which Christians et al. (2009) summarize as monitorial (media as watchdog), facilitative (media as public sphere), radical (challenging authority on behalf of reform), and collaborative roles (media acting in partnership with centres of power).

C2.P76 The majority of journalists regard themselves as professionally autonomous, with internal factors having greater perceived influence over their practice than external pressures from 'organizational constraints (ownership, profit expectations, advertising considerations, and management) and external constraints (business people, advertisers, censorship, government officials, and politicians)' (Hanitzsch et al., 2012, p. 487). However, that affirmation needs to be qualified in light of previous studies showing that constraints may go unnoticed by journalists distanced from higher managerial decision-making and

may also be internalized and normalized as ‘the external limits of professional autonomy often operate in the form of persuasive processes rather than forced compliance’ (Donsbach, 2004, p. 144).

C2.P77

More in line with the industry changes outlined previously in this chapter, job satisfaction levels appear to be declining. Weaver et al. (2007) trace declining job satisfaction among US journalists, regarding perceived erosion of autonomy, from the 1970s onwards. In their later 22-country survey, Weaver and Willnat (2012) found the majority of journalists to be dissatisfied. Those who were ‘very satisfied’ averaged 27.5% across all countries, and the percentage was slightly higher at 33% in the United States.

C2.P78

Studies and surveys indicate how professional and personal identities can be affirmed and strengthened in response to boundary challenges, not just undermined. The psychological work needed to sustain identities and to ‘resolve’ tensions and contradictions, however, lies outside of most conventional surveys and journalism research. In addition, there has been considerable research on journalists’ attitudes about their work and profession

but much less on how their beliefs influence their own work and outputs (Weaver & Willnat, 2012). So the focus and contribution of this book are particularly welcome.

C2.P79

Journalism in the 21st century is characterized by disturbance and uncertainty, from the cracking of monolithic corporate structures to the ambivalence of individuals oscillating between privileged status and subjection. For many who have lost jobs or quit, the experience will have been more agonizing than ambivalent, although many too have migrated to allied fields such as public relations, with relatively greater security and remuneration. Disruption has heightened the ‘uncertainty and angst felt in the structures of professional performance’ (Quintanilha, 2019, p. 1). Yet the overall picture is mixed. There is no common culture across global journalism. Both journalistic values and working conditions remain predominantly shaped by local political, economic, social, cultural, and occupational contexts. Within any given sectoral or institutional context, there tend to be beneficiaries alongside those negatively affected, advocates and critics of change, and usually a complex mixture experienced by individuals. In debates, the same phenomena, such

as native advertising, can be regarded as the saviour or destroyer of journalism (Hardy, 2018). Mobilized in these debates, for practitioners but also for academics, are norms, values, cultural dispositions, and attachments articulated and sublimated to varying degrees.

C2.P80

Journalism is surviving in the 21st century, but Benjamin's angel of history surveys accumulated wreckage too, with long-standing news institutions felled, digital saplings snapped, amid a mixed panorama of despoilment and growth. The commercial model that sustained city newspapers, local monopolies, and national institutions is in structural decline. The business solutions that can work include monetization arrangements that pull at the threads of public interest journalism. Yet the practices involved in seeking to establish and maintain relations with audiences involve innovation and ceaseless reinvention. The business of news is damaged, but the practices of journalism continue to adapt and change.

C2.S13

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