

Svennik Høyer and Horst Pöttker (eds.)

Diffusion of the News Paradigm 1850-2000

NORDICOM

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ISBN 91-89471-30-X

Published by:
Nordicom
Göteborg University
Box 713
SE 405 30 GÖTEBORG
Sweden

Cover by: Roger Palmqvist

Printed by: Grafikerna Livréna i Kungälv AB, Sweden, 2005

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Preface

Media history is much more than a collection of chronological narratives set within national borders. As a social system media has several sustaining parts, at the same time different and interdependent. Some of these parts are international in origin while some are truly nationally or regionally unique in their development. Thus media history internationally can serve as a laboratory to help detect the impact of political ideologies and other traditions, which influence journalism as a textual genre. It is in this spirit the following chapters have been written, collected and edited.

This anthology is topically centred on the news paradigm: its origin and diffusion over more than a century. It also contrasts the news paradigm with some of its opposites in journalism history. Even when contributors vary methodologically – essays and empirically based overviews intermingle with systematic content analyses – they have the forms, the qualities and the substance of journalism in mind as a guiding principle.

In this volume what was old and new journalism in the United States and Britain at the turn of the 19th century is compared to the multi party press in Scandinavia, which developed separately from the news paradigm for long periods. In other chapters the press in Central and Eastern Europe before and after the fall of German and Soviet totalitarianism are compared. In their aftermaths traits of the original news paradigm are found.

These analyses make it evident that the news paradigm, cross-nationally and historically, is introduced and realised in quite different periods. Therefore a simple cause and effect relationship is difficult to demonstrate. But even though, enough traces are left to discern an intermittent diffusion cross-nationally. There are clearly certain conditions, which we associate with open societies and freedom of expression, which favour the realisation of a news paradigm and of more journalistic autonomy in general.

While the authors in the first four sections are mainly preoccupied with the relations between the press and political systems, and their interpenetrations, the three authors in our last section give more specific ideas for what drives developments in journalism. Hanno Hardt emphasises the importance

of the media industries in disciplining journalists. Horst Pöttker proposes, as an alternative explanation, the more general modernising trend towards differentiation into specialities and sub-specialities, which combines the economic, the political and the professional aspects. As in other sectors of society, the drive towards an institutional autonomy is mainly organised by the media themselves, and by the *esprit de corps* of journalists. Kevin Barnhurst demonstrates this trend towards more autonomy in a series of remarkable content analyses of US media. News stories have been widened in scope topically, over the years they have become less personalised and more attentive to social conditions and processes. Stories have been longer and news media have been more self-sufficient both for information and comments. Further details in this rich and multifarious mosaic are wanted, of course, and we eagerly look for more findings in the future.

As always, book projects cannot be realised without considerable interest and money invested by more than the authors. We want to extend many deep felt thanks to our respective universities for providing overheads for the project. Department of Media and Communication at the University of Oslo has in addition given support for language editing, coding, and travels and provided office space for a retired professor while coordinating and editing this book. We are also indebted to Stiftung Pressehaus NRZ in Essen and to Heinrich Meyer for money to language editing. We are thankful to the Foundation for Free Speech in Oslo, which supported the printing of the book. Svernik Høyer wants to thank the Norwegian Academy of Sciences for a general grant some years ago to develop comparative studies of journalism, of which this is an example. The chapter by Michael Schudson, page 19, was reprinted without charge from *Journalism* by the permission of Sage Publications Ltd. Without all our sponsors the project could not have taken off.

We want especially to acknowledge our indebtedness to the language editor Marcus Denton for a splendid job, which extended both his honorarium and normal patience. Tirelessly he has hunted not only for grammatical oddities, bad syntax and curious choices of words. His pursuit often revealed inconsistencies, which he very politely helped to heal. Our publisher Dr. Ulla Carlsson, Director of Nordicom, took the initiative to realise this book and we are thankful for her enduring patience and encouraging interest over more than two years.

Oslo and Dortmund in May 2005

Svernik Høyer

Horst Pöttker

The Idea of the Book

Introduction

Svennik Høyer

The 'new American journalism', as it was called in Europe, appeared in small steps and great leaps during more than fifty years from the 1860s. The combined conditions of politics and economy, which made a neutral description of social and political conflicts a journalistic routine, were present in the US at the beginning of the 20th century. But it had a long way to go on European soil where freedom of expression was rare outside Great Britain in the 19th century.

This collection of articles is dedicated to some of the key ideas behind this 'new American journalism', which gave both journalists and newspapers a new position in society. Some authors are concerned with the genesis of journalism as a distinct modern literary form connected to the ideas of objectivity, some describe how parts of the American journalism spread to various European countries, and others are interested in how new journalistic procedures collided with political ideas.

In the following chapters the 'news paradigm' will be analysed from three different angles. First as an object to be studied in its own right, secondly as a mindset to be compared to contrasting ideas of journalism and finally the news paradigm serves as a basis for analytical methods for certain elements like the 'interview' and 'the inverted pyramid'. By such methods numerical values can be attached to important elements of the 'news paradigm' which in turn can serve as an index of changing journalistic styles in different countries.

It requires a large time scale to detect changes in basic qualities, and it raises important methodological questions as well. How you can retrieve facts – i.e. being journalistically active – is also a question of political norms of who can ask whom for what? The various cultural environments that news texts are put into may influence their shape and contents. But even if these qualities are not independent of the political culture in which news is practised they are not logically connected either. Basic forms of journalism have been shared among journalists of different nationalities. Over time the technology, the techniques, the thinking and the way of presenting news has crossed borders.

The key question then seems to be – is the news paradigm in 1900 the same as the paradigms observed in year 2000? There is sufficient historical detail, we will argue, to trace the presence or absence of a news paradigm. In the following chapters we face these problems by a combination of simplifications and identification. Newspaper articles are simplified by categorising their surface rather than the hidden structures of their messages.

The coding of thousands of newspaper texts in this volume regularly focus on one or more features of news stories: their general topics, their length, their narrative structure, the presence of a ‘voice’ by journalists etc. The mental pre-textual procedures and social interactions are observed indirectly e.g. by the use of interviews as the basis for the news text. The focus is regularly on how journalists process news, and less on what they write. By emphasising the formal features more than the content we can more easily observe how standard qualities of journalism are spread, or disappear, in different political and historical environments.

In the following two sections we will comment on the various components, which are included in the ‘news paradigm’ as a way of defining this concept.

The News Paradigm

In his famous book *“The Structure of Scientific Revolutions”*, Thomas Kuhn (1962) introduced the term ‘paradigm’ into the philosophy of science, by which he intended more than a new name for theories. ‘Paradigm’ refers more widely to a shared mindset among researchers about the nature of things and their basic properties. Alternatively paradigms infer relationships between phenomena at a higher level of abstraction, as in the Big Bang Theory in astronomy. Such theories are also called macro hypotheses, which function as axiomatic and self-evident premises for generating new hypotheses of a lesser order, later to be tested. When evidence based knowledge becomes contradictory scientists systematically search among their basic assumptions to find a new paradigm, which puts things in a more consistent order.

Conceived as a norm-based mindset the concept of ‘paradigm’ can fruitfully be used in the study of news. To write a story journalists follow a sequence of decisions using various criteria for the selection of events, rules and methods to establish the necessary facts as raw material for their story as well as applying strategies for the presentation. It is important for journalists to have their selected events accepted as ‘news’ by colleagues as well as by their public, e.g. by attributions of facts to experts and of opinions to important decision-makers. Finally the journalists must follow rules for composition when they write up a story, which makes it easy for the public to recognise as news.

The news paradigm consists of five basic elements, as demonstrated in *Figure 1* below. We have listed the more or less overt pre-textual and textual operations as organic parts in the news making process by journalists.

Figure 1. Elements of the News Paradigm

The Event

Ideally, a 'newsworthy' event ought to begin and end between deadlines. The 24-hour news sequence came gradually with wired news.

News Value Factors

... are a number of criteria for what are newsworthy, which varies over time, with political systems and with journalistic cultures.

The News Interview

... is a method of cross-examining information sources who are expected to answer, not to ask questions. Asymmetrical turn taking is usual between partners, with the public as a silent third party.

The Inverted pyramid

... is a narrative structure for news stories. Headlines and intro answer the questions: Who, where, when, why and how? The latest and most important news is put first in the story, details come later. Chronologies, as a rule, are turned upside down.

Journalistic Objectivity

... is an overarching idea of accuracy, balance and fairness or neutrality. Demonstrated by the use of multiple sources of information representing different interests or points of view.

The Event

An event comprises actors, a situation, linkages and a time frame. The most important ingredients are the time frame and certain actions within given situations. Something of interest must recently have happened somewhere, which the audience is unaware of and curious to know about. The time frame has historically been influenced by transport and other communication means. The 24 hours news sequence was for instance clearly conditioned by the telegraph network and by regular wire services.

Before journalists can establish an event as news they must possess an understanding of how society in general works, of where important 'events' normally take place. The choice of important sources of information in news stories is often obvious from their position and location in society. In fact the news paradigm contains many hidden premises on normalcy, and is often silent about what is left out by the 'news grid'.

Sources of information are selected in large parts by the institutional structure of society. Available sources with a telephone – 'experts' and decision-makers in central institutional networks – are repeatedly used addresses of where to find 'authoritative' facts. In addition the overriding editorial idea of the audience, which their media is talking to, and the corresponding product-idea, will influence the kind of events for which reporters are looking.

News Value Factors

An example of the early notion of popular journalism is the following quote from one of its pioneers in the 1830s. Henry Benjamin Day, editor of *New York Sun*, expressed his idea of news in the April 4th 1835 issue:

News, properly so called, to be interesting to the public, must generally tell of wars and fightings, of deeds of death, and blood, of wounds and heresies, of broken heads, broken hearts and broken bones, of accidents by fire or flood, a field of possessions ravaged, property purloined, wrongs inflicted, rights unavenged, reputations assailed, feelings embittered, and oppressions exercised by nations, communities or individuals.¹

The *New York Sun* was a typical downmarket publication for its time, without respect for elite values. But apparently, it was also inventing techniques similar to the approaching 'news paradigm'. Upmarket and more serious newspapers could learn from this unconventional journalism.

News value factors, like the ones highlighted by Henry Benjamin Day, are neither complete nor universal. Most of the news criteria used by regular mass media today are in some way bound to their geographical position and the interests of their respective audiences.

The News Interview

The news interview is a tool journalists use to retrieve information from information sources and does not necessarily appear in the text as questions and answers. Nils Gunnar Nilsson (1971) maintains that reporters learned to ask pointed questions while observing courtroom cross-examinations. By this token it is likely that the interview was introduced somewhere in the 1830s along with police reports in the tabloids. However, there is no agreement on this. It is also maintained that an interview appeared for the first time as a conversation in the more upmarket *New York Herald* 1859, but it took some decades before it was institutionalised as a regular routine. Michael Schudson in this volume proposes the following progression. Interviewing, all but unknown in 1865, had become a common activity for reporters in the 1870s and 1880s, was widely practised by 1900 and was a mainstay of American journalism by World War I.

The Inverted Pyramid

An important part of the news paradigm is how journalists tell and present their news. There are several formulas for newspapers texts, some forgotten but many still vividly alive. By the use of a so called 'inverted pyramid' for-

mula, news of the latest event is put first, followed by details on context and circumstances, ending with a string of prior events relevant to the main story. This way of telling a story is distinctly journalistic and not according to the age-old formula of oral tales. By putting conclusions first, the natural chronology of the story is put on its head, ruining both suspense and implied causation.

According to professional legend the 'inverted pyramid' as a formulae for story composition was inadvertently invented during the American Civil War from faulty telegraph connections, which forced journalists to put the most essential facts of military actions at the beginning of their report. However, David T. Z. Mindich (1998) dated the beginning of this story to start with the press release of Lincoln's murder in 1865, when the Civil War ended. Harland S. Stensaas in this volume maintains that the inverted pyramid was commonly used only in the 1890s. Inger Lindstedt (1998) found the first textbook mention of it in Edwin L. Shuman's *Steps into Journalism* from 1894. In this collection altogether six chapters trace the diffusion of an 'inverted pyramid' in five countries over variable periods of time.

Journalistic Objectivity

The emergence of a new 'objective journalism' in the US during the latter part of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th is sometimes explained as a result of cultural changes in American society. According to Mindich (1998: 95-112), the mentality of social life in America changed from a dominant religious paradigm to a scientific one between the 1830s and 1870s. Part of this transformation was an increased realism in politics, in art and fiction, which in turn inspired a 'naive empiricism' in journalism based on the idea of irrefutable facts.

The traditional interpretations of how American newspapers left the 'Dark Ages of Partisan Journalism' and became politically independent emphasise how the combination of increased readership and booming revenues from advertising freed publishers from their bondage to politicians (Mott, 1942:167-180). This involved a redefinition of the role of journalists, which took decades to change. Dicken-García (1989) points out that during the 19th century American editors were often left alone to cope with rapidly shifting ideological winds, and thus vulnerable to the judgements and opinions by others. Commitments to politics became a personal business relationship between editors and printers, on the one hand, and politicians on the other, who could reward a favourable press treatment with government printing contracts and exclusive information.

Michael Schudson maintains in this volume that 'objectivity' became the shared professional norm only in the 1920s, and is supported by Streckfuss (1990: 974) and by Stensaas in this volume. Searching all published proceedings from the American Society of Newspaper Editors between 1923 and 1930 Streckfuss could not find any mention of the term 'objectivity' before 1928,

though 'fairness' and 'balance' and similar terms were used before that. At this point it is enough to conclude that by the 1920s 'objectivity' had become a second name for a new and fact oriented journalism in the US. It marked the end of a gradual progress towards an overriding idea of 'objectivity', which started about sixty years earlier and comprised a set of converging genres and journalistic methods, which we call 'the news paradigm' (Høyer 2002).

As the number of channels for general news information has increased during the last three or four decades, conventional 'objectivity' has been more difficult to pursue for the individual journalist. Not only has the deadline for releasing news become floating, and the expected completeness of a reported story more difficult to satisfy, in the same process the responsibility of being 'objective' has diminished for each channel. The empathy of reporters when covering various beats has also become relevant aspects of many stories. While much in news have become continuous or evolving stories the task of striking a balance and filling in essential details has been given over to the recipients. This development is reflected in the code of ethics, which was adopted by the *Society of Professional Journalists* in the US in 1996. It did not mention 'objectivity' at all, while the previous code from 1987 asked for 'objectivity' as well as accuracy as part of a professional performance of journalists (Ettema and Glasser 1998: 9).

Diffusion of Culture

Journalism is culturally and socially dependent. News must be adapted to cultural forms to be easy to understand, while journalists must operate according to professional norms, in order to make their routines socially acceptable. The interview, for example, gave the initiative to journalists when they collected news on behalf of the general public. But interviews require co-operation from regular sources of information – sources that were used to approaching the editor when and if they wanted anything to be known in public. In Europe, more accustomed to an elite press, the American type of interview was considered an invasion of privacy.

The diffusion of cultural ideas is an underlying theme to this book. Long before 'globalisation' became a catchword, ideas, styles and fashions etc. originating from abroad were imported and domesticated by 'adopting cultures' under the false impression of being local inventions. Diffusion is a normal, often an unseen, process, which evolves at an uneven speed between nations. To trace and explain cultural diffusion therefore has its particular problems as when an old idea is recreated into several national variants, which continue to change and through continuations often become hazy.

The idea of diffusion, which is most common in the communication sciences, is rather one-dimensional in its preoccupation with how identical

innovations are diffused within social groups over time (Rogers 1962). Ideas are rarely identical in different environments and adoption is rarely a passive reception, but rather an interchange, which results in a hybrid of new and old ideas, or between international trends and national customs. Understanding more of the autonomy of an 'adopting culture', it will be easier to explain the entwined trajectories between an original idea and adopting cultures. Adaptation is dependent both on given normative contrasts between the original idea and the adopting cultures at the outset, and on how normative convergence occurs later on.

When diffusion takes up to one and half centuries, as we suggest in our title, it is likely that the ideas of journalism are changed considerably through adaptations. Still, traditional procedures may remain unchanged for long periods, only to be abandoned under certain combinations of conditions, as was the case in Scandinavia.

The diffusion of a new journalism to Europe in the beginning became difficult mainly because the national norms of journalism and censorship differed too much from the American. At the turn of the 19th century press freedom in the US had a long tradition and became clearly defined in the First Amendment to its Constitution in 1791. In Europe, on the other side, there were variable forms of authoritarian centralism, censorship and government control of the press for decades to come.

After a century of wars and revolutions on the European continent, the political development at the end of the 20th century points more in an American direction with an increasing number of democratic elections. On this background the succession of countries adopting various parts of the American inspired journalism seems to follow a clear logic: England came first, then probably Denmark and the rest of Scandinavia. Germany followed suit in the 1950s and the Central Eastern-European press during the 1990s. A common political factor, which favoured this development, was the emerging democracy and freedom of speech. If we then add emerging capitalism in media economics we see a configuration of conditions, which inspires less formal interpenetration between media and political institutions, and more of a 'news paradigm' in journalism.

Our Points of Departure

When we designed this anthology our intentions were that it should be both comparative and diachronic, that it should contain overviews as well as more detailed case studies. We feel that our contributors have met these intentions well.

Our design, however, required pragmatism. We could not hold on to a consistent theoretical framework without giving undue restrictions to the authors. Explanations and interpretations had to remain an open field for

investigations. The approach taken by most authors in this volume are pragmatic or eclectic. Explanations suggested in the following chapters are varied but usually combine two or three tenets from more established schools of interpretation in media research. Technology, media capitalism and political culture (press freedom, democracy or the opposite) interfere both in the creation and in the diffusion of the 'news paradigm'. In addition the inertia of old routines, which the diffusion of the news paradigm meets, gives some evidence to the existence of alternative cultures of journalism.

Our point of departure for the international comparisons in this book is the following suppositions or hypotheses.

- The 'news paradigm' is not universal and does not thrive in all environments: it has its roots in historically given social conditions where wide differences of ideas and cultural values were tolerated.
- During polarised conflicts and under dictatorial conditions where consensual objectivity and journalistic autonomy is not respected, we will find few manifestations of 'the news paradigm'.
- Diffusion of the 'news paradigm' is encouraged when the original conditions for its invention – especially freedom of speech – are met. When political systems change in this direction it is likely that manifestations of 'the news paradigm' will appear more frequently.
- The diffusion of the news paradigm does not follow a linear cause and effect relationship. The original causal agent may not be present, but the model may still be recreated or adopted from journalism abroad where the news paradigm is practised.

News agencies alone are often said to influence a development towards a standardisation in international news journalism by using a detached and balanced manner of reporting. This connection between international and national news reporting is not always found, as we shall learn later on. Indeed 'the inverted pyramid' is much more typical for news-wires than for the journalism, which newspapers produce by their own reporters. In periods other forms of reporting dominated national journalism.

By formulating our hypotheses in such a provocatively crude and simple manner as above, we gladly look forward to a continuing scholarly debate on these matters. Our intention is simply to invite more comparative studies in journalism.

Note

1. Quoted from: Huntzicker, William E. (1999:14-15). *The Popular Press, 1833-1865*. Westport, Connecticut, Greenwood Press.

The Anglo-American Background

The Emergence of the Objectivity Norm in American Journalism*

Michael Schudson

Introduction

“Objectivity” is the chief occupational value of American journalism and the norm that historically and still today distinguishes U.S. journalism from the dominant model of continental European journalism (Donsbach 1995, 17-30).¹ “Objectivity” is at once a moral ideal, a set of reporting and editing practices, and an observable pattern of news writing. Its presence can therefore be identified by several measures: (a) journalists’ express allegiance to the norm – in speeches, conferences, formal codes of professional ethics, textbooks in journalism education, debates and discussions in professional journals, and scientific surveys of journalists’ opinions; (b) ethnographers’ observations of journalists at work and the occupational routines to which they adhere; (c) content analysis of the texts of newspapers and news broadcasts that measure the degree of impersonality and non-partisanship in news stories; and (d) resistance displayed by adherents to the norm when it is openly challenged or criticized (Tuchman 1972, 660-679).²

The objectivity norm guides journalists to separate facts from values and to report only the facts. Objective reporting is supposed to be cool, rather than emotional, in tone. Objective reporting takes pains to represent fairly each leading side in a political controversy. According to the objectivity norm, journalists’ job consists of reporting something called “news” without commenting on it, slanting it, or shaping its formulation in any way. The value of objectivity is upheld specifically against partisan journalism in which newspapers are the declared allies or agents of political parties and their reporting of news is an element of partisan struggle. Partisan journalists, like objective journalists, typically reject inaccuracy, lying, and misinformation, but partisan journalists do not hesitate to present information from the perspective of a particular party or faction.

Where did the objectivity norm come from? It was not always a norm in American journalism. It has a history. It has a point of origin. Specifying that point of origin, identifying its sources, and locating it in particular journalists

or news organizations is not easy. Many matters are in dispute. Some authors would say that objectivity emerged at the point where newspaper proprietors saw opportunities for commercial success and were therefore willing to bid farewell to political party underwriters. They have stressed that the increasingly lucrative market for newspapers in the late nineteenth century led publishers to seek out readers across political parties and so forced them to abandon strident political partisanship. Others have argued that technological change, specifically the invention of the telegraph, placed a premium on economy of style, brought about reporting habits that stressed bare-bones factuality rather than discursive commentary, and so gave rise to an ethic of objectivity (Emery and Emery 1996, 185).³

However, the process by which a practice generates a norm is rarely explored. In my view, the position that the wide distribution of social behaviour naturally and normally gives rise to a norm prescribing that behaviour and attributing moral force to its observation skips over a necessary step.

What Causes a Norm to be Articulated?

Explaining the articulation of a norm is part of explaining the norm. If, say, incest is naturally repellent, and so the avoidance of incest is widely distributed, why should an incest taboo arise? If behaviour is already in place, what additional work does an articulated norm accomplish? If technology made objectivity an inevitable practice or if economic self-interest of newspapers made objectivity the obvious best choice, what purpose was served by moralizing a practice that would have survived regardless?

Norms are moral prescriptions for social behaviour. They are “obligations” rather than “regularities,” to borrow Robert Cooter’s distinction (Cooter 1988, 587).⁴ “Norm” can also refer to prevalent patterns of behaviour (generally speaking, leading government officials in the United States, if married, *do not* have sex with their office interns), but the focus here is the emergence of morally potent prescriptions about what should be prevalent behaviour (leading government officials, if married, *should not* have sex with office interns). Could it be that a prevalent pattern of behaviour gives rise to moral norms? Do widely distributed social practices for some reason ooze prescriptive rules that insist on the prevalent pattern? Perhaps widespread-ness contributes to prescriptive-ness. But many habits are widespread that have no prescriptive force. Most people like to eat ice cream but no one insists that those who do not like it have failed to live up to a morally important requirement. Most people watch several hours of television a day, but no one believes that they should; if anything, TV-viewing receives moral disapproval in general public discussion.

One of the distinctive features of norms as prescriptive rules, rather than norms as prevalent practices, is that they are self-consciously articulated. What

circumstances lead people or institutions to become self-conscious about their patterns of behaviour and to articulate them in the form of moral norms?

At least four conditions encourage the articulation of norms. Two of these we might think of as Durkheimian, having to do with horizontal solidarity or group identity, two are Weberian, concerning hierarchical social control across an organization at one point in time or across generations over time. The first Durkheimian condition is that the articulation of moral norms is encouraged by forms of ritual solidarity that call on a group or institution to celebrate itself, to honour its members, to recognize the introduction of new members of the group or the passing of old ones or the induction of fully adult or assimilated new members to higher status in the group. Thus births, confirmations, funerals, retirements, annual meetings, awards banquets, and other such events provide occasions for speech in which speakers are often called upon to state explicitly, and as moral rules, the ways of the group.

A second Durkheimian condition is more outward looking than inward looking: cultural contact and conflict can provoke the articulation of norms inside the group. Here the prescription that "the way we do things" is "the way one should do things" is a function of a kind of group egoism, a way of defining the group in relation to other groups. This may lead groups to claim independence or separation from other groups, but equally it may prod them to claim affiliation with other groups.

A Weberian condition for the articulation of norms arises in any institutional setting so large that socialization or enculturation cannot take place informally. Wherever people must be handled in batches and trained in the ways of the group, there will be a kind of pedagogical economy in saying out loud what the prescribed rules of behaviour are. Where the ways of the group must be handed down from one generation to the next – where, in other words, some form of schooling is necessary – the teaching generation will benefit from formulating rules of general applicability and rules with moral force. These rules will be of great use to the learning generation, too, in providing certainty about how to behave under inherently ambiguous conditions. The pedagogical imperative for the articulation of norms often leads to an overly rigid or absolute statement of norms and the overlearning of norms on the part of the students. Thus children overlearn gender-appropriate behaviours and are sometimes unwilling to tolerate variation in behaviours that to adults seem innocuous. Bureaucrats, likewise, overlearn rules and may take their own rules too seriously.

A second Weberian condition arises less from the need to pass on organizational culture in a large institution than from the need of superiors to control subordinates in a complex organization. Superiors may wish to be free from normative constraints to act with their best discretion, but they would like their subordinates to be constrained by rules. Here political control encourages the emergence of formalized norms.

These four social conditions prompt the rhetorical formalization of norms. Each of them offers a set of reasons for speech or for the codification into

speech or writing of implicit norms. Both needs for social cohesion (the Durkheimian conditions) and needs for social control (the Weberian conditions) can generate articulate moral norms.

Let me turn now to the history of the objectivity norm in American journalism to see whether this theoretical framework proves of some empirical use.

The Business Neutrality of Colonial Printers

In colonial American journalism, printers testified to a concern for fairness in order to shed responsibility for what appeared in their pages. Benjamin Franklin insisted in his "Apology for Printers" (1731) that the printer was just that – one who prints – not one who edits, exercises judgment, or agrees with each opinion in his pages. "Printers are educated in the Belief that when Men differ in Opinion, both Sides ought equally to have the Advantage of being heard by the Publick; and that when Truth and Error have fair Play, the former is always an overmatch for the latter: Hence they cheerfully serve all contending Writers that pay them well, without regarding on which side they are of the Question in Dispute." In the same passage, however, Franklin also declares that newspaper contributions must exhibit good taste and refrain from character assassination. Clearly, he exercised editorial judgments even as he denied he was doing so (Franklin 1989, 172–73).

Franklin's "Apology" is not only a mess of contradictions but a very rare effort on the part of a printer to defend his behaviour at all. Colonial newspaper proprietors had little theory of the press and little occasion to articulate a rationale. Printers ran their newspapers with little consistent purpose or principle. They saw themselves as tradesmen, not learned professionals. At first, colonial printers did not imagine their newspapers to be either political instruments or professional agencies of newsgathering. None of the early papers reached out to collect news; they printed what came to them. Colonial printers, more than their London brethren, were public figures – running the post office, serving as clerks for the government, and printing the laws – but they were first of all businessmen.

In the first half century of American journalism, there was little indication that the newspaper would become a central forum for political discourse. Colonial printers avoided controversy when they could, preached the printer's neutrality when they had to, and printed primarily foreign news because it afforded local readers and local authorities no grounds for grumbling. Foreign news came primarily from the London press and looked out at the world from an English Protestant perspective; although there were colonists from Sweden, the Netherlands, Germany and elsewhere, the overwhelming majority were from England and no doubt found London-inflected news interesting, perhaps reassuring, but rarely controversial. The preponderance of foreign news was overwhelming. Out of a sample of 1900

items that Franklin's *Pennsylvania Gazette* printed from 1728 to 1765, only 34 touched on politics in Philadelphia or Pennsylvania (Clark and Wetherell 1989, 292).

As conflict with England heated up after 1765, politics entered the press and "fairness" went by the board. It became more troublesome for printers to be neutral than to be partisan; nearly everyone felt compelled to take sides. The newspaper began its long career as the mouthpiece of political parties and factions. Patriots had no tolerance for the pro-British press, and the new states passed and enforced treason and sedition statutes in the 1770s and 1780s. By the time of the state-by-state debates over ratification of the Constitution in 1787-88, Federalists, those leaders who supported a strong national government, dominated the press and squeezed Anti-federalists out of public debate. In Pennsylvania, leading papers tended not to report Anti-federalist speeches at the ratification convention. When unusual newspapers in Philadelphia, New York, and Boston sought to report views on both sides, Federalists stopped their subscriptions and forced the papers to end their attempt at even-handedness (Main 1961).

Some of the nation's founders believed outspoken political criticism was well justified so long as they were fighting a monarchy for their independence, but that open critique of a duly elected republican government could be legitimately curtailed. Samuel Adams, the famed Boston agitator in the struggle for independence, changed his views on political action once republican government was established. This great advocate of open talk, committees of correspondence, an outspoken press, and voluntary associations of citizens now opposed all hint of public associations and public criticism that operated outside the regular channels of government (Maier 1980). As one contemporary observed, it did no harm for writers to mislead the people when the people were powerless, but "To mislead the judgement of the people, where they have *all* power, must produce the greatest possible mischief" (Buel 1980, 86).⁵ The Sedition Act of 1798 forbade criticism of the government. As many as one out of four editors of oppositional papers were brought up on charges under this law. This move went one step further than many Americans of the day were willing to go. Federalist propaganda notwithstanding, Thomas Jefferson won the Presidency in 1800, the Sedition Act expired, and party opposition began to be grudgingly accepted.

In this era, no norm of objectivity appeared. The printer's neutrality was supported in a rhetorical setting in which admission of partisanship or preferences would have invited trouble. Neutrality was prudential counsel, not a moral norm. In any event, all of this referred only to what the printer would print, none of it touched on what a printer might write. What writing there was tended not to be "reporting", as we would think of it today, but commentary. The occupational preconditions for a modern concept of objectivity simply did not exist. So when political partisans made demands on printers, there was no defence against them, no ideological resources to counterpoise the integrity of journalists against the corruption of party, even in a

day when the legitimacy of parties was much in doubt. A language of occupational virtue for journalists had not yet developed.

Partisan Predictability and Stenographic Fairness

In 19th century journalism, editors came to take great pride in the speed and accuracy of the news they provided. With the introduction in the 1830s of the rotary press and soon the steam-powered press, amid an expanding urban economy on the Eastern seaboard, and in the rush of enthusiasm for Jacksonian democracy, commercial competition heated up among city newspapers. A new breed of “penny papers” hired newsboys to hawk copies on the street, and editors competed for a wider readership and increasingly sought out local news – of politics, crime, and high society. This newly aggressive commercialism in journalism was an important precondition for modern notions of objectivity or fairness, but, at first, it fostered only a narrow concept of stenographic fairness. The papers grew increasingly boastful about the speed and accuracy of their newsgathering, but editors found this perfectly consistent with political partisanship and their choosing to cover only the speeches or rallies of the party they favoured. It was equally consistent, in their eyes, for reporters to go over speeches with sympathetic politicians to improve, in printed form, on the oral presentation. Into the 1870s and 1880s, Washington correspondents routinely supplemented their newspaper income by clerking for the very Congressional committees they wrote about. They often lived at the same boarding houses as Congressmen, and the boarding houses tended to divide along party lines (Ritchie 1991, 60–63).⁶

As late as the 1890s, when a standard Republican paper covered a presidential election, it not only deplored and derided Democratic candidates in editorials but also often just neglected to mention them in the news. In the days before public opinion polling, the size of partisan rallies was taken as a proxy for likely electoral results. Republican rallies would be described, as “monster meetings” while Democratic rallies were often not covered at all. And in the Democratic papers, of course, it was just the reverse.

Journalism as an Occupational Culture

Partisanship ran deep in nineteenth century American journalism. Popular historians of journalism like to quote the paragraph in Adolph Ochs’ statement of purpose on taking over the *New York Times* in 1896, about how the paper would give the news “impartially, without fear or favour, regardless of any party, sect or interest involved”. They invariably fail to quote the next paragraph which laid out Ochs’ commitment to sound money, tariff reform,

low taxes, and limited government. Ochs took these principles seriously enough to march, along with top editors of his paper, in the parade for the "Gold Democratic" ticket in 1896 (Davis 1921, 218). "Objectivity" was far from an established practice or ideal in the 1890s.

Partisanship endured, but reporters came increasingly to enjoy a culture of their own independent of political parties. They developed their own mythologies (revelling in their intimacy with the urban underworld), their own clubs and watering holes, and their own professional practices. Interviewing, for instance, had become a common activity for reporters in the 1870s and 1880s. In the antebellum years, reporters talked with public officials but did not refer to these conversations in print. Politicians and diplomats dropped by the newspaper offices but could feel secure, as one reporter recalled, that their confidences "were regarded as inviolate". President Lincoln often spoke with reporters informally but no reporter ever quoted him directly. No president submitted to an interview before Andrew Johnson in 1868, but by the 1880s the interview was a well accepted and institutionalised "media event", an occasion created by journalists from which they could then craft a story. This new style of journalistic intervention did not erase partisanship but it did presage reporters' new dedication to a sense of craft, and new location in an occupational culture with its own rules, its own rewards, and its own esprit (Schudson 1995, 72–93).⁷

Interviewing was a practice oriented more to pleasing an audience of news consumers than to parroting or promoting a party line. Newspapers had become big businesses by the 1880s, with towering downtown buildings, scores of reporters, splashy sponsorship of civic festivals, and pages of advertising from the newly burgeoning department stores. The papers vastly expanded their readership in this growing marketplace; increasing numbers of papers counted their circulation in the hundreds of thousands. Accordingly, reporters writing news came to focus more on making stories, less on promoting parties. Newspapers were becoming highly profitable businesses. Circulation leapt forward while the cost of production plummeted with wood pulp as a new source of paper and mechanical typesetting a new labour-saving device. Advertising revenue surpassed subscription fees as the primary source of income as the papers courted new audiences (particularly women). The increasingly commercial orientation of the newspaper certainly helped sustain the innovation of interviewing.

The idea of interviewing "took like wildfire", wrote Atlanta reporter Henry Grady (1879). What one would like to know, of course, is why. One would also like to know why it took like wildfire in the United States but not in Europe. It would be two more generations before European reporters began to adopt what was by then standard practice in the United States. In Britain, journalists began to accept the interview after 1900, often through American tutelage. American correspondents by their example taught Europeans that their own elites would submit to interviews. This education accelerated during World War I. One American reporter recalled that his as-

signment to interview European heads of state in 1909 seemed “ridiculous and impossible” (and he failed at it) but twenty years later it was easy, the interview was no longer “a shocking innovation to the rulers of Europe”. (Abbot, 1933, 270)

The rapid diffusion of interviewing among American journalists seems to have been unaccompanied by any ideological rationale. It fit effortlessly into a journalism that was already fact-centred and news-centred rather than devoted primarily to political commentary or preoccupied with literary aspirations. It did not give rise to the objectivity norm but was one of the growing number of practices that identified journalists as a distinct occupational group with distinct patterns of behaviour. The growing corporate coherence of that occupational group, generating a demand both for social cohesion and occupational pride, on the one hand, and internal social control, on the other, would by the 1920s eventuate in a self-conscious ethic of objectivity.

Alternative Perspectives on Late 19th Century Journalism

One of the most stubborn beliefs in journalism history is that “objectivity” became the common practice in journalism in the late nineteenth century after and because (a) the telegraph put a premium on a terse, factual style (b) the wire services required value-free reporting to serve clients of various political allegiances and (c) newspapers in general found profit in winning over both Democratic and Republican readers. None of these views offers any response to the question of how a reporting practice might have become a norm with moral force.

The case for the decisive role of the telegraph is made well by Donald L. Shaw. His study of Wisconsin newspapers from 1852 to 1916 found a decline in news bias over the period, as general accounts would have led him to expect. But Shaw finds a particularly sharp decline between 1880 and 1884, a period in which there was a leap from 47% to 89% in the proportion of wire-based stories in Wisconsin newspapers’ coverage of the presidential campaign. Later, and more slowly, non-wire news also showed declining bias, a fact that Shaw attributes to reporters’ learning to imitate wire service style (Shaw 1971, 64-86; Shaw 1967, 3-12, 31; Shaw 1968, 326-329).

Shaw’s quantitative study is reinforced, more allusively, by James Carey’s *“Technology and Ideology”*, a justly famous essay brimming with ideas. Carey argues that the telegraph required regional twang to be removed from a language that would now be available everywhere; that it turned the correspondent who analysed news into a stringer who just relayed facts; and that the high cost of telegraphic transmission forced journalistic prose to become “lean and unadorned” (Carey 1989, 211).

The logic of Shaw’s and Carey’s argument seems at first glance unassailable and there is genuine satisfaction in finding so complex a social change

as a shift in literary style and normative orientation to be so neatly explained. But that is exactly the temptation of economic and technological reductionism that must be resisted.

The beauty in this explanation is only skin deep. In this case, there are three problems. First, it explains a new social practice (in this case, a new literary style), not a new moral norm. It thus simply refuses to face the real question. What is at issue is not only a new style of prose but the self-conscious articulation of rules with moral force that direct how that prose shall be written and provide a standard of condemnation when the writing does not measure up. Here the technological-economic explanations by themselves do not help at all.

Second, the explanation is based on limited data, including data not easily bent to the overall argument. Carey's work is apparently entirely impressionistic. As for Shaw's, it has some curious features if it is to be a basis for a technologically determinist argument. Between 1852, when Wisconsin newspapers used no wire service stories in campaign coverage, and 1880, when half of the stories originated with wire services, there was no decrease in measured bias (actually, there was a small increase) (Shaw 1967, 6). Why should this increase from zero to 47% in the proportion of wire stories have produced no decrease in bias when the increase from 47% to 89% in the next four years led to a dramatic drop in news bias? (Shaw also finds a fairly steep increase in news bias from 1888 to 1892; only after that is there is a steadier decline. This is another anomaly that does not fit Shaw's explanation.) This makes no sense if the constraints of telegraphy necessarily force or at least have a very close affinity to a new prose style.

Third, neither Carey nor Shaw gives close consideration to alternative hypotheses. One hypothesis I advance in *Discovering the News* (1978) is that professional allegiance to a separation of facts and values awaited, first, the rising status and independence of reporters relative to their employers, a change in journalism that developed gradually between the 1870s and World War I, and secondly the emergence of serious professional discussion about "objectivity", which came only after World War I. Only with these developments did the social organizational and intellectual foundations arise for institutionalising a set of journalistic practices to give "objectivity" force (Schudson 1978). Subsequent work confirms my original point that a self-conscious, articulate ideology of objectivity can be dated to the 1920s (Streckfuss 1990, 973-983).

In fact, most newspapers remained deeply partisan until the end of the nineteenth century. In places like Wisconsin, the vast majority of these papers were Republican. That might have made 1884 an unusual year, because many of the most prominent Republican papers in the country (including papers like the *New York Evening Post*, the *Boston Herald*, and the *Springfield Republican*) abandoned Republican standard-bearer James G. Blaine. It is quite possible that the 1880-1884 decline in news bias on which Shaw builds his argument had more to do with the unusual nature of the 1884 campaign

when issues of the personal integrity or corruption of the candidates, rather than party loyalty, played an unusually important role (King 1992, 185-187).

The notion that the move from partisanship to objectivity was economically motivated is widely believed but nowhere justified. The leading textbook in the history of journalism puts it this way: "Offering the appearance of fairness was important to owners and editors trying to gain their share of a growing readership and the resulting advertising revenues" (Emery, Emery, and Roberts 1996, 181). But was it? Readership was growing so rapidly in the late nineteenth century – from 3.5 million daily newspaper readers in 1880 to 33 million in 1920 – a great variety of journalistic styles were economically rewarding. Very likely the most lucrative option was strident partisanship. Certainly this characterized circulation leaders of the day like William Randolph Hearst's *New York Journal* and Joseph Pulitzer's *New York World*. Heated political campaigns and the newspapers' ardent participation in them were circulation-builders, not circulation-losers (King 1992, 396-398, 467-468).

Another factor in the eventual triumph of a professional journalism is that the very concept of politics changed from 1880 to 1920 under the impact of Mugwump and Progressive reforms. Liberal reformers began to criticize party loyalty. They promoted new forms of electoral campaigning, urging an "educational" campaign with more pamphlets and fewer parades. Newspapers at the same time became more willing to take an independent stance. By 1890, a quarter of daily newspapers in Northern states, where the reform movement was most advanced, claimed independence of party.

By 1896, a reform known as the Australian ballot had swept the country, changing forever the way Americans went to the polls. Until the 1890s, American election days were organized to the last detail by the competing political parties. The state did not prepare a ballot; rather, the parties printed up their own tickets and distributed them to voters near the polls. The voter then did not need to mark the ballot in any way; in fact the voter did not need to be literate. He just took the ticket from the party worker and deposited it in the ballot box. The act of voting was thus an act of affiliation with a partisan cause (Schudson 1998, 168-174).⁸

The Australian ballot symbolized a different understanding. Now the state prepared a ballot that listed candidates of all contending parties. The voter received the ballot from an election clerk and, in the privacy of the voting booth, marked the ballot, choosing the candidates from one or several parties as he wished. Voting was now a performance oriented to an ideal of objectivity, a model of rational choice, if you will. An increasingly strident rhetoric prevailed, condemning the corruption of parties and the need for forms of governing that transcended party politics. Civil service reform, taking off in this same era, promoted this rhetoric powerfully in many nations around the world. In the American case, however, and in those other nations that adopted ballot reform, there was not only a verbal rhetoric but also a kind of performative rhetoric in which millions of people acted out a social practice that incorporated a new model of objectivity.

With the adoption of the Australian ballot, civil service reform, corrupt practices acts, voter registration laws, the initiative and referendum, the popular primary, the direct election of senators, and non-partisan municipal elections, politics began to be seen as an administrative science that required experts. Voting came to be seen as an activity in which voters make choices among programs and candidates, not one in which they loyally turn out in ritual solidarity to their party. This new understanding of politics helped transform a rabidly partisan press into an institution differentiated from the parties, with journalists more likely to see themselves as journalists, or as writers, rather than as political hangers-on (McGerr 1986).⁹

Modern Objectivity

What we might call modern analytical and procedural fairness dates to the 1920s. Analytical fairness had no secure place until journalists as an occupational group developed loyalties more to their audiences and to themselves as an occupational community than to their publishers or their publishers' favoured political parties. At this point journalists also came to articulate rules of the journalistic road more often and more consistently. The general manager of the Associated Press, Kent Cooper, announced his creed in 1925: "The journalist who deals in facts diligently developed and intelligently presented exalts his profession, and his stories need never be colourless or dull" (Gramling 1940, 314). Newspaper editors formed their own national professional association for the first time in 1922-23, the American Society of Newspaper Editors. At their opening convention, they adopted a Code of Ethics or "Canons of Journalism" that included a principle of "Sincerity, Truthfulness, Accuracy" and another of "Impartiality", the latter including the declaration, "News reports should be free from opinion or bias of any kind" (Pratte 1995, 206).

This newly articulate fairness doctrine was related to the sheer growth in newsgathering; rules of objectivity enabled editors to keep lowly reporters in check, although they had less control over high-flying foreign correspondents. Objectivity as ideology was a kind of industrial discipline; a Weberian condition was at work. At the same time, objectivity seemed a natural and progressive ideology for an aspiring occupational group at a moment when science was god, efficiency was cherished, and increasingly prominent elites judged partisanship a vestige of the tribal nineteenth century (Purcell 1973)¹⁰ Here Durkheimian affiliation was a factor promoting the articulation of a norm of objectivity.

Another Durkheimian condition was also at stake: journalists not only sought to affiliate with the prestige of science, efficiency, and Progressive reform but they sought to disaffiliate from the public relations specialists and propagandists who were suddenly all around them. Journalists had rejected

parties only to find their newfound independence besieged by a squadron of information mercenaries available for hire by government, business, politicians, and others. Early in the twentieth century, efforts multiplied by businessmen and government agencies to place favourable stories about themselves in the press. A new “profession” of public relations emerged and got a great boost from President Woodrow Wilson’s attempt in World War I to use public relations to sell the war to the American public. The war stimulated popular public relations campaigns for war bonds, the Red Cross, the Salvation Army, and the Y.M.C.A. By 1920, one journalism critic noted, there were nearly a thousand “bureaus of propaganda” in Washington modelled on the war experience. (Irwin, 1923, 27) Figures circulated among journalists that 50 or 60 percent of stories even in the *New York Times* were inspired by press agents. The publicity agent, philosopher John Dewey wrote in 1929, “is perhaps the most significant symbol of our present social life” (Dewey 1930, 43; Schudson 1978, 121-159).¹¹

Journalists grew self-conscious about the manipulability of information in the propaganda age. They felt a need to close ranks and assert their collective integrity in the face of their close encounter with the publicity agents’ unembarrassed effort to use information (or misinformation) to promote special interests. When Joseph Pulitzer endowed the School of Journalism at Columbia (in 1904 although classes did not begin until 1913), he declared that he wanted to “raise journalism to the rank of a learned profession”. (Pulitzer, 1904, 657) By the 1920s, it seemed to at least some of the more intellectual-minded advocates of journalistic professionalism, that this meant a scrupulous adherence to scientific ideals. “There is but one kind of unity possible in a world as diverse as ours”, Walter Lippmann wrote. “It is unity of method, rather than of aim; the unity of the disciplined experiment”. He wanted to upgrade the professional dignity of journalists and provide training for them “in which the ideal of objective testimony is cardinal” (Lippmann 1920, 67, 82).

Nothing was more threatening to this ideal than the work of public-relations. “Many reporters today are little more than intellectual mendicants”, complained political scientist Peter Odegard in 1930, “who go from one publicity agent or press bureau to another seeking ‘handouts’” (Odegard 1930, 132). Just before World War I, New York newspaper editor Don Seitz assembled a list of 1400 press agents for the American Newspaper Publishers Association, distributed the list to ANPA members, and urged them not to accept material for publication from any of them. But this was a losing battle and by 1926 he complained that the Pulitzer School of Journalism “turns out far more of these parasites than it does reporters” (Seitz 1926, 209-210 at 210).¹²

At this time – the 1920s – the objectivity norm became a fully formulated occupational ideal, part of a professional project or mission. Far more than a set of craft rules to fend off libel suits or a set of constraints to help editors keep tabs on their underlings, objectivity was finally a moral code. It was

asserted in the journalism textbooks as well as in codes of ethics of professional associations. By the 1930s, publishers would use the objectivity norm as a weapon against unionisation in the newsroom, insisting that a reporter who joined the Newspaper Guild could not be objective. The Weberian condition of social control inside the organization gave publishers reason to promote the objectivity norm even if they had done little or nothing to invent it (Schudson 1978, 156-157).

The relevance of this Weberian condition may be better recognized by the observation that the further a reporter is from the home office, the greater that reporter's freedom to violate objectivity norms. Foreign correspondents are treated more as independent experts, free to make judgments, less as employees to be supervised. In truth, they cannot be supervised nor do editors often have the knowledge to second-guess them. For that matter, readers do not normally have the background to fill in a context to make bare facts comprehensible.

Others – notably sports reporters – are exempt from rules of objectivity on different grounds. All journalism is ethnocentric, giving more attention to national news than foreign news. Where news organizations cater to local rather than national audiences, as is decidedly the case in the American press, they are ethnocentric with respect to their own city or region. In the rare cases in which an American news organization is designed with a national audience in mind – *USA Today*, for instance – sports reporting operates by an objectivity norm, but ordinarily sports reporters openly favour local teams. If a Chicago newspaper provided coverage for a visiting basketball team as sympathetic as it provides the hometown Chicago Bulls, the act would be understood as treachery, as if *The Times* of London had treated press releases from Hitler's Germany with the same deference as those from 10 Downing Street.

From the perspective of the local news institution, the triumphs and defeats of the local team are examined from a stance that presumes enthusiastic backing of the team. The home team is within what Daniel Hallin has called the "sphere of consensus" in journalism, a domain in which the rules of objective reporting do not hold (Hallin 1986, 116-117). Journalism is a complex social and discursive domain. American newspapers are involved not only in reporting conflicts and competitions with professional detachment but also contribute to establishing a local community identity. Not infrequently, in the nineteenth century, newspapers were founded in order to draw attention to and increase the real estate values of frontier towns. This booster spirit survives and colours the American press, but in reporting political news, American journalism embraced the objectivity norm.

At the very moment that journalists claimed objectivity as their ideal, they also recognized its limits. In the 1930s there was a vogue for what contemporaries called "interpretive journalism". Leading journalists and journalism educators insisted that the world had grown increasingly complex and needed to be not only reported but also explained. The political columnists, like Walter

Lippmann, David Lawrence, Frank Kent, and Mark Sullivan, came into their own in this era. Journalists insisted that their task was to help readers not only to know but to understand. They took it for granted by that point that understanding had nothing to do with party or partisan sentiment. In this respect, even interpretive forms of journalism paid homage to non-partisanship.

Was this progress, a professional press taking over from party hacks? Not everyone was so sure. If the change brought a new dispassion to news coverage, it also opened the way to making entertainment rather than political coherence a chief criterion of journalism. Speaker of the House "Uncle" Joe Cannon objected: "I believe we had better publicity when the party press was the rule and the so-called independent press the exception, than we have now. The correspondents in the press gallery then felt their responsibility for reporting the proceedings of Congress. Then men representing papers in sympathy with the party in power were alert to present the record their party was making so that the people would know its accomplishments, and those representing the opposition party were eager to expose any failures on the part of the Administration." In the independent press, in contrast, serious discussion of legislation gave way to entertainment: "The cut of a Congressman's whiskers or his clothes is a better subject for a human interest story than what he says in debate" (Cannon and Busbey 1927, 295). News, Joseph Cannon mourned in 1927, had replaced legislative publicity. What had really happened is that journalists had become their own interpretive community, writing to one another and not to parties or partisans, determined to distinguish their work from that of press agents, eager to pass on to younger journalists and to celebrate in themselves an ethic and an integrity in keeping with the broader culture's acclaim for science and non-partisanship.

Conclusion

Journalists live in the public eye. They are not insulated from public scrutiny – they do not have recondite language, fancy technology, mirrors and mysteries to shield them from the public. There are strong reasons for journalists to seek moral norms that appeal to the public in order to protect themselves from criticism, embarrassment, or law suits and to endow their occupation with an identity they can count as worthy. But the practical utility of having *some* norms does not explain why this norm, the objectivity norm, came to dominate.

A variety of norms are capable of achieving the ends of providing public support and insulation from criticism. Journalists in Germany, China, Cuba or Argentina work with norms that differ from the objectivity norm. To understand the emergence of a norm historically, it is necessary to understand

not only the general social conditions that provide incentives for groups to adopt some norm but also the specific cultural circumstances that lead them to adopt a specific norm. Strategic uses for normativity help explain why journalists have norms at all. Durkheimian and Weberian conditions promoted the generation of a new norm in American journalism, but these components do not explain why journalists selected the particular norm they did. The latter problem requires understanding the cultural environment of American journalists early in the twentieth century and the ideas, concepts, and values that they had access to, found appealing, and could convey convincingly to themselves and others.

With that problem in mind, I return to the question of why European journalism did not initially develop the norm of objectivity and, when later they came to accept it, did so with less fervour than Americans. Some of the sociological conditions that affected journalistic norms in America were absent or less pronounced in Europe. The desire of journalists to distinguish themselves from public relations practitioners was absent in Europe because public relations developed later and less extensively in Europe. Moreover, the growing anti-partisan nature of American political culture intensified in the Progressive years and went much further than efforts to contain party corruption in Europe. In America, a civil service tradition had to be invented and emerged as the result of a political movement; in Europe, a degree of bureaucratic autonomy, legitimacy, and professionalism could be taken for granted, so there was less reason for European civil servants to ideologize themselves the way American reformers did. The ideological virtues of a journalistic divorce from party, so readily portrayed in America against this reform background, had no comparable political ballast in European journalism.

It may also be that the cultural space that could be occupied by objectivity as a professional value in American journalism was already occupied in European journalism. European journalists already understood themselves in a publicly successful way – as high literary creators and cosmopolitan political thinkers. They did not have the down-and-dirty sense of themselves as labourers whose standing in the world required upgrading as American journalists did. If there was to be upgrading, in any event, it was to a literary rather than professional ideal.

This is much too global a generalization about the many different forms of European journalism, but there is a good case that it applies very well at least to the French experience. Jean Chalaby has argued that British and American journalism experienced a “unique discursive revolution” and became information and fact-centred in the mid-nineteenth century, but French journalism did not. Until late in that century, when leading British and American newspapers employed numerous foreign correspondents, the French press drew most of its foreign news straight from the London papers. The French were much less concerned than the British and Americans to draw a line between facts and commentary in the news. French journalism and other continental traditions of journalism did not participate in the “unique discursive

sive revolution” that characterized British and American journalism – and so would not come around to an objectivity-oriented journalism until many decades after the Americans and, even then, less fully (Chalaby 1996, p. 313) Chalaby explains that French journalism could not partake of the Anglo-American discursive revolution because it was dominated by literary figures and literary aspirations.

It would be wonderful to find a person, a moment, an incident that gave birth to the objectivity norm in American journalism and then to simply trace the mechanisms of diffusion from newspaper to newspaper, and from American newspapers to world journalism, but there is no magic moment. The social conditions that made possible, desirable, and convenient the occupational practices that are now understood as objective reporting emerged during the late nineteenth century in ways that did not initially produce a strong, self-conscious articulation of the objectivity norm. At the point when the norm became clearly articulated – in the 1920s – it was already operating in the daily activities of American journalists. It is easier to explain the articulation of the norm, arising from the Durkheimian and Weberian conditions I have sketched, than to establish exactly which features of the American cultural landscape and the changing social conditions of the late nineteenth century were most vital in preparing the soil for it. What is clear is that the moral norm American journalists live by in their professional lives, use as a means of social control and social identity, and accept as the most legitimate grounds for attributing praise and blame is a norm that took root first, and most deeply, in this journalism and not in others across the Atlantic.

Notes

1. Donsbach conducted a survey to compare German, Swedish, Italian, British, and American journalists. He found Americans “still uphold norms of objectivity, fairness and neutrality”. They do so more than their European counterparts who are much more likely to say that it is important for them to “champion particular values and ideas”. Differences in norms seem also matched in differences in the social organization of work: only a sixth of American journalists who say their primary function is reporting or editing also acknowledge spending some time writing commentary, while for German journalists the figure is over 60 percent and for Italians and British reporters and editors about half acknowledge spending time in commentary. See also Donsbach and Klett (1993, 53-83) and Chalaby (1996, 303-326).
2. On newsroom practices, the landmark work is Tuchman (1972, 660-679). On journalistic defenses of objectivity against its critics, the two chief moments came in the 1960s in response to “new journalism” and New Left critiques of journalism and in the 1990s in response to the movement for “public” or “civic” journalism. The former is summarized in Schudson (1978, 160-94) and many of the latter defenses are cited and discussed in Schudson (1998, 132-49).

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3. The eighth edition of the leading journalism history textbook (1996) emphasizes both explanations but also acknowledges growing uncertainty about their validity. See Emery and Emery (1996, 185).
4. McAdams (1997, 381) defines a norm as “a decentralized behavioral standard that individuals feel obligated to follow.” This definition is meant to distinguish general social norms from law, the latter being a highly centralized and authoritative standard backed, at least in principle, by force. I think law is a particular kind of norm rather than something altogether different from it.
5. Buel quoting Pennsylvania jurist Alexander Addison. On Addison, see also Rosenberg (1984, 399-417).
6. For historical materials not otherwise footnoted, I draw primarily on Schudson (1978).
7. I draw here on a much fuller account of the history of the newspaper interview in Schudson (1995, 72-93).
8. The symbolic and substantive importance of ballot reform is emphasized in Schudson (1998, 168-174).
9. See especially McGerr (1986).
10. Purcell discusses lucidly the general prestige of objectivist or “scientific naturalist” understandings of science and social science in the 1920s.
11. The history of public relations is not well developed. The material here comes from Schudson (1978, 121-159).
12. See also Hanna (1920, 398-399); Michael (1935); Gruening (1931); Bent (1927); and Kelly (1935, 307-318) for other critiques of press agency.

The Rise of the News Paradigm

A Review of the Scientific Literature

Harlan S. Stensaas

Some Characteristics of the News Paradigm

At the core of the news paradigm is the notion of “objectivity”, conventionally defined as the apparent value-free impartial reporting of observable or verifiable factual data from a detached, impersonal point of view. Objectivity is central in the Code of Ethics of the Society of Professional Journalists. First adopted in 1926 and revised in 1973; the code states that journalists are required “to perform with intelligence, objectivity, accuracy, and fairness.” The code further requires “clear distinction between news reports and expressions of opinion” and that “News reports should be free of opinion or bias and represent all sides of an issue.”

Two other aspects are included in the modern news paradigm: the attribution of facts to expert opinions and the inverted pyramid structure in writing up the story. The notion of attribution is related, of course, to objectivity. It allows the reporter to present ideas and opinions related to events without the reporter's becoming part of the news. Attribution is, ideally, made to “authoritative” sources that are named in the news story. But many reports use passive attribution, unnamed sources, or confidential sources. The inverted pyramid is a utilitarian form that highlights the main facts while also facilitating page makeup.

The notion of objectivity has come to be regarded as the central ethical issue of American journalism. Most professional journalists responding to an open-ended questionnaire concerning their perceptions of professional ethics tended to equate ethics with objective news reporting (Mills, 1983). The word “objectivity” did not appear in the three-item questionnaire but was perceived as the principal ethical problem by most professionals. Studies such as Mills', together with the codes of ethics, would seem to indicate that professional journalists accepted objectivity as a value and believed objectivity possible, even though some have called it a “myth” (Hager, 1982), “obsolete” (Smith, 1980), a “semantic will-o'the-wisp” (Shilen, 1955), a “strategic ritual” (Tuchman, 1972), and even “irresponsible” (Glasser, 1984).

Early Criticism of the Press

Outside the profession, public officials and the public appear to have adopted the view that any journalism that is non-objective must necessarily be contrary to the public interest and perhaps immoral. Strong criticism from Vice President Spiro Agnew in 1969 and 1970 questioned the objectivity of the press and seemed to strike a responsive chord in much of the public. Targeting conservative and anti-war newspapers and network commentators, he called for a “wall of separation” between news and comment (Emery & Emery, 1988: 502).

Such criticism has a long history. Among 14 charges against the American newspaper press brought by Wilmer (1859) in what Mott (1950: 311) called “the first book devoted wholly to criticism of the American Press” were that the papers published misleading reports, withheld useful information, practiced Tory-ism and villainous deceptions. Wilmer, a former editor, expected unbiased news reports as the legitimate obligation of the newspaper press of the mid-1800s. Muckrakers of the early twentieth century raised similar charges. Upton Sinclair (1919: 222) complained that the press was controlled by big business:

Not hyperbolically and contemptuously, but literally and with scientific precision, we define Journalism in America as the business and practice of presenting the news of the day in the interest of economic privilege.

Birkhead (1984: 6) connects the phenomena of the muckraker to industrialization, as the newspaper also underwent technological development:

The press was perhaps a model of an industry in technological transformation moving toward a new social role. Muckraking was the technique of exposure, the revelation of facts upon which to build an illuminated, if not enlightened, reality. More broadly, progressivism called for decision-making information and, at the subjective level, uniform expressions of value to nurture an integrated culture. The means of modern journalism were well suited to the motives of the reformers who undertook to establish the morality of the new century.

In the post World War I era, Lippmann (1920: 49-51) declared that the war raised serious questions about quality of information provided to mass audiences. He believed newspapers should be conduits of information:

The news of the day as it reaches the newspaper office is an incredible medley of fact, propaganda, rumour, suspicion, clues, hopes, and fears, and the task of selecting and ordering that news is one of the truly sacred and priestly offices in a democracy. (p. 47)

And further: “The health of society depends upon the quality of the information it receives” (Lippmann 1922: 80). In a later volume Lippmann (1922:

226) made sharp distinction between news and truth, saying that news signalises an event while truth brings to light hidden facts and sets them in relation to one another.

In the 1930s New Deal era, then Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes (1939: vii-ix) challenged the “objective point of view and fairness” of the metropolitan newspaper press, making specific reference to the Canons of Journalism of the American Society of Newspaper Editors. He charges that the papers violated the canons by misrepresenting, distorting, colouring, and lying in the news reports. The concept of objective news reporting also appears in early news writing textbooks (Ross 1911) and in the earliest major academic treatise on journalistic ethics (Crawford 1924: 17-18). Ross’s chapter on “The Writer’s Viewpoint” details his concept of objective reporting:

The viewpoint of the news writer must be that of the unprejudiced, but alert, observer. He must approach his story with a mind open to the facts and he must record the facts unvarnished by his own preferences and opinions. Comment on the news of the day is the function of the editorial columns. It has no place in the news story.

Ross (1911: 18) uses the word “objective” in a checklist of qualities of the ideal news story: “It is written from an impersonal, objective viewpoint”. Crawford (1924: 99), after devoting two of his 12 chapters to “Deficiencies of the Press,” follows with three chapters on “The Principle of Objectivity Applied.” He begins his first objectivity chapter:

In the foregoing chapters, it may be pointed out, there has been laid down a somewhat elaborate philosophy of journalism, a philosophy which presents objectivity in the dissemination of facts as the primary ideal of the press. Now, granted that every one theoretically agrees with this philosophy and would like, moreover, to see it carried out in actual practice, how is this to be accomplished? . . . That newspapers generally are moving gradually toward the goal that has been presented, however, there can be little doubt. Nor can it be doubted that still more progress would be made were the ideal of objectivity more tenaciously and realistically held by journalists. The advance made in the natural sciences since they abandoned the chiefly speculative and adopted the investigative method is evidence of what may be accomplished in a human institution even against the most implacable opposition.

A Chronology for the News Paradigm

Origins of the news paradigm that centre on objectivity are widely debated. Some have noted that colonial printers pledged to report the news factually, truthfully, and impartially but were soon forced into other modes by condi-

tions of the times (Shilen 1955; Bradley 1985). Impartiality is not the same as objectivity (Bradley 1985), though it serves the same purpose of protecting the newspaper's credibility with its readers. An objective report must necessarily be impartial, but an impartial report need not remain detached and impersonal, nor need it report only verifiable data.

Attempts to render faithful accounts of events may be found in earliest journalism. Emery and Emery (1988: 51) point to James Rivington, the Tory editor of the 1770s, as an example of "an objectivity that was not the standard of his era". But when and why did objective reporting come to be the accepted standard of good practice for American journalists? On this, views are widely divergent and evidence is minimal. The telegraph and press associations may have influenced it (Shaw, 1967; Carey, 1981), it may have been a response to chaos in the international scene before World War II (Smith, 1980), it could have risen to serve the needs of a commercial newspaper press in the mid-1800s (Schiller 1979, 1981), or perhaps it was a defence against propaganda, news management, and public relations after World War I (Schudson 1978). Blankenburg and Walden (1977) found economy as a possible rationale for objective reporting, and Kaul (1986: 52) suggests that it emerged along with professionalism to accommodate changes in the marketplace, a result of strategy by publishers to "accommodate journalists' status ambitions while subverting their economic claims". But Korn (1984) questioned whether journalistic ethics were possible and Black and Barney (1985) advanced credible arguments that codes of ethics are inappropriate for journalism.

Although the legitimacy of objectivity as a news ethic was already being questioned in the 1950s (Shilen, 1955), it came under increased attack in the 1970s and 1980s (Tuchman 1972, 1978; Smith, 1980; Hager 1982; Glasser, 1984) and while much was found wanting, no one proposed a satisfactory replacement (Christians 1977; Korn 1984). Schudson (1984: 30) proposed that the news media had adopted "a kind of schizophrenia ... to act as if classical democracy were possible, and simultaneously to work as if a large, informed and involved electorate were not possible" But that solution is less than satisfactory because, as Kaul and McKerns (1985) point out, this is "a role that defines normality as a mental pathology."

A Content Analysis of the Inverted Pyramid 1865-1954

Although some writers trace objective news reporting to the penny press of the 1830s, there is general agreement that it grew and developed sometime between the Civil War, along with the introduction of the telegraph, and World War II, a span of nearly 100 years (Carey 1981; Schiller 1979, 1981; Schudson 1978; Smith 1980).

To gather empirical data concerning the origins of the modern news paradigm, I investigated three aspects of objective news reporting in selected U.S. daily newspapers (Stensaas 1987). First, I explored the time frame for

the development and standardization of objectivity as a news form. Secondly, objective news reports were studied in relationship to their origin as wire news versus non-wire news and as published in New York newspapers compared to other newspapers. Finally, I investigated the relationship between objective news reporting, inverted pyramid format, and the practice of citing authoritative sources.

Content analysis was used to describe objectively, systematically, and quantitatively the general news reports of six representative dailies between the years 1865 and 1954 in terms of qualities related to objective reporting and to plot changes in the reports over time. The selected newspapers were (a) in continuous publications during the 90-year period, (b) well-known at least to the extent of receiving more than passing mention in journalism histories, and (c) divergent in location by geographic region. Continuous publication and notability were regarded as evidence of leadership and influence and thus the content selected from those papers would reflect practices of successful American journalism (Stensaas 1987: 44).

The newspapers included a Northern metropolitan daily, the *Chicago Tribune*, which began publishing in 1849; a prestigious Southern daily, the *Atlanta Constitution*, which began in 1868; a West Coast daily, the *San Francisco Examiner*, which began in 1865; a prominent regional daily, the *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, which began in 1837; and two New York City newspapers, the *New York Times* which began in 1851, and the *New York Tribune* which began in 1841 and became the *New York Herald-Tribune* in 1924. It ceased publication in 1966.

Using the time period extending from the post-Civil War era to the post-World War II era, the study used five 10-year periods spaced evenly over the 90-year period. Studying every other 10-year period permitted plotting measures across time. The periods were 1865-1874, 1885-1895, 1905-1914, 1925-1934, and 1945-1954 (Stensaas 1987: 46).

Results of the investigation indicate that objective news reports were being published in 1865-1874 but most reports were non-objective. In 1884-1895 about half the reports were objective, but chi-square tests indicated that the two periods did not differ statistically. By 1905-1914 about two-thirds of the reports were objective. In 1925-1934 and in 1945-1954 about 80% of the reports was objective.

Thus, objective reporting was present at the beginning of the study, but began to increase cumulatively in the 1880s and continued to rise until after 1934 when it remained at about 80%. As a standard reporting method, objective reporting was well established after the 1880s, reached its peak in the late 1920s and early 1930s and remained standard after that (Stensaas 1987: 70).

Frequency distributions and chi-square tests indicated that objectivity, inverted pyramid, and the use of authoritative sources are related and increase through time during the period of the study. Both inverted pyramid and authoritative sources were rare in the 1865-1885 period and both were

nearly universal after 1925. Based on the data, the general standard news report, after 1905, was an objective report written in inverted pyramid format and citing authoritative sources for the information (Stensaas 1987: 72). There were no significant differences in news reports received by wire compared to non-wire reports, nor were there differences between reports in New York City newspapers and other dailies (Stensaas 1987: 71).

A Question of Determinants

Many have suggested reasons or causes for the rise of the standard news paradigm in American journalistic practice. Shaw (1967) and Carey (1969, 1981) suggested technology, especially the rise of telegraph and wire services, as a cause. Others have cited international chaos, and the rise of professional persuaders who used propaganda, news management, and public relations (Schudson 1978; Smith 1980). Other proposed causes include the needs of a commercial press (Schiller 1979, 1981), the rise of professionalism and changes in the marketplace (Carey 1969; Janowitz 1975; Kaul 1986), and the rise of positivistic science (Janowitz 1975; McKerns 1978; Schiller 1979). These five causes – technology, professional persuaders, commercial press, professionalization, and the rise of science – are the main themes. Some writers ascribe more than one “cause.” The author would propose another: a basic shift in Western culture that may best be labelled “Secularisation.” These six propositions are discussed below.

Technology

The argument for technology centres mainly on the rise of telegraph and its use in transmitting news. Because the wire services served newspapers of all political persuasions and needed to avoid alienating customers (clients) “writers became skilled at constructing non-partisan, i.e., ‘objective’ accounts of events” (Carey 1969: 33).

Shaw (1967: 3-4) noted that between 1880 and 1890 America became industrialized and a number of inventions shaped the modern newspaper. He lists improvements in presses, the linotype, auto-plate, colour printing, halftones, rotogravure, telephone, typewriter, automobile, and “continued improvement in telegraph procedures”. He attributed a sharp drop in biased presidential campaign news in Wisconsin daily newspapers between 1880 and 1884 to increased use of unbiased telegraph news, and suggested tentatively that local reporters “learned to write more unbiased news copy from imitating the relatively unbiased style of wire news” (Shaw 1967: 31).

Schudson (1978: 4-5) believes it “just as likely, or more likely, that newspapers would take the availability of wire service news as license to con-

centrate on different kinds of reporting". Why, he asks, "should a practice, obviously important to the survival of the institution of the wire service, become a guiding ideal of institutions not subject to the same constraints?"

But the author's study cited above found no difference in news from wire services compared to locally generated news. This would seem to make telegraph a moot point in the discussion of cause.

Professional Persuaders

The rise of propaganda and professional persuaders during and after World War I has been proposed as a cause (Schudson 1978: 134-144; Smith, 1980: 61). The argument is that objectivity was a response to or a defence against propaganda, press agents, and public relations.

Objectivity was partly a response to the chaos in the international political sphere; it fostered the collection of information on the basis of a special diction, which restricted the definition of a statement to that which could be assented to by all... . It was the remnant of reality left behind when the reader had been protected from the one-sided truths of the press agent and the double-edged truths of the politician. It was the ideology of an age that had grown to *distrust* democracy, which had seemed to fall both politically and economically in the 1930s. (Smith, 1980: 61)

Schudson (1978: 122) indicates that a distrust of facts was the root of objectivity as an ideology; "It was not the final expression of a belief in facts but the assertion of a method designed for a world in which even facts could not be trusted." and further, "Public relations were one of two key developments which made journalists suspicious of facts and ready to doubt the naïve empiricism of the 1890s. The other development was wartime propaganda" (Schudson 1978: 141).

But the rise of the objective news report was well underway before World War I and the rise of public relations and propaganda. The modern paradigm, then, preceded the rise of the persuaders. Perhaps the objective nature of news lent itself to the goals of the persuaders. They may have found the news easier to manipulate in its seemingly detached formula.

Commercial Press

The rise of a commercial press is cited as a cause for objective reporting. Two arguments arise for this: First, the marketing task required a wide and diverse audience and support of advertisers. This precluded partisanship because a neutral "objective" report would be acceptable to all. Schiller (1981) says, "As a business, the newspaper's foremost task was to sell itself and,

through its efforts, other products" (p. 15). To justify itself, the commercial press staked a "pre-emptive claim ... to the defence of natural rights and public good" and that was "the enduring foundation upon which the structure of news objectivity was built" (p. 75). The other argument is that objectivity simply facilitated production in a growing news operation:

To select, collect, write, refine, and collate this multiplying series of accounts, newspapers staffed themselves with an increasingly complex bureaucracy, comprised of reporters, copyeditors, editors, and circulation and advertising sales personnel. The division of labour within the newsroom in turn nurtured an emergent profession of journalism whose members were intent on enhancing journalists' status and pay.

A profound and vital aspect of this transformation of news creation was the progressive development of "objectivity" as the overarching norm guiding the construction and evaluation of news accounts. (Schiller, 1979, pp. 46-47)

This second argument, that objectivity provided a cheaper means of collecting and transmitting news, is also supported by Blankenburg and Walden (1977: 591-592) who suggested that "objectivity befitted concise, interesting, non-partisan news accounts that expediently reduced transmission costs and attracted readers". In one sense, this is an argument for a technological cause.

It seems obvious that the modern news paradigm would be useful to the commercial press, and it may have flourished in that setting. However, it is difficult to accept the rise of commercial press as a cause. The Penny Press arose in the early 1830s, but as late as 1865-1874 most news reports were non-objective (Stensaas, 1987: 57-58).

Professionalization

Another proposition is that objectivity resulted from the professionalization of journalism. Janowitz (1975: 618) attributes this activity to his "gatekeeper" model:

Since World War I, journalists have come more and more to consider themselves as professionals and to search for an appropriate professional model. The initial efforts were to fashion journalism into a field, similar to medicine, where the journalist would develop his technical expertise and also a sense of professional responsibility ... Under the gatekeeper concept of professionalism, the journalist encountered institutional pressures and personal limitations in searching for objectivity and separating fact from opinion. But to the extent that he thought of himself as a professional or hoped to make journalism into a profession, he had little doubt about standards of performance, although there was much debate about their clarity and how to apply them.

Kaul (1986: 47-55) noted: "professionalization represents the ideological reorganization of work that ran parallel to marketplace reconfiguration" and that objectivity "emerged as an ideological corollary to commercial non-competition."

Carey (1969: 33) placed objectivity ahead of professionalism: "It is important to recognise that the canons of objective reporting turn the journalist into a professional communicator; from an independent observer and critic to a relatively passive link in a communication chain that records the passing scene for audiences".

Objectivity and journalistic professionalism are certainly connected. But again, the time sequence seems to rule out this proposition as a cause. Professionalism by nature involves organized societies or associations. In newspaper journalism, the earliest of these may have been the American Newspaper Publishers Association, founded in 1887, but this was primarily a trade organization composed of people in managerial positions interested primarily in business management (Emery and Emery 1988: 577). Sigma Delta Chi was founded as a collegiate organization in 1909 but did not adopt a code of ethics until 1926. About half of the news report was objective as early as 1884-1895 and two-thirds by 1905-1914 (Stensaas 1987: 57-58). Clearly, the practice of objectivity preceded professionalism.

Cultural Contexts for a 'New Journalism'

The Rise of Science

Several writers have attributed journalistic objectivity in whole or in part to the rise of the scientific method (Janowitz 1975; McKerns 1978; Schiller 1979). This view is that the positivistic method of observing and reporting were borrowed from science and applied to news reporting. Janowitz (1975: 618-619) cites this as the origins of the objective gatekeeper model which he dates from World War I:

... this image of the journalist sought to apply the canons of the scientific method to increase his objectivity and enhance his effective performance. The model was reinforced in part by the increased prestige of the academic social researcher and it assumed that, through the application of intellectually based techniques, objective and valid results could be obtained ... It represented the belief that the scientific method was productive in various sections of society and that it had broad substantive and cultural relevance for the journalist.

McKerns (1978: 50) ascribes the same cause, but dates it to about 1900:

Around the turn of the century journalists, impressed with the scientific method and its adoption as a *modus operandi* by professionals in the fields outside of

the pure sciences, operationalized truth in terms of objectivity, a seemingly more tangible goal, and made its attainment dependant upon working values such as accuracy, fairness, balance and comprehensiveness. These values became means to the end, i.e., truth as objectivity.

Schiller (1979: 49) holds the commercial press as the cause, but believes objectivity was “nurtured” by the rise of science:

News objectivity was nurtured by the climate of “Baconianism” pervading contemporary American science and, through its scientific deference to fact, the commercial newspaper stood aloof from the progressive relativization which eventually affected other modes of thought.

Scientific method and news objectivity have in common the impartial, detached collection of factual data. A fundamental difference exists: scientific method requires the drawing of conclusions from the facts collected; journalistic reporting stops before drawing conclusions, leaving it up to the reader to decide the meaning and application of the facts. That being the case, “nurtured” is a well-chosen word.

Secularisation

But the root cause for the rise of this journalistic phenomenon is likely less immediate and more fundamental than those discussed above. It results instead from a basic shift in Western culture and thought, which came about within the same time frame. The labyrinth of names and labels for this shift muddies the issue – modernism, rationalism, humanism, post-Christian. The late Francis Schaeffer (1988: 15) called it a “line of despair” and Lears (Fox & Lears 1983: 6) refers to the “secularisation of liberal Protestantism”. “Secularisation” is a particularly good word because it gets to the heart of the matter – a shift from values to neutral non-values. The point is that until the closing decades of the nineteenth century (it’s not a sudden shift) Western culture and thought was based on Christian ethics and presuppositions. The basic presupposition was that there are absolutes in morals. With presupposition of absolutes, classical reasoning from thesis to antithesis (right/wrong, good/bad, true/false) is possible. The secularisation of culture and thought resulted in a shift to relativism – synthesis instead of antithesis. At its heart, this represents a change in the concept of truth. The implications for journalism and journalistic objectivity should be evident: If the journalist deals in truth and truth is relative, depending on the receiver, then the only course is to present “value-free data” so that the recipient may fashion his own “truth” from the “facts”.

Schaeffer (1968) traces this “line of despair” from the German philosopher Hegel (1770-1831) through the Danish philosopher Kierkegaard (1813-1855)

and existentialism and shows the line descending like a staircase from philosophy through art, music, general culture, and theology. He dates the shift as before 1890 in Europe and between 1913 and 1935 in the United States.¹ Shaeffer (1968: 16) describes the diffusion of the shift:

The shift spread gradually, in three different ways. People did not suddenly wake up one morning and find that it had permeated everywhere at once.

First ... it spread geographically. The ideas began in Germany and spread outward. They affected the continent first, then crossed the Channel to England, and then the Atlantic to America. Secondly, it spread through society, from the real intellectual to the more educated, down to the workers, reaching the upper middle class last of all. Thirdly, it spread ... from one discipline to another, beginning with the philosophers and ending with the theologians.

In discussing political change in America during the 1990s, the columnist George F. Will outlined changes in "American religiosity" (Will 1995). He listed a series of "awakenings," beginning with the Great Awakening of 1730-1760 that emphasized "new birth" at revival meetings and preceded the American Revolution, followed by a second "awakening" between 1800 and 1840 that featured camp meetings and "taught that anyone could acquire saving grace by inner struggle and by struggling against social sins." Out of this grew the abolitionist and temperance movements. The third "awakening" occurred about the time of the rise of the modern news paradigm:

The third quickening of religious life, between 1890 and 1930, came during increased urbanization, immigration and labour strife. Its core belief, shaped by Darwinism and the new faith in science, was that humans and society could evolve toward perfection as scientists discovered God's laws in nature. The Social Gospel movement preached that poverty is not a personal but social failure. Embraced by the growing ranks of people running universities and mass media, this doctrine provided the intellectual predicate for the welfare state. (Will, 1995)

It appears that the third wave of religious fervour resulted in a merging of religion with natural and social sciences, a secularisation that shaped the culture and thought patterns of that generation. Lears (Fox & Lears, 1983: 6) refers to a rise in authority of medicine and a decline in authority of the clergy in the late nineteenth century:

[The] professionalization and growing authority of medicine had been under way at least since the early antebellum era, when health reformers sprouted like mushrooms, linking medical with moral standards of value. But during the late nineteenth century, medical prestige became far more firmly established. While urban ministers' authority waned, doctors of body and mind became professionalized into therapeutic elites. This meant a growth in influ-

ence not only for traditional M.D.s but also for neurologists, psychologists, social scientists with panaceas for a sick society, and even for mind curists on the penumbra of respectability. Ministers and other moralists began increasingly to conform to medical models in making judgments and dispensing advice.

A shift from authority of "revelation knowledge" of the clergy to the authority of "objective" knowledge of science would have major implications for society. Lears (1983: 6) says it resulted in a "secularisation of liberal Protestantism among its educated and affluent devotees". Such a climate may well have contributed to the rise of objectivity in journalistic practice.

A Reshape of Literary Traditions: The Long View

The news paradigm did not appear suddenly, the immediate result of some cataclysmic event, nor did it spring from a sudden brilliant and inventive idea birthed in the brain of a genius. Rather, it has very early beginnings but accelerated between 1880s and 1920s before becoming the standard form in American journalism. Its time of blossoming runs parallel with many other developments in American culture and society, chief of which is the phenomenon referred to above as "secularisation."

As a cultural phenomenon, the news paradigm was no orphan. Other writers besides newspaper journalists also shifted direction. In American literature, the Romantic Movement was ushered in by Irving (1783-1859) and ran its course through Whitman (1819-1892) and Melville (1819-1891) before being followed by the Realists. The dates of change to Realism in literature roughly parallel those of the genesis of the news paradigm in journalism. John Fiske (1842-1901) was writing about evolution and natural selection in the early 1870s as a contemporary of Mark Twain and other realists. Some of Fiske's correspondence with Charles Darwin is included in anthologies (Foerster, 1947: 939-940). Realism merged with Naturalism sometime near the beginning of the Twentieth Century. Foerster's description of the Realistic outlook provides insight to the common cultural heritage of Realistic literature and the news paradigm:

A new period was at hand when men turned from the ideal ship to the actual ship, from the land of heart's desire to the not so rosy facts of life. They now proposed to give up dreams and face the truth, to avoid warm enthusiasm and begin cool observation, to abandon wishful thinking and adopt the integrity of science – to be disinterested, objective, exact, to see things as they really are. In harmony with the scientific-industrial civilization of the modern world, they would produce an impersonal literature, subordinating or suppressing personal preferences, confidences, and confessions, all the illusions of the inner life, and endeavour in complete honesty to picture with truth the world outside the individual consciousness, the world we actually live in. (p. 933)

So the news paradigm evolved in a culture that was being reshaped on all sides by advances and changes in science, technology, industrialization, education, religion, and a host of other human activities. It was a new age, a changed culture, and Queen Victoria was not in charge.

An important feature of the closing decades of the nineteenth century was the rise of egalitarianism in higher education, this resulting from the Morrill Acts of 1862 and 1890. The land-grant colleges emphasized agriculture and mechanic arts and applied the scientific method to agricultural problems. One effect of this may have been the infusion of the basic notions of positivism into the population. The movement in higher education also provided the basis for professional journalism education and the opportunity for more standardization in journalism. Objectivity was part of the standardized journalism presented in classes, as evidenced by early textbooks (see Ross 1911; Crawford 1924). But egalitarianism in higher education provided a vehicle for diffusion of the secularisation process.

Thus, the genesis of the news paradigm in the U.S.A. is the result of basic shifts in American culture, which brought forward forms already in existence and converted them to standard practice in American journalism.

Note

1. The first showing of modern art in the United States was in the Armory Show in New York in 1913

The News Pyramid and its Origin from the American Journalism in the 19th Century

*A Professional Approach and an Empirical Inquiry*¹

Horst Pöttker²

An important component of the news paradigm is the form of news universally recognised today, which is described in journalism handbooks as the 'inverted pyramid'. When and why did this form of news gain acceptance as a professional standard? Let me first describe the inverted pyramid. Thereafter, I will discuss four theses regarding its development as described in journalistic literature: a technological, a political, a cultural, and an economic approach. The common feature for these theses is that they seek the reasons for the development of this professional standard and its constitutive aims outside of journalism; in the development of telegraphy; in the interests of government to control and steer the flow of information; in the changing of the educational system and in the commercial interests of publishers. I would like to confront these approaches with the argument that the widespread use of the inverted pyramid in professional journalism must be explained by its communicative potential to reach readers or listeners with news, thereby creating a public discourse. To support my thesis, I present a diachronic content analysis of the *New York Herald* and the *New York Times* from 1855 to 1920. I collected the relevant literature and press materials during a research semester at the University of Iowa in the fall of 2001.

The Inverted Pyramid

Professional journalism knows a variety of standardised forms of presenting information, for which special communicative principles of dissemination are characteristic. Reportage uses authenticity to overcome resistance to reception; commentary employs conclusive argumentation; the interview takes advantage of the attractiveness of real dialogue. The most investigated and, in the training of journalists, most extensively taught genre is 'hard news', which attacks the selectivity of perception by expressly placing the most

important information at the beginning of the story, thus circumventing the reader's decision whether to continue or stop.

'Hard news' is commonly considered an especially objective form of reporting events. This is only true, however, of the chronological report if the reporter refrains from adding their own judgements and interpretations. It is not necessarily true of a descriptive method that to a great extent presupposes decisions on the relevancy of the topic by the journalistic subject. Even if these decisions are based on widely accepted conventions, they are not, in contrast to the chronological chain of events, inherent in the objects of journalistic work.

If the most important information comes first, the name 'pyramid' seems an obvious choice. It is far less obvious why an 'inverted pyramid' should be concerned, bearing in mind that if the most important information comes first, it is printed in newspapers at the top of the column.

The most important information is summarised in the so-called 'lead sentence' that, according to standard practice, has to answer to four or five 'W-questions' (who, when, where, what, and perhaps why?). After the lead sentence comes the rest of the story, which may already be redundant for the reader. The information presented after the lead sentence appears in a decreasing order of relevance and with an increase in quantity. The details considered least relevant appear at the end.

In addition to quick readability, the professional advantage of this style of covering events is that news written in such a way can easily be shortened from the end. This means that the journalist responsible for the final editing, who is invariably pressed for time, is not obliged to undertake a time-consuming comprehensive reading of the text when compiling a page or a broadcast transmission.

The answers to the question about when and why this form of presenting information originated and ultimately prevailed as the trademark of professional journalism, is of interest to more than just academic historians. If it could be demonstrated that extensive use of the pyramid form in news writing was only due to the influences of interest groups not related to journalism, the dominance of this method in the education of journalists would hardly be understandable.

Like most other professional standards, the pyramid form of news-writing obviously originated in 19th-century American journalism. Like most other investigations regarding the origins of the inverted pyramid, I restrict myself therefore to an analysis of American press practices. From there the inverted-pyramid news-writing style began to spread around the world during the last third of the 19th century. Whether, when and how this happened is analysed in other parts of this book about the diffusion of the news paradigm.

Two Paradigmatic Examples

Old narrative style, chronological, opinion bias: *The New York Herald*, January 17th 1850

TORTURE IN SWITZERLAND

A strange circumstance has just taken place at Herisau, the capital of Inner Appenzell, in Switzerland, showing how much in these countries of old liberties civilization is behindhand in some matters. A young girl of 19, some months back, assassinated her rival. Her lover was arrested with her, and, as she accused him of the crime, both were put to the torture. The girl yielded to the pain, and confessed her crime; the young man held firm in his denial; the former was condemned to death, and on the 7th of this month was decapitated with the sword in the market-place of Herisau. This fact is itself a startling one, but the details are just as strange. For two hours the woman was able to struggle against four individuals charged with the execution. After the first hour, the strength of the woman was still so great that the men were obliged to desist. The authorities were then consulted, but they declared that justice ought to follow its course. The struggle then recommenced, with greater intensity, and despair seemed to have redoubled the woman's force. At the end of another hour, she was at last bound by the hair to a stake, and the sword of the executioner then carried the sentence into effect.

Factual news style, inverted pyramid, no bias: *The New York Herald*, January 17th 1920

PHYSICIAN KILLS HIMSELF – AFTER ROMP WITH SON

Dr. Frank Lawrence Cochrane, forty-three years old, of No. 742 St. John's Place, Brooklyn, shot and killed himself yesterday in his home by firing a bullet through the roof of his mouth. He was found by his wife, who heard the shot, lying in the bath room.

Dr. Cochrane was well known in Brooklyn, where he practised for the last twenty-five years. He belonged to many clubs. It was said that he killed himself because of worries over the interest due on a mortgage on his house. He was educated at the Boy's High School, Brooklyn, and completed his course at Cornell. He was a graduate of the College of Physicians and Surgeons, from which he was graduated in 1900.

Mrs. Cochrane told the police that shortly after breakfast yesterday her husband romped with his five-year-old son, James. He then went to his office, left the combination of his safe and the key to his safe deposit vault on his dresser, wrote a check to his wife for all the money he had in the bank and then made his way to the bath room, where he killed himself.

The Inverted Pyramid: The Four Explanations

The Technological Thesis: Unreliable Telegraph Lines

The most famous German dictionary of communication studies contains an entry about the development of the inverted pyramid form (also called “climax-first” or “top-heavy form”) that reads as follows:

The top-heavy form of presenting news developed during the American Civil War (from 1861 to 1865). Due to the fact that at that time the telegraph lines were still rather unreliable, very often only the beginning of a report on military action reached the editors. If the report had been chronologically built the core message, i.e. the outcome of the reported fighting, did not reach the reader. Therefore the journalists started firstly to transmit their messages in two parts, namely in the first place the so-called lead or head sentence and in the second place the body of the message. In the lead or head sentence a summary of the most important news was presented whilst in the body part additional information was given. (Noelle-Neumann, Schulz & Wilke 1989: 72f.).

There is a similar definition under the heading “News pyramid” in the *Dictionary of Socialistic Journalism*: “This method developed in the early years of telegraphy when technical malfunctions were still frequently experienced” (Sektion Journalistik 1984: 147f.).

Explaining the development of the inverted pyramid by referring to the unreliability of the electric telegraph seemed so obvious and was so convincing that neither Marxist nor traditional communications scientists felt obliged to support this claim with empirical evidence. This can perhaps be explained by the fact that technological explanations have a plausibility of their own based on the foundation-superstructure premises of Marxism³ as well as on the progress paradigms of the Enlightenment that see a sign of liberation in humanity’s increasing command over natural resources.

If the technological thesis is true, the inverted pyramid form must have spread in journalism at the same time as the use of the electric telegraph. After nearly a century of experiments, electric telegraph connections began transmitting news before 1850 – in the US in 1844 (Washington-Baltimore) and in Germany in 1848 (Berlin-Frankfurt/Main). In 1865, William Howard Russell reported for *The Times* of London on a failed attempt to lay a transatlantic cable by ship from Ireland to the United States (cf. Hudson 1995: 231-243). By 1870, the initial technical difficulties had been overcome, and the electric telegraph was used by journalists and newspapers on both continents. Russell, dispatched from *the Times* as a special correspondent to France, could no longer compete with his colleagues because he continued to submit his reports by letter – in contrast to the Americans, who used the much quicker telegraph (cf. Hudson 1995: XXIVf.).

Did the inverted pyramid really succeed in making its way into American newspapers between 1850 and 1870, possibly with a push between 1861 and

1865 during the Civil War? If use of the inverted pyramid in newspaper reporting between 1850 and 1870 did not significantly increase, the technological thesis would at least require serious re-evaluation if it were not dismissed altogether.

The Political Thesis: Governmental Steering

Although some authors in the United States argue that the rise of the inverted pyramid in journalism must be attributed to the unreliability of the telegraph lines, this opinion is by no means universal. Mitchell Stephens thinks that the war reporters of the Civil War, "rushing to transmit their most newsworthy information over often unreliable telegraph lines" (Stephens 1997: 253f.), were responsible for the development of the inverted pyramid (cf. also Jones 1947: 322). But other American historians of journalism, especially those working with empirical and quantitative data, doubt that this thesis is correct. Frank L. Mott presumes that, although a more direct style had been used to cover the Civil War, the traditional chronological presentation of facts was still prevalent in the reporting of the time (cf. Mott 1962: 330). Michael Schudson refuses to believe that the episode of the Civil War was at all relevant for the development of the pyramid style. He argues instead that the first examples of the pyramid occurred in the 1870s and 1880s (cf. Schudson 1978: 61-87). The standard work of American press history by Emery and Emery also places the development of an "objective" style of reporting in the post-Civil War period. In any case the authors regard the murder of President Lincoln on April 14, 1865 as the decisive moment when the rise of the inverted pyramid began (cf. Emery/Emery 1996: 143f.).

David T. Z. Mindich undertakes a critical synopsis of empirical studies on the development of news-writing style in 19th-century American journalism. He suggests that the findings concerning a possible correlation between the use of the telegraph and the rise of unbiased ("objective") news, as proposed by Donald L. Shaw, are unconvincing if one considers that news bias had its heyday in 1872: i.e. a full generation after the introduction of the new technology. On account of the state of the research, Mindich refutes technological explanations and favours instead a political thesis. Like Emery and Emery, he is of the opinion that the Civil War and the murder of Lincoln coincide with the genesis of the pyramid form.

Mindich demonstrates his political thesis using the figure of Edwin M. Stanton, Secretary of War for the Union during the Civil War who, despite a lack of military expertise, was appointed by Lincoln in 1861 to rid the Army of the Northern States of corruption and other troubles. He can show with some justification that the power-hungry politician Stanton, unpopular among the generals and in need of suitable means to catch the ear of the Union Army, favoured the pyramid form when preparing official bulletins. Stanton could, by doing so, better influence public opinion in the interests of the government. The pyramid, by virtue of an elevated, almost authoritative

bearing, makes the public more susceptible to official positions. Furthermore the inverted pyramid by way of hiding those judgements in line with the position of the government behind the facade of its rigid, apparently objective construction actually increases their influence on the public. By placing those items that the government regards as most important at the beginning, officials exert influence on what the public views as important. Mindich explains thus: "The 'objective' news report is, at best, an honest attempt to assemble facts as fairly and accurately as possible; but it can also be a deliberate ordering of 'facts' to manipulate public perceptions... Stanton's 'objective' facts are used to mask his personal agenda. During his tenure as war secretary, Stanton was fanatical about controlling the dissemination of information" (Mindich 1998: 74f.).

Mindich substantiates his thesis, that the development of the inverted pyramid in American journalism is attributable to the interest in power and the ability of politicians like Edwin M. Stanton to steer public opinion, by referring to a number of official bulletins in pyramid form that were released to the press and printed virtually without alteration. Among them was the "official dispatch" of the death of Lincoln and its circumstances that appeared in the April 15, 1865 issue of the *New York Herald* (cf. Mindich 1998: 68-94).

The political explanation that specifically refers to Stanton, as well as the technological argument, would have to be regarded as void if it could be demonstrated that the pyramid form did not circulate widely among newspapers during or shortly after the Civil War, but considerably later. If the pyramid form is in fact deeply connected with the political intention to steer public opinion, it would have occurred most frequently in authoritative systems where such intentions were most advanced, e.g. during the Nazi regime or in the Soviet Union and other East European countries before 1990. This explanation therefore obviously contradicts all historical experience which is also presented in other parts of this book.

The Cultural Thesis: Educational Paradigm Change in the Progressive Era

While the technological and political theses date the rise of the inverted pyramid to the time of the Civil War, two explanations that focus respectively on the socio-economic and socio-cultural context date the diffusion of the "relevance principle" as a news standard to the years from 1890-1910, the so-called Progressive Era. The most explicit in terms of dating is the cultural thesis that, to my knowledge, has so far only been published on the Internet (cf. Errico *et al.* <http://www.scripps.ohiou.edu/mediahistory/mhjour1-1.htm>). After analysing a number of randomly chosen newspapers from 1860 to 1910 in a diachronic content analysis, Errico and others come to the following conclusion: "...few examples of the summary news lead can be found in newspapers of the 1860s. In fact during 1865, when the Civil War ended, no examples of stories

that used the summary news lead or inverted pyramid writing were found... It was not until 1895 that even 1 percent of all stories surveyed had summary news leads... Between 1890 and 1900, however, this study found a significant nationwide increase... in the number of stories with a summary news lead and the inverted pyramid story form. The trend continued steadily upward... By 1910 one of nine news stories surveyed used the summary news lead and inverted pyramid construction" (Errico *et al.*: 3).

Based on their findings, the authors conclude that the pyramid form did not develop prior to 1880, but spread most robustly in the first decade of the 20th century. They attribute this fact to the quantitative expansion of education – which resulted in the rapid decline of illiteracy – and the paradigm change from the classical-humanistic to the pragmatic-technological ideal of education during the Progressive-Era in the United States. Hand in hand with this paradigm change, in their opinion, there was also a change in the expectations and skills of both journalists and the public. Consequently, a change from the traditional “soft” comprehensive narration to the “hard” reporting of concise and relevant facts became unavoidable.

Although innovative, empirically and historically well founded, the survey is not without gaps. Doubts concerning the method of data collection are justified. The survey authors only considered texts longer than five sentences. As a result news material most characterised by a principal feature of the inverted pyramid – brevity – was neglected. It should also be noted that James Gordon Bennett's *New York Herald*, one of the first “penny papers” and famous for its major innovations in the field of journalism was not among the newspapers surveyed. These omissions suggest that Errico *et al.* may have underestimated early distribution of the pyramid form. Furthermore the survey authors do not provide a theoretical framework for their argument. Where is the causality between the change in the educational ideals of society and the spread of the pyramid news form in journalism?

The Economic Explanation: Cost Saving

Explanations focussing on the economic context of the rise of the inverted pyramid are often found in scholarly literature. This approach tries to explain the development of a form of journalism that favours relevant facts and apparent objectivity by the profit-mindedness of the publishers, especially their interest in minimising costs.

An examination of the thesis focussing on the commercialisation of news, reveals that practically the entire period from the introduction of the “penny papers” in the 1830s to the full unfolding of the “penny press” at the end of the 19th century is regarded as related to the development of the pyramid form. The most representative of this economic approach is Gerald J. Baldasty, who interprets the standardised form of presenting news exclusively as a consequence of commercialisation (cf. Baldasty 1992).

A closer examination reveals that the relevant literature mentions several economic advantages of the new, "hard" style of news-writing. The most common is that the huge costs of wiring news by telegraph forced publishers to put as much information as possible into as little text as possible (cf. Bleyer 1973, Emery/Emery 1996, Jones 1947, Schudson 1978). The connection to the technological approach that exists in this argument is very clear. In order to cut labour costs publishers increasingly relied on the telegraph services of the news agencies, especially that of the Associated Press (AP), whose influence on the presentation of news had continually increased since its founding in 1848 (cf. Dicken-Garcia 1989, Emery/Emery 1996, Hynds 1980, Mott 1962, Shaw 1967).

A third theory suggests that the speed with which newspapers can be produced – implying the saving of time and money – must be regarded as the main stimulus of competition (cf. Dicken-Garcia 1989, Kobre 1969, Perry 2000, Warren 1944). However, the opinion that the summary news-lead was primarily used as a lure in the fight of competing daily papers to reach the biggest number of readers by offering a quick and superficial reading is relatively rare (cf. Stephens 1997, Warren 1944).

The economic approach is quite helpful in reminding one of a fundamental fact that is often either deliberately neglected or taken for granted in communication studies: that there is a fundamental contradiction between the commercial interests of the mass media and journalistic quality. The pyramid form, like other professional standards of journalism, arose in a media system that was fully market-oriented from the very beginning. The development of both the principle of creating public awareness and public discourse as well as the rules of journalistic professionalism occurred because, not despite, of the dynamics of capitalism. To explain this unquestionable historical connection, communication research still needs a closed theory. The economical approach to explaining "hard" news coverage could be the first step in this direction.

This approach does, however, have its deficiencies as can be seen from its inaccuracy in dealing with the question of dates. Since the introduction of the "penny papers" in the 1830s, the commercial interests of publishers have played an enormously important role in American journalism. However, the pyramid certainly developed as a standard of news presentation decades later. If the changes in the economy caused by telegraphy are regarded as the main cause both the economic and the technological theses must be rejected if the pyramid form proves not to have developed during or immediately following the Civil War.

Like the technological, the political, and the cultural theses, the economic approach suffers from the fact that only factors *outside* of journalism and its organisation in the mass media are considered. The economic and the cultural theses at least have the advantage that, instead of focussing on single factors, social connotations are more comprehensively considered as possible explanations.

The Inverted Pyramid: A Diachronic Content Analysis of the *New York Herald* and the *New York Times*

A diachronic content analysis of one or more archetypal newspapers of the period, from the introduction of telegraphy prior to the American Civil War and the climax of modern print journalism before the introduction of radio, is evident to verify the approaches described above and possibly detect new explanation patterns. For this reason I have chosen the legendary *New York Herald*, which James Gordon Bennett, Sr found in 1835 as a “penny paper”, and was merged in 1920 with the *New York Sun* after the sale of the Bennett press empire. This newspaper can be regarded as a prime example of professionalism in 19th-century American journalism in terms of its support for entrepreneurial and editorial innovation.

The years 1855, 1875, 1895, and 1920 were selected as being relatively uneventful (not closely overshadowed by major wars) and ‘normal’. The number of articles written in the pyramid form was tallied from the total number of articles that appeared on a fixed day chosen at random – January 17.

In very short texts, it is virtually universal that the most important news is presented at the beginning, which is also already the end. Errico et al. maintain with some justification that the pyramid form requires not only a “lead” but also a “body”. They therefore analysed only those articles that were longer than five sentences. In my opinion, however, it is possible to determine whether an article comprising three, four, or five sentences is written in the inverted-pyramid form, and consequently I have analysed all articles, even the shortest. In order to determine the not-too-significant share of peaks in the use of the inverted pyramid due to the small size of an article, the length of all articles was also recorded.

The *New York Herald* between 1855 and 1920

The results of a comparison of the number of news stories longer than 50 words that used the pyramid form with the total number of articles evaluated seem, in my opinion, especially significant.

Table 1. *The New York Herald*, January 17, Articles in the Editorial Section Using the Pyramid Form

Year	Number of articles	Percentage of pyramids	% of pyramids Articles < or = 50 words	% of pyramids Articles > 50 words
1855	66	6.1	3.0	3.0
1875	116	15.5	6.9	8.6
1895	194	35.6	8.7	26.8
1920	187	39.0	10.7	28.3

The Table shows that even in 1855 (six years before the outbreak of the Civil War), 3% of the articles over 50 words used a real pyramid structure. These are not telegraph messages, and the frequency (two articles in one issue) is so small that the idea of the inverted pyramid as a working routine or even a professional standard at this time can be excluded. Rather, one may presume that this happened by accident. Up to 1875 the share of pyramids increased to 8.6%, which at best can be attributed to the working routine of individual journalists but not to a professional standard. Only between 1875 and 1895 does the share of pyramid news stories rapidly increase to more than a quarter, exactly to 26.8%. Because the percentage remained more or less constant from 1895 to 1920 (28.3%), one can reasonably assume that the inverted pyramid form became a professional standard in American journalism not earlier than 1875, but certainly not later than 1895.

This argument is supported by the fact that the pyramid phenomenon is clearly mentioned in a journalism handbook that appeared in 1894 in conjunction with the advice “that a well constructed story begins with its most important fact and ends with the least important” (Shuman 1894: quoted after Mindich 1998: 65).

Between the years 1875 and 1895, additional changes in the appearance of American papers took place:

Table 2. *The New York Herald*, January 17, Articles in the editorial section (except “Financial and Commercial” and “Maritime Intelligence”/ “Shipping News”)

Year	Number of articles	Average word length	Articles with Illustrations (%)			Headline of article (%)		
			Drawings	Photos	Total	without	small	big
1855	66	711				97.0	3.0	
1875	116	627				81.0	12.1	6.9
1895	194	367	8.2		8.2	14.4	61.9	23.7
1920	187	244	1.1	5.3	6.4	20.9	30.5	48.7

The number of articles in a single issue of the newspaper increased substantially and rapidly while the average length of an article decreased. In 1875 there are no illustrations, while in 1895, 8.2% of the articles are illustrated. This use of illustrations increases slowly until 1920 when photography replaced drawings as the primary illustration technique. There was a more dramatic increase in the use of headlines; 80% of all articles are without headlines in 1875, while 85% of the news stories appear with a headline in 1895. The number of headlines then decreases slightly until 1920, but those that do appear increase in size.

Additional changes occurred that are not recorded in Table 2 are worth a mention. The number of editors is mentioned in the masthead in 1895, in direct contrast to their absence in 1875. Furthermore the articles are more

clearly sorted into categories such as Washington, New York, international, sports or culture. Section divisions, however, still do not appear.

In conclusion one can say that in 1895 the *New York Herald* had become much more clearly arranged, readable, and stimulating for the reader than it had been in 1875. American publishers and journalists had by that time discovered their readers and, finally, some better methods for selling information as a product. The task of the journalist now no longer merely consisted of placing news arriving from outside sources into the paper in its original condition, but of preparing them for the reader by adapting their size, appearance, and textual and visual condition to the needs of the newspaper and its readers. By means of this 'inside editing', the communicative quality of the texts improved considerably, making them more understandable.

A Closer Analysis of the *New York Herald* between 1880 and 1890

In order to find out more precisely, when and why this inner professional process took place at the *New York Herald*, I used the same instrument to analyze the crucial years 1880, 1885 and 1890. Thus, a closer meshed net of five-year intervals unfolds, ranging from 1875 until 1895.

Table 3. *The New York Herald*, January 17, Articles in the editorial section (except "Financial and Commercial" and "Maritime Intelligence"/"Shipping News")

Year	Number of articles	Percentage of Pyramids			Average Word Length	Percentage with Illustration	Headlines		
		Total	≤ 50 words	> 50 words			Without	Small	Big
1875	116	15.5	6.9	8.6	627		81.0	12.1	6.9
1880	123	26.0	10.6	15.4	679		12.2	77.2	10.6
1885	169	26.0	11.8	14.2	258		23.7	70.4	5.9
1890	181	30.9	9.4	21.5	363	1.7	13.8	76.8	9.4
1895	194	35.6	8.7	26.8	367	8.2	14.4	61.9	23.7

A close look at Table 3 offers insights that help to explain and understand the spread of the pyramid form within the framework of the development of 'inside editing'. It is striking that the average length of the articles abruptly drops by more than half, and then slightly rises again in the short time span between 1880 and 1885. It is fair to assume that this change can be traced back to a measure that had been taken by the editors and was immediately put into effect; but in the workaday routine lost some of its obligation⁴.

Similar results show in the sudden, radical decline of articles without a headline from 81.0 to 12.2 percent between 1875 and 1880, as well as in the increase of large headlines from 9.4 to 23.7 percent between 1890 and 1895. The number, as well as the form, of headlines can be changed by editorial decisions from one day to the next.

The share of pyramid-news for all editorial contributions, as well as for articles longer than 50 words, increases gradually and continuously. This is explicable, because the writing of news according to the relevance principle is a professional technique that cannot be enforced but has to be learned and distributed via teaching and training. Furthermore the technique contradicts the quasi objective tendency to give way to the sequential order of events and narrate them chronologically.

The technique of writing pyramid-news is an essential part of the second, professional nature of journalists that has to be wrung from their first, innate nature in a constant and laborious process of self-critical socialisation. There are also indications (visible to the researcher but not from the Tables in this article) that in 1880 and 1885, when the share of pyramids among longer articles was too small to be indicative of being a routinely used standard, some long articles are constructed by summing up several short news items continuously under general headlines such as "City News Items", "Summary of the News", "Army Intelligence", "Personal Intelligence" or "Obituary Notes". These articles are off-set against the rest of the text with cross-bars. They exist of singular lead-sentences of 10 to 25 words without a news-body which have been put together densely, apparently with the goal to give hasty readers an overview on different events, topics, and subjects.

The management of the editorial department could not trust their journalist's routine in so far as the pyramid is concerned. Consequently, they probably collected and put together the news that was meant for the hasty reader into tabular form. These have probably been edited by journalists, who were specialised in the matter. Use of this practice gradually declined after 1890, when the pyramid had for most journalists become a routine procedure, but without disappearing completely from the press further on – in either the US or Europe.

On the basis of such vivid details, it can be reconstructed why and by which practical steps the pyramid developed as a professional standard in the two decades between 1875 and 1895, finally becoming popular among American journalists, and also a part of journalistic training.

The *New York Times* between 1855 and 1920

In order to find out whether and to what extent the *New York Herald* must be seen as an exception, I have also analysed the relevant issues of the *New York Times* from the years 1855, 1875, and 1895.

Although the changes taking place during 1875 and 1895 are less obvious with the *New York Times* than with the *New York Herald* (perhaps attributable to a smaller degree of readiness for innovation), the same fundamental developments can also be found. There is a tripling of inverted-pyramid news stories; considerably more, and on average, shorter articles; the addition of illustrations; and the use of bigger headlines. We may therefore as-

sume that the *New York Herald* is not an exception and that the general trend of the 1880s toward communicative quality and journalistic professionalism was only more striking with the paper edited by James Gordon Bennett, Jr than with its competitors.

Table 4. *The New York Times*, January 17, Articles in the editorial section

Year	% of pyramids > 50 words	Number of articles	Average word length	Articles with drawings (%)	Headline of article (%)		
					without	small	big
1855		101	?		8.9	91.1	
1875	4.6	153	684		6.5	93.5	
1895	14.5	241	362	1.7	2.1	94.2	3.7

The Inverted Pyramid, Journalism, Public Communication and the News Paradigm

If the inverted pyramid really became the professional standard in American journalism in the 1880s, the technical, the political and the cultural theses cannot be true. If unreliable telegraphs or power-hungry politicians during the Civil War were responsible for this phenomenon, its development would have been finalised in the mid-1870s at the latest. Had the increase in the quality and quantity of education during the Progressive Era caused the increased use of the inverted pyramid, it could not have happened before the turn of the century. If one does not want to rely entirely on the economic approach, one has to look for a new thesis that takes the question of chronology into account.

At the beginning I pointed out that the ‘lead principle’ enhances the receptivity of the reader by circumventing selective perception. It enables a quick reading, so that readers with little time can learn the most important facts. Writing news in the inverted-pyramid form – like the reduction of text and sentence length, the illustration of articles with drawings and photographs, the use of headlines, and the sorting of news into specific sections – therefore enhances the communicative quality of the journalistic product. It is not surprising that this style of news presentation spread at the same time as other innovations intended to stimulate the readers’ receptivity. The emergence of this professional standard should therefore be viewed primarily as a function of its communicative potency – helpful in the journalist’s task of creating public awareness and public discourse – rather than solely as the result of influences from fields outside its own domain, i.e. technical, political, or cultural frameworks.

The thesis based on communicative aspects does not exclude the economic interest of publishers in making newspapers more attractive to readers. The development of inside editing after 1880 must surely be connected

to the economic considerations of American publishers eager to enhance the usefulness of their papers. But economic considerations and journalistic professionalism do not exclude each other. They share the intention of reaching as many people as possible via the media regardless of whether they are called buyers, consumers, readers, or recipients.

The advantage of the inverted pyramid as a *work routine* lies more in its cost-saving aspects. The advantage is that texts can be shortened from the end if the final layout requires it, and this saves time and labour costs during the editing process. At the same time, it facilitates quick production that increases the currency of the news, a journalistic quality appreciated by both newspaper sellers and readers that is reflected with an increase in the number of copies sold.

Only if, and when, a general understanding emerges in the field of communication research, that mercantile interests and the journalistic ethos are not diametrically opposed, but share (at least partly) the same aims, will professional standards like the inverted pyramid, which originated in the fully market-oriented American media system, no longer be seen as external obligations that journalists must simply endure, but rather as means of increasing professional efficiency.

This explanation obviously is important for our question when and why the news paradigm as a whole originated and diffused throughout journalistic cultures in the western world.

Notes

1. Revised and with new data and their interpretation extended version of an article which at first has been published in *Journalism Studies*, Vol. 4. , 2003, No. 4, p. 501-511.
2. The author wishes to thank Tobias Eberwein, Anne Fölting, Christina Kieseewetter, Chris Long and Johannes Rabe for various technical help with this study. He is also grateful to the John F. Murray Fund of Iowa for financial support during the research.
3. This premise postulates the dependence of consciousness and various forms of communication (superstructure) on the material being (base).
4. Similar phenomena still show in newspaper layout-reforms today: First the new concept is being followed consequently, but over time some journalists come back to their old professional habits (cf. Katz & Reichstein 2002).

Old and New Journalism in The London Press

The 1880s and 1890s

Svennik Høyer

As an illustration of how the 'news paradigm' was first domesticated outside the US, this chapter describes how new and old ideas of journalism confronted each other in the London press during the last two decades of the 19th century.

Partisanship and Commitments

In the 1890s: "... 'independent' and 'neutral' papers began swamping the overtly partisan ones ..." Alan Lee writes (1976: 193). The accuracy of this statement depends on the meaning of words. Neutrality and its synonyms like nonalignment and dispassion are ambivalent words; they might as well denote disinterestedness or aloofness, words that do not cover the realities of the London press, even in the 1880s and 1890s.

London newspapers and journals had been aligned along fault lines of stark political and religious antagonisms, before and after an interlude of six years, 1679-85, when Parliament failed to renew The Licensing Act. In 1695 licensing was abandoned and press freedom confirmed indirectly even if later, and until 1855, it became curtailed by both libel laws and "taxes on knowledge". But censorship and regulations of the press in the UK often failed to curb opposition completely.

Stamp duties on news created the conditions for a bristling market of an unstamped, oppositional, illegal and low-priced underground press, containing comments rather than news. Thus the irreverent 'new journalism' in the 1880s followed an old tradition by demonstrating a lack of loyalty to the establishment, whether Whig or Tory. Impartiality was a condition for being independent, but a part of it was commitments to social and political issues. Newspapers in the 1880s were often dedicated to causes outside the given political agenda, as Alan Lee remarks above, which they nevertheless tried to influence.

William Thomas Stead coined the expression 'new journalism' in one of his most quoted articles "Government by journalism", which was published in the *Contemporary Review* May 1886 (653-674). Here Stead demonstrates his ambitions for a professional journalism, which for him was a far cry from a detached objectivity; through his campaigning journalism he hoped to gain both democracy and socialism (Conboy 2002: 97). According to Stead, journalists should struggle for given causes rather than for gaining political influence. The press should be dedicated to identifiable politics rather than to a political party (Boston 1988: 91-104). Through his own investigative journalism he conducted social and political campaigns on vice and the exploitation of the poor in his penny paper the *Pall Mall Gazette*, where he first became a reporter, then assistant editor in 1880 and sole editor between 1883 and 1900.

The Fourth Estate

Stead's message must be read with his contemporary leading London newspapers in mind, of which *The Times* was an embodiment of newspaper traditions since the 18th century. Already by the time of the Napoleonic wars *The Times* had become both independent and the most influential of newspapers, as much inside as outside government circles. Editorials in given circumstances could destroy ministers politically, even Cabinets. By the mid 19th century *The Times* had become the most important channel between public opinion and the governing institutions, the only essential reading on political matters and it increasingly became a spokesman for the middle class and the commercial interests fronting for the landed aristocracy (Clarke 2004: 230-31).

Part of *The Times*' influence was based on very tight links to the Government and the Civil Service; in the 1830s and 1840s it regularly published the Queen's Speech and the texts of government treaties ahead of the event (Walker 1982: 35). *The Times* had earned this symbiotic relationship with the powers that be, by several means, one of them being technologically in front of its competitors from the beginning of the 19th century. In 1841 *The Times* was also a business success with a circulation of 28,000 copies on an average day and a profit of £ 17,100. Much of the profit was reinvested in extensive networks of correspondents in foreign capitals and major provincial cities and agents in important harbours, to speed the communication of news. This network ensured *The Times* was on occasion better informed than the Government.

But as much as editors cared for their speedy news service and the political impact of their newspaper, and for public rhetoric in their writing, new genres and forms of journalism were not their main concern or talent. The unique semi-monopoly *The Times* enjoyed among morning papers waned

when newspaper taxes were repealed in 1855. More inventive competitors came to the fore.

To save taxes, which were levied on each sheet of newsprint, editors had packed as much information on every page as possible, which gave the newspaper the impression of a solid block of reading material, without any hint at where to begin except at the left side corner at the top of the page. This became a tradition for many of the London morning newspapers and to the end of the century they clung “stubbornly to the traditionalist formula of *The Times* – the front page of ‘smalls’, the minimal news-titling headlines...” (Hutt 1973: 71).

Major articles were centred on a number of lengthy editorials, or on reports of judicial proceedings, usually printed verbatim. The “interests, which the regular ‘stamped’ London dailies represented were those of the political society in which editorial staff moved” (Brown 1985: 255). Editors and leading journalists hunted social prestige more than scoops. The ambitions of the established mid-Victorian newspapers were to select stories within the range of ‘normal politics’ and to inform on acceptable events and opinions.

Events were most often transcribed the way they happened with few perspectives added. Incoming news was handled almost without condensation. An important court case in the *Telegraph* could be as long as 15,000 words (Engel 1996: 34), longer than any chapter in this book. Newspapers appeared as compilations of discrete items with little attempt to organise, let alone manipulate, the news in pursuit of an editorial objective (Brown 1985: 250-51). Meetings were reported chronologically, letters from correspondents, from officials or from readers were printed with little or no editorial pruning. The news notices gave disparate and disconnected information often out of context, and were spread randomly between pages.

This old formula changed gradually towards the end of the 19th century. Long speeches were edited and shortened and the number of reported speeches decreased markedly (Lee 1976: 123). “Top-ranking parliamentarians, who had been used to receiving in the press the equivalent of the columns they filled in Hansard, were fortunate to secure abbreviated reports of their speeches” (Koss 1981: 348).¹ *The Times* lost its edge both technologically and journalistically with the ever-increasing capacity of rotary presses from the 1860s onwards when several new competitors, who were better able to catch the attention and fancies of the middle class readers, overcame it in circulation.

Campaign Journalism

In opposition to the old formulae, Stead became an advocate of active reporting; his trademark was a dramatic style – radiant, radical and rebellious. He became known as a disseminator and practitioner of an American muck-raking style of journalism, rather than an innovator himself. He demonstrated

his admiration for the unrestrained creativity in United States in his *The Americanisation of the World* (1902), where he wrote in the preface:

It is only when we look at the manifold manifestations of the exuberant energy of the United States, and the world wide influence which they are exerting upon the world in general and at the British Empire in particular, that we realise how comparatively insignificant are all the other events of our time.

This was an enthusiasm Stead tried to infuse into his own journalism. The *Pall Mall Gazette* became a model for the new literary evening papers covering the arts, politics and social questions, providing more analysis and discussion than the morning papers (Clarke 2004: 258). Stead was himself an accomplished author, biographer and literary critic; his bibliography includes studies on Pound, Yeats and Eliot, a biography of Gladstone etc.

In October 1883 Stead introduced the celebrity interview, and published 134 of them the following year in the *Pall Mall Gazette* (Chalaby 1998: 127). In Stead's own comment (1902: 111): "The interview was a distinctively American invention, which has been acclimatised in this country, although with odd limitations. *The Times*, for instance, will never publish an interview with any person if it takes place on British soil."

As an editor Stead asked journalists to investigate concrete cases of political malpractice and conditions of social injustice, similar to the campaign journalism Horace Greely pioneered in the *New York Tribune* thirty years earlier. Charles Dickens too had pioneered social reportage with realistic descriptions from prisons and slums in the 1830s, but without calling for public actions (Slater 1996).

Stead's ambition was to influence the political agenda, not to reproduce acceptable controversies and ceremonial events. He was crusading against the 'old corruption' in exposing slums and bad housing conditions in London, but also fought for an improved Navy, for General Gordon to be sent to Sudan and for closer imperial ties in general. Most notoriously Stead disclosed the practice of juvenile and child prostitution under a flaring headline 'Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon'. A headline like this was new in London journalism in 1885. Stead also used questionable methods when collecting his information. The reportage brought Stead much substantial condemnation in higher circles. Members of Parliament publicly criticised his journalism on prostitution, newsagents stopped selling the paper and the Prince of Wales cancelled his subscription (Conboy 2002: 97-8, Clarke 2004: 259).

Investigative journalism alone could not satisfy Stead, he went on the lecturing circuit. This was certainly not part of the American type of 'new journalism' or of 'objectivity'. According to the *Pall Mall Gazette* 19 October 1885 Stead had in fourteen days covered 2,200 miles and addressed fifteen meetings and audiences of between forty and fifty thousand people. Such crowds did not pay off in increased circulation, which increased only slightly from 8,360 to 12,250 during the most heated campaign on juvenile prostitu-

tion. Stead's popularity was not enough to withstand later losses in advertising and circulation; he was dismissed from the *Pall Mall Gazette* on 1 January 1900 (Clarke 2004: 262).

There were others coming home from a trip to America full of ideas for new stories, like T. P. O'Connor, founder of *The Star* in the same market segment as the *Pall Mall Gazette*. In his manifesto for *The Star* in 1888 he declared an intention to bring stories beyond mere politics; he believed readers also wanted something dramatic and picturesque, humorous, pathetic or anecdotal, yet also stories of fashion and the arts of housekeeping (Engel 1996: 45). But to O'Connor's way of thinking a new journalism did not preclude a point of view:

The Star will be a Radical journal. It will judge all policy – domestic, foreign, social – from the Radical standpoint.

The Apolitical Tabloids

Alfred Harmsworth (Lord Northcliffe) was amongst the first and the most successful of tabloid entrepreneurs, serving both as publisher and executive editor for his newspapers. Harmsworth had a vision of a popular newspaper, details of which he was not hesitant at ordering his editors and journalists to realise (Taylor 1996). Unlike W. T. Stead, Harmsworth was a businessman more than an idealist. He aimed his halfpenny *Daily Mail* at an audience of the lower-middle and upper-working classes; launched in 1896 it approached a circulation of one million by 1900. Consequently Harmsworth's methods had a greater impact on the development of modern English journalism than Stead's. Due to its immense popularity the *Daily Mail* formed a model for other London tabloids.

Harmsworth was not uncommitted politically, but – like Gordon Bennet in New York half a century earlier – he committed himself openly to a selection of causes that left his papers harmless to the majority. In his first leader on August 31st 1894, after he took over the *Evening News*, he wrote:

Free from fad and prejudice, the *Evening News* will preach the gospel of loyalty to the Empire and faith in the combined efforts of the peoples united under the British flag. Conservative and Unionist in Imperial politics ... non-sectarian in all questions affecting the religious belief of the community, sympathetic towards labour and friendly to every phase of communal advancement. (Koss 1981: 358).

This was a kind of political concern performed in a non-partisan way, in contrast to the "independence" of traditional political journalists who were proud of being able to choose between party factions, rather than to free

themselves from commitments to a single party (Startt 1988: 287-288). Harmsworth's campaigns were launched like social events and not out of moral concern. According to Chalaby (1998: 78-7) this was part of a larger 19th century trend, which continued into the 20th century, away from political questions and ideas as a mainstay of news and comments towards a focus less on issues, and more on people and private life. When the *Daily Mail* was crusading it was for wholemeal bread, a new hat shape, better roses, purer milk, better houses etc. (Chalaby 1998: 142).

A year after launching his popular *Daily Mail* in 1896, Harmsworth explained the reason for his success: "The possibility of our being able to issue eight page papers with success is entirely one of editing and sub-editing" (Brown 1985: 251), and indeed the *Daily Mail* was more thoroughly rewritten than its competitors. Harmsworth demanded brief and easily digested texts from his staff. By the same token the *Daily Mail* also contained a wide variety of short stories, to suit the reading abilities of a new kind of reader buying the paper in increasing numbers. Down the avenue of 'human interest' stories, a wider spectre of topics was introduced: adventure, celebrities, fashion, horse racing and travel in addition to the traditional topics of political, foreign and domestic affairs. By the late 1880s most newspapers had a sports editor and they developed their own conventions of presentation (Brown 1985: 254).

The new recipe required a more active journalism and the interview became the most useful tool for it, in addition to the telephone (Chalaby 1998: 91). A new technique of creating 'new' and more complex 'events' in the editorial department came by collating, summarising and combining incoming information into one story. Eliciting information from the telegraph and their own network of correspondents, newspapers were able to cover and to compare complex strings of separate events and social conditions like general strikes, damaging weather etc. It was a kind of journalism, which did not depend on things to happen in one place alone or depended on statements to be uttered in Westminster or Whitehall. In addition many newspapers initiated events themselves by, for example, involving their readers in competitions, and sending reporters on adventurous missions. All of this was very different from what newspapers were able to do in the 1870s and 1880s (Brown 1985: 268-69).

Another prominent feature of 'new popular journalism' was a more colourful style, which emphasised a different kind of observation and new details. Headlines and reportage became more descriptive; they gave a picture of the person or situation rather than a literal rendering (Hutt 1973: 67). A contemporary observation by P. O'Connor (1889: 423) notes: "There was a day when any allusion to the personal appearance, the habits, the clothes, or the home and social life of any person would have been resented as impertinence and almost as ... indecent..." but apparently not in 'new journalism' by the late 1880s.

In addition, new layout and display typography came into use thanks to inventions like the so-called 'linecaster' and the linotype-setting machine (Hutt 1973: 69). Bold types appeared together with stacked or decked headlines, sub-heads and crossheads. The many-levelled headlines emphasised the structure of the news and summarised different aspects of the story as a forerunner of the lead. Increased use of illustration also helped to highlight key points in main stories (Lee 1976: 121, 129). Lesser news stories and comments were departmentalised topically and given their special pages and columns inside. By such means editors of the tabloid press were able to clearly differentiate between stories and give each of them added significance. But as late as 1892 the *Morning*, a halfpenny paper, became the first to regularly place news on the front page (Wiener 1988: 51). Illustrations became common only around the turn of the 19th century.

Independence, Dedication and Indifference More than Objectivity

We have given prominence to three newspapers, which illustrate different aspects of the relation between press and Government. *The Times* represented, at stages, a corruption of the Fourth Estate, all for the sake of being better informed of government affairs, but it could also muster enough independence later to challenge Cabinets. The *Pall Mall Gazette* did not care so much for Government as for social issues. In order to raise social conscience and change the political agenda the paper used unconventional journalistic means and methods. The *Daily Mail* was concerned with making a good read, about life style topics, and stories, which could tickle the curiosities of readers. Most of this was new in British journalism and became immensely popular. The *Daily Mail* was not interested in governing the country or aligning itself with any particular community; in political affairs it was rather indifferent unless the conflict ahead was of an overwhelming national importance.

At the end of the Victorian Age 'new journalism', as illustrated by the *Pall Mall Gazette*, was a movement away from fixed commitments to political parties and not so much towards balanced or detached 'objectivity' as in America. Independence rather than objectivity were its hallmark. Much of serious journalism was mainly to stay dedicated to communal causes, campaigns and scandals with a moral impact, which had clearly anticipated consequences for the political decision-making process. This independence of choosing their positions, and being unbound by parties, but still have the freedom to take sides supporting or attacking candidates before elections, is very much alive today in British print journalism, in contrast to the 'correct' and less colourful television news (Semetko 2000: 354).

The transition to 'new journalism' in Britain lasted forty years, loosely calculated, from about 1880 to 1920. This is a short period compared to the preceding three centuries of the British press. Jean Chalaby (1998: 65) calls it a 'rupture' of traditions. After a short and chaotic period from the 1880s to 1900, journalism in Britain was no longer the same kind of texts and discourse. *The Times* called it 'the demise of the dignified' (The History of The Times, 1947: 91).

Whether we call it a rupture or a demise of traditions, 'new journalism' in Britain was much influenced by the American forerunners, but not dominated by it. The peculiar British mixture of strongly committed and independent journalism imported most parts of the American 'new journalism' from the 1880s onwards, except a belief in journalistic 'objectivity' and impartiality.

Chronologically the transition to modern journalism in London was a reversal of influence from the time of colonial and federal press in America, which for most of its news depended on sailing vessels bringing over the latest possible London newspapers (Clark 1994). By adventurous editors and journalists, like William Thomas Stead, influences began to travel in the other direction two centuries later. Stead, however, died on one of his missions to America; he was a passenger on the Titanic on April 15th 1912.

Note

1. Hansard is the record of the proceedings of the House of Commons.

Scandinavia

The Rise and Fall of The Scandinavian Party Press

Svennik Høyer

Introduction: The Concept of Party Press

According to Western ideals of press freedom media and government should be separate centres of influence and power. The media is supposed to observe and influence the political process without being a legitimate part of formal decision-making. The freedom of expression, as a human right, was originally conceived of as the possibility for individuals to enter the public sphere freely. 'The fourth estate', on the other hand, refers mainly to the forum function of media, or to media as a system of outlets, where opinions are put into action within a political setting by anyone having something relevant to say. The media in this public sphere are free to determine what in the public interest is to be published.

Thus the idea of a 'fourth estate' is corrupted when the roles of press and politics are interlinked under a given ideological superstructure as it was in the Scandinavian party press. The multi-party press gave the public few choices but politically biased newspapers, although the papers were biased in different ideological directions.

In order to inform and evaluate events and actors independently, a non-biased but politically engaged newspaper keeps a critical distance to the ever-changing political decision-making process without having any obligations to the interested parties. Sympathies may change in the process from one party to another. A party newspaper, by contrast, rarely sets the political agenda. It lets the party lead the way.

Most authors in the Scandinavia section take the party press as a given historical frame of reference: a century of partisan newspapers dominates media history. Since words like party press and partisan are used differently some introductory and conceptual clarifications may be needed for the following overview. 'Party press' denotes interrelations of many kinds and with variable strength of mutual bindings; the expression also has many negative connotations. Frank Luther Mott writes about the dark ages of partisan journalism (Mott 1942: 167-180) while more recently Jeffery L. Pasley (2001)

describes the tyranny of printers when in the late 18th century printers began to mix business with party politics. Jürgen Habermas (1962) viewed the party press as a stage in the decline of public discourse in Europe.

In a more precise meaning a party paper is a newspaper owned, staffed and directed by the political party or by political party affiliations, which was often the rule for the Social Democratic press in Scandinavia. Labour newspapers in Norway between 1945 and 1989 were required to be loyal to the party cause. If a Labour paper lost confidence in the party, this automatically implied a loss of its possessions to the national party organization. Commitments in the bourgeois newspapers were, by contrast, often 'grundrichtungsbestimmt' to use a German name for it. They were long-term allegiances, without any formal strings. Arnhild Skre provides an important detail that tells a lot about the quality of this relationship in the 1960s. Representatives from the bourgeois parties in the run-up to the general elections in 1965 and 1969 met in secret with representatives from the political department of the three largest Oslo newspapers to discuss informally common strategies before the election campaign started (Skre 2004: 41).

Instead of focusing single-mindedly on the media Colin Sparks (1998) treats media and government as two opposite sets of partners in public communication which cannot avoid interacting in many situations. Sparks calls the relationship between the opposite partners – 'interpenetration'. He refers to the various components of mutual dependencies and the nature of services given between media and political institutions; Sparks suggests a configuration of conditions that may change, bit by bit, over time in both democratic and authoritarian regimes. Thus 'interpenetration' is a more neutral and a less static concept than 'the fourth estate' and less tainted than the 'party press'.

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For the Scandinavian press we suggest five main periods along the temporal axis: 1st – the original printers press with an implicit elite orientation until the 1860s; 2nd – the mobilisation of a politically committed press; 3rd – the institutionalisation of a multi party press; 4th – the development of a public service broadcasting, which influenced print journalism in many ways from the 1960s onwards and 5th – the commercialisation of newspaper ownership from the 1980s and the slow unwinding of party commitments in the press.

The duration of these periods varies; they even overlap to some extent both within nations and across the region. Nevertheless it is well documented that the periodicity can be applied in all Nordic countries and that the variety of political bindings is of a similar nature in all four nations. We start with the 2nd and 3rd periods.

Institutionalisation of the Early Party Press

A greater part of the Scandinavian party press was formed during the last two or three decades of the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century. This period of political polarisation overlaps with an extraordinary expansion of the press. Expansion occurred through the development of a variety of new technologies that made printing more efficient and newsprint cheaper, which eventually led to lower copy prices, stronger competition and a wider circulation. Expansion of the press was further facilitated through decreasing postal tariffs and an expanding transportation infrastructure of railways, steam ships and an extended network of roads.

The period also overlaps with the formation of political parties, first as factions in parliament, then as nationwide organizations. Several lengthy and severe political conflicts were vital in this process during which parliamentary opposition groups decisively wrested political control from the King, from the nobility and from the upper echelons of the merchant class.

It is tempting to combine these two larger events and conclude that the parties utilised the expanding newspaper market to mobilise the electorate. This interpretation is misleading as it places the means of publishing in the hands of parties. The parties did not command such resources in the beginning, and more often than not newspapers had committed themselves politically before parties were organised locally or nationwide.

Available data supports a hypothesis of combined strategies by editors and publishers. The political conflicts in the 1880s made it increasingly difficult for newspapers to remain in the role of a spectator, so in the end only 7 out of a total of 99 Norwegian newspapers remained neutral by 1885, one year after the liberal victory. Party labels were not chosen incidentally. Regional variations in votes for the two parties were paralleled by commitments in the press. The Liberal press was in a clear majority in districts that were strongholds for the liberals, and vice versa for the Conservatives (Høyer 1968).

The Socialist press became an integral part of the party organisation from its very beginning. Initially bourgeois newspapers were party supplements outside their parties; later on they became important substitutes where local party chapters were missing (Høyer 1995: 346-56). During the mid-war years the bourgeoisie parties also relied on their press to organise elections campaigns locally, and on editors and journalists to man their organisation (Danielsen 1979).

The Social Democratic dailies in the capitals, proved so successful by the end of the 19th century that their profits could be used to subsidise the extension of the party press in the districts. This was especially true in Copenhagen where *Socialdemokraten* became Denmark's largest paper by circulation 1900-1910. Also in the larger industrial cities of Scandinavia the labour press were as a rule economically profitable in the first decades of the 20th century (Engblom 1996, Hadenius, Seveborg and Weibull 1970, Thomsen 1972: 178-86, Høyer 1978, 1995).

The bourgeois press perceived their Socialist competitors as a serious challenge, which encouraged their parties to engage in newspapers that were purely politically motivated. The ensuing political differentiation of the press became most expressed in Denmark, where the Four Dailies system appeared in the larger urban centres from the 1880s with one newspaper for each of the four major parties. The system survived until the 1950s (Niels Thomsen 1972: 166-71).

As copy prices fell and the market expanded, new social groups became available as a public for establishing newspapers, which tended to appeal to members of these social layers. The evolving stratification of the readership market had clear political overtones. Päiviö Tommila and Raimo Salokangas conducted a detailed study of this gradual segmentation of the market; they identified altogether 16 categories of newspaper readership between 1800 and 1950. Differentiation of the Finnish press started before 1820 with newspapers aimed exclusively at the Swedish speaking educated upper class; only from the 1830s were papers produced for the Finnish speaking educated class and landowners. Newspaper entrepreneurs then increasingly appealed to the middle-class from the 1860s and the working class from the 1890s onwards. Small holders gained a press dealing with their interests from around 1900. Among the last groups to have newspapers covering topics of their interest were the population in peripheral districts from the 1920s (Tommila 1988: 490, Salokangas 2001).

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The first national and apolitical organisations for journalists in Norway were founded in 1883 during the most bitter of political conflicts. Parliament was the first regular meeting ground for reporters and it apparently served as a catalyst for further professional and social contacts. Nine years later two political press associations, one conservative and the other liberal, replaced the national union. These organisations were often used actively to formalise mutual representation between parties and their press. Sometimes gentlemen of the press were awarded a place in Parliament in return for a competent service to the party. Indeed close to 10 per cent of representatives in the Norwegian Parliament in 1909 had a background in journalism or in newspaper management while 22 per cent of representatives in 1965 had a similar background (Høyer 1968: 107).

A non-political association for both journalists and editors was formed again in 1910. This organisation could not serve as an effective professional forum for journalists partly because of the political discord within the organisation and partly because of different opinions between editors and journalist. The first wage contract for journalists was only negotiated in 1938, and the National Union of Journalists was founded in 1946 (Ottosen: 1996). Journalists

in Sweden were organised in 1901, but not until the 1950s did the organisation obtain a wage contract with owners (Windahl and Rosengren 1976).

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In 1920 the scene suddenly shifted, as the parties became major actors in the newspaper industry. Business cycles suddenly turned downward in 1920 and the majority of newspapers faced ruin (Danielsen 1979). The newspaper industry did not generate enough capital to sustain the number of newspapers that was actually published during the inter-war period. The bourgeois parties, confronted with rising popularity for socialist parties and the near annihilation of a majority of their co-opted newspapers, were willing to supply subsidies as well as inviting preferential advertising from the business world. New bourgeoisie papers were started, and an old one rescued, by a combination of local capital and national planning. The socialist papers by contrast had to mobilise the loyalty, the diligence and sometimes the money of their party members to survive (Høyer 1995: 330-45).

Interpenetrations between Party and Press in the 1960s and 1970s

In this section we shall follow some manifestations of interpenetration between party and press during the 1960s and 1970s through the political activities of editors and journalists as well as through their expressed opinions in a number of surveys.

Party newspapers were still the rule during the late 1960s and early 1970s. Party dailies represented 92 percent of the total number of newspapers in Denmark in 1968, 57 percent in Finland in 1970, 60 percent in Norway in 1972 and 92 percent of dailies in Sweden in 1975 (Salokangas 1999: 95, NOU 1992: 14 p. 38, SOU 1975: 79 p. 65). Definitions of 'newspapers', 'dailies' and the nature of party attachments may differ somewhat in these figures, but the general impression for the early 1970s is a clearly dominant multi-party press, in number of titles and even more in percent of total circulation.

The dealings between parties and their press existed in an assortment of long forgotten documents. Mutual understandings were more prevalent in what may be named as a political and oral culture among journalists. Announcements of vacancies or of new positions sometimes mentioned the party orientation of the newspaper; implicitly or explicitly political loyalty was often requested as a condition for being appointed (Høyer and Ihlen 1998: 99). Most journalists knew anyway to which party the different newspapers belonged. This system restricted career choices but created politically harmo-

nious editorial staffs; we found that the most politically deviant journalists worked in the sports department (Høyer 1979: 78-100).

The party culture in the press contradicted ideals of autonomy and integrity. Similar contradictions could also be traced in survey responses. Few editors admitted that they served the party when asked by Kai Kronvall (1971), for the most decisive qualifications for their own appointments: 60 percent of Swedish editors-in-chief considered journalistic experience the decisive qualification, only 3 percent mentioned political experience, while an additional 19 percent mentioned political experience combined with other qualifications. A survey in 1974 of Norwegian newspaper journalists and editors found that 74 percent of respondents agreed that journalists must be independent of political parties. A slightly smaller share of 62 percent thought journalists must be loyal to the political policy of their newspaper. Many editors and journalists apparently meant that they could both be professionally independent *and* loyal to the party of their newspaper when needed. *Table 1* below gives more information from the same survey on political activities among Norwegian journalists, specified by their editorial status and the party commitment of their newspaper.¹

Table 1. Political Activity among Norwegian Editors and Journalists 1974 (percentages)

Political Position by Members of the Press	Party Commitment of newspaper	Editors	Sub-Editors	Journalists
Member of Municipal Council	Socialist	40	32	12
	Bourgeois	26	6	9
Office in Political Party	Socialist	83	82	51
	Bourgeois	59	32	28
Member of a Political Party	Socialist	93	95	75
	Bourgeois	74	54	46
<i>N</i> = 100%	Socialist	35	38	257
<i>N</i> = 100%	Bourgeois	76	68	461

Source: Høyer and Lorentzen 1975: 296, Table 7.

The data in *Table 1* clearly shows that political activity increases with editorial responsibilities. Further cross tabulations demonstrated that the overlap between the party label of newspapers and the political sympathies of newsmen increased with the number of years of professional experience, by their specialisation and as they rose in the editorial hierarchy. A more recent survey revealed that political experience increased from 35 percent among the younger reporters (20 to 34 years old) to 62 percent among the older ones (more than 55 years old), which reveals an emerging generation gap (Allern 2001: 126).

Comparisons to Sweden and Holland confirm the high political activity among Norwegian editors in the 1970s. Kronvall (1971) found that 26 percent of editors in the party press had held offices within the national party and that 54 percent had party assignments on the regional or local level. Kempers and Wieten (1976) found that 26 percent of Dutch journalists were members of a political party (compared to 19 percent for the Dutch electorate) in the 1970s.

The basically high level of participation among Norwegian journalists percolated upwards in the political system. Seven percent of members of Parliament in the post-war period have been recruited directly from the press, in addition to many other representatives more loosely attached to the press. A study of political elites from 1962 to 1967 revealed journalists as one of three professional groups most frequently recruited to elite positions.

The focal point of newspaper opinions is of course the editorial. Høyer (1964), using editorials as a measuring stick for political allegiance in 9 party newspapers, counted editorials with explicit statements supporting their party or attacking political adversaries during a month before three general elections in the 1950s. The main hypothesis was that market leaders in various cities were less prone to agitate politically on behalf of their party than their competitors with a politically more homogeneous readership. The hypothesis was confirmed.

Another finding in this study was a marked drop in the frequency of party dedicated editorials during the 1950s. Høyer extrapolated this trend and predicted the decline and possible death of the institution of a party press within a decade. Arnhild Skre (2004) in turn investigated the prediction in detail by studying the editorials of three Oslo-papers during the week ahead of three general elections from 1957 to 1973. She found few if any confirmations. The party press was still going strong in 1973 (Skre 2004), in Norway as in Sweden.

Confidantes and Adversaries

Authorities in Scandinavia, as in the US, emphasise openness towards media as a matter of law (Freedom of Information Act) and of principles (Tryckfrihetsförordningen). Even if the administrations are not always law abiding in this respect, journalists can demand access when and where they know about certain information inputs, or outputs, to and from the administration whereas information circulating within administrations are in principle closed to outsiders. The privilege of governments to conceal important information is, by contrast, favoured by more centralised administrations as in France, Germany and in the UK where the Official Secrets Act efficiently protects Whitehall from normal journalistic surveillance (Seymour-Ure 1974, Galnoor 1976, Cockerell, et. al. 1984).

Relations between politicians and journalists are normally fluid and informal in present-day Scandinavia. 56 percent of the respondents in a Danish survey among members of the parliamentary press corps from 1975 deemed a good relationship with the politicians to be a necessary condition of their work in the Parliament and while 71 percent accepted secrecy by the politicians as a natural part of certain phases in the decision-making process, 80 percent of political reporters, totally or partly denied any right for the politicians to influence the agenda of mass media (Thulstrup 1975).

This ambivalence of journalists acting as fellow conspirators and sometimes as adversaries seems to have been a natural part of the party press in the 1970s. A Swedish survey among journalists conducted in the autumn of 1973 underscored the investigative and public service role of the press: 92 percent of the respondents considered control of the local government essential to their newspaper, while 76 percent agreed that the press should be a channel of unbiased political information (Fjæstad and Holmlöv 1976). Local politicians, however, in a similar survey revealed an all but unanimous discontent with the treatment given them by newspapers representing their rival parties, whilst being favourable to the publicity given them by their own press (SOU 1975:78, p. 154).

If this was taken as a statement on media performance, the politicians reported biased journalism as a general rule, which Lennart Weibull (1975) confirmed in a comprehensive content analysis. By the mid 1970s there was still a clear party bias in the selection of news both in the Social Democratic and the Bourgeois press, irrespective of local competition (Lennart Weibull 1975).

A Wider View on 'Objectivity' Emanating from Broadcasting

Public broadcasting has had a long and venerated tradition of supporting the government and administration and not expressing or instigating any conflict. Newspapers viewed broadcasting news as a dangerous competitor from the beginning (Dahl 1975, Halse 2001). The first newscast of the day was restricted to come on air only after the evening papers had come on the street at 7 o'clock p.m. Most of the content in Scandinavian radio newscasts originated from the national news bureaus that in turn were owned by the press.

Politics in the early years of radio news was regarded as a potential source of unrest, comparable to the political role of the opposition press. Broadcasting management was also anxious to keep an image of uncontroversial enlightenment. The programme director of the Finnish broadcasting (Yleisradio) gave a speech as late as 1960 in which he laid down some rules for "What one cannot say on the radio": Radio must not undermine the foundations of lawful society ... Criticism was permitted but only in a positive vein ... Criticism of the authorities and public institutions was to be avoided

even in humorous contexts (Salokangas 1996: 115, 149). But winds of change were blowing both from outside and inside Scandinavia.

Until the advent of a mass television audience, deferential interviews served mainly as a platform in BBC from which politicians could explain and defend their points of view, maintains Brian McNair (2000). In the mid 1950s this style changed. The more interrogatory interview now came to the fore in the BBC when facing competition from the more self-consciously populist ITV.

Reporters in Scandinavia also came to distrust the idea of 'objectivity' in news, the old hallmark of public service broadcasting, including passive observations of events 'produced' by elite decision-makers. After a long and heated debate of policies in Finnish broadcasting, the norms for proper conduct by reporters were changed in the direction of investigative journalism. It was stated in the 1967 preamble of the company's programme rules that: "Programmes should air different and even contradictory views of life and the world, but the formation of views is not the task of Yleisradio (Finnish public service broadcasting) but that of the members of society as individuals" (Salokangas 1996: 149).

One specific event that obviously contributed strongly to the fall of the party press was the rise of television as a dominating channel for news in the mid-1960s. Half of the adult population on an average day saw the televised newscasts either on the one national channel in Denmark and Norway or on the two public service channels in Sweden. This also implied that every reader had seen a quite fair and balanced reporting of domestic politics on television by the time they read their (party) newspaper. Part of this picture was also a new and radical sense of professionalism among journalists. They tried to redefine their role in current affairs reporting, which provoked many confrontations with the political establishment. This "uproar" is graphically described in Norway by Hans Fredrik Dahl and Henrik G. Bastiansen (1999: 411-524) in their monograph of the Norwegian Broadcasting Company 1945-1981.

At the heart of the professional discussion among Scandinavian broadcasters during the 1970s was the right of reporters to go outside elite circles in their search for news and to be openly critical and, if necessary, controversial. 'Objectivity' in this context became an act of balancing established political doctrines with alternatives not easily detected by routine reporting. The more expressed political role of public broadcasting was strongly debated by the press, which feared that television should become the politically most influential mass medium, which they of course accurately anticipated (Bastiansen 2004).

There were differences of opinions between parties in the 1960s and early 1970s as to how much political programmes in television should be regulated, especially before elections. No party was willing to give broadcasting a free reign in these matters (Bastiansen 2001), while the more basic characteristics of 'neutrality', 'objectivity' and 'balance' were discussed in semi-public forums and in closed seminars within media organisations.

Another possible source of unrest grew with the sharply increased recruitment in the 1960s, 1970s and early 1980s, which came with the advent of television and the increase in station time in radio. The widened scope of activities and the many new positions needed to be filled implied a more lax corporate control (Engblom 1998). This opened journalism up for many fresh candidates, right out of universities and with student's unrest over conservative teaching, eager for more Marxism in social sciences and humanities, and with protests against the Viet Nam War fresh in their minds.

Jörgen Westerståhl and Folke Johanson found in their comprehensive and unique content analysis of Swedish media in six cross sections between 1912 and 1972 that Public Service broadcasting in Sweden moved in stages towards a critical and independent journalism. Public broadcasting moved from an ideology of being neutral and educational in a rather paternalistic manner within the frames of establishment consensus to a balanced, neutral and uncontroversial media ideology, and further to one of investigative journalism from the middle of the 1960s. The amount of stories with a critical bias grew in the process and the scope of news reporting expanded topically. Clearly broadcasters used news criteria more self-consciously. But their selection of critical news did not keep them closer to trends in society as documented in official statistics. When unemployment was, for example at its height in this period, reporting on unemployment was at its lowest in the media (Westerståhl and Johansson 1985).

The proportion of critical news-stories increased from almost zero in the 1930s and 1940s to almost a third of all stories in the early 1980s. Broadcast journalists from the beginning of the 1960s increasingly asked questions in an interrogatory manner, especially with politicians, but also with information sources from other sectors of society. The focus of interest was changed from person-oriented events to environmental and social problems. More significantly, new angles were given to traditional topics. Military defence was, for example, presented as public expenses on defence, the production and export of Swedish weapons, the living standards of conscripts etc. International conflicts and military defence in a cold war perspective was rarely mentioned. As a result of these many changes media consciously began to set priorities for public attention trying to influence the political agenda, rather than the other way around.

Westerståhl and Johansson's description of the changing role of reporters corresponds closely with the broader analysis of the current affairs programming in the Swedish Broadcasting, which Monika Djerf-Pierre and Lennart Weibull published in 2001 (Djerf-Pierre and Weibull 2001). They distinguish four periods: the paternalistic enlightenment (1925-1945), public service information and consensus-building (1945-1965), the idea of broadcasting as a 'fourth estate' using confrontations and polarisation as journalistic means (1965-1985), and finally the interpreting and investigating journalist also playing the role of a public bard, beginning around 1985, when the public broadcasting monopoly was broken.

These epochs, Monika Djerf-Pierre and Lennart Weibull insist, do not follow a linear progression. Competition and the perceived need to maximise ratings intervened with the objectives of Public Service broadcasting. The more recent commercially inspired orientation is, in some respects, more similar to the ideal of a correct information disseminator from the late fifties and early sixties, than to the period of investigative journalism, which lies in between.

The same trend was observed in Norway, most typically in political programmes. From serving as platforms for politicians in the 1950s, broadcasting became a political arena in the 1960s. From the 1970s broadcasting journalists also became actors or stage managers in political debates, which sometimes could develop into happenings (Bjørklund 1991: 291). Nowhere was the conflict over the legitimate role of journalists more expressed than in election programmes. In the 1970s parties could no longer agree over the format of election programmes, and journalists took over the initiative. From being only moderators for candidates in the 1950s, which met with prepared manuscripts, broadcast journalists, in the style of talk shows, selected participants and themes, and took charge of turn taking and the dramaturgy of the discussion in 2001 (Allern 2004).

Yes we run the show. We decide who shall participate and what to discuss.
And so what – who else shall decide – the politicians and their spin doctors?
(Quoted from Allern 2004: 141).

The statement was given by the head of the political department in the Norwegian nation-wide commercial channel TV2, in a debate in the Oslo Journalist Association, summing up the experiences of the 2001 general election campaign. Her self-assurance also reflects another more basic turn taking; namely that the newspapers had become accustomed to regarding the main TV programmes as the most important events in the campaign.

The Party Press Fades Away

No one has set a date or even a year for when the party press disappeared. By 1995 only 30 percent of the Finnish language press in Finland had formal party ties (Salokangas 1999: 97). In Norway 39 percent of newspapers in 1990 were classified as belonging to the 'political' press, but in 1999 only one newspaper declared a party attachment or party commitment in its preamble (NOU 2000, p. 79). In Sweden the leading broadsheet (morning) paper *Dagens Nyheter* had declared itself independent in 1974. Similar vaguely formulated commitments could be found all over Scandinavia: 'politically independent' were the key words under the frontispiece of newspapers at the end of the 1990s. This was for the regular news press; all nationally circulated evening tabloids had been either apolitical or politically ambivalent for most of the post-war period.

Several explanations have been given for the supposed death of the multi-party press. It appears that an accumulation of conditions were interacting within a short period – the introduction of new media, an increased sense of professionalism among journalists, concentration in the broadsheet market and the success of apolitical tabloids. Some of these conditions have only recently been analysed.

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An awakening professional self-consciousness became manifest among print journalists in 1968. The union of Norwegian journalists in their tariff negotiations demanded to be consulted whenever publishers planned to appoint new editors, or promote journalists to sub-editors. The demand was repeated in 1972, 1976, and in 1980. The journalists also asked to be consulted when newspapers planned to redesign or reorganise content and layout. These consultations were termed 'internal' or 'editorial' democracy. Publishers and editors retorted that such demands would undermine the right of owners to control the long-term philosophy of their newspapers; a principle that the party press was based on.² Journalists insisted and were willing to abstain from wage increases for a period, in return for more control over their working environment. By 1980 they won the right to be consulted (NOU 1982:32, 209-212). Similar discussions were going on all over Western Europe at about the same time (Høyer, Hadenius and Weibull 1975).

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The newspaper economy underwent great changes during this period, in the readership market as well as through a commercialisation of newspaper ownership, fuelled by a rapidly expanding advertising market from the 1960s, which skewed the income base. Market leaders among newspapers took the lion's share of the advertising market, out of proportion of their share of the readership market. Reinvesting their profits, the market leaders, mostly bourgeois newspapers, were able to expand more rapidly in circulation than their competitors. This was called the 'circulation spiral' (Furhoff 1967). In the process the political composition of party press readers was also seriously skewed: in 1969 45 percent of the Norwegian audience read only bourgeois newspapers versus 15 percent for the Labour press, a quarter of Labour voters read only bourgeois newspapers, while only 3 percent of bourgeois voters were confined to labour newspapers alone (NOS A 350, 1970).

The modern tabloid developed in Denmark from 1904, in Sweden from 1944 and in Norway from 1952. In Sweden and Norway the tabloids were less affected by concentration from the 1950s because they operated in a new and expanding market segment, which eventually comprised about a quarter of total circulation.

As concentration in the reader market continued it was not a viable business proposition anymore to continue as party newspapers. The minimum number of readers required to return a profit became larger than any existing local group of party supporters. On the other hand, with a growing monopolisation of local markets there were fewer incentives to change old habits.

The same concentration was observed in several European democracies. The readership market for broadsheets saturated gradually but slowly from the 1950s. This spelt a decrease in the variety of newspapers locally, and a growing political heterogeneity of the readership for the surviving newspapers. This eventually inspired a politically more flexible and open attitude in journalism (Høyer, Hadenius and Weibull 1975).



Three types of ownership dominated in the Scandinavian press in the 1970s: 1) Private ownership through the descendants of old printer families, who owned some of the largest newspapers; 2) limited companies that controlled the rest of the privately owned press and 3) party ownership that was dominant in the social-democratic press. The activity of conglomerates became prevalent from the early 1980s when a few companies began to invest in the communication sector generally buying up local market leaders in the newspaper industry, before expanding to international acquisitions. The dawn of the new millennia saw 75 out of 223 Norwegian newspapers and 55 percent of total newspaper circulation controlled by three of the largest Norwegian conglomerates (Østbye 2001: 241).

Ownership became commercialised. Multimedia conglomerates re-organised the newspapers and put them back in the market. This meant that success in publishing was no longer measured in political influence but by the returns on capital investments. Profits from newspapers were transferred to other communication sectors. Profit was not necessarily reinvested in the newspaper itself, which was the traditional rule. There was no room for party committed newspapers in such business calculations. If the logic of the newspaper market had weakened the concept of a party press, the new ownership killed it.

New Rules for Interpenetrations

There is still some discussion as to whether the party press still exists. The interpenetration between parties and press nowadays has certainly changed in character. Relations today are mostly delimited to normal routines of information seeking and information-giving where participants all have their own business to mind and where services are exchanged and implicitly

negotiated on the basis of neutral news criteria. Editors are not active anymore in politics and journalists have made it a rule to stay outside parties and interest organisations.

Lennart Weibull nevertheless (2000: 102) asserts that a majority of Swedish newspapers still declare, more or less clearly, some sort of political commitments in their editorials but not in their news content. Lars Nord (2001) in an analysis of the press in Sweden during the 1990s, however, finds that newspapers rarely took a clear-cut stand in favour of any party. When the editorials deal with parties, as they often do, the parties are described as political actors in a play where journalists are onlookers. Comments are usually addressed to recent events and issues and not to overarching ideologies. However, during the closing weeks of the election campaigns in 1998, 42 percent of newspaper editorials were found to deviate from this pattern; they supported fully or in part their old political friends.

Indeed, as Nord (2001) argues, some of the old networks are still active in a number of covert ways. Party agencies continue to distribute political articles of which some are reprinted verbatim by a few smaller newspapers. There are telephone conferences at which the party news services, mainly from the Social Democrats and the Centre (Agrarian) party, comment on recent political events. There are meetings between editors working within a common "sphere" of political interests, and also those exclusive meetings in Stockholm where party leaders, leading politicians or power players in industry, business and military defence explain their long term policies "off the record" to editors and leading commentators and are then open for questioning. None of this is printed or broadcasted.

Anker Brink Lund (2002) depicts different scenes and games of interpenetration between politicians and journalists in the Danish parliament (Folketing). It is a play in two arenas: in investigative and in routine political journalism respectively.

Investigative journalism can be looked at as a challenge to the establishment in the form of scrutinising reports, often with intended political repercussions, initiated by the media organisation, but often with unpredictable consequences. Only a few concrete events and named administrative units, firms or persons are regularly involved as objects of reportage of this 'focus-journalism' as it is called in Danish.

The routine reporting of the national political decision-making process has its centre in the Danish Folketing (parliament) – or more exactly in the parliamentary press corps. The focus rests on government business. Ministers are regularly invited to attend meetings with the press corps and as a rule are given national attention in important cases, while backbenchers have less access. In order to share some attention ordinary members of parliament must provide newsworthy information, e.g. on new or faltering alliances for pending laws.

In their fight for publicity politicians are both competitors and team players with journalists in a game of uncertain outcomes. There is little overlap

between the agenda of the parliament and the agenda of media, but there are still possibilities both for politicians and journalists to influence these agendas.

By contrast, the relations between journalists and representatives were more deferential in the 1960s, as described by a veteran member of the press corps in the Norwegian Parliament Olav Maaland: “the press serves as an integrated part of the parliamentary system” (Maaland 1965: 222). It takes at least one year of mute observations by a freshman reporter to detect the unwritten rules, he observed, and it takes several more years to have friendly relationships with representatives: “Be respectful and keep silent until you are spoken to” was Maaland’s advice for the neophyte (Maaland 1965: 223). The reversal of roles between politicians and journalists was reflected in a survey of Members of the Norwegian Parliament thirty years later in 1995: 54 percent agreed completely and 41 percent agreed partly that media stories too often influence the setting of the political agenda (Allern 2001: 262).

Party-press Interpenetrations and Cultural Diffusion

In this chapter I have taken as my point of departure the many roots, which the ideals of journalism have – culturally, economically and politically. Politics in combination with economics can elucidate the development of party-press interpenetrations. We need this combination of approaches to explain the beginnings and perseverance of party attachments in both privately operated and politically organised newspapers throughout Scandinavia. Likewise the fall of the party press was both commercially and politically motivated. In the end politics was the weaker part, both as a psychological motivation and as an organisational support. Party politics was clearly no longer a good business for owners, while plain trustworthy news and investigative journalism eventually became prime professional values for journalists, free of party commitments.

Technological innovations pass national borders more easily than the cultural, as we noticed in the introduction to this book. It took more than half a century for the news paradigm to pass from the US to Scandinavia, even if the beginning had many similar traits. The rising circulation and the prospect for a mass press, following from improved printing methods and cheap newsprint made of pulp, influenced journalism from the mid 19th century in all five countries, but somewhat differently, depending on the historical situation.

Parallel developments are depicted both in the US and in Scandinavian between the 1880s and 1920. The curves for newspaper consumption are quite similar in shape and chronology in the US, in Finland, Denmark and Norway. Total circulation started to rise from the 1880s, exponentially around the turn of the century, and then levelled out or dropped in 1920 (DeFleur,

1970: 21; Høyer 1968: 92; Thomsen 1972: 172; Tommila & Salokangas 2001: 25). But if similar in technology and circulation, the political situation was quite different during most of the 19th century. As a result: while the American press gradually became more politically independent towards the end of the 19th century, a party press was borne in Scandinavia, much as a result of the same expansion in circulation and competition.

The Scandinavian countries had a relatively autocratic political tradition until the last three decades of the 19th century while the American tradition was based on freedom of speech. Party organisations in Scandinavia began to rise only towards the end of the 19th century, whereas they had been securely entrenched in American public life for many decades at that time. The party dependent press in America was the result of a low level of capitalisation in the newspaper industry, as was to become the case in Scandinavia. Presidents and Governors controlled much of the US press politically by giving either preferential printing contract of government documents to friendly printers or subsidises and inside information to cooperating editors out of contact with a professional milieu (Kaplan 2002, Dicken-Garcia 1989). In Scandinavia the Kings more or less openly subsidised friendly publications or had editors on their pay roll.

State affairs were the privilege of Kings and their courts to discuss until the mid-19th century. To form factions or political groups was immoral if not illegal for most of the century in Scandinavia. Thus a party commitment in the 1870s and 1880s had quite a different meaning compared to the US. Making a party commitment was not an act of surrender to politicians, on the contrary, for editors it was a sign of independence. It authorised them to deal with the most important affairs of the nation on behalf of the majority of their followers among the readership. A party committed press initiated a democratic discourse.

In the US the political development took another turn. Richard Kaplan (2002) argues, as many have argued before him, that objectivity as a journalistic tenet in the American press was inspired by economic progress in the newspaper industry from the 1880s. Kaplan, however, insists that objectivity in political journalism became dominant only in combination with a transformation of public life in the 1890s when the role of political parties waned.

By way of a conclusion: Changes in both political and economic conditions were essential ingredients of similar market strategies of newspapers in Scandinavia as well as in the US. But while the role of parties waned in US public life, the press became a vital part in the forming of a party system and of parliamentarism in Scandinavia. The differences in the national histories, and especially in the role of political parties, are the key to defining the initial differences in the styles of journalism that lasted for many decades.

Notes

1. Our data about the political activities and opinions of journalists and editors in the press has been derived from a postal survey addressed to members of the National Union of Journalists and the Norwegian Editors Association in the spring of 1974. The return rate was almost exactly 70 percent resulting in 1300 interviews. Tests of the representative character of our data showed deviations of up to 3 percent on known variables from more comprehensive databases. See Pål E. Lorenzen and Sverre Høy (1976).
2. This is formalized in an agreement between the association of editors and publishers; that publishers have the right to decide the basic philosophy (or party alignment) of the newspaper, while the editor is free to interpret this philosophy without daily interference.

News Paradigms, Political Power and Cultural Contexts in 20th Century Sweden

Jan Ekecrantz

Introduction: What Causes What?

What historical and structural conditions can explain the rise of the “news paradigm”? Is there *a* paradigm in the first place and, if so, how should it be specified in terms of form and content? This chapter starts from the assumption that both exogenous and endogenous factors are at work here. That is, the paradigm, first loosely conceived of here as news as we know it in the modern Western world, has diffused across space and time, but throughout it has also been strongly conditioned (as to form and content) by national, historical, structural and other contexts. The idea here is to elaborate on this assumption and then qualify it by taking a look into a concrete national context.

I will argue for multi-contextual approaches and for a distinction between long-term and short-term perspectives, since they actualise different types of explanations. If there is such a thing as a universal modernization road, there are also many partings of ways. I will provide some historical examples in order to substantiate the multi-contextual approach and to move further away from not only a developmentalist, but also a universalistic modernization perspective. I have pursued this line of reasoning elsewhere, criticizing the idea of a global convergence of news cultures resulting from the ubiquity of so-called global media. There is enough evidence around of news (also TV) being couched in national outlooks (‘domesticated’ or ‘nationalized’). Further, print journalism that is in focus here still has an important role in setting national news agendas. CNN prides itself on representing “history in the making”, but it is only on rare occasions and then for brief moments that global broadcasting cuts through all the filters set up by national media (Perlmutter 1998).

The bulk of the chapter is a summary overview of the results of a series of studies, all of them aiming at a comprehensive understanding of the complex and dynamic relationships between news media and the rest of Swedish society. One overall conclusion is that, given a general modernization impetus early in the 20th century, the concrete national context intervened strongly in

the shaping of both the forms and contents of news – and continued to do so throughout the century. This is not only a matter of local modifications of a universal process (towards some higher stages of journalism), but part of cyclically appearing tensions between the informational and politicised modes of news. More speculatively the question is raised about the fate of the news paradigm in what has come to be called the post-journalist age, in which critics consider news as less reality-driven than market-driven.

Journalism is by definition based on the idea of the value of a daily input of news in our lives. ‘Le journal’, the daily report of the relevant events of the day had its origin in the merchant’s office (Carey 1989). ‘Le quotidien’, French for the *everyday*, the *contemporary* and the *newspaper* is another word that helps us trace the origins of the idea of the value of daily news (Terdiman 1985). News, as such, is of course of a much older date than both the newspaper and the idea of the indispensability of everyday news about the world¹, but the modern “news paradigm” (facticity, event-orientation, objectivism and concomitant formats, styles and sub-genres) is of a still later date. It came into being with matured capitalism in the second half the 19th century, converting the daily (later hourly and even continuously) transmitted information to large audiences into a commodity, as part and parcel of European modernity (Hartley 1996).

A mix of more specific and well-known explanations of the rise of news has been offered, based on factors such as technological or infra-structural innovations like the railway, the telegraph, introducing the telegraphic text, and the camera, contributing to the idea of ‘objectivity’, historical events, not least wars like Crimea and the American Civil War, economic conditions like the rise of the mass market, business needs (the stock exchange). Demographic and sociological explanations have also been suggested, like population growth during the 19th century (Peckham 1962), the rise of a petty-bourgeoisie and a working class, urbanization, etc. The nation-based state and the homogenous language region (Innis 1951) are other sociological circumstances often mentioned. In Sweden, for instance, the national news agency was first set up in the foreign ministry.²

These conditions were internally related and the press and its news and advertisements have often been seen as integral parts of a general “modernization” process, which took about the same form everywhere throughout the Western world. This idea of a uni-linear and unidirectional development does not preclude an uneven development because all these preconditions are not met at the same time “everywhere”. This applies to both infrastructures and formats of news journalism. The press photo is a case in point. A combination of technical and demographic conditions (the many immigrants) triggered its appearance in the New York City newspapers of the early 20th century (Schudson 1978).

History offers many examples of new technologies, formats and genres *not* being adopted in society just because they exist somewhere. Historian Peter Burke comments on the historically variable civilizational shifts, where,

for instance, the introduction of printing was delayed by a couple of hundred years in Russia. Once the first printing house was set up, massive production of print would still take a long time (Briggs & Burke, 2002). The same tsarist country also long resisted the (Western) conception of news (Palmer 1998). We have thus to take into consideration the whole complex of conditions, technological, economic, political, social, and cultural.

Richard Terdiman has described the close relationship between the rise of news and factors related to class, economy and markets. Newspapers have from the very beginning created their markets by identifying themselves with everyday life and by propagating commercialism. Tellingly, the word 'article' stands for both a written piece in a newspaper and a merchandize advertised next to the article. Together they make up the newspaper page, the advertised commodities and the journalistic articles in between them. Thus, the newspaper was really the first modern consumption object, to be disposed of when consumed, a widely distributed specimen of the mentality that it propagated in its pages. By selling a new(s) consciousness it first of all sold itself (Terdiman 1985, Carey 1989). The standardization of its products was to follow, as the "routinization of the unexpected" in the words of Gaye Tuchman. It is obvious that the growth of modern media and media forms is closely connected to the rise of modern capitalistic economies, but this is not the whole truth. There are also the political and cultural determinants, as a few historical examples will demonstrate.

Inconclusive Histories

The number of newspapers or of copies (total paper consumption) is often used as an indicator of modernization – like hospital beds, cars and telephones. This may be an adequate measure of the presence of modern media in societies, perhaps also of the presence of modern journalism, but this latter correspondence is far from self-evident.³ Another complication with the correlation between media growth and general modernization is that it may be valid in the long historical (many centuries) perspective. In the shorter term it is obvious that the number of periodical publications or circulation figures also depend, sometimes drastically, on collective information or propaganda needs in extremely uncertain and unpredictable historical situations.

Consider for instance the following figures from the time of the French Revolution. In the decade before 1787 the average number of pamphlets published annually in France was 26. From then on a dramatic increase followed, culminating with 3,305 printed pamphlets in the revolutionary year 1789. Ten years later this figure was down on the 1787 level, a mere 211 pamphlets (Hartley 1996: 115). Let us compare this with similar figures from the early 20th century Estonia, showing the impact of the Russian Revolution around 1905. In the years before 1906 the number of periodicals swayed

between 27 and 38. In 1906 and 1907 the figures were 100 and 112. After that the number stabilized at 70-80 periodicals for the years to come. In 1913-14 there followed "a new increase in press publications because of the tense political atmosphere prior to World War I" (Lauk 1990: 12). A similar situation was at hand in the Soviet and post-Soviet Russia when, around 1990, both the number of outlets and total circulation figures increased sharply. Then, in the 1990s many people turned away from politics and the average circulation of national newspapers dropped from 2.58 million to a mere 118,000 (Vartanova 2004: 192). Television, now in almost every Russian household, or the Internet (accessed by some 8% of the population) alone cannot explain this drastic decline in newspaper reading.

There are innumerable examples of rapid changes – at the same time quantitative and qualitative. In Spain a media explosion reminiscent of the French Revolution, occurred in the 1930s, in the short-lived 2nd Republic, between Rivera's dictatorship and the Civil War (1931-36). The 2nd Republic saw 2,000 new periodical publications. It was at the same time a quantitative leap and a qualitative shift: an outburst of modern journalism, news, tabloids, entertainment, sports, etc. It was an emancipatory tabloidization, breaking with the non-informational "journalism" of the dictatorship years (Ekecrantz 1991). Like Weimar in the 1920s, it was an example of outbursts of collective action in a popular public sphere, or the civil society, more or less independently of the level of technological development, but as in the case of the Spanish republic, quickly materializing the unrealised potentials of new newspaper technology and form. Another upsurge occurred after the death of Franco in 1975, but in a totally different media technological situation: visualized media and a personalized, scandalizing and semi-pornographic journalism, reminiscent of the media landscape in Estonia around 1990.

Latin America provides us with examples of a different kind: technology was let free within the political confines of authoritarian regimes. Several of these regimes in the post-War decades did not (however harsh the political censorship) close off their countries from international communications (like commercial TV), nor did they obstruct technical changes in the media (Waisbord 2000). When these regimes were gone advanced media systems were already in place in terms of technical level and media genres.

Other historical examples show that societal conditions may spark technological breakthroughs. Russia and the Baltic countries in the late 1980s and early 1990s would be other cases of what may sometimes be a temporary mismatch between communication forms and social realities, sometimes a dramatic and sudden catching up. In situations as these real media pluralism or anarchy may occur temporarily without the presence of modern media. St. Petersburg towards the late 1980s offers a good example, as demonstrated by Tamara Krekola in a study based on unique archival materials, a multitude of short-lived papers appearing in the streets (Krekola 2000).

All this illustrates my point that national political cultures, transformations and major events co-determine media developments generally and with that

the transformation of journalistic forms. In times of intensified political struggles or social upheaval the activity in society's ideological machineries is heightened. The temporarily intensified production of images and counter-images is based on the mobilization of available resources for ideological production (Wuthnow 1989). This production apparatus then may transform itself into a machinery for cultural and ideological reproduction under more stable or static conditions. "Objective" or factual news may in one historical situation, in times of transformation and struggles between old and new social forces, serve as a political weapon against oppressive, authoritarian systems based on national or other historical myths. In other situations, when the status quo is broadly unquestioned, informational, a-political news may serve ruling interests, either by diverting attention from political realities altogether or by framing them as without alternatives.

The idea of news has been given very variable meanings across space and time. It has also been an idea filled with contradictions, being partly rational and partly irrational. Driven at the same time (as has often been the case) by contradictory needs for market maximization and information needs, between the ethos of the new and the need to frame everything in conventional terms and stay within the horizon of expectations. The routine rendering of the deviant and the improbable constituted an "aesthetics of surprise" or shock that was already present in the early days of modern news journalism, that is the late 19th century (Donovan 2001). It has since been a more or less latent feature, an embryonic 'society of the spectacle' much later to appear in full-blown shape in today's matured global television system, founded on a spectacular impulse and a pleasure principle often in the guise of its opposite (Kellner 2003). Infotainment is one of its names. Whatever our analysis of this phenomenon – it problematizes ideas about a universal development spelled heightened enlightenment.

Gravitating between such extremes, journalism of the last hundred years does give us an array of gradual, unidirectional shifts in news formats and styles, but also cyclical and qualitative transformations not readily identifiable in terms of an overall modernization process. The story of Swedish news journalism is as much a story of a social institution finding its place among other institutions, with all the power struggles that are entailed in that process. How did this show up in the newspaper pages?

Within a large research programme we wanted to shed light on the ways in which news texts reflect, especially in indirect ways, a society's social structure and political culture as they transform themselves across time. Above all it was our intention to disentangle journalism's own active role in this historical process, as part of the larger modernization of Swedish society throughout the 20th century.

The programme yielded a series of books and reports, most of them in Swedish, for instance Ekecrantz & Olsson, 1994, *Editing Society: On the history of journalism, descriptive power and informed reason* (in Swedish), based on front pages in the years 1910, 1935, 1960, 1990) and Becker *et al*, 2000,

Picturing Politics: Visual and textual Formations of Modernity in the Swedish Press (in English and based on a sample of newspaper articles from 1925, 1955, 1987, 1995). The most easily available summary of theory, methods and results is found in Ekecrantz 1997. Before entering on a longitudinal exposition a few words about the materials and methods are in place.

Editing Society was thus based on front-page articles from four (national and local) newspapers, all articles from one such page on a certain day, every third month in the selected years. In the later studies (Becker *et al.*, Ekecrantz *et al.*) another sampling procedure was used, based on one full week for each of the years and the whole newspaper, within which a random sample of articles was drawn. One rationale for working with full (real, not constructed) weeks was the focus on “journalistic events” as these developed within a weekly news cycle. In these studies ten papers (four of them used for closer study) were included and all sampled articles were digitalized for detailed linguistic analyses. Both qualitative and quantitative techniques were applied and we also included a range of contextual data (the approach was termed ‘contextually oriented discourse analysis’). Two of the years, 1955 and 1995 were given special attention by groups of researchers and doctoral students working with the full newspapers and evolving journalistic events (Ekecrantz *et al.* 1995 and Becker *et al.* 1996, respectively). It is worth noting here that the different sampling procedures and sample sizes yielded very similar results (see below). This, in itself, indicates that modern journalism is a relatively stable, collective and predictable social practice, across different newspapers and within the time frame of a few years. Even a small sample can consequently be highly representative. In others words, we have to do with an institution and, like professionalization, institutionalisation develops historically. We shall now turn to such historical transformations.

Sweden: The Long Road to What?

1909 is a pivotal year in many Swedish journalism historiographies. This is when the “Americanisation” took place in the major national daily, the *Dagens Nyheter*. This term can stand for much of what we often associate with a modern journalistic product: a front page filled, not with advertisements, but with the major news stories of the day, photographic pictures, headlines, etc. The modern front-page, of course, was in place on a given day and other modern elements were to show up at a pretty fast rate. Some of them, like outdoor press photography, had to wait a decade or so before technical innovations made them possible. This is one way of studying the modernization process – by the historical fixation of breakthroughs of significant elements characterizing modern journalism. Quantitative growth patterns, as we have discussed above, is another way.

The number of newspapers peaked in 1922. The 1920s was also the decade when advertising got its breakthrough. The 1920s is often depicted as the moment when modernity broke into the Swedish society, and news was seen, together with advertising and cars as the paramount sign of the times.

It was a politically tumultuous time, in the aftermath of the First World War with the Russian revolution reverberating internationally and nationally.

Sweden was, until the late 19th century, one of the least industrialized and urbanized countries in Western Europe. It now experienced an accelerating modernization, economically, but also politically, with general suffrage from 1921 and fluctuating majorities in the parliament. There was first, a general need for information in a dramatically changed national and global situation. Secondly, there was a fierce ideological struggle between the socialist and bourgeois party groups, a situation to be ended in the early 1930s. From then on the Social Democrats were to stay in power until the 1970s. It was during these decades that modern journalism was defined and developed.

An Institution Comes of Age

In Sweden the news paradigm and the idea of objective news developed within the confines of the party press system. The press' ideological distinction between news and views served to uphold the idea that the impact of the party affiliation was restricted to the editorial and opinion pages. In the real world, politics also entered the news pages, more so with the formation of forces in Europe before the Second World War. In the 1950s the politicisation of news was no longer driven by the party system to such an extent. Consensual politics could use the journalistic institution as an ideological organizer in the service of the welfare state then being socially engineered in relative political accord. The 1980s saw the birth of outright campaign journalism, most outspokenly in the tabloid press. Later it would find its way into the national and local morning papers. As is usual for journalism with a populist slant, this version's prime rationale was commercial. The local papers nowadays mostly mobilize their readers around local issues, reminiscent of the national dailies' adherence to national goals in the 1950s.

Journalism is, with its bundle of genres, an institution very much defined by its relationships to other institutions in society. An overall interpretation of our findings was that there has been a shift in the relationship such that the autonomy of journalism vis-à-vis other institutions in society, including the political system, has grown successively over the last century. In relative terms the early dependence on the political *party* turned into a dependence on the *state*, later replaced by the *market*.

The development of Swedish journalism was thus closely interconnected with the creation of "The People's Home", the peculiarly Swedish (and to a variable extent Scandinavian) version of the welfare state. Journalism took on the officially sanctioned task as the indispensable link between the po-

litical system and the citizenry – not only as a disseminator of two-way information between the two, but also as a social organizer. Across the century this implied a number of distinct forms of “news societies”. This is how we chose to label them in *Editing Society* (Ekecrantz & Olsson 1994).

THE SOCIAL FORM OF NEWS

The *unedited* society: -1910

The *accounted* society: 1910-1955

The *conversational* society: 1956-1965

The *edited* society: 1966-1990

TYPICAL EDITORIAL PRACTICE

Mechanical transmission of news items

Taking notes of prominent utterances

Organizing and representing dialogues

Instrumental, politicised actualisation

Ten years after the appearance of this book one should perhaps add:

The *spectacle* society: 1991-

Staging media events, political spectacles

The definition of the periods should not be taken too literally, one reason being that the different (types of) newspapers developed unevenly, another that earlier forms lingered on when a new form had gained prominence. Furthermore, significant changes occurred within these periods with the possible exception of the short third period. Still, we believe that the etiquettes give a fairly adequate idea of central traits in the social history of Swedish news journalism.

In the “unedited society” the editorial office was basically a “post office”. Messages dropped in from near and far, which together with clippings from other newspapers were assembled in no particular order. Embryonic headlines existed in the shape of first sentences in bold. In the “accounted society” reporters stood close to their prominent sources who appeared in the texts without much editing of the often quite lengthy statements. The articles were often illustrated with a photographic portrait of the speaker. In the beginning of the period these photos were taken in an atelier, not by a press photographer. In most cases the accounts were introduced by a brief reporter statement about the time and place of the “speech act”.

In the “conversational society” this transmission of monologues gave way to all kinds of dialogues, either as textually represented with the journalist as an observer or as an active participant. In the welfare society under construction, most dialogues concerned social issues. Also photographs carried a social content in the sense that many of them displayed groups of people, very often interacting with another, talking consensual society into being, as it were.

This was one of the traits that disappeared completely in the full-blown “edited society”. Now the whole arsenal of objectivism techniques is used to establish journalistic authority in the texts. At the same time the journalistic or editorial initiative in actualising certain conditions or events at the expense of a myriad of others is disguised as impartial reporting, however detrimental or beneficial the revelation might have been to a political actor or interest. This “instrumental actualisation” (Kepplinger *et al.* 1991) is largely

unpredictable and contributes to a new instability in the political system. The “spectacle society” represents the extreme form of the edited society, a society in which politics is strongly media-driven (Kellner 2003). This extrapolation of our own results is still waiting for comparative historical documentation in Sweden.⁴

The identification of these “societal” forms and ideal typical practices was based on a number of content, formal, editorial, graphic and other criteria. Some of these can be seen as indicators of long-term *gradual changes*, others representing the introduction of *key elements*, characteristic of modern journalism, and still others had to do with *qualitative shifts* – one dominant form giving way to another.

After the Americanisation of the *Dagens Nyheter* and other newspapers in the following years one could safely say that, in principle, the key elements of modern news journalism were in place by the end of World War I. The news material was compartmentalized as to subject area and placed into a hierarchy of ascribed importance. There were headlines and illustrations and at least some of the five W’s could be detected in most of the articles. However, beyond that, important changes would follow in the decades to come. Some of them were of the gradual kind and related to a general modernization process. Others should rather be seen in the context of the transformations of the national political culture.

Into the Centre of the Stage

Representative samples of articles from the 1920s, 1950s and 1980s displayed significant changes in the ratios of articles with *illustrations* and *signatures*. The portion of illustrated articles, including photos, drawings and news graphics doubled from the 1920s to the 1950s and trebled into the 1980s. In the later period a third of all articles were illustrated. The increase in the use of signatures is even more dramatic. Starting out in the 1920s the signature was almost non-existent. It was not the journalist, but the newspaper, as “organ”, which was the mouthpiece, for others or for itself. In the 1950s less than 10% of the articles carried signatures. By the 1980s this figure had risen to close to 40%. Also the types of signatures used, tell us about changes in the professional role model. First there were the more or less anonymous initials, later came the “artist” names, still later to be replaced by full names. Today one can easily observe that the ratio of signed articles is much higher than the 40% of the 1980s. This relates to tabloid development and the frequent use of photo by-lines.

The use of *questions and answers* and how this usage has changed over the years tells us something about the journalist’s, and journalism’s, relationships to both authorities/sources and readers. In the 1920s question marks appeared frequently in the headlines. In later decades they were very rare. What were the questions about in the ‘20s? They were primarily concerned

with three topics. It was asked: i) If a certain rumour was actually true? ii) Which decision would be reached? iii) What do we really want? The uncertainty of predictions and normative dilemmas were considered to be interesting reading on the threshold of the modern society. Questions were open and positive answers were largely missing. Guesses were still guesses and like predictions and rumours, they were not transformed into facts. This was a time of questions and also uncertainty in the world of journalism.

In the 1950s all the uncertainty of the 1920s was gone. The socially engineered People's Home had all the answers to the questions it posed and the newspapers, then positioned close to the political system and the state bureaucracy, took pride in reporting about the pending solutions to remaining social problems. There had been, in the 1980s, another change. Questions posed from outside no longer drove journalism to such an extent. Journalism's selective actualisation of issues provided "answers" to questions that had not really been raised in either some autonomous public or political sphere, but more often had been generated from within the media system.⁵ Illustrations, signatures and questions and answers all attest to the more central position of the journalistic institution. Other dimensions add to the picture of a zigzagging modernization process.

The Formation of the Journalistic Event

The *temporal* dimension can in different ways be used to further assess the meaning of modernization in the Swedish context. This variable is defined here, as the main time orientation(s) of the article: past, present and/or future. This also gives an indication of the complexity of the journalistic text. The most complex ones deal with the present and include references to the past and also some speculation about future consequences in the form of predictions, hopes or fears.

Out of the possible combinations those including the present, a "now", increased their share, especially those focussing on the present and the future: things happening now have future consequences. This seems to be the basic temporal logic of modern journalism, Swedish style. The portion of all articles that had this 'current' orientation increased from one-sixth to more than half.⁶

There is thus a steady change with regard to the temporal orientation of Swedish news over the 20th century. How are we to interpret this change and how is it related to social, professional and institutional changes? There are two explanations. In the first decades of the century Sweden was still in the middle of a strong ideological phase of modernization. The "modern" versus the old or "traditional" constituted the dominant discursive field. References to history (old technologies going wrong, traditional institutions failing) served to hail present changes and the brave new world waiting on the doorstep. In later years historical references or causes disappeared gradually. Historical explanations were no longer in vogue. The future is chiselled

out *now*, it is not seen as an outcome of history. This is the typical Swedish rhetoric of progress, selectively suppressing history (Palonen 1997).

The second explanation of the gradual disappearance of history is that the very short micro-history of reporting also disappears step by step. "Some days ago" is no longer a viable temporal fixation of an event in the 1960s or 1990s. The discursive context of the journalistic event is peeled off, including for instance the meeting between reporter and source. Journalism also speaks with a voice of its own when it channels the voices of other actors. This is just one objectivism strategy out of many.⁷

A related dimension is the type of journalistic *event* that dominates. In the early days traditional event types such as the *unique* and *cyclical* events made up 83% of the total. The remaining 17% were a mix of *trends* (tendencies), *processes* and (circumstantial, situational) *states*. Towards the end of the century these ratios had changed to 58.3% and 41.2%. The ratio of "state" articles had more than trebled. The once typical journalistic news story, an account of something unique that has occurred in the recent past is not so typical any more. This might seem paradoxical, thinking of the standard 'Five Ws' definition of news journalism.

Swedish media's orientation in social and political *spaces* across time is a different story in the sense that there have been no notable changes over the 20th century as to the privileging of certain sectors or levels in society. Using a dichotomised scale distinguishing between "power" spheres and "society" spheres, the only really significant change is that the ratio of articles dealing with *both* these groups of spheres increased significantly. This reflects a strong increase in the type of news that focus on political or authority decisions and how they affect or afflict ordinary people. In the days of the People's Home ordinary people appeared as spectators or as participants in social events. This was later to be replaced by a victimization of men and women "in the street".

How did this relate to the type of events that occurred? What happened in the different sectors in terms of the event types that we discussed earlier? Distinguishing between "modern" and "un-modern" event types we found that modernization, the move away from the unique and cyclical to the processual, tendential and circumstantial, goes faster in the power spheres than in the social spheres of society. Power modernizes itself, it is dynamic and future-oriented, whereas the rest of society is slow or standing still, looking backward rather than forward. Modern Swedish journalism looks with different eyes upwards and downwards. At the top we find plans, rationality, verbosity and progress – at the bottom irrationality, deviance and randomness, and non-speaking or reactive subjects.

It seems to us that increased professionalism in news journalism naturalizes the perspectives at the top. Different social strata are thus ascribed different time horizons, subaltern groups more often than others lacking future outlooks. One implication is that the temporalities of journalistic texts are correlated with power and ideology. They reflect the relationship between jour-

nalists and other actors and they show the degree of adaptation to the dominant value systems of a particular society at a particular historical moment.

Concluding Remarks

We started out with a strong commitment, founded on a series of studies, to the idea that the modernization of the formats and contents of journalistic news is, to put it bluntly, less a universal trend than a national affair. The preceding pages have shown examples of this lack of steady “progress” in the journalistic texts. Apart from such easily observable changes as the increased uses of illustrations (visualization) and signatures (personalization) it is hard to identify one-directional changes. Once modern journalism, as characterized here, was installed around World War I the rest of the story has more to do with changes in the national political culture than with anything else, globalisation included. We are talking of print journalism. Other journalism is partly another story, a story of how the TV-dominated society of the spectacle may signal the demise of the news paradigm altogether as a mass mediated cultural form.

Notes

1. Michael Palmer argues for a much longer historical perspective on news: “...the (Western) journalistic canon of the 5 Ws and the inverted pyramid is, in a way, a throwback to Quintilian’s rhetoric of circumstances...” (Palmer 2003). Here, however, we are concerned with commercial news intended for a mass audience and may therefore content ourselves with a 150 (or 175) year perspective.
2. An overview of such factors is presented in Høyer (2001) and, with a focus on professionalization, in Høyer & Lauk (1997).
3. If prejudice and superstition is taken as indicators of archaic or pre-modern journalism the correlation might sometimes even be the reverse. I am thinking of British million circulation tabloids, for instance, often subverting even the concept of news.
4. A first treatise of spectacle politics, within the research programme, can be found in *Medierummet* (Media Spaces), Becker et al, 1996.
5. For a detailed account of questions and answers throughout the studied periods, see Becker et al, 2000, chapter 2.
6. These data are from Editing Society and based on the years 1935, 1960 and 1990. Another study (Ekecrantz et al, 1994) yielded similar results. For an English article version, see Ekecrantz 1997.
7. For just one example of studies dealing with such strategies see Lisbeth Lipari : “As with other aspects of news work, textual strategies such as stance adverbs [like obviously, clearly, apparently, and presumably] can serve to enhance and conceal both journalistic and social authority” (Lipari 1996, 821). In Sweden Mats Ekström and colleagues have conducted several studies of journalistic strategies.

Telling the News

Danish Newspapers 1873-1941/2000

Søren Kolstrup

Historical Outlook

The period of 1870-1910 in Danish history is one of swift and profound economic, political and social changes. The peasants join the public sphere en masse around 1870 and in the ensuing 25 years they organise their political, economical and cultural life, and are soon followed by the workers. The country is industrialised after 1870. Life in the countryside changes as the urbanisation of Denmark creates a totally new environment for every day life – that of the modern city. There is an arduous three-way political contest between the Conservative government, the Liberals of the peasants' party and Social Democrats of the workers' party. Finally, after thirty years of discourse during which the political and cultural power of the Conservatives is slowly eroded, parliamentarism is installed in 1901.

In this context and throughout this period the press expands. The expansion of the political party press is led, by the liberal press in the 1870s, and then by the social democratic press in the 1880's and 1890's. At the same time, different types of popular, non-political, newspapers develop especially at the end of the century. There were, in 1870, 73 provincial newspapers with a circulation of 42,000 copies. This had increased by 1913 to 128 provincial newspapers and 113 sub-branch newspapers with a circulation of 402,000 copies (Thomsen 1972, 172 and 220). The Copenhagen press had, in the meantime, risen from 9 to 17 titles and circulation had increased from 53,000 to 381,000 (Ibid. 241-245). Commensurate with this expansion the reading surface of newspaper issues doubled or tripled during this period (Ibid. 248).

The readership expanded among old and new social layers (Ibid. 246). The penetration of the newspapers to the remote western and northern parts of the country is the clearest expression of the expansion of the press in this period (Ibid. 133).

The press fulfils different needs. It brings political/cultural information and advice, it strengthens the readers self-esteem, which was absolutely necessary in an atmosphere of Conservative contempt for the peasants and workers and

it provides entertainment. Furthermore it should be noted that only the press is able to give all levels of society an awareness of the nation as a structure where different actors are involved in different activities or processes at different places at the same time. This is one of the main points in *Imagined Communities* (cf Anderson 1996). As a result new types of newspapers are introduced especially new types of popular newspapers. New genres are introduced (the reportage is definitely established around 1880) and the existing genres change. The model for news articles changes completely over this period.

The content becomes more and more entertainment oriented. Thomsen has examined the distribution of the Copenhagen newspapers' reading matter in six categories: politics, economics, (high brow) culture, sensation (crime and accident), (the popular culture of) entertainment and diverse (personal and social events). He puts together the last three categories into one 'Popular' category. I have summarised the first three into a category of 'Serious reading' and have calculated the average figures of these two categories. Finally I have calculated the importance of categories in *Social-Demokraten* (1874-2000) and *Politiken* (1884-the present). *Table 1* indicates that *Politiken* was very late to give the entertainment reading a central role; it also shows that *Social-Demokraten* returned to providing 'Serious reading' at a moment when 'entertainment' was well established in the rest of Copenhagen's newspapers.

Table 1. The Distribution of Serious and Popular Reading over the Years According to Thomsen 1972, pp. 888-90 (per cent)

Year	Serious reading	Popular reading	Serious reading Soc-Dem	Popular reading in Soc-Dem	Serious reading in Politiken	Popular reading in Politiken
1868	63.4	36.6				-
1884	55.9	44.1	69.1	30.3	66.7	33.3
1902	38.7	61.3	43.8	56.2	63.0	37.0
1914	38.5	61.5	54.7	45.3	44.0	56.0

This paper tries to see the evolution of news structure as a long-term process over half a century. It is seen in the light of the French Annales School that was famous for its distinction between a long and medium term history (Braudel 1996, 15-38).

Media history is normally a history of formats, the triumphant concepts and is focused on short-term history. Thus when *Politiken* had been modernised in 1905 by its famous editor, Henrik Cavling, history had come to its term and the evolution of the more conservative newspapers was uninteresting (cf. Lehrmann's discussion in Lehrmann 1999, 47). Danish media history is still marked by a fascination of Cavling (see the descriptions of Cavling in Drotner 1996 and Marzolf, 1982). It is a history of events. It is a short-term history. The Cavling revolution at *Politiken* 1905 is seen as a rupture, but like other ruptures we deal in this case with the consequences of a long

process within the press (cf Søllinge and Thomsen, vol 2, 75-76): As for entertainment reading *Politiken* joins the mainstream in 1905.

In this chapter I try to follow the dying formats as well as the emerging ones. While it is difficult to establish when a particular development or historical phenomenon begins, it is even more difficult to say when it stopped. These slow developments may be very hard to follow and demand more empirical studies than this chapter alone can offer. Barnhurst and Mutz (1997) have, however, conducted a very thorough and detailed investigation of the evolution of news reporting over a period of 100 years in "American Journalism and the Decline in Event-Centred Reporting".

The structure of news is the expression of working routines, and working routines change imperceptibly slowly. Then at a given moment they become conscious. That is the change. Unfortunately we still do not know when the new structures of news became conscious routines in all sections of the Danish press.

The News Genre

Any news story in Danish newspapers in the 1870's had a linear structure, but by the 1940's almost all stories were constructed according to the inverted pyramid (relevance order, instalment principle, top-down organisation, cf. van Dijk 1988a, 48). How did this fundamental change in text structure come about in Denmark? I present an explorative investigation based on 3330 articles taken from 75 Danish newspapers covering the period from 1873 to 1941.

We all know that it is hard work to define the different journalistic genres. What do they have in common and what distinguishes them from each other – what are the criteria? It is even more difficult to define them over time – what is the identity of a changing genre? Most books about journalism have a chapter on journalistic genres or text types. Normally the routines of the production processes are fundamental criteria for defining genres, but since the definitions are normally very loose, the genre problem is not very important (Meilby 1996, 64–72). News is the hardest genre of all to define – it can be anything. We cannot use structural features – they change. We cannot use the routines of the working process – they have also changed. The size of an article is not a useful criterion. The long article of 200 years ago is deemed today to be a short notice. But in the absence of any other criterion we have to admit that news can best be defined by its content. News, as Pynt Andersen suggests, contains a rupture. Events that distinguish themselves or can be presented as distinguished from the daily routine are news (Pynt Andersen 2002, 221 ff.) For more information about news as rupture see Jamet et Jannet (1999a and 1999b). This has been a constant feature since the beginning of newspapers. News comprises crime, sex, scandals, accidents, marriages, catastrophes, political events etc (cf. Søllinge and Thomsen 1989, vol. 2, 75). News content seems in many ways to have remained stable since the 16th century, but not news structure. It is astonishing that within a period of 40-50 years the way

news stories are told changed completely and then remained stable for almost a 100 years. Furthermore the structure of the newspaper story is even adapted by news bulletins of the temporal-linear media – radio and television (cf. Lewis 1994). There are several explanations for this change, but without a thorough investigation of the ‘how’ of this evolution, it is useless to ask the ‘why’. This paper is a first step to investigate the how.

Linear and Non-linear Principles in Newspapers’ Layout

The linear principles reign, in 1850, in the newspapers’ layout as well as within single articles. This means that the newspaper invites the reader to a continuous reading line and that the story tells events in a chronological order. There were not necessarily, at that time or in the following years, headlines for each article. The specific news item was not an independent unit. The few headlines indicated the provenance of news: 1) The specific place from where the news and/or the newspaper came that was the source of information. 2) The method of the communication: Postal information and later telegram news. 3) The division of foreign (Udlandet) and domestic news (Indland/Fædrelandet) was a thematic indication, but closely related to the indication of the source.

How did the evolution from the newspaper as a ribbon (the uninterrupted columns) to a topographic display occur?

The newspapers from the beginning of the 19th century had the same print format as a book with, normally, two columns, but sometimes only one as was the case of *Politievennen* (circa 1820). Early in the century the format grows longer, but still in the 1840s Danish newspapers had normally two columns and they continued to have a pagination covering a whole year. So even a single issue of a newspaper was not, in principle, independent.

About the middle of the century the newspapers began to have three columns and to use the *feuilleton* and at approximately the same time the use of bold print-types helped in dividing the long columns into more easily legible units.

While the principle of the provenance for telegram news was, around 1870, still predominant in Copenhagen, in the provincial news we see the emergence of the single article with headlines in bold or, more commonly, with the first words in bold. The use of ‘gothic’ fonts was abandoned in advertisements and the experimentation of the use of two columns is apparent. The advertisements are now isolated units and begin to disrupt the ribbon display. As such, the reader is invited to view them in a different manner. A linear reading is no longer viable, as each advertisement is attempting to interrupt the reader’s perception of the adjacent advertisement.

It was possible by the end of the century for newspapers to choose any format from the tabloid to “blanket” format. They could cultivate the classic

Figure 1.



Berlingske politiske og
Avertissements-Tidende, 21st
January 1873, front page

Figure 2.



Aarhus Amtstidende, 2 January
1873, front page

look with up to seven or even eight columns. This highly aesthetic and austere layout possessed all the problems of reading, in linear fashion, three broadsheet pages with very little space for the eye to rest. They could, on the other hand, continue in the direction that had been initiated by the advertisements with the introduction of bigger headlines and headlines covering several columns. The newspapers began to give up linear reading and began the construction of the topographic layout with multi-layer headlines.

Forposten (1899-1901) which continued under the name of *Middagsposten* 1901-09) was the most outstanding example of the popular press just after the turn of the century. The articles are easily distinguished from each other. The titles or headlines use Latin characters (of different fonts), and headlines may cover several columns and even the whole page; and multi-layer headlines were common. These are all the elements that are needed for modern newspaper layout. Thus the reader can, by the turn of the century, skip articles, can jump from one article to another and the headlines serve as guidance. The headlines create islands of the central information and directions for more details – if so wished. This topographical system is, by 1940, well established. It remains the principle in use today with the exception of the tabloids' front-page.

The single news item cannot be a completely independent unit until the newspaper uses a topographical headline design. The isolation of each news item gives it a specific identity that is a prerequisite for the change into a construction of relevance (the inverted pyramid).

Figure 3.



Forposten, 11th February 1901,
front page

The Investigation of News in 75 Newspapers

This chapter is based on the systematic reading of 75 newspapers covering the years 1873 to 1941. Table 2 contains an overall list indicating for each period the number of newspapers and the number of articles in these newspapers.

The reading and counting of the news articles was systematic. It cannot, however, be said that the choice of newspapers was systematic. Imperfect as it is, the data is useful anyway, and it helps to ask the right questions and to get an idea about the general movement of change.

All the articles have been registered in a few categories; news; reports from meetings and "other articles"; comments, short news/notices, reportages, features, all kinds of fiction and cultural material that does not have the aspect of news. A great deal of news is presented in notices. But any notice that it is reduced to giving information like "X has arrived yesterday at Y" is too short to show either a linear structure or a relevance structure or to have the aspect of a narrative. This type of notice has been relegated to the category of notices.

Table 2. The Number of Newspapers Investigated

	Number of newspapers	Number of articles
1870-1879	11	288
1880-1889	14	488
1890-1899	11	327
1900-1909	20	848
1910-1914	07	343
1927	02	136
1940-1941	10	900
Total number	75	3 330

I understand *linear constructions* as news stories that present the events in chronological order and thus with very little information in the headlines and *intermediate constructions* as those that present some information in the headlines or in the lead and then presents the main information in chronological order. The notion of *relevance order* is used in the sense of van Dijk. But when is an *intermediate structure* no longer intermediate construction but a *relevance structure/inverted pyramid*? (cf Inger Lindstedt 1998, 79).

Table 3 contains the distribution of the three categories for news articles (soft and hard news) and for reports of meetings for each period, first in number of articles, then the percentage of the news articles in the three categories: linear (lin), intermediate (int) and relevance structure (rel). Reports from meetings are rare from 1927 onwards, and are mostly treated like ordinary news articles. They are therefore not counted as reports but as news articles.

Table 3. Distribution of Structure of the Articles

	News Articles						Reports of Meetings					
	Numbers			Percent			Numbers			Percent		
	lin	int	rel	lin	int	rel	lin	int	rel	lin	int	rel
1870-1874	22	00	00	100	00	00	17	00	00	100	00	00
1875-1879	43	01	02	93	02	04	13	00	00	100	00	00
1880-1884	16	00	00	100	00	00						
1885-1890	63	06	32	62	06	32	23	00	04	85	00	15
1890-1894	13	00	03	81	00	19						
1895-1899	21	06	14	51	15	34	21	00	00	100	00	00
1900-1904	41	10	32	49	12	39	02	00	00	100	00	00
1905-1909	54	16	29	55	16	29	20	00	05	80	00	20
1910-1915	24	21	22	36	31	33	17	00	04	81	00	19
1927	27	19	27	37	19	37						
1940-1941	05	40	249	02	14	84						

These figures do lack statistical significance. Nevertheless they show that the newspapers move from a state of total linearity through a more complex situation to the complete dominance by the relevance structure. In fact the

numbers for linear structures cover the examples of narrative constructions – but no attempt has been made to count them, the numbers being too small and the distinction between simple linearity and narrative structures being too uncertain. An analysis based on two unstable categories, simple linearity and narrative linearity, would suffer from extremely low reliability.

One other conclusion can be drawn from the data: the reports from meetings do not change at the same speed and rate as the proper news articles. There were attempts to change this dinosaur of Danish journalism. The detailed reporting of meetings died out after 1920 and was absorbed by the ordinary news reporting except for a few examples of reports from meetings in local councils or committees.

Linear and Non-linear Principles in Newspaper Articles

Story and Discourse

The linear representation, from the start of newspapers' existence to about 1890, was the way to capture events (Bell 1991, 173). This means that story and discourse in the sense of Chatman match each other (cf. Chatman 1978, 63 ff.).

This construction principle works well if the subject matter (the story) is simple and if the evolution of events can be contained within one temporal line. If the event is complex and has actions with temporal ramifications going on at the same time, the linear model is problematic. The reports in the Danish press about the French revolution 12th – 15th of July 1789 or the terrible battle of Isted 1850 are good illustrations of the inherent problems (for the problems of temporal ramification see Øhrstrøm 1998, 253 ff.).

Here is an example where a simple story line matches the discourse line perfectly: In the year 1885 the cabinetmakers and the joiners began to organize their trade unions in the province. Two members of the trade union organisers in Copenhagen visited 13 towns within 18 days. *Social-Demokraten* wrote, on the 9th of June 1885, a rather long article of 80 lines about this event. The article strictly follows the events in the last five towns on a day-by-day basis giving a resume of each meeting as closely to the chronological story order as possible. The article ends: "Berg and Jensen arrived at Copenhagen after a journey of 18 days having meetings in ..." and then the 13 towns in chronological order are listed. The article may seem a bit bewildering for a modern reader, but it is easy to understand, and with a bit of training you will find this way of presentation perfectly normal.

Such linear texts are easy to read, but they do present some problems. First they invite the reader to read the whole text as the last piece of information in the text frequently has to be read to understand the point of the article. In the case of the two trade union organisers, the information that they have now returned home is the key fact. Secondly, as long as the newspapers had only two or three small pages of reading matter, tabloid or a format

between tabloid and broad sheet, linearity is no problem. The reader has the time to read the entire article. But if the reader has less time or if the newspapers have become bigger you cannot be sure that the reader can read the whole paper. Thirdly, long linear texts give you the feeling that you do not receive all the information. The story looks like a conveyor belt of information. There is nothing to indicate the important and less important facts. Readers as a result lose the plot when they have to read long articles. They may be easy to read, but they are difficult to grasp.

The Temptation of Narrativisation

A lot of news material can be turned into a narrative according to this model:

Initial situation – disruption – actions – solution/non-solution – final situation.

This model is a version of the narrative scheme according to the Swiss text linguist Jean-Michel Adam (Adam 1992, 54-58, see also and Branigan 1992, 14).

Allan Bell (Bell 1991, 147ff) uses the Labov model for personal narratives to gain a model that seemingly is valuable for the structure of news in newspapers:

Abstract, orientation, complicating action, evaluation, solution, coda.
(cf. Bell 1991, 148ff, and Labov 1972, 354ff).

Bell, however, misunderstands the model when he makes it a model for newspaper stories, as he has to discard the temporal aspects and the withholding of information. He has therefore to discard the “mise en intrigue” (the putting into plot) of Adam. But he is right in the sense that there is a rupture in both types of stories. Strangely the first handbook about journalism (Shuman, 1895) was perfectly aware that the great difference between news stories and narratives was the absence of narrative plot in news stories (Lindstedt, 95-96).

Here are some examples of the use of narrative devices:

9th of June 1885. *Social-Demokraten* prints a report about the way the newspaper's sub editor (Wiinblad) had been called to police court about an article on military affairs. Wiinblad makes a satirical portrait of his opponent and presents himself as a poor, innocent and inoffensive person. He plays with the different points of view, indicates clearly the strong points of the evolution (complicating action and the absence of the expected solution) – all these literary devices give the text a strong ironical moral.

The same year, 1885, a young man made an attempt to assassinate the Conservative, and dictatorial, Prime Minister Estrup. *Sorø Amtstidende*, a liberal opposition newspaper, in existence 1866-1963, published a report on 22nd October, which is reduced here to a resume of the main points.

- 1) The rumours in Copenhagen presented with a dramatic mise en scene,
- 2) The rumours were right,
- 3) The scene of the attempted murder:
 Estrup has just come home; he is in front of his house.
 Young man turns up and shoots.
 Estrup: "Do you want to kill me?"
 Young man shoots once more.
 People arrive to rescue Estrup.
 The front door is opened from inside.
 Estrup goes in.
- 4) He has not been hurt.
- 5) Estrup: "Well now I can say that someone has tried to kill me".

The whole story has an implicit narrator who points out, indirectly, how the different actions should be understood. The Prime Minister finally closes the incident with a kind of moral.

One type of story was frequently used by the popular press; reports from the courts, especially the brief stories about people having been given small fines. These were humoristic stories with a very strong emphasis on the narrator or their point of views. The popular newspaper *Aftenbladet* (1887-1959) has ten of these stories on 24th of July 1889. The individual stories share a common headline "From the Police Court" and are differentiated by an indentation of the first line and the names of the protagonists are marked with spaced letters.

The narrative has the advantage of presenting a good story, it is easy to understand and the important and less important elements are easy to distinguish, and it is easy to remember (cf. Branigan quoted above). The reader is captivated. But the narrative solution also has its disadvantages. Information in a good story is withheld (cf. Bordwell and Thompson 1990, 482 and Branigan 1992, 66), there is a constant play based on the disparities of knowledge, and only at the end is the total pattern of causality understood (the retroactive determination). This is one of the fundamentals in story telling. But the dissemination of serious information in newspapers is neither a play nor a game. The journalist has to deliver the information as quickly and as "willingly" as possible. They should not play with the reader, in the manner of an author or a film director. If they do so, the focus is on the fascination of the text (as in the reports from police court) and the focus is not on the referent. Narratives are normally marked by the existence of a narrative voice, a point of view, and a level from which the story is told. This is a bad device in news reporting. In the merging journalistic ideology, news is not told by

someone, it is not submitted to a point of view. News is there; the facts are there; the press just collects them (cf. Meilby 1996, 64ff).

Narrativisation means also that the story becomes more or less self-containing. *Deixis*, in narrative fiction, is only valuable within the limits of the story (Harms 1991, 150). If the news story is told according to these lines it begins to look like fiction. But news is not fiction; news is fact. A self-containing *deixis* cuts the links to our actual world. The text loses its referential function. News must have a clear link to actual reality. That is the fundamental contract. This contract is very strong when the information is important – especially if we are dealing with political information. The ways the stories from court are told in *Aftenbladet* make them look like fiction – but this has no consequences for their credibility as the reports from court are, by contract, pure entertainment or fun.

As mentioned before it may often be difficult to distinguish linear, chronological description from true narratives. The narrative solution existed since the very beginning of the print press – the casual leaflets – and it seems to have been quite widely used in the period 1880-1910. But it was never predominant. It was mostly used in stories where one person opposed the other, crimes or humorous stories from every day life. It was, however, normally absent in political affairs. Nevertheless the impact of narrativisation varies a lot over time. The narrative structure, in the 1940s, seems to have been rare, but there were variations from newspaper to newspaper. Today narrativisation seems more acceptable, at least in the popular press, and the narrativisation of news has become an issue of importance for the survival of the print media. I am convinced that the period 1885-1900 was the golden age of narrativisation when even political material seemed to rely heavily on it as well as on fictionalisation.

I am not in favour of linking a long-term evolution – the changing of news structure – to the history of events. But the still hypothetical and extraordinary use of narratives in the period 1885-1900 may very well be due to the fact that a direct reporting of political affairs could be dangerous and that in some cases the literary devices were an easy cover up. Narrativisation was a useful tool in the very harsh political climate of this period.

The Principle of Relevance

The narrative solution was not therefore a perfect solution; it was and remains a secondary one. It did not reduce the time spent by the reader and it only marginally facilitated their comprehension of the text. The solution was the inverted pyramid, the principle of relevance described by van Dijk in several of his texts from the 1980's. How the new inversion of order has been established is still not very well explored. It may well be that the first examples of inverted structures can be traced back to the telegrams during

the American Civil War. But we still need a better knowledge about journalists' practice of news reporting and their consciousness of the phenomenon. When did the new structure become a normative and conscious model for the work of Danish journalists? It was a conscious device for at least some American journalists, as Shuman's *The Art and Practice of Journalism* was published in 1894 (cf Lindstedt 1999, 94 and Schudson 1995, 53). The change does not seem to have begun in Denmark as a part of a conscious project. Indeed the first changes are almost imperceptible. The first Danish textbook on journalism, Ole Cavling's *Journalistik. Kortfattet vejledning i moderne journalistik*, presents the relevance principle, but seems to infer that this structure was far from being established in 1928 (Lindstedt 1998, 106-07).

In most textbooks there are two explanations for the fact that in journalistic texts the discourse order is so different from the story order:

- The inverted structure enables the reader to choose whether they wish to read the whole article or whether they should be content to read only the resume.
- It enables the sub / editor to cut overly long articles 'from behind' – the main information will still remain (a point already described by Shuman).

This is of course true – this final stage is a well-established and conscious routine. But before this establishment there were intermediate stages (see below) and these intermediate stages did not normally allow for cutting 'from behind'. To which extent were these stages conscious? Danish journalists could not foresee in 1885 how the news would be structured in 1915. Articles, for a good many more years, kept important information till the end of the story, even with some important information placed at the beginning. We can, however, point out the conditions necessary for the structural change. It is possible to array some types of news stories/informative texts where the relevance principle could be at hand as a model and then point out the practical advantages of the inverted structure.

- The individualisation of the piece of information introduced by a headline is a precondition.
- The influence from descriptive non-chronological texts such as personal portraits and obituary texts.
- The reports of debates about Bills and other propositions of laws. The bill has been voted on (event) and there then follow explanations and details about the new law – and even references to the debates. These texts are a blend of chronological structures and a-chronological descriptions. Unfortunately such texts are rare, the reports of debates in parliament are not at all innovative and the evolution seems to have been slow in this particular domain.

- The crime story, the trial and the verdict. The main event is the murder, the corpse or the verdict. The detective enquiry follows, the murderer is found and finally the reader is told what happened before the murder or the verdict. But this story could quite as well be told from the very beginning: events preceding the murder, then the murder, etc. So in the case of crime stories we have two possible structures: First a simple chronological story about the successive events or the stressing of the main event, the murder, from which point the rest of the story is told.
- In the case of 'breaking news' events, the newspaper has to add incoming information. The linear texts were unable to cope with this situation whereas the inverted structure permitted new information to be added from behind (see below).

Here is an example of intermediate construction of the news story:

Story 1. *Politiken* 12th June 1885

Headlines	<i>Man Shoots Himself.</i>
Main event	<i>Man shot himself at a public baths (identification details.)</i>
Circumstance & Consequences	<i>Assistant sees man and does not suspect him, bears shot, finds the dead man, corpse disposed of in the office.</i>

I use van Dijk's notions: Headline, lead, main event, circumstances, consequences, history etc. (cf. van Dijk 1988a, 52) even if this is in fact an anachronism, the 1885 story seen with the perspective of 1988. The death in this story is important as we receive this information twice, but as there is no further information about the dead person, the perspective changes and we follow the assistant from his point zero: the arrival of the candidate for suicide.

Story 2. *Kolding Folkeblad* 18th June 1885

Headlines	<i>No headlines: use of bold for the first five words.</i>
Main event	<i>High court has made a decision in an administrative trial (decision not indicated).</i>
Consequence	<i>A decision that probably will be tried at the Supreme Court</i>
History	<i>The churchwarden has asked to be paid for ringing the church bells at the burial of the late Queen (four years earlier). Payment refused by the governing church council. A detailed description of the reasons follows.</i>
Main event	<i>Supreme court has decided that the parish must pay.</i>

This story is closer to a relevance structure, but still uses old structures even with some true narrative devices (the withholding of information). First the information is given that the Supreme Court has made a decision, there follows a linear history and finally the content of the decision is given.

The two stories show – if this should at all be necessary – that from the simple linearity to the relevance structure, the intermediate nuances are numerous. They might suggest that the crime story is an ancestor to the relevance story where the main event precedes the explanation. The crime stories (crimes, verdicts, suicides, accidents) were an experimental field, where new routines and models were tried. The crime story is equally suited for narrative as well for relevance structures.

This evolution towards the inverted structure should not be considered as a smooth and equal movement towards a well-defined goal. The popular press may, in many respects, have been the section of the press that began this movement. While this may be true, even the rest of the press showed strange divergences. *Folkets Avis* (1897-1928) and *Forposten* print the same story on 6th of February 1901: The suicide of a staff sergeant at an inn in Copenhagen.

Folkets Avis relates the main event, the suicide, four times within an article of 70 lines

Headlines	<i>The death</i>
Lead 1	<i>The death</i>
Lead 2	<i>His arrival – and his death</i>
Main event	<i>Detailed report about the events from the beginning at 1 a.m. in the night till he was found dead (description): there is a change of point of view, we see the sergeant through the eyes of the landlord.</i>
Consequence	<i>Police arrive</i>
Comments	<i>Information about the sergeant.</i>

Forposten compiles a much shorter article, half the size of *Folkets Avis*

Headlines	<i>The death</i>
Main event	<i>Report about the events from the beginning till he was found dead (description): there is no change of point of view, from the very beginning we see the sergeant through the eyes of the landlord or the staff.</i>
Consequence	<i>Police arrive.</i>

The first article has a structure not far from the crime stories found in popular newspapers today or even in the quality morning papers: the main information is presented twice (or more) at the beginning, the story then returns to the main event in a linear narrative. *Forposten* has a much more classical structure: a very short headline and the rest in total linear order.

News stories, circa 1910, and especially political stories are more frequently organised according to the relevance principle. This is just one example: In 1908 Alberti, the Minister of Justice, was arrested for fraud. The value was enormous. The scandal was enormous. *Folkets Avis* composed an article covering three columns with headlines covering all three columns.

Headlines	<i>Alberti arrested.</i>
Lead	<i>The official announcement functions as a lead: Alberti arrested.</i>
Main event	<i>Alberti arrested (linear description, narrative).</i>
History & previous events	<i>Causes for his arrest.</i>

The rest of the article consists of new information that has turned up, of reportage and an interview with Alberti's wife.

The problem for *Folkets Avis*, and for other newspapers as well, is clearly the overload of important information. The newspaper has only one way to cope with the situation, which is to add the incoming information as it arrives. In fact the relevance principle has already given us the main information so the incoming information needs no further explanation. The relevance principle is much more efficient in such context than the narrative or the linear discourses.

The inverted structure never really became the only solution even if the newspapers around 1940 have very few articles with narrative or other quasi-linear structures. The inverted structure was adopted for its practical usefulness. It was both easy for production purposes and for the reader's orientation. But it was not a good solution for comprehension and memorisation (cf. discussion in Justin Lewis 1994.)

1940-1941 and 2000

The relevance principle is, by 1940, the principle. Almost any article about events is presented according to the relevance principle. Even stories that could have been narratives like the court reports. The 17th August 1940 *B.T.* (1916 – the present) relates an assault against an innocent holiday visitor. Headlines plus twenty lines is not a long article, yet the information of the main event – the assault – is given four times at the beginning followed immediately by the consequences! *Aftenbladet*, on 21st May 1941, relates a railway accident with headlines about the consequences of the accident and the whole article is a constant shift from consequences to main event and back. It is not until the end of the article that the reader was given the information about the beginning of the accident. It is necessary to look thoroughly to find simple linear or narrative stories in 1940-1942. The few stories with the intermediate structure come in twenty cases from two provincial papers and many are reports from local meetings, the rest are accidents. The five stories of the 1940-42 data with a linear structure are narratives.

The inverted structure has become an ideological signal indicating true and serious information even in the most trivial affairs. The inverted structure has thus at least four positive functions: It facilitates the production; it facilitates the orientation of the reader; it reduces the reading time and it

appears as a authorization for serious information. On the other hand it is debatable whether the structure aids either comprehension or memorisation and it is by no means good for entertainment.

It should be noted that the news story today is slightly different; the van Dijk categories of verbal reactions, expectations and evaluations have become more important. The information of the main event comes increasingly from interviews and is presented as interviews with the main actors. This evolution can be explained by convergence of at least three factors.

- The journalists and public, of the old political press, shared a common culture and knowledge, albeit not a very extended one, but sufficient to understand events and texts. Today the complexity of information is overwhelming. The journalists are specialists in nothing. They have developed the practice of asking experts for their opinions, and they do not share knowledge with the readers who are supposed to know nothing. In this case the use of interviews is a solution for the journalist – and for the reader.
- The strong emphasis is on neutrality. Both sides have the chance to express themselves to give objectivity. They are therefore represented in the news text. The journalist is less responsible.
- The influence of television? The information becomes a montage of bits of interviews as on television.

Finally we should add that around 2000, there was an ongoing discussion on the use of narratives in journalism and elsewhere. The linear narrative structure has regained public favour over the last years, as with the developing focus on entertainment it has become inevitable that the use of narrative devices has increased. But when did this regain of favour begin? And to which extent was this movement conscious? Is this new interest for narrative devices only due to the crisis of the newspapers – the narrative as saviour? Has new journalism had an influence on simple news reporting in Danish newspapers already in the 1970's? What we know is that most narratives are located in either specific genres, especially in features, or at a specific place in the news story – the linear main event.

Conclusion

This “new journalism” (factual and entertaining etc.) reached Scandinavia at the start of the 20th century, and with it came the transformation of old-style party newspapers. The men who introduced the modern newspaper to Copenhagen and Stockholm were Henrik Cavling (1858-1933) of *Politiken* and Oscar Hemberg (1881-1944) of *Dagens Nyheter*. (Marzolf 1982, 133).

The idea of the fundamental role of individuals in the over night transformation of newspaper genres and design is also suggested by Drotner (1996, 46-49). The idea forgets the slow pace of evolution preceding 1905 and ignores the equally slow pace of evolution in newspaper design after 1905. It is equally disregards the fact that working routines cannot be changed as easily as the paper format of a newspaper. The case of *Riget* (1910-1913) is illustrative in this respect, even if it was established as a “new” newspaper, its articles varied greatly in the use of different news structures.

The important years for the change of news structure are 1885-1910. This was preceded by 10 years when the changes began, especially the use of headlines, and was followed by 25 years when the old habits died out. There were no extant examples of articles composed in a simple linear structure format in 1940. The data indicates that serious political information generalised the use of the new structure before other types of information or stories.

The change of the principles of layout was accomplished about the turn of the century. But the use of the new layout varied not only from newspaper to newspaper, but also from issue to issue of the same newspaper for about 30 years.

The analysis of the data in this article raises numerous questions that can only be answered after a renewed analysis on the basis of a larger and systematic mass of data:

- Did the change of news structure begin in Copenhagen as common sense might suggest? Or is there no difference between the provinces and the capital?
- Were the remote areas the last to give up the simple linear structures as common sense might equally suggest?
- What was the role of popular newspapers in the transformation of the news structure? While it would not be astonishing were the popular press at the forefront, serious political information was not the domain of the popular press.
- There is still the requirement for data from a thorough and detailed analysis of the relations between the subject matter such as political events, crimes, accidents, social stories, etc. and the new news structure. We do need a specific history of each news sub genre.
- The initial hypothesis was that the change of news structure is related to or due to the increase of information. Does this mean that the size of the reading surface of a given newspaper was a factor of importance?

The political orientation and the reading matter of a single newspaper may change more or less radically and in short time. This is what happened at *Politiken* in 1905. The working routines change much more slowly than struc-

ture changes and this is what happened to the writing of news (not the collecting of news data) from 1885 to 1910/15. The news structure, after 1920, has not fundamentally changed. These three changes are a perfect illustration of the Annales School's ideas about "speed and history".

There were complaints in the 1890's that the changes were going faster and faster. As for the press, these complaints were often correct even if not in the case of the evolution of the news structure. As we have seen this evolution was not described when it took place. Today people still complain, or are proud, about the ever increasing pace of change. The changes are described everywhere. Any discussion about the Internet has a sentence about the increase in speed. We have forgotten all the compartments of society where things are stable and change slowly – as is the case of the news structure.

The Half-hearted Modernisation of Norwegian Journalism 1908-1940*

Svennik Høyer & John Nonseid

Methods and Approaches

Our purpose in this chapter is to look for some characteristics of modern journalism sampled from four Oslo-papers during the first half of the previous century. We shall look for some traits of modern journalism, like the active hunt for news outside newsrooms, the topical spectre and the forms of presentation. Our questions are: When in the period 1908-1940 may the modern, or American, type of journalism have been introduced to the Oslo press, and to what extent was the use of news wires instrumental in influencing this development?

These hypotheses were derived with some modifications from Donald L. Shaw (1967: 3-12) who was among the first among communication scholars to suggest a connection between the use of the news wire and a bias in political reporting. He investigated 147 Wisconsin dailies in Presidential election years between 1852 and 1916 and found a marked drop in political bias between 1876 and 1884, and since then a steady low level of bias. This trend was even observed in election news. By comparing wired news stories with stories written and edited by the newspapers themselves Shaw found that news agencies were clearly less biased than newspapers. The bias, however, in both kinds of content decreased over time for as the use of wired news went up, the party bias went down.

American scholars have since challenged many of Shaw's interpretations. The professional consensus among communication scholars was most recently shaken by Richard Kaplan's findings that Mid-West papers had a bias in their political reporting until the end of World War I and well after the news wires had come into common use (Kaplan 1997).¹ The chain of causality, which Donald Shaw had suggested, was broken, but his findings of biased and unbiased political reporting in Wisconsin newspapers are still valid, if incomplete.²

Shaw's hypothesis was not applicable to the Norwegian condition, as is clear from the introductory chapter to this section. The multi-party press was,

according to the history of the Norwegian press, an established tradition for about a century between the early 1880s and the 1980s (Høyer 1995: 264-378). 'Objectivity' – by contrast to political commitments – requires an outsider's look at news events where the outcome of events is inconsequential and relative to the position of the observer. We had, consequently, to find another approach to study the advent of the modern and the ideologically more detached journalism in Norway. This approach we found in the styles of presentation and more specifically in the methods of storytelling or in the dramaturgy of news.

We assumed that forms of presentation interfere less with content than the norms of journalistic objectivity. The qualifier 'less' ought to be emphasised because objectivity and certain forms of storytelling belong to the so-called 'news paradigm' which emerged gradually in the US over approximately seventy years from the mid-nineteenth century to the 1920s. As was discussed in the introduction to this book the paradigm comprises interviewing, objectivity and the presentation of news. 'Objectivity' is a central tenet in the news paradigm, but not the only one, as contributions to this anthology demonstrate. Stensaas (1986-87: 55, 58) found in a sample of American newspapers 1865-1934 close statistical relationships between measures of increased 'objectivity' and the use of inverted pyramid constructions. But the relationship was not complete. Over time the use of the inverted pyramid forged ahead of other elements in the news paradigm, like a 'balanced' use of information sources.

There were further limitations and specifications to our project. The four leading Oslo newspapers that were chosen represented four different political persuasions.³ They were studied during a composite week in five time cuts: 1908, 1915, 1920, 1930 and 1940, beginning with the first edition each year.

The newspapers were chosen in part because of their reputation, in one way or another, as innovators in Norwegian journalism. We assumed that the first signs of the American style of news journalism being introduced to the Norwegian press at the beginning of the 20th century would probably be detected among these four papers.

The five time cuts were consciously chosen to reflect the situation before World War I and to stretch the period beyond 1925, the year so far mentioned – with some authority – when modern news journalism supposedly had a breakthrough in Norway (Roksvold 1997: 69) to the onset of the World War II. The Norwegian press reported World War I mainly by news wires, as our data will demonstrate. So, if it were true that the use of news wire influenced journalism, 1915 would be an important year.

A composite week was constructed for each time cut in which all stories in the four newspapers were classified and coded.⁴ The unit, both for coding and analysis, was the whole article irrespective of its size. The whole article rather than the paragraph is, in our opinion, the unit that best reflects editorial decisions in print journalism. Also the whole text is needed when story structure is the object of analysis. We assumed that the number of units

in our analysis varying from 1129 to 2141 texts between 1908 and 1940 would compensate for the variances in the size factor.

The question of unit size in measuring content qualities – whether words, sentences or column inches versus stories – was discussed in the early literature on content analysis by Berelson (1952), and by Budd, Thorp and Donohew (1967). One of their conclusions is that measurement by column inches and by the counting of articles gives equivalent results as reported by Stensaas in this book. The fact that the variance in story length seems to diminish over time supports this point of view. Thore Roksvold (2001) found in a sample of five newspapers that differences in the length of articles evened out between 1903 and 1993; smaller articles became longer and longer articles became shorter. The number of notices fell from 314 to 100 while the average number of words per article went up from 120 to 196 or by 63 percent during this period (Roksvold 2001: 63).⁵ The trend towards more standard sized articles may have been caused by the use of more headlines, also for smaller articles, during the period. How this trend in turn affected contents or story structures may only be guessed so far, our data give further hints.

Increased Journalistic Activity

The internal history of the Norwegian press from approximately the 1870s reflects an international trend in the steady increase of more efficient factors of production. Circulation figures began to rise exponentially from 1880 until 1920 following lowered postal rates, cheaper newsprint made from pulp and a rapidly improved print technology, as reported in this volume.⁶ An expanding reader market allowed for a steadily increased competitiveness in lowered copy price and subscription rates as well as in an increased volume of each edition and in the scope of journalistic coverage. This is reflected in *Figure 1*, which documents the number of articles in our four Oslo papers during a composite week between 1908 and 1940, specified for self made articles produced by journalists in the four newspapers, as well as for newswires produced by telegram bureaus.

As we see from the figure, the increase in the total number of articles is wholly due to an increased production of copy from the editorial staffs. The use of wired news increased as expected from 1908 to 1915, almost balancing the number of stories originating from home during the war. The use of wired news after 1915, however, declined unexpectedly in frequency from 536 (47 per cent) in 1915 to 334 (16 per cent) in 1940. Some of this decline may be caused by the fact that journalists had been given instruction in the art of rewriting or turning wired copy into their own stories. The *Norwegian Telegram Bureau* (NTB) had, from 1900, started to telephone wired news directly to the larger newspapers, giving a fuller account of the details

Figure 1. Newswire and Self Made Stories 1908-1940 (absolute numbers)

(Giverholt 1967). This may some times have inspired the ‘rewriter’ to forget his original source.

The increased volume of articles in the press is in turn correlated to an increased number of journalists (Høyer 2003) as well as to a more active journalism as demonstrated below in *Table 1*. The table shows some main methods that journalists used to retrieve information. ‘Passive journalism’ is defined as articles derived from documents received in the editorial office without any additional efforts by journalists to collect more information from outside sources. ‘Passive journalism’ also includes reports from public meetings and the Storting (parliament) where journalists cannot intervene in the events reported. ‘Active journalism’, by contrast, includes attributions to named persons or authorities interviewed and reportage based on interviews and other active means of collecting information. ‘Active journalism’ also includes observations of events that need to be transcribed or authored, like features. Gunilla Lundström (2004: 110) quotes a more demanding definition of ‘active journalism’ given in 1931 by one of the pioneers in Swedish journalism, Ewald Stomberg. Active journalism, he said, is the news that the newspaper has found by its own efforts, in contrast to what newspapers report without any toil on their part. Lastly, ‘comments’ in our classification include: editorials, reviews, and backgrounds.

As we see from *Table 1*, the proportion of passive journalism has more than halved from 77.7 percent in 1908 to 35.9 percent of articles in 1940. ‘Active journalism’, by contrast, increases from a mere 4.4 percent in 1908 to almost half of stories, or to 48.1 percent by 1940. The proportion of comments remains almost the same throughout the period: 17.7 percent in 1908 compared to 16 percent in 1940 without depicting any clear trend in the intervening years.

Table 1. Stories in Four Oslo-papers According to Methods of Retrieving Information and Comments. Self-produced Stories 1908-1940

Year	1908	1915	1920	1930	1940
Passive	77.7	71.4	73.7	66.0	35.9
Active	4.6	6.5	7.3	11.6	48.1
Comments	17.7	22.1	18.9	22.3	16.0
N = 100%	690	597	772	1 062	1 806

For Stockholm Gunilla Lundström (2004: 114) found for 1915 and 1916, by a slightly different definition of 'active journalism', a great variance among newspapers in their proportion of 'active journalism' ranging from 64 percent of content to "very little". This seems to make the Oslo-papers more passive by comparison. For a longer period and with a different definition of 'active' journalism Thore Roksvold (2001: 68) has classified the use of sources of information in his sample of five newspapers, but he still corroborates some of our main findings. He found that the use of verbal sources, alone or in combination with either observations or documents, has more than doubled from 26 percent of stories in 1903 to 59 percent in 1993. The same trend turned up in a content analysis of three of the newspapers in our sample (*Arbeiderbladet*, *Dagbladet* and *Aftenposten*) during the mid-war period. Between 1919 and 1939 the amount of 'active' journalism increased from 15 percent of articles to 29 percent (Karlsen, Lie, Moe, Ulstein and Winsvold 1995). These authors used basically the same method as ours but they had a more restrictive definition of 'journalistic activity', and also a smaller sample of newspapers.

Even if the data varies in methods and quality they give a consistent picture of increased journalistic activity and the use of new methods and genres, which requires both more efforts and ingenuity from the journalists before they can write their stories.

Topical Structure

It is reasonable to expect that when the available space and number of journalists increase and journalists are more active in collecting news, the variety of topics in journalism will expand. The impression of variety, however, depends on how many categories you include in your index. A standard scientific index of news content does not to our knowledge exist, so we compiled our own. We settled for eight broad topical areas of editorial attention. The basis for calculations is the number of stories for each time cut coded according to their main topic, as shown in *Table 2*.

Table 2. Self Produced (non-wired) Stories 1908-1945 According to Topics in Four Oslo-dailies (percentages)

Year	1908	1915	1920	1930	1940
Accidents	6	3	4	4	4
Crime	9	10	9	11	4
Public affairs	37	37	38	41	37
Politics	25	20	22	13	10
Economy	11	14	13	11	9
War	–	4	–	1	7
Sport	2	6	8	10	15
Culture & Entertainment	10	6	8	9	14
N = 100%	690	597	772	1 062	1 806

Table 2 gives an impression of a rather stable structure of topics within the range of our categories. The most noteworthy changes are a decrease in the proportion of attention given to politics by 15 percent, and a steady increase of sport reportage by 13 percent. Sport, in 1908, was a marginal topic compared to both 1930 and 1940. The other categories vary by five percent or less and do not depict a consistent pattern over time. This does not mean that, for example, the content of politics and public affairs has diminished in the number of stories; only that the expansion of available space has by 1940 favoured 'sport' and 'war' over politics and public affairs.

Since news is often defined as reports of disrupted social routines it was natural to include 'accidents' and 'crime' in our index of topics. On the other hand 'public affairs', 'politics' and 'economy' are areas usually covering events, important as well as trivial, outside the private sphere. These are events that are regularly reported in order to inform readers of the state of affairs outside their circle of regular acquaintances as they may affect their life and welfare. 'Sport', 'culture' and 'entertainment' are less socially serious topics, but possessed with a high degree of reader attraction and fascination.

Table 3. Wired Stories 1908-1945 According to Topics in Four Oslo-dailies (percentages)

Year	1908	1915	1920	1930	1940
Accidents	11	12	13	18	17
Crime	12	3	10	17	1
Public affairs	36	37	38	41	37
Politics	25	10	28	26	20
Economy	14	7	7	19	9
War	3	58	12	–	30
Sport	1	–	2	6	6
Culture & Entertainment	3	1	1	2	1
N = 100%	439	539	426	339	334

There were two major periods of armed conflict in Norway's proximity, during the three decades of our time cuts; World War I and the Soviet-Finnish Winter War 1939-1940.⁷ So 'war' is one of our categories of content. A rather curious detail in *Table 2* is the small attention given to 'war' in 1915 in the self-produced articles. The absence of 'war' in 1908 and 1920 are easier to explain. An explanation of the low frequency in 1915 is given indirectly by the high rate of news wires (48 percent of all stories), which carried the main burden of battle and war information in 1915; indeed 58 percent of news wires concerned World War I. Further details can be read from *Table 3*.

From *Table 3* we see that accidents are more often reported in wired news than in the self made copy (table 2). The reporting of politics and economy has about the same proportion in both kinds of content.

The eight categories (in tables 2 and 3) do limit the ability to recording more minute varieties of contents. Thore Roksvold (2001: 64) used twice as many or 16 topical categories, and he confirms our main impression of a rather stable topical structure in newspaper contents.

Modes of Story Telling in News

Modern news journalism gives journalists a kind of paradoxical autonomy (Høyer and Lauk 2003). The introduction of interviewing, for example, gave journalists the decisive initiative in collecting and evaluating information. But then, the news story is said to gain in prestige by the number of authoritative sources consulted and attributed for facts, which ultimately conceals the opinions, insights and abilities of journalists, as well as their personal responsibility for the article. The journalist should not, by the standards of objectivism, intervene in the story. Modern news journalism underscores this impersonal character in that presentation first gives the gist of the news event, followed up by explanations and details in a falling order of importance. This, in short, is the 'relevance structure' as defined by the Dutch linguist Teun van Dijk (1988b: 78). The more common name in journalism is the 'inverted pyramid', or simply the 'pyramid', which has been known in American journalism since the 1860s (Mindich 1998). Julius Reuter informed his correspondents in 1883:

It is requested that the bare facts be first telegraphed with the utmost promptitude, and as soon as possible afterwards a descriptive account, proportionate to the gravity of their incident (Read 1999: 106).

This is a short recipe for the 'inverted pyramid' where all the essential information is given in the headline and in the first paragraph, the so-called lead. The methods of modern news journalism through stressing facts and avoiding generalisations and predictions became an antithesis to the opinionated

press. Party papers, for instance, had a network of information sources in various professions and walks of life, which basically agreed with the political philosophy of the newspaper. Committed journalists could not be 'balanced' in their choice of sources or detached in their presentation without ruining the formulae of politically attached journalism. This was probably the situation in Norway at the beginning of the 20th century.

Modern news journalism in wired news may be seen in this context as a Trojan horse, which was inadvertently smuggled into the party press. This is not, however, a question of 'either-or'. The omnibus or multi-purpose and ambivalent newspaper becomes impossible only in totalitarian systems. There is still some room within a multi-party press for variations of style between papers, even some room for experiments.

The following two stories from the conservative *Aftenposten* more or less follow the rules of modern news journalism with an event-focused lead:

**Four Finnish hospitals bombed by Soviet-Russian planes.
Flysheets circulated in Leningrad: "Stop the war"**

In addition to the hospital in Nurmes, where 19 persons were killed by Russian bombers, three other hospitals were also attacked by Soviet-Russian planes. Easily detectable red crosses marked all hospitals. Altogether seven nurses have been killed. (*Aftenposten* January 24th 1940).

There then follows some details about political life in Helsinki, reactions in The Hague and a separate wired story from Moscow under the same two headlines. This article contains several related stories referring to the same war, but the most dramatic news is given a clear priority. The major part of this composite story was not identified as wired. It may be a combination of reports from *Aftenposten*'s own correspondent and the telegram bureau (NTB). The dateline Helsinki January 24th gives only an indication.

There were many hybrids of inverted pyramid and stories told chronologically throughout the period of 1908-40: the headlines in three or four decks gave the most important news in capsule form, while the main text opened either with information about sources of information or with what had happened earlier, before the news story really began.

The following notice from *Arbeiderbladet* in 1930 illustrates a more typical 'inverted pyramid':

Well-known burglar caught

The well-known burglar Skrede who early yesterday morning escaped from prison, was caught in the afternoon when he came strolling near the municipal cleansing department where he met two constables hunting for him. He did not resist when taken back to prison. Most of the police force searched for this dangerous criminal yesterday. (*Arbeiderbladet* January 30th 1930).

Stories written according to the formulae of modern news journalism were abhorred as vulgar when they were introduced in Europe at the end of the 19th century. Interviews were seen more as an abrupt and unwelcome invasion of privacy, than as a polite conversation (Silvester 1993). The old European traditions of journalism (German, French or Central-European) was closer to essay writing, to enlightenment, to traditional methods of story telling, or simply to more unstructured ways of just telling news. The most important reason for publishing newspapers by the end of the 19th century was still a way of making opinions public, and thereby influencing power holders and establishing the proper facts of social life.

In addition to the 'inverted pyramid' above we have identified two other categories of story structure or dramaturgy closer to the European tradition: the 'diamond' kind of news story structure and the 'quadrangle' as a category for residual cases.

The story line at the beginning of the 20th century in journalism gave more emphasis to chronology and sometimes to colour and drama in presentation. The 'diamond' equals the classical mode of story telling: First introduce the actors, scene and plot, then expand the story to a dramatic climax, and finally wind it up by a concluding statement, which brings the audience back to the present. The following story is a prime example of a 'diamond' from the Swedish newspaper *Falu Kuriren* October 10th, 1910. Our quote is taken from Jan Ekecrantz and Tom Olsson (1994: 117-19).

On board the ship *Signe* from Åland, which for the time being is harboured near the town square of Maria, an awful incident occurred. Two brothers Johansson own the ship.

The older brother came late at night on board in the company of some women, who started to make much noise. When the younger brother told them to keep quiet, the older brother hit him with an iron rod, followed by several cuts from an axe. Passers-by hurried to pacify the bully, and the wounded was taken to the Serafihospital.

His condition is critical and one cannot say for certain if his life can be rescued.

This way of telling a story would hardly be recognised as news today but, as we shall soon see, it was commonly applied in journalism some decades ago.

The third category, which we have named the 'quadrangle', comprises all stories, which do not belong to the other two categories. This implies that the 'quadrangle' type contains other genres, which were evaluated as irrelevant for news journalism. The 'quadrangle' stories are, as news, unfocused and lacking a detectable dramaturgy, as Halliki Harro Loit points out in her chapter on Estonia. The 'quadrangle' stories are comparatively long, so we shall comment on the content rather than translate it directly. Thore Roksvold (1997: 69-71) gives an example from *Tidens Tegn* of a typical 'quadrangle' story of the soccer Cup Final in October 10th 1919.

**The Norwegian Cup in soccer.
Odd, Skien Norwegian champion, Beats Frigg 1-0**

The headlines give the kernel of the news story, but then a longwinded introduction follows.

The main text starts with a description of the weather as the train pulls out of the railway station in Oslo, with details of the passengers, stations passed en-route and of how sunshine changes to snow before the train reaches its destination. This is followed by some information about the public, the arena and how the teams entered it. The report of the match starts only in paragraph six, and then summarises it in chronological order in a further six lengthy paragraphs. The reporter ends the story with an evaluation of the performance of the two teams in two paragraphs. He did not report his return trip to Oslo.

This article relates two stories: a travelogue consisting of 226 words or 29 percent of the text, followed by a report of a soccer match in 444 words, occupying 56 percent of the text, ending up with an integrated evaluation in 116 words, taking 15 percent of the text.

The following article has the same characteristics of two intertwined stories (*Aftenposten* February 3. 1950):

A researcher of cancer coming home from America

The story opens with the description of the call of an America liner "Oslofjord" at the port of Bergen. Among the passengers was Dr. Liverud from the National Cancer Institute coming home from a study trip to the US. The article then gives details of his trip, interchanging information about the sailing through the Panama Canal, with visits to several renowned clinics. After a while the interview arrives/focuses at what seems to be the main topic: the treatment of cancer. The journalist ends the interview with an open question about the distribution of cancer in the American population, which produced some vague impressions from Dr. Liverud who apparently did not know about the distribution. The attitude is deferential throughout the story.

Data Analysis

Table 4 demonstrates the development in the dramaturgical form of news stories in our four newspapers 1908-40. The most striking impression is the consistent differences between wired and non-wired stories: The news agencies as expected seem to be in the lead, in more than one meaning of the word 'lead', away from the 'quadrangle' towards the 'inverted pyramid'. The next strong impression, however, is that 1940 in most respects breaks a trend between 1908 and 1930, especially by giving a higher than expected proportion of 'quadrangle' stories. A consistent and linear development towards

more structured news stories (pyramid + diamond) was apparently broken in 1940.

The use of the 'inverted pyramid' in non-wired stories increased tenfold from 1908 (3 percent) to 1940 (32 per cent). The use of the 'pyramid' in wired stories by contrast increased by five-fold to 57 per cent of all stories in 1930 and then fell by 20 percent to 1940. When we compare wired stories with non-wired we see that in all time cuts wired stories were more often written in the 'pyramid' form.

We cannot discover any clear trend for the 'diamond' form of news-stories: The non- wired stories were still dominated by the more dramatic 'diamond' form of storytelling up to 1930 but then the form almost disappeared. The 'quadrangle', by contrast, decreased remarkably to 1930 and was replaced mainly by the 'inverted pyramid'. Quite unexpectedly, news stories in 1940 became more unstructured, according to our definition. The 'quadrangle' dominated.

Table 4. Stories in Four Oslo-papers According to Genres of Presentation. Self-produced (non-wired) and Wired Stories 1908-1940 (percentages)

Year	1908	1915	1920	1930	1940
Inverted pyramid (non-wired)	3	8	10	16	32
Inverted pyramid (wired)	12	23	30	57	37
Diamond (non-wired)	46	56	52	57	25
Diamond (wired)	19	15	26	13	5
Quadrangle (non-wired)	51	36	38	27	43
Quadrangle (wired)	69	62	44	30	58
N = 100% (non-wired)	690	597	772	1 062	1 806
N = 100% (wired)	439	536	426	339	334

The only reasonable interpretation we can give for the break in most of the trends in 1940 is the Soviet-Finnish Winter War. It was the event most frequently referred to in foreign news in our six sampled days from January and February 1940. The 'war' category made up 30 percent of wired stories and 7 percent of non-wired stories. The majority of the war stories were long with a composite character, as in our example above. The winter campaign left a deep impression in Norwegian public opinion and produced a great deal of comment in the press. The conflict also became a symbol in the interwar feud between Marxist radicals and bourgeois fascists. Background articles made up an impressive 14 percent of non-wired stories in 1940. Background articles were next to non-existent in the other four time cuts: between 1 and 4 percent of all stories. Much of the major events in the Winter War could apparently not be reported in a detached, or in an 'objective' manner, without comments.

Discussion

We started out with two questions: When may modern news journalism have been introduced to the Oslo-press, and could it be explained by the use of wired news stories?

Some forms of modern news journalism were practiced early in the 20th century, but at a low frequency. By 1940 journalism was mostly embedded in traditional forms and in forms of transition, even though a development in the direction of modern journalism is clearly detectable in the preceding period. Despite a clear trend towards a more active journalism between 1930 and 1940 the use of modern journalistic forms seems to fluctuate too much to confirm any impression of an established routine.

It is easy to lose the perspective when focussing mainly on certain forms of news journalism, so it is wise to reserve some uncertainty about what more exactly happened to journalism in general beyond the reach of our categories. Forms of writing and story composition, as yet un-investigated, certainly developed between 1908 and 1940.

Harland Stensaas (1986-87: 55) in his investigation of the objectivity ideal as practised by five US newspapers in three sampled periods between 1865-1874 and 1925-1934 found that, according to his definitions, on average 40 percent of stories were objective in the first period and 80 percent in the last. Horst Pöttker in his content analysis of the *New York Herald* in this volume reports that 26 percent of the stories investigated in 1895, and a similar proportion in 1920, was written in the inverted pyramid form. Norwegian journalism, by comparison, looks like a latecomer, for only by 1940 could the four Oslo papers be compared to the *New York Herald* 20 years earlier. Søren Kolstrup – in his chapter to this book – concludes that the modern form of story telling was securely established in Danish journalism by 1940. Denmark seems to be ahead of the rest of Scandinavia in implementing modern forms of journalism. The Danish press, for example, pioneered the publication of Europe's first modern tabloid newspapers in the 1860s (Thomsen 1972, Gustafsson 1996).

Our data, however, support one of Kolstrup's other main conclusions that the introduction of more fact-oriented and top-down journalism is a gradual process. No single year such as 1905 for Denmark, 1908 for Sweden or 1925 for Norway marks a sudden and pervasive revolution of new forms and conventions.

Gradual developments over several decades seem to be the normal condition in news journalism. Journalism, more than other forms of writing is a collective project. Texts are hierarchically edited and controlled. New forms not only mean new ways of thinking journalism but also of observing and selecting the news, writing it up in new formulas of story telling and then editing it in one or several steps. Routines must be agreed, tried out, practised, accepted by the audience and finally made into a working habit. These adjustments take time.

Inger Lindstedt (1998) has analysed an important step in the diffusion of new forms of journalism. In her analyses of 17 Swedish textbooks, published between 1917 and 1996, she finds a more or less explicit aversion to modern news journalism in textbooks before World War II. The inverted pyramid was called “American” as late as 1953, while in 1981 it was called either ‘international’ or ‘traditional’. As to how long it had been ‘traditional’ is not yet documented.

Gunilla Lundström (2004) vividly describes the emergence of modern journalism in the Swedish press 1898-1968. Not only were there early signs of modernism – the first two-column headline (May 18th 1900), the inverted pyramid (1906) etc. – but also early experiments went far ahead of a more common practice. There were venerated traditions to be replaced and resistances to overcome. The more general domestication of new practices was a longwinded process.

Against this background the news agencies appear as lonely pioneers in the mid-war period. They were able to some extent to push the non-wired news in the Oslo newspapers from a diamond form of presentation towards the ‘inverted pyramid’, and away from the unstructured ‘quadrangle’ until 1930. Then by 1940 the ‘quadrangle’ had suddenly returned in great quantities.

In retrospect our data demonstrate that by 1920 the ‘inverted pyramid’ was visible in the Oslo press, and in 1940 was clearly in progress. Modern news journalism did not however dominate at any time between 1908 and 1940, either in amount or in form of presentation. The important genres in print journalism in this period were notices, comments, reviews and reportage. Our data give a firm impression that the Norwegian press was a late-comer to the factual oriented journalism. If the introduction of ‘objectivity’ and a detached and independent professionalism in the US came in the 1920s, an informed guess would be that the same process gathered speed in Norway only after World War II when the broader and diffuse association of Norwegian publicists split into two organisations clearly intended to defend the autonomy, the economic interests and social standing and education of journalists and editors respectively.⁸

Notes

1. Kaplan coded editorials before elections in eight Detroit papers between 1868 and 1916 and found a gradual drop in the rate of biased editorials in Election campaigns from 81% in 1868 to 52% in 1892 and to 17% in 1916. The proportion of biased news space in Presidential election years, however, was much lower, and the trend was not as consistent as for editorials, it fluctuated between 15 % in 1868 to 40% in 1896, to 14% in 1900 and to 5% in 1916.
2. Donald Shaw’s proposition more generally about a direct link between technological change and journalism has also been strongly disputed by Michael Schudson, as will be

* We want to thank the Department of Media and Communication, University of Oslo for support to the coding of news content and data.

learned from his introductory essay to this collection. Schudson (2001) maintains that the idea of 'objective journalism' borrowed heavily from current philosophical trends of Pragmatism at the beginning of the 20th century in the American society, which idealized objective facts and uncommitted professional discretion. Schudson (1978) dates the beginning of 'objective reporting' to the 1920s.

3. The papers chosen were a cross section of the party press typology at the time, though not reflecting the relative strength of the different party presses. The chosen papers were: *Aftenposten* (conservative), *Dagbladet* (liberal), *Social-Demokraten/Arbeiderbladet* (socialist) and *Tidens Tegn* (liberal-conservative). *Tidens Tegn* represented a rather small splinter party, but on the other hand, it was well known as an innovator in journalism, for many years with a circulation only peaked by *Aftenposten*. *Social Demokraten* (from 1923 *Arbeiderbladet*) was owned by the national Labour Party, its editor elected by the party convention together with the chairman and the central committee. *Dagbladet* bragged at being the main organ for the liberal party, but was so only unofficially. The other two papers were family owned for most of the interwar period. *Tidens Tegn* (liberal/conservative) was started in 1910. So for this paper the first year investigated was 1910.
4. Only the six workdays were coded. By common agreement, Sunday editions were abandoned in the Norwegian press from 1923. A 'composite' week is constructed by starting with a chosen day, say Monday, in the first sampled week, then picking the Tuesday the next week, and so on until every weekday is covered. The reason for spreading out the weekdays in this fashion is to reduce the risk of one single event to dominate the content.
5. Roksvold's sample consisted of *Dagbladet*, a large Oslo-paper (also in our sample), *Adresseavisen*, a large regional newspaper, *Gudbrandsdølen* and *Nordlys*, two medium sized local newspapers, and *Sunnbordland*, a small local newspaper
6. The source material for estimated total circulation figures are the statistics on circulated copies by the postal service. Parallel trends have been observed both in the US, Denmark, Finland and Norway. See DeFleur (1972: 21), Thomsen (1972: 172), Tommila and Salokangas (2001: 25)
7. Our sample covers January and February 1940. The German attack on Norway April 9th and the ensuing campaign for six weeks was not expected in Norway, and out of sight for the four Oslo-papers in our period of analysis.
8. In 1946 a trade union for journalists was established, and in 1950 the editors followed suit and established the Norwegian Editors Association. In 1951 a one year course in journalism was introduced, the first in Norway, and in 1965 a regular two-year course at the college level was started, financed by government means. See Rune Ottosen (1996).

Germany

Comments on the German Tradition of News Journalism

Horst Pöttker

The first Bible was printed with moveable type 550 years ago and the first newspapers appeared 400 years ago. The places where that occurred – Mainz, Strasbourg and Wolfenbüttel – belonged at the time to the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation and as such the language in which the newspapers were written and read was High German. The cradle of the press, therefore, stood incontrovertibly in Germany.

It is, however, a mistake to think that the cradle of journalism must therefore have also been in Germany. The mistake is furthered by the fact that the terms ‘media’ and ‘journalism’ are often confused, especially in critical contexts. “The press lies!” “Television was caught napping again!” We are in the habit of complaining this way when journalists neglect their duties and fail in their tasks. At the same time, the newspaper and the television, and thus the media, are only necessary material prerequisites so that journalists can practice their profession.

Development of Journalism with an Anglo-Saxon Lead

Journalism as a profession, as a collection of knowledge and skills, duties and rights, behaviour-determining values and norms that serve the task of overcoming the spatial and social barriers of societal communication and creating public discourse does not have its origin in Germany. It lies in the old Western democracies, especially in the Anglo-Saxon countries. In the first decade of the eighteenth century Daniel Defoe, the British author and the prototype of the journalist, was already fighting journalistically for a sober and independent war reportage and against legal restrictions on press freedom (see Pöttker 1998), which can be considered a characteristic of modern, professional journalism (see Pöttker 2004).

By this time there had already been magazines in Germany for several decades that went beyond the collection of highly disparate news correspond-

ence, which was common in the periodical press up to that time and that had come in from distant places. But significantly, it was a 'political sensibility' that differentiated these German periodicals from the informative correspondence collections that formed their basis (see Habermas 1962, 1989; Weber 1994: 148-153). The subjects of these reflections and opinions were social 'events' that should have been the subject of political, not journalistic, regulation. Some publishers, on the basis of bad experiences, even believed that it was necessary to stress that they did not want to interfere in the 'affairs of state' of the ministers or anticipate their business (Weber 1994: 143). Nevertheless, by the early 19th Century German publishers imagined themselves in the position of politicians instead of, as in the Western democracies, developing their own professional self-image. There it was important to provide the information so thoroughly, aptly, precisely and interestingly that the public could make its own judgments and take up its position as politically sovereign.

One phenomenon in which the disciple role of the German-speaking countries can be seen in the development of modern journalism, and recognizable from early in the process, is the emergence of standardized forms of presentation such as news, commentary, reportage, or the interview. This book is devoted to the news paradigm and follows the emergence and diffusion of the news form of representation in four regions of the world. The *interview*, therefore, has been chosen here as an illustrative example. As an investigatory technique, it is probably as old as journalism itself. On the other hand, where and when the interview began to be a sculpted, journalistic form of presentation and gained acceptance in professional practice was the subject of historical-empirical research whose results not only refute academic myths, but also make possible a comparison between the Germanic and Anglo-Saxon journalistic cultures (see Grzella/Pfingsten 1993, 1994).

It is curious that the authors of these revealing studies reach the conclusion "that the interview...gained currency as a method of investigation and as a genre at approximately the same time worldwide" (Grzella/Pfingsten 1994: 112). If their findings are viewed closely, there appears to be a clear lead in the North American development of journalism over the German and Austrian in the second half of the nineteenth century. The 'time lag' emerges from the titles of their papers. "The Interview: Genesis of a journalistic form of presentation in the USA from 1830-1872" is the title of one, whereas the other is entitled "Genesis of a Journalistic Form of Presentation: The interview in Vienna and Berlin between 1860 and 1900." The titles appropriately sum up the results of sifting through thousands of newspaper editions. The authors, concurring with other press historians on both continents, identify the first text that was clearly sculpted in question-and-answer format as occurring in the mid-1830s in American papers. James Gordon Bennett, publisher of the *New York Herald* permitted his questioning of a female witness to the murder of a prostitute to be printed word-for-word (see Grzella/Pfingsten 1993: 4f). By contrast they found the first interview published in a

Berlin or Viennese newspaper occurred in 1860, and then only as an acquisition from a correspondent of the London *Times* (see Grzella/Pfingsten 1994: 36ff). Furthermore, according to the results of this research, the interview reaches its peak in the American press in the 1860s and 70s (see Grzella/Pfingsten 1993: 48f.), whereas it first achieves its quantitative high point in German and especially in Austrian newspapers between 1891 and 1900 (see Grzella/Pfingsten 1994: 37ff.). Finally, as a further indication of the German delay in the development of this component of professional journalism, it can be observed that the English word 'interview' was adopted by the German language and was immediately employed as a professional journalistic term (see Grzella/Pfingsten 1994: 87ff).

The earlier emergence of the interview in the USA is consequently revealing because it is, from the beginning an integral element in the development of the 'penny papers', such as the *New York Herald* (founded in 1835), that considered the entire population to be customers and readers, irrespective of their political views and education. The 'penny press' exemplifies the emergence of a journalism that increasingly relies on facts, rather than on a party program, and on comprehensibility and other communicative qualities rather than on long-winded discourses. This emergent type of journalism, in disentangling itself from political interests is only driven by commercial and journalistic interests. It is this new journalism of the mass press that gives rise to the news paradigm. But so does the interview, which partly asserts itself parallel and complementary to the news as a form of presentation. Since communication is a universal element of human life that is ever able to cast new light on events and because the presentation of communication in the question-and-answer format makes the information easier for the public to digest, the interview thus presented a communicative quality.

Experts of the interview expressly attribute its genesis and acceptance in North America to the development of a modern journalism that was interesting to the whole public and independent of party politics: "The development of the mass press with its need for authentic and at the same time simply-woven human interest stories aligned with entertainment *and* the almost simultaneous emergence of a non-aligned political journalism independent of state power gave rise to the modern interview in the USA" (Haller 1991: 24). Also in the study of the German-language press, the function of the interview for a journalism freeing itself from politics becomes clear: "It [the interview] was increasingly used to look for new information and to verify data. Politicians especially found such critical considerations to be a threat and an imposition. With that the claim that politicians merely abused the interview for their own promotional goals is also refuted" (Grzella/Pfingsten 1994: 113). So it stands to reason that it is possible to interpret the 'time-lag' in using the *interview* as an indicator of the traditional connection of German journalism to party politics.

Germany: The Phenomenon of Journalism as Politics

In academic literature, there is no difference of opinion on the point that German journalism remained bound to “Weltanschauungen” and political intentions much longer than journalism in the Anglo-Saxon countries. While the opinion lead and party oriented press of the latter was gradually replaced in the 1830s “by a fact-oriented, largely neutral press that had almost completely given up its political postures by the end of the century” (Donsbach 1999: 491), this was not the case in Germany. There, journalists continued to be inclined “to contribute to the creation of public opinion with critical-advocatory articles on literary, philosophical, or political topics ... to fight for their ideas in newspapers and magazines” (Ibid.).

That the consensus on the continuing tradition of German partisan journalism only rests on the names of a few researchers from the same school of thought – chiefly Wolfgang Donsbach and Jürgen Wilke – does not reduce the plausibility of this thesis upon which our chapter on the diffusion of the news paradigm in Germany is also based. Nonetheless, it is noteworthy that the thesis is essentially supported by numerous studies of individual journalists from either the period before 1850 (see Wilke 1993) or by the results of surveys of journalists in the Federal Republic of Germany, post-1945 and after the occupying powers had asserted the Anglo-Saxon news model as the official pattern (see Donsbach 1999: 507ff.). While two of the essential human characteristics of surveys are that of an ‘objective observer’ or ‘critical watchman’ it was made clear that the Anglo-Saxon news paradigm of ‘objective reporting’ would exclude journalists from the ‘critical watchman’ role.

Rare by comparison, if one disregards media-historical data on the newspaper ownership of parties, unions, and churches, are journalistic-historical empirical investigations for the epoch of the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century. This seems to be an especially important period for the question of the German tradition of political partisan journalism in comparison to the West. The salient facts are potent. The authentic interview had also gained acceptance in Berlin and Viennese newspapers by the 1890s. Karl Bücher, the German press economist and historian had already formulated in 1914, in view of the war propaganda in the German newspapers, the ideal of a sober and distanced journalism that considers its task “to serve the truth and only the truth and to have a moderating effect on the enflamed popular passions” (Bücher 2001: 221); and last but not least Otto Groth, an editor with extensive professional experience in the German press, had during the Weimar Republic already sketched the beginnings of an almost strikingly Anglo-Saxon conception of journalism as a mediating profession and “auditorium” (see Groth 1928-30; 1960-72). All of them point to the urgency of viewing in a more differentiated manner, than previously undertaken, the tradition of political partisan journalism in Germany. In doing so it would be necessary to ask not only about the meaning of opposing tendencies, but also whether they can be traced back to Anglo-Saxon examples or independent developments.

On the other hand there are arguments in favour of the continuation of the tradition of political partisan journalism. Max Weber, who cites Groth and likewise had experiences with the German press at his disposal, expressly classified the journalist, in his famous 1919 lecture "Politics as a Profession", as a modern example of the 'demagogue' – working under the Western figure of the professional politician - the "party officer" in fact. Weber, in no way made this classification with a critical intent, but in an emphasized recognition of the journalistic, as opposed to the scientific, achievement (see Weber 2001). Such a description of journalism, in Anglo-Saxon social science, as a special case of politics would have been scarcely conceivable. At the same time, the conclusion of Weber's model analysis on the real German journalism of his time is certainly obvious, but naturally not incontrovertible.

Explanations for the German Tradition of Political Partisan Journalism

In order to characterize the tradition that differentiates journalism in Germany from the development in the Anglo-Saxon countries at least until the middle of the twentieth century, conventional explanations for the phenomenon of political partisan journalism were presented in the absence of empirical data, and finally, a few theoretical considerations of it were offered.

Donsbach names two reasons, namely the *Enlightenment* with its inclination toward philosophical, cultural and political admonishment as well as the *later-realized press freedom* in Germany (see Donsbach 1999: 490ff.). The tradition of tracing political partisan journalism back to the Enlightenment and illustrating it with exemplary journalistic personalities from this period such as Wilhelm Ludwig Wekhrlin (1739-92) (see Wilke 1993) is not very convincing. This is primarily because there had also been a period of Enlightenment in the Anglo-Saxon countries and in France in which the humanistic missionary desire and political zeal were hardly weaker than in Germany.

It is more plausible to point to the different traditions of press freedom. The freedom of the press had already been achieved in England through the abolition of the Licensing Act (1644) and the subsequent passing of the Freedom of Press Act in the same year of 1695 and was anchored in the United States since 1791 by the First Amendment to the Constitution. By contrast, censorship in Germany only gradually subsided after the unsuccessful bourgeois-democratic revolution of 1848, though the protracted development of press freedom was interrupted by major setbacks until late in the twentieth century. It has only been recognized and anchored in all of Germany since 1990. Political partisan journalism, as far as that goes, may be explained by the fact that for much longer than in the Western democracies, censorship made it impossible for German journalists to express their "Weltanschauungen" and political opinions, which from the beginning has

been easily misunderstood as the impartial “quintessence” of journalism (see Wagner 1998). Since German journalists were only freed from the shackle of censorship comparatively very late, the desire to gain publicity for one’s own convictions was set that much more intensively in motion. The German tradition of political partisan journalism since the mid-nineteenth century can, as a consequence, be interpreted entirely as an overdue and thus more intensive fulfilment of a long-obstructed need.

A more plausible explanation, which posits the delay of German society in the process of modernization in general (see Plessner 1959), seems even more efficient. Modernization is primarily a process of the progressive differentiation of institutions and professions. Systems theories speak of “partial systems” that are concentrated on a particular social task toward which they direct their activities with increasing endemic logic and autonomy.

If journalism is counted among these systems of action that gain autonomy in the process of modernization, the oft described ‘other way’ of Germany, the ‘delay’ of German societal development, must also mean a deficit of professionalism in journalism in contrast to that found in those societies which were most advanced in modernization. Journalism expressed in terms of systems theory, because of the general backlog in functional differentiation, cannot as a partial system have disentangled itself from other systems of action, such as politics, to the same extent. Viewed in this manner, the close connection of journalism to politics represents only one, but an especially important, sector of the comparatively limited autonomy of journalism in Germany. This connection is also manifest in journalism’s traditionally stronger overlapping with other partial systems and their logic (economics, sports, literature, science, war, etc.). In many of these areas the journalism in societies that are late in modernising, Italy and Russia no more so than in Germany, come under reasonable suspicion of being less independent and of orienting less on its own qualities such as relevance or comprehensibility than, above all, journalism in the Anglo-Saxon culture.

The zenith of the political partisanship of German journalism was achieved under the Nazi regime. The fusion of the overburdened subjectivity of German journalism with political propaganda may be interpreted as the paradox at which the highpoint also revealed the dangerous characteristic that lowered it to criminal levels. It is only too clear that the Western occupying powers wanted to break this tradition after the total capitulation of Germany in the Second World War. Whether and to what extent they were successful is now, as it was then, an important question of journalism research.

A Desideratum: German Journalism Before and After 1945

The year 1945 also represents a radical caesura for the chapter of our book dealing with Germany. The diffusion of the news paradigm is the most im-

portant component of modern Anglo-Saxon style journalism and remains as an excellent indicator of its global diffusion. In this light there should, therefore, be a more conscious effort in the future to provide the answers to two uncertainties about the historical development of German journalism. First whether, to what extent, and for what reasons there had already been a journalism in Germany that was anchored on the ideal of objectivity and on factors of comprehensibility such as brevity prior to 1945; and secondly a more thorough investigation as to whether, to what extent, and for what reasons the old tradition of partisan journalism, at the least subliminally, persists.

In this section we must be more modest. Rudolf Stöber sketches the media background of German journalism development up to 1945, which is little-known internationally. Bernd Blöbaum asks how lasting the incision of 1945 has been. He is able to show that the Western Allies did succeed in imposing the news paradigm on German journalism, but that this is not completely anchored in the structures of editorial organization even today.

Journalism Paradigms Before 1945

Rudolf Stöber

Preliminary Remarks

Journalism history and media history are always part of general history. Therefore, media and journalism history are connected with political and legal developments, with social, demographic and economic history, with cultural discussions and with technological progress. So I will give some preliminary remarks on the related subjects first.

First, Germany never was a homogenous entity as central states like France or England have been – with two exceptional periods: the Nazi dictatorship of 1933-1945 and the German Democratic Republic (GDR) of 1945-1990. While the German “nation” started as a political idea or as a cultural concept deep in the Middle Ages it was not until the 18th and 19th centuries that the discussions on what Germany is, or would be, took on any significance. It would take too long to discuss this with greater thoroughness, but it is more than a coincidence that the emergence of the German nation as a cultural concept and as a political entity ran parallel with the diffusion of magazines and newspapers.

Furthermore, Germany was organized politically as a more or less feeble, almost non-existent federal state from the Thirty Years’ War’s end in 1648, up to the late 19th century. The struggle for political unity is hardly connected with our purpose – except in an ambiguous manner. Journalism, on one hand, has promoted the discussions of Germany’s unification since the 18th century. On the other hand so long as Germany did not have a political unity its rich cultural diversity was free to develop. Newspaper history in Germany is a product of this cultural diversity.

The concept of newspapers was invented in 1605 in Strasburg, formerly a free imperial city in the Alsace province of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation, and spread from there initially throughout the continent and then all over the world. Due to the cultural and political diversity of some 80 states (1803) Germany had the highest number of newspapers – compared with other countries – up to the 19th century. However, there never has been

a capital press. The informal capital of the press was Nuremberg from the 15th to the 16th century and Hamburg from the 17th to the early 19th century. Between 1815 and 1848 the “*Allgemeine Zeitung*” (AZ) from Augsburg was the most important newspaper. In the late 19th century, Berlin began to rise as the key newspaper city. Nevertheless, other cities such as Cologne, Frankfurt, Leipzig and Munich have also been important press capitals.

The press laws were as diverse as the cultures. Some German states had no press law at all; others controlled their press very strictly. Some states – like the free imperial city of Hamburg – more or less tolerated its press. This variety of attitudes decreased throughout the 19th Century as the press laws became increasingly federal. With The Confederal Press Law of 1819 (Carlsbad Decrees) and further press laws of the “Reich” 1848 (the Empire’s constitution), the federal state press law of 1854 and the press law of 1874 of the newly founded “Reich” the rules of the press became standardized. It could be argued that until the rise to power of the Nazis in 1933, German newspapers enjoyed a relatively free environment – with the exception of the years of World War I.

In social, economic and demographic history Germany experienced alternating phases of catastrophes and normal developments much like the rest of continental Europe. After the great plague of the Black Death in the middle of the 14th century the economy slowly recovered and grew at an almost steady rate up to the 16th century. The economy plunged temporarily with the German Peasants’ War in 1524-1525 (when they demanded the end to serfdom) and went into a semi-permanent state of chaos during the Thirty Years War in the 17th century. The economic recovery was once again slow due to the reduction of the population. But after the Napoleonic era and especially from 1850 onwards Germany became more and more dynamic in technology and economy. The population grew rapidly, too. Small towns enlarged to big cities. The industrial basis of the economy widened; the agricultural basis lost its domination over the economy. Due to rising literacy and rising income, more and more people became readers of the press. The press – scientific journals, magazines of enlightenment and political newspapers – was an agent of change (Eisenstein 1979).

Invention, Differentiation and Spreading of the Press

Press history usually starts with Gutenberg. His invention (1440s) occurred in a prosperous economic phase after the recovery from the great plague. The demand for hand written media had increased throughout the Middle Ages. This demand, led by science, civil and clerical offices gave a fair chance for Gutenberg’s technology to succeed. But John Gutenberg did not invent the press. He just invented printing with removable letters and in doing so improved writing and copying. Gutenberg had aimed at an old market first,

that of expensive books. He thought of his “new art” as the ultimate improvement of writing. Contemporaries were astonished by the perfection, not by the speed of reproduction (Giesecke 1998). Therefore, his invention did not automatically start the development of journalism.

Gutenberg started a new cultural technology and also invented the first pattern of industrial mass production. But the fact that he became one of the most important inventors of all times derives from a combination of five fortunate happenstances: First he lived in a culture with an alphabetical system of lettering. Secondly Gutenberg was a goldsmith and was able to use metallurgy and the foundry processes for the necessary technological basics. Thirdly Gutenberg lived in the Rhine valley where wine production was very familiar to everyone. His press was derived from a wine press. Fourthly he lived in Mainz, a rich trading city where he could borrow the huge amount of money for the venture. Lastly, Mainz lies in the centre of Europe. Therefore, the invention could spread very fast (Stöber 2003).

Hand written books, before Gutenberg, were exorbitantly expensive. Illustrated books cost a fortune. Gutenberg’s bible was expensive, too. One could buy a city-house for its price. But it was three to five times cheaper than the hand written and illustrated bibles at that time. And printed books dropped in price constantly. Craftsmen and even farm labourers could afford Luther’s New Testament in 1522. But when the demand in the traditional market was satisfied, an economic crisis occurred as the market for high priced books fell into stagnation round about 1500. Gutenberg primarily was interested in printing books, as were most printers until the end of the 15th century.

Market competition in the old market for books had increased too much; some books like Schedel’s “World Chronicle”, printed in 1493, could not be sold off properly. The Reformation, therefore, came just in time to rescue both printers and publishers from business stagnation. Now Gutenberg’s invention changed its character. Men began to use printing for providing topical information in serial or semi-serial products like broadsheets, leaflets and newsheets. So, the religious Reformation in Europe created a new market and prepared the ground for the rise of journalism.

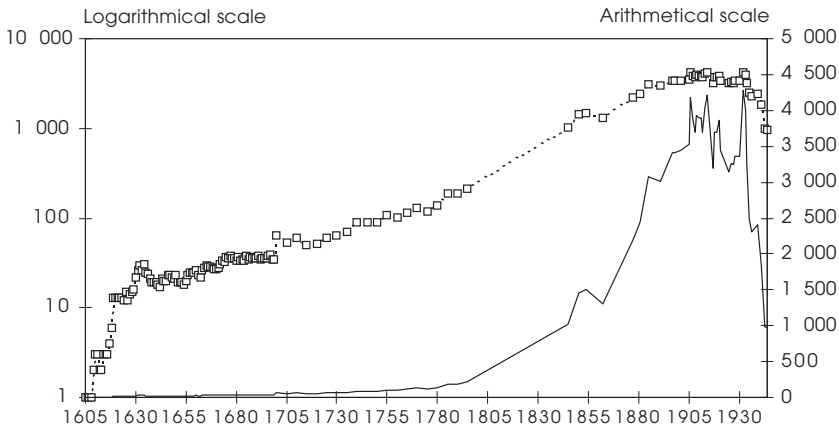
At the end of the 16th century news leaflets were very common and the first serial press appeared. Michael Aitzinger edited a chronicle from 1583 to 1598 and a magazine was founded at Rorschach, Lake Constance in 1597. Johann Carolus of Strasbourg took one step further in 1605. He declared in his supplication addressed to the Imperial City’s Council that he wanted to combine two businesses: selling hand written letters of information and printing (Weber 1992). In both markets the competition was higher and margins lower than they used to be. His combination of both businesses invented newspapers. Newspapers emerged from hand written newsletters but changed their character completely and thus became a new medium.

There were two forms of early newspapers, the political newspapers and the so called ‘intelligence papers’. The latter were invented in France in the

early 17th century and imported to Germany in the early 18th century. Their high tide was the second half of the 18th century. There was a great variety of this form. Most of them consisted of advertisements and private, official and non-political educational articles. Many of the readers like teachers, clergy or civil servants were urged by authorities to read the 'intelligence papers'.

In the 17th and 18th century most of the political newspapers mainly consisted of news since comments and editor notes were not in use. Most absolute regimes did not tolerate opinion. Nevertheless, more and more newspapers were founded. Relative growth of the number of newspapers was the biggest in the early 17th century because many people were very interested in war tidings during the Thirty Years War. Absolute growth was the biggest in the last decades of the 19th century when both population and industry increased rapidly. In the Nazi era the number of newspapers declined.

Figure 1. Number of German Newspapers (1605-1945)

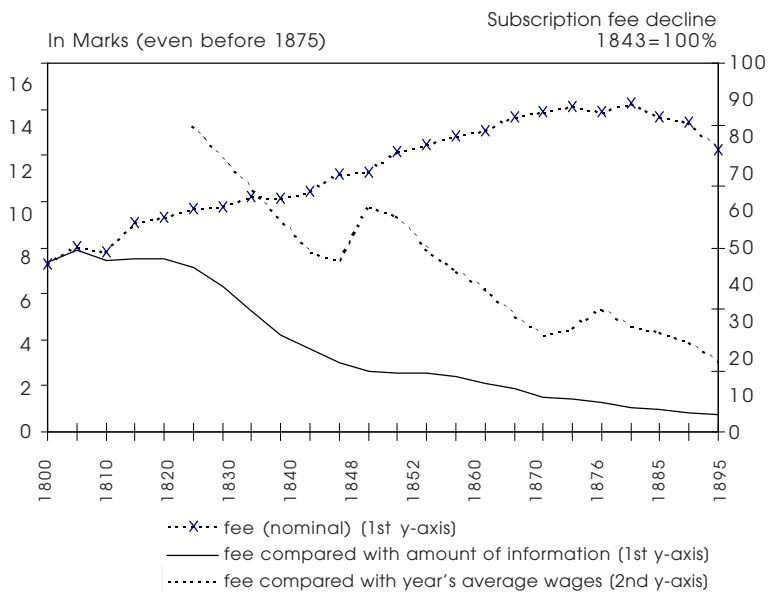


From the second half of the 17th century on magazines spread throughout Germany. The first political magazine was founded in Nuremberg in 1674. The so-called "moral weeklies", general interest magazines on entertainment and moral education, dominated the early 18th century. In the 19th century mass circulation magazines started. A first example was an imported "penny magazine". From the middle of the 19th century on so called "family magazines" and – some decades later – illustrated magazines were introduced to the market (Wilke 2000).

Printed newspapers of the early 17th century had been very expensive, but they were ten times cheaper than hand written newsletters. While as many as 300,000 adults had read newspapers at the end of the 17th century, ten times as many (3 million) read them at the end of the next century. Also prices continued to fall during the next 200 years. Newspaper prices were reduced quickly through significant improvements in paper quality as well

as the technology of typesetting and printing that were made throughout the 19th century. Paper made of wood pulp was much cheaper than paper made of flax. Newspapers were filled with more and more information by news agencies. Prices, especially when compared with the offered information (amount and quality), reduced dramatically. Printing press machines printed much faster than Gutenberg's press. Wages rose in the late 19th century and as a result an increasing number of individuals could afford subscription. A worker at Krupp's steel firm had to pay 2.32% of his year's wage in 1843 for an average newspaper subscription. This had fallen to 0.54% by the end of the century. Indeed by the end of the 19th century the daily circulations for all German newspapers are estimated at 20 million. This means, given that up to three people read each copy, almost every citizen read newspapers.

Figure 2. Price Reduction of Newspapers in 19th Century



Changes in Journalism Paradigms

Modern journalism was not invented at once, but has continuously developed since the late 17th century. Five stipulations have to be fulfilled when we want to speak of “modern” journalism: all of them can be characterised as necessary but not sufficient.

First there has to be a serial press. “Journalism” derives from “journals” – i.e. periodical press. Journalism emerged from pre-modern professions: Some were literati, some were clerks, others were correspondents of rich merchants, some were secret agents of foreign states, and others were residents or dip-

lomats. The earliest newspapers were directed at the patricians, high court officials, rich merchants, and heads of states, high clergy etc, the ruling elite of the early modern states: These 'pre-journalists' wrote for a media continuum ranging from personally addressed letters to impersonal news.

Therefore the second condition is that journalism had to emancipate itself from related professions, especially from literary authors. For a great many literati who could not enter their desired profession for one reason or another, lacking funds, a patron and even a publisher, journalism remained a valued alternative well into the 19th century. However great their need, the literati did not want to be 'daily writers' [Tagesschriftsteller]. Therefore, they usually stood outside of the economic process of journalistic production. This placed the potential of 'journalism' to be a profession in an ambiguous position that needed clarification: The book business and press business do not operate with the same economic rules. A book publisher buys manuscripts written by external authors while newspapers largely depend on internal editorial staff. They build the nucleus of journalism.

This ambiguity leads to the third condition in that the press business had to be separate from the book business. Indeed the emergence of the first German journalists lasted two generations after John Carolus' invention of serial weeklies (and dailies). But most of the pre-modern states did not tolerate opinion printed in newspapers. Serial press was (and is) very easy to prosecute. Early (serial) modern newspapers were something like criminal suspects who had to report to a police office day by day; so most papers renounced the use of editorial columns until the middle of the 19th century.

This leads to a 4th condition: Modern journalism depends on the development of editorial characteristics. Editorial personnel have to write and edit according to the publishers' principles. In most German newspapers the development of editing principles lasted until the late 19th century. It largely depended on the existence of free press laws. In 1874 all German journalists enjoyed an almost liberal press law for the first time.

These four conditions create the fifth. Journalists had to develop a notion of their own profession. This was completed in the early 20th century when German journalists founded their first trade unions. Until the middle of the 19th century there had been no union at all and the first associations had combined publishers and journalists. The first trade union, only for journalists, was founded 1910 was the "Reichsverband der Deutschen Presse" (RDP).

It is almost impossible to give a statistical survey on the development of journalism. During the 18th and 19th century journalists were not separated from related professions. And most of the journalists did a part time job. The statistical bureau of the Reich counted 5.500 "scholars, literati and journalists" at the end of the 19th century. During World War I between 5.000 and 12.000 journalists existed. The statistical bureau of the Reich counted 6.246 journalists in the Weimar Era. At the same time the trade union RDP argued, its 3.650 members were equal to 90% of all journalists in Germany. In 1936 the Nazi-RDP counted 15.000 members, but only 6.000 of them did a full time job (Stöber 2000, 196).

Until the 19th century journalism was a transit job, very often for academic scholars. A study on journalists in northern Germany concluded that before 1848 most of the journalists had written a doctoral thesis, but after 1848 most of them did not finish their academic studies (Brunöhler 1933; Engelsing 1966). The most important newspaper of the early 19th century was the *AZ* from Augsburg. Many of its editorial staff and most of its correspondents had a Doctorate (26,2%) or even the second academic thesis “Habilitation” (24,4%). The high ratio of academic journalists in the 19th century is due to the illiberal political climate throughout the early century. Many academics had to work as journalists because they had no chance of getting a professorship at the university. Even after 1874 many journalists of the quality press had been members of the liberal and democratic opposition during the Revolution of 1848 and the next years. 40% worked for less than five years at the *AZ*, 20% stayed for 10 to 20 years, 23% stayed for more than 20 years. At least the last section can be claimed to be full time journalists (Heyck 1898).

A survey on the developments in journalism affirms this result: During the 19th century the ratio of journalists, who remained journalists for all their lifetime, increased (Requate 1995, 178). But we have to be aware that while historians are pretty well informed on the ‘grand’ quality press their information on the small press is poor. Only famous journalists, those of important newspapers and of big cities had a fair chance to be remembered in books, biographies or archives of the secret services. Unimportant journalists usually stayed anonymous. So the next statistic is in no way representative for journalism as a whole, but only for “quality journalism”:

Table 1. Journalists’ Secondary Jobs (before 1900) (Requate 1995)

	pre 1848	1849-1870	1870-1890	after 1890
No other job	47 %	64,5 %	69,5 %	71 %
Literati	16,5 %	13 %	11,5 %	11 %
Publisher		5 %	5 %	6,5 %
Professor	5,5 %	2,5 %	1,5 %	3,5 %
Civil servants	7 %	4 %	3,5 %	1 %
Others	23,5 %	10,5 %	8,5 %	7,5 %

Many journalists in non-quality papers started their career as typesetters or printers. After 1860 many small papers were founded and the small press made no distinction between journalists and publishers because many publishers were often their own journalists. If a small paper had both a publisher *and* a journalist, the latter usually had to be able to write on topical interests. These “stand alone” journalists were very common until the Weimar Era. A statistical survey of the RDP counted 10% “stand alone” out of 3.200 journalists (Stöber 1992). On the other hand, the quality press improved the differentiation of the journalistic profession. The editorial staff of newspapers got bigger with more specialized journalists engaged in political, eco-

nomic, cultural or sport journalism. In the Weimar Era at least four departments were in use at grand newspapers: the political, economic, entertainment and local department.

Last but not least we have to look at the political bias of German journalists. The survey on media history shows very clearly that partisan journalism was almost unimportant until the 19th century. For example, some excellent regional studies on the history of German press do provide us with statistical data on journalists in the 18th and early 19th century (Kurzweg 1999; Greiling 2003). But they do not give any statistical data on the journalists' partisanship – because that was not, at the time, a category. Of course partisanship had existed before 1800. But it had had quite a different meaning. When press-partisanship was mentioned before the 19th century it was usually characterized in the Thirty Years War as “pro-Swedish” or “pro-Catholics” and in the Seven Years War as “pro-Prussia” or “pro-Austria”.

As mentioned above the history of German journalism started in an era when comment and opinion was more or less forbidden. Until the 19th century therefore, journalism mainly reported what had happened. The absence of (modern) partisan journalism was a dominant feature in the early press of almost any other state, too. But in Germany partisanship was also suppressed during long decades in the 19th century. After a short but important intermezzo in the revolution of 1848 the high tide of partisan journalism began with the foundation of the Kaiserreich and the press law of 1874. Therefore, Germany's political system – as in other states, too – set up the frames of partisan journalism. And party press was, as almost everywhere else, a stadium of transition. In Germany this stadium just started later than in other countries – due to the late beginning of modern political liberties.

The party press can be divided in three (or four) groups: 1st, newspapers that voluntarily supported a political party; 2nd, newspapers that founded a political party; 3rd, newspapers belonging to a political party. A 4th category is no party press at all but better characterized as “state press”: for example the Nazi press between 1933 and 1945.

The 1st category was the most common. Therefore, most partisan journalist wrote for newspapers that did support a political party. Papers and journalists committed themselves to support a party, sometimes only during election campaigns, sometimes continuing throughout the years. The self-commitment was very common in the liberal and conservative press. After 1874 almost every bourgeois or middle class newspaper supported a party from time to time. The voluntary support characterized the press of the Catholic Centre-Party, too. Nevertheless, all the voluntary supporters called themselves independent. And all these ‘independent’ partisan journalists were very important for their supported party, just because the parties were not well organized – until the 20th century.

The 2nd category is very small. Some prominent newspapers played a role as a catalyst when parties were founded. Maybe the earliest German example is the liberal “*Deutsche Zeitung*” (1847-1850). Another famous example is

the “*Neue Preussische Zeitung*” (1848-1939), nucleus of the conservative party of Prussia. Another newspaper to mention is the “*Social-Democrat*” (1865-1871), central organ of the “Allgemeiner Deutscher Arbeiter-Verein” – a forerunner of the German Social Democrat Party. A catalyst of the Centre-Party was the “*Germania*” (1871-1938). And the “*Rote Fahne*” (1918-1933) supported the foundation of the communist party after World War I.

Lastly, newspapers created the 3rd category, which was most closely related with political parties. These papers belonged to a political party or an organization that ran the newspapers instead of the party. This organizational pattern was widely used by the social democrats, the communists and the Nazis. But in every case there were voluntary supporters of the mentioned parties, too.

Because the political system is closely related with the structure of the party press, it shaped the partisan journalism. Between Imperial Germany and the Weimar Republic five major groups of parties dominated the political landscape: liberal parties, conservatives, social democrats, the Centre-Party and minority parties (French, Dane, Poles). The liberal journalists covered a wide range of their own political spectrum – from almost conservative ‘national-liberals’ to almost leftist ‘free-liberals’. Conservative journalists on one side had to fight resentments against public opinion in their own party and on the other side strong ties to the political administration bound many journalists – especially of the small rural press. Journalists of the social democratic press were often part time trade unionists and/or part time politicians. Indeed many of them were members of parliament. Many writers of the Centre-Press were, especially in the beginning, priests and therefore part time journalists, too. Journalists of the minority press were also deeply rooted in their social environment (Requate 1995, 290-324).

Between about 1900 and the Weimar Era approximately 50% of the press did not belong or support any political party, 2-5% of the newspapers belonged to the social democrats, approximately 10% supported the Centre-Party, about 20-25% called themselves conservative, and 15-20% supported liberal parties. The minority press never counted for more than 3-4%. But even before the start of World War I partisan journalism was already retreating. And during the Weimar era the quantitative importance of partisan journalism diminished further (Groth 1928).

Due to the late start of partisan journalism in Germany, many journalists had developed a high esteem of opinion journalism since the 19th century. But in a certain sense this perception was ideology. It arose from self-descriptions of some prominent journalists, unionists and scientists. The most prominent of this group was Emil Dovifat, an influential member of the Centre-Party, a unionist (member of the RDP), and one of the most prominent scientists in journalism studies in the Weimar Era. He merely created a mythological and normative perception of the ideal journalistic role model and spread the evaluation that opinion journalism is the best journalism of all. This was an ideological judgment and was due to social conflicts between

unionists and publishers in the Weimar Era. The journalists did not want to be recognized as hired “prostitutes of opinion” (Stöber 1992).

On the other hand, during the Weimar Era the number of partisan journalists on the extreme left and right was growing. Nevertheless, the real number of partisan journalists was much less important than a relatively small but zealous group of journalists. Besides the hatred of Joseph Goebbels and the Nazi-press against the Weimar Democracy, the rightist press of Alfred Hugenberg grew more and more important. But the most important feature of his press empire was the news agency “Telegraphen Union”. Through this ‘Trojan horse’ almost half of the press subscribed to biased news during the last years of the Weimar Era.

Therefore, after 1945 partisan journalism was discredited. From the Anglo-American perspective it seemed to have been the leading paradigm of journalism in the Nazi Era and before. When after 1945 many foreign experts thought of partisan journalism to be an important cause of the political and cultural catastrophe they were neither completely wrong nor wholly right. The Anglo-American perception of the domination of partisan journalism in pre 1945-times was not the whole truth. During long periods of the early press history partisanship did not matter at all. There had been no dramatic turns in journalism paradigms throughout history but there was a constant change – due to technical, social, political and economic changes. This was the same in Germany as it was in other countries, too.

German Journalism after 1945

Reporting Instead of Influencing

Bernd Blöbaum

Introduction

In German society, the year 1945 not only marks the end of World War II and of National Socialism; it also represents fundamental changes in important areas of society. The changes which began in that year also pertain to mass media and journalism. This historical date of 1945 not only marks a break from the past and a new beginning in Germany, but is also associated with continuities and stabilizing factors, especially with regard to people and institutions. The social historian Wehler emphasizes in his study of German societal history that there is no point zero in the historical process. He refers to the fact, "that on the heap of rubble of the lost war and under supervision of the Occupying Powers the options for action were extraordinarily limited; that especially after each catastrophic collapse the forces of persistence of well-established and institutionalised traditions prove powerfully valid; that human strength to set off for new shores is very limited after such shocking experiences" (Wehler 2003: 973).

This analysis can also be applied to the media landscape in Germany in the opening years of the post-war period and to journalism in particular. There has not been a point zero for the mass media and 1945 does not mark a new beginning for journalism that can be seen as independent of either the experiences in the Weimar Republic until 1933 or of National Socialism (1933-1945). Similarly the paradigm of news journalism, which after the end of the Second World War spread rapidly throughout West Germany, cannot solely be attributed to the instructions of the western Allied Forces. A foundation, which had already developed before 1945, was necessary for this diffusion. This article discusses the elements of continuity and modernity in German journalism that can be identified with regard to the news paradigm just after 1945, and its representative characteristics.

A secondary analysis must provide the basis for the argument because empirical research about the history and development of journalistic forms of presentation in Germany is very limited. It must further be noted that a

systematic history of journalism is found neither for the period of military occupation between 1945 and 1949 nor for the following years (Blöbaum 2002). Journalism research in Germany is a very young field of journalism and communication science, of which the predominant aim is to provide the vocational qualification of journalists and which infrequently looks at the historical elements of journalism.

Journalism as a System

Journalism and the mass media, such as television, radio, the Internet, the press, newspapers, and magazines are frequently regarded as synonyms. Hence, journalism usually stands for media content. Likewise, journalists and journalism in German scientific research are frequently treated as being synonymous. Thus journalists are reduced to communicators. This article proposes not to limit journalism to journalists and their actions, but to regard journalism as a system interconnected with its environment in various ways.

The German sociologist Niklas Luhmann defined journalism on the basis of the theory of social systems as an analytical category constituted by journalism-specific structures and communications (cf. Luhmann 1984, Rühl 1980, Blöbaum 1994). The nature of journalism is determined by its structures like other functional systems of modern society, such as politics, science, and the economy. The journalism system consists of three structural elements (Blöbaum 1994):

- Journalistic organizations: mass media such as newspapers, TV programs and editorial offices, which are primarily arranged according to topics, e.g. politics, economics, sports, and culture. These form the structure of journalism at the organizational level.
- Journalistic roles: journalists work in professional roles for which they are prepared during training and which are continually practiced in vocational socialization. In the historical development of journalism, the processes of differentiation and consolidation of role elements characterize this professional role. Differing from British and American journalism, divisions of labour in the editor's office regarding the role as well as the organizational aspect have not developed along the lines of activities seen in the United States and England: e.g. editor and reporter, copy tester etc. (cf. Esser 1998). They have instead developed along topic and event fields such as politics, economics, culture, sports, and local issues.
- Journalistic manuals: the organizations and the roles in journalism as well as the manuals are designed for the production and processing of information. This is their main function, regardless of the fact that programs can also pursue goals such as education and entertainment.

Different forms of manuals can be distinguished with respect to journalism. Presentational manuals are forms and techniques for the presentation of contents (such as news, correspondent reports, comments, interviews, features). At the same time there is a specific journalistic manual for the collection of information (journalistic-editorial research): a selection manual, which provides a framework for the selection and processing of information; and a verification manual, which examines content for correctness.

In the history of journalism in modern society, these journalistic structural elements became differentiated in the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century. They are customized for the function of the journalism system that is the current exchange of information for public communication.

Communication science research in Germany focuses predominantly on the professional role and analyses the attitudes, self-conceptions and role images of journalists. Frequently, political communication is at the centre of attention when inquiring about the influence of journalists on political reporting. Limiting research to communicators and political communication leads to a deficit of findings about organizational elements and particularly about journalistic programs. When analysing reporting and thereby also news as a form of presentation many studies examine exchanged political content rather than the actual form of its presentation. Thus, there is a lack of systematic studies of the news paradigm and its implications for journalism in Germany.

The complex definition of journalism outlined here does not permit solely viewing the news paradigm in isolation, but rather inserts it into the context of the elements of the journalistic system. Since journalism – like any societal system – is interconnected with the environment, the conditions necessary to affect the development of news reporting come into view with the analysis of news as a presentational form. The same applies to journalism and to the entire German society since there was not a completely new beginning after 1945. It's less about identifying fundamentally new phenomena starting from 1945, and more about transitions and continuities, which in sum represent a modernization of journalistic structures. Therefore, the initial conditions are first described before changing the focus to news as the basis of information journalism after 1945 (for the following cf. Blöbaum 2002).

Initial Conditions for Development of Journalism after 1945

Journalism in the German post-war period is rooted in the phases of the Weimar Republic and National Socialism. Even in the 19th century, the structural characteristics of modern journalism had already developed. Since the latter half of the 19th century, the press organization in Germany operated in

a strongly regionalized and localized manner. This is a fundamental characteristic of the present-day press environment. In addition to provincial and regional newspapers, a variety of gazettes and quality newspapers developed until 1933. The Weimar Republic was particularly characterized by a wealth of such publications, which corresponded to the extremely fragmented political party spectrum. Party newspapers and other party oriented newspapers were established and often quickly discontinued. The information function of these media was clearly subordinate to agitation and influencing of opinions.

The evolution of the independent role of journalists in Germany was more robust from the beginning of the 20th century. As journalism became a more distinguishable trade, interest groups formed and a journalistic model developed. Retallack describes this process as professionalization: "By 1920, journalism was a vocation that had some, but not all of the hallmarks of a free profession" (Retallack 1993: 210). In contrast, the German historian Requate sees an "informal professionalization" (Requate 1995: 398) for journalists and refers to the heterogeneity of journalistic work processes and contents. During the time of the Weimar Republic, large newspaper organizations maintained an advanced division of labour with journalists for individual reporting fields whereas at many regional newspapers the publisher simultaneously held the position of the only editor and content for political party newspapers was supplied by party members.

The powerful party press before 1933 actually attempted to inform their readers, except that, predominantly, the style of announcement journalism was used. News selection and the form of presentation remained strongly linked to political conviction and subordinate to party orientation. Media shaped the market and were to fulfil different expectations: education, mobilization, intermediation of information and entertainment. These heterogeneous performance expectations stood in the way of the development of a news paradigm, which grants priority to clear information. Instead, different motives for selection and forms of presentation existed side by side.

The time of National Socialism represents a large break for journalism but did not constitute a complete new beginning. Control of the media and their usurpation for propaganda purposes by regulating content did not allow space for the flourishing of journalism during the Nazi era. National press politics mandated compulsory membership in the "Reichsverband der Deutschen Presse" (Imperial Federation of the German Press) and banned Jewish and communist (and partially social-democratic) journalists from the profession. This effectively meant the abolition of the freedom of the press and the takeover of the media by the political system.

One feature of journalism was missing: Journalists were not independent in their decisions. Both the content selection and the form of presentation were regulated for long periods. The control of journalistic programs by the State and the requirement of journalists to provide propaganda did not permit the flourishing of the news paradigm.

The cessation of the war in 1945 did not cause a corresponding break in the mass media production. However, publication of daily newspapers between 1945 and 1949 was bound to respective licensing by the four Occupying Powers (cf. Koszyk 1986, 1999). During these four years, the western Allied Forces licensed 156 new daily papers in Germany while in the Soviet zone, 21 daily papers received licenses until 1948. The occupying powers also controlled the broadcasting stations that began transmitting radio programs in May 1945.

The licensing models used by the western Allied Forces were introduced to prevent the media organizations from accumulating too much political journalistic influence.

Newspapers were slim, often with only four pages, and were sometimes published only two to four times a week. Thus, there was still little scope for journalism to flourish. The situation started to improve from 1948 when the volume and the number of issues increased. The licensing phase ended in 1949 and a lot of original publishers came back on the market with their papers.

The reconstruction of news agencies, which were set up in each zone of occupation by the Allied Forces, were vital for the development of the news paradigm. They were, for lack of an intact infrastructure, the most important resource for most of the mass media.

The mass media in addition to the agencies should above all perform two services according to the ideas of the western Allied Forces: reporting about the problems of reconstruction in post-war Germany and the relaying of democratic principles. Apart from their information function mass media at first were to perform a substantial educational service in Germany after 1945. The terms "re-orientation" and "re-education" describe the education of Germans to become democratic citizens.

The Americans, the British, and the French were suspicious of the noticeable influence of the State and politics on the media in Germany (cf. Esser 1999: 665f.), they attempted to embed in the pluralistic Anglo-American tradition by means of licensing and to direct the journalists by way of job training, training courses and schooling in order to implement the Allied conceptions of appropriate news reporting.

Despite all efforts toward a new beginning, the Allied press politics in post-war Germany relied on a tradition of the party affiliation of the press dating from the Weimar Republic. The British, in particular, predominantly licensed party-affiliated newspapers. Party affiliation was also a characteristic of many journalists who, after 1945, re-entered into the profession. While the journalistic elite of the Nazi era was barred from executive functions, below the leadership level there was no change in personnel. There was a varied mixture of journalists working in the editorial offices after the war: imaginative newcomers without professional experience, former journalists who were banned from their profession during National Socialist times, and veteran editors from the Weimar and Nazi eras. After 1945, journalists tried

to adapt to the new circumstances. A systematic reappraisal of the past did not occur for this profession.

An important characteristic of journalism in Germany remained *in situ* from the first phase of professionalisation throughout both the Weimar Republic and the Nazi era in that journalism had always been regarded as a liberal profession that did not require a formalized education and training. This is in contrast to the situation in the United States where, since the beginning of the 20th century, journalism schools have trained prospective journalists. The principle of on-the-job training is dominant in Germany. This also leads to professional standards being predominantly acquired on the job and therefore in the context of vocational constraints.

However, the period of the licensed press did open several avenues for the modernization of journalism. Young journalists, who entered into journalism after 1945, were not personally shaped by a politically motivated usage of their profession. This increased the chances for a viable independent journalism to develop which placed the dissemination of information into the foreground and the affiliation to party interests and political conviction to the background. This was vital for the emancipation of journalism from special interests and for the flourishing of the news paradigm.

The interference of the western Allied Forces with the journalistic programs have probably had the most sustained effect with regard to the enforcement of a modern news paradigm in Germany. The supervision of the press by the State in Germany before 1945 and its proximity to political parties was disconcerting for the Americans and the British. Therefore, they substantially intervened with common journalistic practices in order to install an independent journalism. On the one hand, they specified defaults for reporting, thereby limiting the journalistic freedoms. Sources were restricted, and criticism was not permitted with regard to Allied occupation policy or the economic state of distress after 1945. On the other hand, American and British press officers mandated defaults for the forms of reporting and presentation in the media. Thus, they initiated a modernization of German journalism. The news paradigm was literally prescribed to German journalists.

The implementation was a part of the Anglo-American press policy. A July 1945 memorandum of the British Control Commission for Germany (CCG) states as default for the journalistic presentation of topics and events, that German journalists would have to learn "to present news objectively; to avoid the tendentious writing of news; to distinguish, and separate, news from comment; to avoid the confusion produced by editorials on news pages; and to segregate such editorials, where they belong – in a clearly defined opinion page" (Meier 1999: 252). Guiding principles of this kind were given to German journalists by way of instructional booklets and guidelines. These were of particular concern for those older journalists who had been socialized during the Weimar Republic and National Socialism with the idea that media convey convictions and serve to influence and to agitate. The

predefinition of fact-oriented information journalism meant that they had to discard the most basic procedures they had learned.

A program was specified for German journalism, which reflected British and American concepts. The media should primarily contain facts, and journalists should concentrate on reporting those facts. The editors in Germany had trouble with this pattern of objective reporting for a long period. The press officers frequently had to admonish the journalists after 1945 to adhere to the principles of news journalism and to clearly and visibly separate opinion from news reports. As Meier's analysis indicated, the party affiliated licensed newspapers, in particular, did not adhere to the defaults in election times, but fell back into the political party journalism of the Weimar era. "The desired separation from opinion and news report slowly approached the ideal only over the course of the fifties" (Meier 1999: 253).

Even if the British and American press specialists did prescribe to German editors the strict separation of opinions and news, they did not interfere with the internal organization of the media nor did they enforce, according to the model of Anglo-American journalism, a separation between news editing (news department) and editing of commentary (editorial department). Until recently, it has been common in German journalism for news and commentary to be clearly distinguishable in content and layout despite having been written by the same journalist. This separation between news and commentary did not become part of the media organization in Germany as an institution. The principle idea developed to be part of the journalistic attitude.

The enforcement of the news paradigm was a long process despite the rigid defaults mandated by the Allied Forces after 1945. The dispatches and reports from the first years after the war document reveal just how arduous it was for journalists to convert their editorial programs from intentions of manipulation to a transfer of factual information. Many texts seem stiff like unadorned protocols. Others openly combine political intentions with pathos. But it can be concluded that with time, contributions in the media became more factual, information gained importance over propaganda and news also became shorter. The news agencies, whose work came under special scrutiny of the press officers, had an important role in this development.

Detachment, comprehensiveness, objectivity and comprehensibility are central characteristics of the news paradigm. It took some time for practicing their use and then routinely using these elements.

Critical journalism was not exactly desired after 1945 but it was difficult for editors to take an active role in the acquisition of information or even to work in an investigative manner. Thus, Allied press experts occasionally criticized German journalists for lacking creativity and imagination in finding and using sources of information.

The learning process of German journalism was accompanied by a change in the image of the audience. Over a long period, journalists had viewed the recipients as receivers of messages. After 1945, German journalists had

to adjust to view autonomous individuals as their audience, able to form their own independent opinion on the basis of information and differing opinions.

The western Allied Forces certainly had a very large share in the establishment of factual news journalism. However, it can also be seen that besides this external pressure on one item of the journalistic program, elements of information journalism had already gained a foothold in German media long before 1945. At the end of the 19th century, the gazettes' were oriented toward the information needs of the readers they reported informatively in short texts, emphasized current topics and were structured clearly.

The question remains as to the reason for German journalism adopting the news paradigm so readily after 1945. The principal reason lies in the Allied Forces in West Germany turning the Anglo-American concept of objective reporting into the leitmotif of journalistic operating principles. This development was promoted by the detachment of the mass media from party affiliation, which was to have a lasting effect in Germany. The combination of democratisation of society and its institutions, a parliamentary democracy, competition in the media market, the style-building role of the news agencies and altered expectations of media users further supported the process of the establishment of information journalism. All in all, the modernization referred to by the news paradigm signified increased journalistic autonomy.

Today, information journalism with its ideal of objective reporting is firmly established in Germany. Journalists enjoy rights and privileges in researching and obtaining information. German authorities, for instance, are obligated to disclose to journalists the information they request. Media laws refer to the objectivity requirement. In interviews, journalists indicate that they primarily regard their role as neutral reporters. The writing of strictly fact-oriented news is among the indispensable and fundamental exercises both in the training of journalists outside of the media enterprises as well as inside the companies. The German Press Council, the body for the self-monitoring of the printed media, obligates journalists in its journalistic principles "to verify with due care the validity of news and written or pictorial information for publication according to circumstances."

The Changing of the News Paradigm

The news paradigm of the Anglo-American journalism tradition, through the process of engaging with the journalistic traditions in Germany after 1945, gained a foothold before establishing itself as a pure form of news and information journalism. The news agencies, as suppliers of current news, and the editorial offices in mass media organizations, are the guardians of this journalistic program (cf. Wilke 1999, Donsbach 1999).

Changes, however, can be identified with regard to news and information journalism. These changes were putting pressure on the systematically

structured, fact-oriented, and information transfer-oriented piece of news. This process of change in journalism will only be briefly mentioned here.

Exclusivity and freshness of topics increasingly became important competitive factors with mass media. This can be seen, for example, in the process of political reporting from the capital city Berlin where because information is published so swiftly after discussions, press conferences, and journalistic-editorial research, there is often too little time remaining for the verification of facts and the thorough validation of sources. News agency journalists are exposed to the same pressure. The desire for exclusivity, to secure public attention at short notice, leads to some media and journalists publishing rumours and speculations in central fields of events such as politics, economics, culture and sports without being able to specify respectable sources. In doing so, a factual orientation yields to a speculative orientation. Media marketing activities impair neutral reporting in the same manner because mass media frequently have organizing roles of events, which they then cover. They therefore lack the necessary objective distance from these events required for objective reporting in terms of the news paradigm.

Moreover, news journalism is influenced by special interest groups' instrumentalization and controlling of news reporting. Political parties and groups from the spheres of politics and economics, but also culture and sports, frequently utilize PR and media agencies to publicize their concerns in the mass media. They use the formal elements of news writing such as structure and linguistic forms to transport their interests. Such prepared offerings are frequently published unedited.

A widespread view in German journalism is that entertaining and varied topics and elements as well as dramatization and personalization are well suited to win the loyalty of media users. This leads to a dilution of the news paradigm in the form of infotainment.

Overall, these developments do not supersede the place of the news journalism paradigm. Objective news continues to serve as a point of reference. However, as a paradigm it loses its brilliance.

Central and Eastern Europe

The Antithesis of the Anglo-American News Paradigm

News Practices in Soviet Journalism

Epp Lauk

The frightening thing was that it might all be true...

George Orwell

The character of the political regime of a society shapes the general contextual framework for the media performance and journalistic professionalism. It also frames the conditions for professional behaviour of each journalist, including the limits of their ability for individual decision-making.

This chapter will focus on the characteristics and contexts of the Soviet type of journalism – journalism in a non-democratic ‘closed society’ under the strict supervision of the Communist Party (CP) and the State – referring to Estonia for detailed examples.

The media in Estonia and other Baltic nations initially adopted the Anglo-American news paradigm in the 1920s (See Halliki Harro-Loit’s study, in this volume). The democratic tradition of journalism was destroyed along with the destruction of the independent statehoods and the subsequent incorporation of the Baltic countries into the Soviet Union in 1940. The whole nature of the media was distorted with the change of the political regime. The Soviet version of journalism was violently introduced. The media in the region witnessed the destruction of the existing press system and professional organisation of journalists, the introduction of new personnel who were loyal to the Communist Party and the execution of strict supervision and censorship over all public information. The regaining of independence in 1991 made it necessary for journalists to redefine their professional identity, and created favourable circumstances for re-discovering and re-learning the standards and conventions of ‘Western’ journalism, including the Anglo-American news paradigm.

Concept of Soviet Journalism

Soviet journalism was a deviation from the Western understanding of journalism in all respects, including its functions in a society, genres, vocabulary,

professional conventions and standards. The concept of the role and functions of the mass media in the former Soviet Union was derived from the practice of absolute superiority and omnipotence of the Communist Party in society.

The most important purpose of the press, first formulated by V.I. Lenin as early as in 1902 (in his pamphlet “*What is to be done?*”) was to fight for the strengthening of the power of the Communist Party. This function, together with establishing the Communist regime, became a key tenet in the Communist Party ideology as well as one of the basic aims of journalism in the Soviet Union throughout its history. In post-World War II Communist bloc countries the media were seen as both a direct extension of the party apparatus and as ‘an ideological weapon’ of the party with journalists defined as ‘officers of the ideological front’ (Jakubowicz 1992:83).

The mass media were also excellent means for executing the Party’s project of creating a new kind of human being – *homo sovieticus* – and to gain full control over his activities and thoughts. Furthermore, the ambition was to determine how people ought to think and behave, and to prevent deviations from the ‘correct’ ideological line, as set by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU).

Among the main features of *homo sovieticus*, as laid down in the Programme of the CPSU adopted at the XXII Congress (1961), were unconditional devotion to the idea of Communism, dutiful work for the society, the sense of collectivism, the merciless struggle against the enemies of Communism, and high moral qualities. George Orwell’s description of such an ideal member of society in his “Nineteen Eighty-Four” is very close to reality:

The ideal set up by the Party was /—/ a nation of warriors and fanatics, marching forward in perfect unity, all thinking the same thoughts and shouting the same slogans, perpetually working, fighting, triumphing, persecuting – three hundred million people all with the same face (Orwell 1966:62).

The mass media’s mission was to act as a standard-setter that told the people how to behave properly and say the right things; their task was to create “an ideologically correct symbolic environment, filled with content designed to socialize the audience to the ideas and values of Communism/—/” (Jakubowicz 1995: 23).

To achieve these goals and specifically, to secure and strengthen the *status quo* of the ruling party elite (*nomenclatura*), a complicated mechanism of supervision and control over all spheres of society was established. As information is a vital precondition of power, the CPSU needed to attain complete control over the content and distribution of public information. Various different means and conditions were created for filtering, rationing, blocking, directing and manipulating the flow of public information.

It is generally believed that the all-embracing control was achieved with the means of censorship. However, censorship was just one element of a much larger and more complex mechanism of an organisational apparatus

available to the Party for supervision and control. Concealment, hypocrisy, demagoguery, denunciation and fear were among the constituent components of this mechanism. Thus, the main factor that shaped the nature of Soviet journalism was not censorship, but the Soviet media concept *per se* and the “fruitful” conditions of the socialist order.

CPSU – The World’s Largest Communication Monopoly

The interests of the ‘paymaster’ are always reflected in the content of the news media (cf. Altschull 1984). In the Soviet Union, it was the Communist Party that oversaw all resources of the society and supervised all branches of production, including the production and dissemination of information. Thus, the economic control by the Party was built into the very organisation of the socialist economy. The Party allocated the resources, set the tasks and appointed the managers to carry them out. The communist media were directly and fully subsidised from the State budget. The ‘planned economy’ guaranteed the necessary supplies for every publication or broadcast and television station, whether or not it was officially identified as Party-managed (Dzirkals 1982: 87). The concept of the ‘planned economy’ presupposed continuous increase of production and the over-fulfilment of plans. This also applied to the Soviet press. Circulation numbers were increased from year to year, as were the production resources, irrespective of the actual demand.

The approval of the Central Committee of the CPSU was required to found any media organ (including those formally subordinated to governmental bodies or various economic or scientific organisations) wherever in the territory of the USSR, or to make changes in staffs, pay rates, layout or frequency of publication (Dzirkals 1982: 87). The huge mechanism of printing and distribution was also a State monopoly. Thus, as Lendvai (1981:25) put it, “USSR Inc.” was “by far the largest communication corporation in the world” with the Communist Party leadership acting as the supreme board of directors of gigantic multi-media companies. Since such an arrangement liberated the Soviet media from economic concerns as well as made any economic competition impossible and unnecessary, the media were only required to concentrate on active propaganda of the directives and aims of the Communist Party. The economic control was interlaced with administrative as well as political supervision and control.

The Soviet Media Hierarchies

An important factor that enabled both the efficient supervision and direction of the flow of information was the hierarchical design of the whole Soviet

media system. The hierarchy of the press mirrored the institutional structure of Soviet society. Vihalemm and Lauristin (1997:104) define five levels in the hierarchy of the press with the upper level of the All-Union CP press, with *Pravda* at the pinnacle, followed in importance by the Russian-language CP press in the Soviet republics and the CP press in national languages. Then *Komsomol* (the Communist Youth League) and other youth press and local newspapers formed the third level. Finally on the bottom two levels are the cultural and scientific publications, the women's and sports magazines, and lastly 'Samizdat' and other alternative publications. However, it was not only the media channels that were set in a hierarchical structure for there also existed hierarchies for sources, topics, events, genres, authors etc.

The most authoritative among the sources of information was the government news agency TASS – the Telegraph Agency of the Soviet Union. TASS and *Pravda* were the only sources of official information for the national media. TASS strained and filtered all the foreign information that was published or aired by the Soviet press and broadcasting. TASS also operated as “a kind of bloc gate-keeper, a communications centre transmitting, withholding or slanting information” when there were sudden, unexpected switches in Soviet policy or world affairs (Lendvai 1981:30-31). According to Lendvai (Ibid. 30), there was a tacit agreement among the Communist bloc countries that the news agency of one country reported events in another country solely on the basis of releases by the agency in the country concerned. Lendvai also gives an example where the entire Eastern European press waited for thirty-six hours for a TASS announcement about the death of the former Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev.

The Soviet *Pravda* was a standard-setter and model of a Party organ for the other Communist bloc countries as well. The organs of the Communist Parties of Eastern Germany, Romania, Hungary, etc shared the same world-view and the same stereotypes and did not differ much from *Pravda*'s scale of values and political priorities (Ibid. 92). However, certain deviations were still possible as for example, the Romanian press was more balanced in presentation of international news and the Hungarian *Népszabadság* published relatively frequently materials on the issues of human interest (Ibid).

For the national and regional media within the Soviet Union in the languages other than Russian, the All-Union broadcasting with its main television news broadcast '*Vremya*' (*The Time*) and All-Union newspapers were the next important level of sources. National news agencies, working in the languages of the Soviet 'Republics' were entitled to produce and distribute only the news of national and local importance.

In the hierarchy of topics, the policy and ideology of the CPSU and the internal policy of the Soviet Union were followed in importance by foreign policy and international relations. 'Correct' treatment of the issues on the history of the CPSU and the USSR were also regarded as information of greatest significance. Ideological, political and historical topics of All-Union importance could only be presented in one, official version that strictly heeded

the communist orthodoxy. The producers of such canonised texts as well as their sources explicitly spoke with the voice of the power holders.

On the lower levels of the hierarchies where the issues of economy, education, agriculture, science, sports etc were covered, more flexibility was permitted and looser control practiced, especially in the cultural segment of the media. Some cultural publications, for example, such as *Literaturnaja Gazeta* (*Literary Gazette*) or *Novyi Mir* (*New World*) in Moscow, enjoyed a certain degree of liberty to critically discuss societal issues. Nevertheless, their national counterparts in the 'Republics' could still have problems with censorship while attempting to publish translations from the *Literaturnaja Gazeta* or cartoons taken from the *Krokodil* (*Crocodile*), the All-Soviet satirical magazine.

Mechanisms of Supervision and Control¹

The CPSU was in the position of monopolistic control over the public word that included not only the press and electronic media, but also all kinds of printed matter, film production, theatre and cinema performances, exhibitions, advertising etc. In parallel with prevention of the hostile or undesirable opinions, the aim was also to control and direct the formation of opinion (cf. Gunther & Mughan 2000).

In the Soviet Union, the freedom of speech and other democratic freedoms were declared in its Constitution and repeated in the 'Constitutions' of its member 'Republics'. However, these freedoms were guaranteed for the Soviet citizens only on the conditions that they were used for "the consolidation and development of the socialist order in accordance with the aims of building Communism" (Konstitutsioon 1988: 15). If these freedoms were used in a way that might have been interpreted by authorities as agitation and propaganda harmful to the Soviet system, the cases were treated according to the Criminal law. The penalty for the 'crime' was imprisonment from six months to seven years with or without internal exile for a period of two to five years, or internal exile alone (Kriminaalkoodeks 1990:77).

Thus, officially, there was no censorship in the Soviet Union, and the words *censor* and *censorship* were used only in a historical context or concerning capitalist countries. At the same time, according to some estimation, the institutionalised censorship employed at least 70,000 censors in the 1970s-1980s throughout the Soviet Union (Dzirkals 1982: 92).

The CP monopoly of the media ownership, publishing, printing and distribution set the general context for the control over the content of the mass media and the activities of the authors (journalists, writers, artists etc).

The Soviet mechanism of mass media supervision and control consisted, in general, of two major sectors: the Communist Party authorities hand in hand with the KGB (the Committee of State Security), which constituted the

“brain” of the system, and the State censorship administration, operating as an “executive hand” (Lauk 1999:30).

The overall media policy and the appointments of central press editors-in-chief and top management of publishing houses were decided at the highest level of the CP hierarchy – the Politbureau and the Central Committee Secretariat. The chief editors of the All-Union newspapers *Pravda* and *Izvestija* were also members of the Central Committee. The Secretaries of the Central Committee supervised and directed different segments of the media in co-operation with the Ministries and various Central Committee departments. The largest among these departments was the Agitation and Propaganda Department that supervised all central press organs, radio and television. Respective local models were structured in a similar way in the national ‘Republics’ of the USSR. However, appointments of the editors-in-chief of any ‘Republic’ press had still to be approved in Moscow.

The KGB’s Fifth Department (until the late 1960s, the Second Department) determined most of the topics and issues that were to be banned in the public texts. This department in cooperation with the state censorship administration also prepared the Handbooks of Classified Data and checked the manuscripts of scientists in research institutions. In especially sensitive political cases where the ‘right’ interpretation was extremely important, disclosing dissidents for example, KGB officers produced texts that were published as editorial material or as a journalist’s contribution. Direct telephone lines existed, connecting high-level Communist Party officials and KGB officers with the editors-in-chief. The KGB also kept secret files on journalists and even journalism teachers and students (cf. Sükösd 2000).

The most direct executive level of censorship was that of the Chief Administration for the Protection of the State Secrets in Print (from 1990 – the Chief Administration for the Protection of the State Secrets in Press and the Other Media). This organisation was more widely known by the abbreviation of its name in Russian – Glavlit. Similar administrations existed in all Soviet ‘Republics’ and they were all subordinated to the Chief Administration in Moscow. Glavlit had censorship offices in all the bigger cities of the country, special officers in broadcasting and publishing organisations and in postal services. Glavlit as a whole was subordinated to the Agitation and Propaganda Department of the Central Committee of the CPSU and the KGB at the All-Soviet level and at local levels. Organisationally Glavlit belonged to the system of the Council of Ministers, but this was merely an economic relationship. Glavlit addressed all reports, letters, complaints etc, to the Central Committee and the KGB.

In addition, the responsibility for the practical censorship was put on the State Publishing, Printing and Book-Trade Committee and the State Television and Broadcasting Committee, which in turn were subordinated to the Central Committee of the CP. The editors-in-chief and all publishers were accountable to and controlled by the Propaganda Department, the local (city or district) party committee and Glavlit. In practice, other state institutions

(ministries and their departments, local administrations, legal, cultural and educational institutions etc) also functioned as the metastases of the cancer of censorship.

A central document guiding the work of censors and, from the 1950s onwards, also of the chief editors was the Handbook of Classified Data, the last issue of which was published in 1987 and consisted of 183 pages. A general practice was to collect and burn all copies of the older version of the Handbook when a new version was issued. Forbidden topics and facts included disasters with human losses, everything that concerned the armed forces, criminality and jails, cases of social unrest and protests, and of course, censorship itself. The first time that the words *censor* and *censorship* were publicly mentioned in the Estonian media was as late as 1987.

Glavlit was, during the Stalinist period directly responsible for the 'correctness' of the political content and wording of public texts. In the middle of the 1950s, the censorship of publications and broadcasts was made the responsibility of the relevant chief editors. They were provided with the Handbooks of Classified Data and other instructions, and had the responsibility for the 'correct' ideological line of their outlets. Glavlit censors only gave the final permission for publishing or broadcasting. They communicated with the authors solely through the editors. Numerous complaints from Glavlit to the Propaganda Department of the Central Committee of the Estonian CP during the 1960s and 1970s indicate, for example, that the editors often used this position for passing texts that were not 'correct', politically and ideologically. In the cases of complaints, the practice was to invite the editors of the publications concerned to a 'conversation' (editors also called the situation as an invitation to 'the carpet' or to 'coffee') at the Propaganda Department where relevant instructions and reprimands were given. However, very few of such cases are documented, as well as the instructions and warnings given over the telephone lines.

In the Stalinist years, Glavlit and the KGB were also busy with 'cleaning up' the libraries, schools, scientific and cultural institutions, and other places where printed matter was used or produced from 'anti-Soviet, counter-revolutionary and other harmful literature', which was then burnt.²

Although the mechanism of the mass media control and supervision was designed to be all embracing and all penetrating, there were also factors that undermined the efficiency of the whole machinery, especially in the occupied nations and satellite countries. The goals of the Soviet media – to re-socialize and homogenize the population according to the values and interests of the Communist Party and State – contradicted the collective experience and historical memory of people. They refused to identify with the "structures and institutions of social life developed by the communist state" (Jakubowicz 1992:88)³ and turned to the private sphere or other apolitical spheres of life for safety and reliable information. The official media failed to meet the audience's needs, but offered a 'virtual reality' that too obviously contradicted the real life experience. According to an Estonian sociological survey in the early

1980s, the readers' interests were opposite to the official hierarchy of the topics. The most popular issues among the readers were those of family and home, nature, social welfare, ethics, culture, education. Politics and ideology came last in the rankings (Vihalemm & Lauristin 1997:106-107).

An underground press (*samizdat*) developed, as an alternative, in many nations (Poland, Czechoslovakia, Lithuania, Russia, Ukraine etc). In others, like Estonia, the opposition discourse emerged within the official media, especially in the cultural segment. After the end of Stalin's reign, the strictness of the control somewhat loosened and an alternative, formally apolitical discourse started to develop alongside the ideological one. An intentionally cultivated metaphorical language became a definite way of expressing resistance to the ideological oppression and propaganda (see more: Høyer, Lauk & Vihalemm 1993).

During the 1970s and early 1980s, several other segments of the official media (local press, certain parts of the radio and television programmes) followed suit. The frequent appearance of the 'human dimension' in even the most conservative Party newspapers is the best example of this trend. For instance, in the portrait stories about outstanding workers or prominent party members their personal human traits were strongly emphasised while their official merits were given scant attention. In this way, in the official media, the propagandistic content and oppositional content existed in parallel in the same outlets, simultaneously representing opposite discourses.

From the mid-1980s onwards, the opposition discourse began to surface more frequently. As a consequence, a significant discursive change occurred in the public texts between 1988 and 1989 that definitely contributed to the legitimisation of democracy in Estonia.

Bad News is Not News

News presentation in Soviet journalism was completely based on and derived from the main task of the Soviet media – brainwashing the populace and glorifying the Communist Party's undertakings. In the press, this propaganda was presented in journalistic formats, including the format of news. Thus, the main function of the news was not to inform about what happened, but to illustrate the success of Party policy in its enterprise of building a Communist society. This was also the leading principle for deciding what was newsworthy. In practice, it meant that only good news was news and anything else was unimportant or even undesirable. In the news, facts were always interpreted in accordance with party directives, and very often, interpretations replaced information. Omission of relevant information was a widespread practice in the Soviet news presentation. A TASS news item published in the section of the All-Union news of the Estonian daily *Noorte Hääl* in 1986 can serve as a typical example:

TASS. From Grodno. None of the kolkhozes⁴ of Grodno oblast has to worry about the transportation of cattle to slaughterhouses anymore. This work is now taken over by a specialized transport firm that was established at an agricultural-industrial enterprise. Transport schedules and routes have been worked out. In the kolkhozes platforms for loading the cattle have been built. Now, three times less trucks are needed for the transportation of the slaughter cattle than before the introduction of the centralised transport service (Noorte Hääl 30.4. 1986).

Access to information was limited by expansive definitions of state secrets and by the power of institutions to withhold information (Mickiewicz 1998:40). If for example, reporting about a disaster with human losses could not be avoided, it was done with maximum possible delay and only a minimum of information was given. Thus, it was next to impossible to get an adequate picture about what really had happened. Traditionally, a short announcement of the event was transmitted with a confirmation that competent authorities had started to deal with the case. Usually, very little if any information was added later.

There was the potential for the Soviet news policy to become more open and diverse after *glasnost* – ‘speaking out loud as a policy’ (McNair 1988:131) – in 1985. However, the mass media remained Party controlled throughout *perestroika* and *glasnost*. The supervising mechanisms were not removed, and *glasnost* was primarily viewed as an instrument in the hands of the CP reformist leadership “to make the management mechanism work more flexibly and effectively” (Hochman 1988:36). As an effect of *glasnost* the restrictions that foreign correspondents had experienced in the Soviet Union were reduced and their conditions for reporting and making current affairs programs became better. There were, however, in 1986 only about forty western journalists in Moscow (McNair 1988:137). *Perestroika* leaders also set up regular briefings with foreign and domestic journalists giving more information about political events than ever before. This change was a remarkable contrast compared with the situation before *glasnost*, but still it did not mean a radical breakthrough of a new information policy in the Soviet Union.

Chernobyl Catastrophe as a Test of the New Information Policy

Soviet media coverage of the catastrophe at the Chernobyl nuclear power station on April 26, 1986 can be viewed as both an example of supervised and manipulated news coverage that was typical of Soviet journalism and an indicator of the failures of the *glasnost* efforts in the Soviet media policy.

Chernobyl released into the atmosphere substantially more radiation than the two atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki at the end of

World War II. Radioactive contamination affected all Ukraine's neighbouring countries and to lesser extent, most of Europe. Experts estimate that in the decades after the disaster over five thousand individuals will die of cancer (Bittman 1988:11). An accidental radiation emission of this magnitude warrants massive media coverage detailing information on the key points of societal interest: what happened, when, where and why, post-event operations and possible effects on the natural environment and health for all those regions at risk. Estonia is approximately 1500 km from Chernobyl, and the Forsmark Nuclear Power Plant near Stockholm a further 300 km. It was atmospheric radiation data from the latter almost 48 hours after the accident that forced a terse TASS statement to be released to the world and read out by an announcer on Moscow television at 9.02 pm on April 28 (Gregorovich 1996). The statement did not contain any details:

An accident has taken place at the Chernobyl power station, and one of the reactors was damaged. Measures are being taken to eliminate the consequences of the accident. Those affected by it are being given assistance. A government commission has been set up. (Quoted by McNair 1988:140).

The same text was the first news item on the accident published in the Soviet press in the All-Union *Izvestija* on Tuesday 29th April. This was followed by another TASS statement on the next day that was also published in *Pravda* and sent by TASS to all the media in the Soviet Union. Although *Izvestija* was ready to publish the news as early as on 27 April "the editors /—/ were ordered to suppress a story providing more details of the event" as Professor David R. Marples argues, who interviewed the editorial board of *Izvestija* in July 1987 (Marples 1996).

The following section throws light on how the four leading Estonian national dailies of that time⁵ reported on the accident during the succeeding weeks, from April 27th to May 15th. Having TASS and All-Union newspapers such as *Pravda* and *Izvestija* as their only sources of the news about Chernobyl, these newspapers clearly reflect the official information policy of that time. The articles in all four papers frequently used the same wording. The following Table summarises the information that a reader could glean from the Estonian dailies during the first weeks after the disaster.

It is evident that the importance and consequences of the disaster were diminished and the aim was to reassure people. The date of the accident appeared in the press eleven days after the accident and it was not for another seven days till the people in Estonia received their first local information concerning the catastrophe, on May 13th. The Estonian daily *Noorte Hääl* and both Russian dailies published the same article under the title of "Specialists are Commenting" that was prepared by ETA (Estonian Telegraph Agency) correspondent K. Zahharov. Quoting the top officials of the Ministry of Health of Estonian SSR the article reassured that no danger existed and the measurements showed that the radiation was within non-life threat-

Table 1. The Paucity of Information Released by the Estonian Newspapers during the First Three Weeks after the Catastrophe

Where: Ukraine, the Chernobyl nuclear power station 130 km north from Kiev	When: Saturday, April 26, at 1.23 by Moscow time (revealed on the 11th day after the disaster)
What: • An accident, in which the 4th nuclear reactor and some building constructions have been damaged • Three other reactors undamaged, but stopped • Certain amount of radiation leaked • Two people were killed in the accident • Over 100 people got injured by radiation • 197 people have been sent to hospitals, 49 of them have got to go home already • 18 people are in difficult health situation • 36 are in difficult health situation • 6 are dead	Why: • Only subsequent research will give answer to this question • Perhaps, some unforeseeable failures happened
Environmental Health: • The level of radiation has stabilised, is closely watched • The level of radiation in Byelorussia is permanently watched • The level of radiation does not exceed the safe norms • Near the reactor the level of radiation is 10-15 milliroentgens (<i>but not said when measured</i>) • During the first couple of days the level of radiation decreased 3-4 times • 'Situation of the radiation' in the western border areas of the USSR is normal • On the territories of Ukraine and Byelorussia the levels of radiations are the same as before • Radiation around the power station and the town of the station has decreased 1.5 times • Radiation is decreasing • The water is not polluted	Post-Event Operations: • Government commission headed by the Vice-Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Soviet Union comrade B.J. Shcherbina arrived • Well-known scientists, specialists and leaders of ministries and other central institutions have been included into the commission • Liquidation of the consequences of the accident continues • De-activation continues • The 4th reactor will be covered with concrete • The 4th reactor is covered with thousands of tons of protective materials • Special units with modern technology and efficient equipment have arrived and started to work • The work "for carrying out the complex of technical measures" continues

(All the above quotes from *Rahva Hääli*; *Sovetskaja Estonija*; *Noorte Hääli* and *Molodjozh Estonii* are translated by the author.)

ening limits. It was also reported that although the radiation level around the power station at Chernobyl had increased about 4-6 times, it still was not dangerous for people and was not harmful for the fauna and flora. *Rahva*

Hääl published a similar article on the same day, but written by its own staff member⁶ who interviewed the Chief Doctor of the Sanitary-Epidemiological Institution of the Estonian SSR. The doctor confirmed that Estonia was not under the danger of radiation.

It is fair to state that for three weeks after the disaster it was not possible to gain an adequate picture of the events in the Estonian newspapers in either Estonian or in Russian. Only two out of sixteen articles on Chernobyl published in *Noorte Hääl* and three out of fourteen in *Rahva Hääl* contained some substantial facts about the real course of events (all presented in Table 1). Russian language dailies published only two informative articles each during the first three weeks after the disaster. The rest were counter-propaganda articles disclosing the “avalanche of bourgeois propaganda lies” in the provocative Western media, and information of how people all over the Soviet Union were heroically helping those who suffered in connection with the accident. The latter, however, did not contain any information about the accident or the victims and were focussed, not on Chernobyl, but on other geographical locations.

Glasnost had promised more than it could deliver. The old patterns were still there, and they were not quick to change. The old hierarchy of sources had functioned perfectly. The direct voices of the authorities – TASS and the All-Union media – had served as the only sources of information for the other levels of the press hierarchy, even in the immediate localities of the disaster – Byelorussia and Ukraine.

Radical changes would only occur with the collapse of the Communist regime that caused the disintegration of the centralised media hierarchy, and the liberation of the media from Communist Party supervision and finally, created the conditions for a free press.

Ambiguous Role of Journalists

The ideal of a Soviet journalist was not based upon professional, but political and ideological values and standards. A “professional” Soviet journalist was not allowed to be an unbiased transmitter of news. They were required to maintain an “active” position and to be an advocate of the Communist Party ideology (Lauk 1996: 95). The professional duty of any Soviet journalist was regarded to be the “daily concern about the strengthening of ideological influence over the masses” (Tepljuk 1989:122). The professionalism of Soviet journalists was measured by their faith and loyalty to the Party: “The level of political and party responsibility is a trait that characterises his professional maturity and /–/ professional fitness” (Ibid: 101).

For Soviet journalists, their professional freedom was limited to an Orwellian understanding of it: “It is the party that guarantees the journalist the necessary freedom of action /–/. In using the freedom of activity, of-

ferred by the party, the journalist must see to it that this freedom is realized to the fullest extent in the interests of society. The party has a right to demand from the journalist ideological clarity, definite views and a principled manner" (Tepljuk 1989: 114). In order to guarantee this, the leading positions in the media organisations were filled with people nominated by the Communist Party, and in many cases, they were former party functionaries.

The primary aims of professional education were to provide young journalists with a correct ideological position and knowledge necessary for becoming an efficient propagandist. The duty of providing this education was given to the Faculties of Journalism of the Universities and the Communist Party Higher Education Colleges. These faculties "were the most carefully watched and highly politicised of all departments. After all, they prepared the political communicators of the future, and included among them were often the representatives of the security organs using the cover of journalists" (Mickiewicz 1998:42). The vocational skills and mastery of creative work came only as secondary professional requirements. However, such an ideal of an orthodox party journalist was rarely achieved and journalists could even perform a task opposite to that of spreading Party ideology. The Solidarity press in Poland in 1980-1981 is the best-known example.

The contrast between the Soviet people's everyday life and Communist ideology was so obvious that the teaching of the ideologically accepted views and interpretations of reality often directed the students to 'read between the lines' and to critically evaluate both the reality and the ideology. Indeed 'teaching between the lines' was also practiced in some Universities, as for example in Tartu, Estonia (Høyer, Lauk & Vihalemm 1993: 219-220). Only those journalists who belonged to the Soviet party *nomenklatura* as editors-in-chief, heads of political departments of media organisations or leading political commentators, and who enjoyed respective privileges and salaries, overtly expressed their devotion to the Communist Party.

Among the other journalists, as an Estonian example demonstrates (see: Lauk 1996), a small number of cynical conformists appeared, who expressed their critical attitude through ridiculing the official ideology, but not going so far to be blamed for anti-Soviet activity. A significant group of journalists challenged the constraints of official ideology by transmitting their message 'between and behind the lines', risking the attention of the censors and getting punished. Finally, the largest group of journalists did not have any strong personal involvement in the system and did their work without problematizing its political meaning. Many of these were not members of the Communist Party (and, indeed, as a result were never promoted in their careers). They felt themselves to be very much alike their audiences, and tried to use apolitical topics and 'human' language to speak to them.

The ideological pressure and control that forced journalists to express loyalty to the paymaster on the one hand, and silent opposition in various forms on the other, placed them in an ambiguous situation. It was not easy to gain the confidence of the audiences without losing the trust of the au-

thorities and vice versa. The borderline between non-contributing and opposing was always vague and journalists could easily be accused in not following the main principle of the Soviet media – *partiinnost* – party-mindedness. The consequences could be rather severe, from imprisonment or deportation to Siberia during the Stalinist years to temporary or permanent prohibition to work as a journalist during the later decades up to the end of the 1980s. “In the case when the activity of a journalist does not correspond to the demands of the party, it is empowered to deprive him of the right to speak in its name or may choose other means of influence over him” (Tepljuk 1989:117). The highest degree of party punishment was the expulsion from the ranks of the CPSU. The acute danger of repressions sharpened journalists’ sense of self-censorship and warned them from touching on sensitive issues.

Conclusions

Free market conditions and relatively extensive freedom of expression in the democratic political systems create a favourable environment for the development of the function of social control of the press and the concept of socially responsible journalism. Information practice reflects these functions in a news paradigm that values accuracy, details, objectivity, openness etc. All these characteristics of the Western news paradigm hit a concrete wall in the Soviet system where the precondition of the maintenance of the regime was control throughout the whole society. Therefore, the purpose of the media in the Soviet Union – to strengthen the Communist Party’s power and to make its policy unquestionable – replaced democratic functions with manipulation, propaganda and disinformation. An extensive system of control over the content, production and distribution of public information was built up to ensure that the audience would receive only the ‘right’ message and alternative sources of information would be inaccessible.

As the case of Chernobyl demonstrates Soviet journalism was propaganda journalism, even when it concerned a disaster of worldwide importance. Instead of providing the world with accurate facts and accounts of what happened, the Soviet media minimized the scope of the disaster and its consequences. Only an official version of events, fabricated by TASS and ‘authorised’ special correspondents from *Pravda* and *Izvestija*, was available for people in the Soviet Union. Under the pressure of international public opinion and the media the Soviet information tactics, after a while, became more open and cooperative, but still remained cautious and guarded by the Communist Party. The report on the accident, launched in August 1986, was prepared exclusively by the Soviet experts (Marples 1996). The trial of six key persons of the nuclear plant in July 1987 was mostly held in secret.

Although there were always (more or less successful) attempts at resistance from the lower levels, and in the mid-1980s the *glasnost* and *perestroika*

reforms initiated from the top, no radical change in the information policy occurred until the basic tenets of communist orthodoxy had altered. The basic concept of Soviet journalism, discussed above, and the environment in which the Soviet media operated, created a distorted journalistic phenomenon – propaganda news and news without information that was clearly an antithesis of the western news paradigm.

Notes

1. This section is largely based on my article “Practice of Soviet Censorship in the Press” published earlier in *Nordicom-Information* 1999, Vol. 21, No 3, pp 27-39.
2. Annual reports of censorship authorities of Estonia show that in the first year of Soviet rule (1940-1941), over 200 000 copies of Estonian books had been destroyed. During the four years after the WW II (1944-1948), almost half a million copies of books and periodicals were burnt (Lauk 1999:29).
3. Jakubowicz (1992) describes it as ‘sociological vacuum’.
4. ‘kolkhoz’ is the abbreviation of the Russian word for ‘collective farm’.
5. *Rabva Häääl* (The People’s Voice) and *Sovetskaja Estonija* (The Soviet Estonia) the main organs of the Estonian Communist Party in Estonian and Russian; *Noorte Häääl* (The Voice of Youth) and *Molodjozh Estonii* (The Youth of Estonia) the main organs of the Estonian Young Communists’ League in Estonian and Russian. The circulations of the four papers (for the population of ca 900,000 Estonian speakers and 500,000 Russian speakers) were at the time: *Rabva Häääl* – 151,000; *Noorte Häääl* – 159,000; *Sovetskaja Estonija* – 46,000 and *Molodjozh Estonii* – 52,000. According to a survey in 1988, 60% of Estonians regularly read *Rabva Häääl* and 70% of Estonians were regular readers of *Noorte Häääl* (Vihalemm 2004: 299 – 304). People usually subscribed to both Estonian language dailies.
6. This article was the only one among all the articles on Chernobyl in four Estonian dailies during the month that was written by a local staff journalist.

Historical Development of the News Format in Estonia 1920-1990

Halliki Harro-Loit

There have been many political regimes in Estonia since the 1920s through which modern journalistic conventions have developed. One of the underlying hypotheses is that all forms of journalism are sensitive to their cultural and political contexts. For not only is information retrieval affected by the kind of power that the sources of information wield, but news presentation is also regulated by various political expectations, norms and conventions. The development of autonomous or professional journalistic techniques may be delayed under authoritarian regimes or even more under totalitarian political regimes.

Although one may find some good examples of the “inverted-pyramid” type of news stories from the 19th century Estonian newspapers – the use of the pyramid structure was casual during most of the 20th century. In addition, during the Soviet time the whole concept of news genre was strongly affected by political ideology. The modern news format was conventionalised only during the 1990s when Estonia again became an independent, democratic and capitalist state and the majority of media organizations trained their journalists in professional news writing.

The present study combines qualitative text analysis with quantitative methods for the analysis of journalistic forms and content. Six selected years throughout the 20th century represent different stages of professional development during different political regimes. The main body of my text will be dedicated to an analysis of how and when the ‘inverted pyramid’, or the wider technique of ‘focusing’ developed within Estonian journalism.

Historical Conditions of Journalism in Estonia during the 20th Century

The Estonian language press began to appear regularly from the middle of the 19th century. The journalistic community From the 1880s, expanded as competition developed between the publications. The freedom of speech

and the freedom of the press were first proclaimed by the Manifesto of Independence on 24 February 1918, and finally confirmed in the Estonian Constitution in 1920. Rapid modernization of the press as an institution started in the 1920s, when most of the preconditions for an autonomous field of journalism were present in the independent Estonian state.

The growth of the newspaper market peaked in 1933. In the meantime, as the result of this expansion and increased competition, several new publications were started. *Esmaspäev* ('Monday'), the first tabloid, was launched in 1922. The market became increasingly differentiated and publications intended for readers with specific interests appeared. Radio programming began from 1927. The big dailies therefore did not compete only amongst themselves but started to vie for audiences with another mass medium.

Alongside the changes in orientation, typography and layout changed as features of the Anglo-American newspaper model were imported to Estonia. In the 1920s considerable quantities of material on British, American and Scandinavian journalism were dealt with in various publications including a history of journalism, the economy of news organisations, the freedom and status of journalism, news technology, access to information etc.

The constitutional crisis that had developed in Estonia in the wake of the international economic crash in 1929 ended up with a state of emergency on Aug 11, 1933. Censorship was temporarily imposed three months later over the daily and party press, and political organisations were stopped. In March 1934, an authoritarian regime was established that took the press and radio under the government control. Political parties were forbidden and thus, the party press destroyed. Although most of the former party newspapers continued to publish, a political plurality of opinions was subdued. The State Propaganda Department was founded for providing newspapers and radio with official information and to supervise the press and broadcasting. The new Constitution of 1936 enforced several restrictions of the freedom of press, and the Press Act in 1938 imposed numerous limitations and regulations on the press. Censorship, however, was not as strict as the censorship that immediately followed the Soviet occupation in summer of 1940.

The Third Reich and the Soviet Union agreed through the secret Ribbentrop-Molotov pact of late August 1939 that Estonia belonged to the 'Soviet's sphere of interests'. The Soviet Union established military bases in September 1939 and occupied Estonia in June 1940. A state coup by the communists was arranged in the same month and the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic became a part of the USSR.

The Soviet concept of media autonomy, journalistic practice and what would be considered as news differed so much from previous practices as to be considered a totally new paradigm. All media was owned and operated by the Communist Party or by the Communist youth organisation *Komsomol*. Political comments and most of the international and national news in Estonian newspapers was produced and controlled centrally by TASS or by the Estonian Telegraph Agency (ETA). (See Epp Lauk's chapter for more details).

The forty-seven years of continuous Soviet rule (1944-1991) can be divided into four periods where political freedom differed slightly from one period to another. The first period refers to the Stalinist tyranny with brutal repression until 1956. The second period between 1956 and 1968 was called 'the Thaw', with less strict censorship. The third period 1969-1986 was labelled 'Stagnation', with room for some journalistic experiments. Formal control was strengthened again after the Prague Spring in 1968. But by the late 1970s, the Soviet Union and its economy had weakened so much that a limited debate on public affairs became possible. The fourth period between 1987 and 1990, after Glasnost, has been named the 'New Awakening' in the Baltic nations.

As the Soviet system gradually disintegrated, the room for journalistic discourse widened. Having been few in number and brutally suppressed during the Stalinist era, the professional journalistic community started to re-develop during the Thaw. By the 1970s an alternative journalistic discourse gradually emerged in the official media, in parallel to the Soviet propaganda. During the independence movement from 1988 the Estonian media were gradually able to gain more autonomy. Censorship was abolished in the autumn of 1990, almost a year before actual Independence.

Database for the Quantitative Analysis

My research was carried out on the analysis of the daily paper with the largest circulation in the six selected years – *Päevaleht* in 1920 and 1931; *Uus Eesti* in 1938; *Noorte Hääl* in 1971 and 1981. However 1999 was an exceptional year in the history of the Estonian press as for the first time the circulation of a popular tabloid, *Sõnumileht* was as great as the leading quality daily, *Eesti Päevaleht*, so both were selected for analysis. All news items and articles, 2407 items in total, published in the first week of October of the selected time cuts were analysed.

The Development of the Inverted Pyramid Structure

The development of the 'inverted pyramid' form of presentation is linked to the use news wire in the late 19th century. The form is considered the archetype of fact-oriented and detached journalism (Høyer 1997). The inverted pyramid format demands a focused and condensed technique, and more journalistic activity in collecting necessary information compared to unstructured stories that reported events more or less as they happened. Reporters had, to a great extent, traditionally relied on officially given information. The inverted pyramid style, by contrast, requires a conscious prioritisation of facts, of plots and sub-plots and a more careful maintenance of the main facts in the foreground of a news event. Chronology is in the process turned upside

down. van Dijk (1988a) calls it the relevance principle compared to traditional stories where chronology was the main organising principle.

The chronological order better preserves the intentions and agenda of information sources as well as the succession of disordered elements as they unfold in the original event. The traditional convention for story telling is known as a 'diamond'. Here the order of events is arranged so that the culmination of actions occurs near the middle of the story, after an introductory presentation of context and actors.

A third category may be called the 'quadrangle' (see Høyer and Nonseid in this volume). The quadrangle, in contrast to the 'diamond' and the 'inverted pyramid', presents the news without any detectable dramaturgical structure or storyline. Except for the headline, the following example presents this type of news story:

Tax for staircases

Staircases will bring an income of 2 million cents to the town.

As it is known, last summer the Town Administration of Tartu decided to impose a tax for staircases that extend to the street. This decision had to be passed on 1 January this year. Meanwhile, lists of staircases, on which tax would be imposed, were compiled. Now we hear that soon the Town Administration will hold a meeting in order to affix the plan that tax will be imposed on staircases extending 30 cm into the street ... *Postimees*, January 3. 1929

While metropolitan newspapers in the US conventionalised the inverted pyramid of news presentation in the 19th century (Schudson, 1978: 78), this new genre strategy came to Europe much later. [See also Søren Kolstrup's earlier chapter on Denmark in this anthology]. As Sverre Høyer's and John Nonseid's chapter on Norway demonstrates, between 1908 and 1930 the 'inverted pyramid' was more prominent in news wires than in the news stories produced by the newspapers themselves.

The same trend could be detected in Estonian papers but according to the findings of Melly Rüga (Rüga and Lauk, 2000) on the news discourse in an Estonian daily 1884-1913, and according to my own empirical findings (Harro 2002), it is clear that the use of the inverted pyramid structure was casual in telegraph news. The inverted pyramid structure appears in Estonian newspapers mainly when news was translated from foreign newspapers and when news wires included more than three facts. An important point here is that news wires regularly contained only one or two facts and thus rarely gave any information of background or consequences.

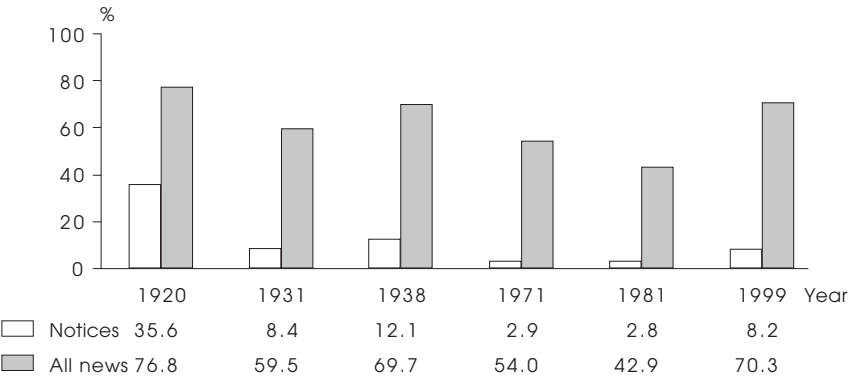
Telegrams and announcements (messages in notice form, sometimes close to advertising) were published in news sections. It is impossible to identify either the "inverted pyramid" or any other structure element in such texts, which will be evident from the following example:

Draft of the law of language

On it's meeting on the 9th of January the Estonian Government decided to present the draft of a Language Act to the Parliament. *Kaja*, January 10. 1924

Therefore, while discussing the development of news genre it is important to keep in mind the fact that during the periods when the journalistic staffs were small, newspapers published a lot of raw information. *Chart 1* demonstrates the amount of this raw material during different time cuts.

Chart 1. Percentage of News Genre of the whole Newspaper Text and Percentage of Announcement Type of News in Estonian Leading Dailies in 1920, 1931, 1938, 1971, 1981 and 1999



As *Chart 1* clearly demonstrates, the amount of notices or telegram type of news was especially high in the 1920s. Notices were typically published on news pages and were not separated typographically. It indicates that a daily paper often served as a public billboard, transmitting information rather than generating news itself. Announcements from official sources were treated as uncontroversial information, and not as a material for further editing or comments.

The first definition of the news story, which appeared in an Estonian journal for young people in 1924, defines 'news' as: "Messages about events and facts that are interesting for the public. The messages should be truthful, short and lively" (Mändmets, 1924: 868). Story structure was not mentioned. Six years later, Harald Vellner, the editor of the daily *Waba Maa*, gave the first known description in Estonia of the inverted pyramid or the relevance principle in a public speech in 1930:

(The) Estonian press is too much influenced by the German press that is lagging behind in news reporting technique...German news is biased. In America, *news items are constructed according to certain rules* ... News should be classified and *the first sentence should say everything* ... Our press more and more

follows the American news construction technique ... Still, there is a lot of anarchy, *different parts of a message are not put into a hierarchical structure*. (Press trends in Estonia. *Waba Maa*, March 1st, 1930). (My italics – HHL)

In 1932 Vellner published a textbook titled: *Reporter's Handbook*. The book was a synthesis of different Anglo-American textbooks, a German textbook and a London-based journal *Press News*, all published between 1914 and 1931. The book briefly presented contemporary knowledge of reporting technique. But, as will be demonstrated below, very little of this technique is found in Estonian journalism in the 1930s. This is an indication that innovations, as theoretical knowledge, may diffuse fairly quickly while it takes more time to adapt and internalise them as a convention of everyday practice. However, in the 1920s and 1930s, several “borderline cases” to the ‘inverted pyramid’ are extant. The following example is quite typical of a borderline news story for the 1920s and 1930s:

Water tax will be raised

At the last meeting of the town council on 29th of December long discussions again broke out about the raise in the water tax. The discussions lasted for two hours. Finally the proposal of the town government was accepted. Before the discussions the mayor explained the situation, saying that the government would not decrease the percentage of the water-system loan. The budget for a water-filtering system and a decision about the taxation of pubs was also finally agreed.

The budgets of the town bank and pawnshop were accepted. The head of the pawnshop was elected for another 3-year period. The meeting ended at half past eleven. *Postimees*, December 31. 1927

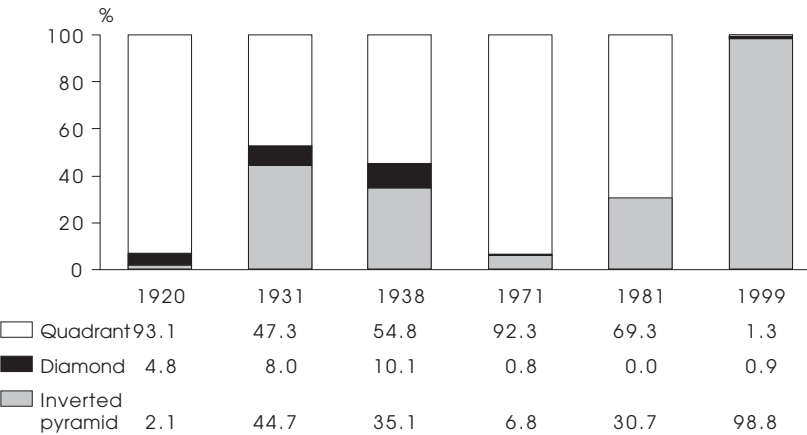
In a modern structure this report would run as follows: “Water tax will be raised on December 29th. The town council accepted the town government’s proposal to raise water tax to X marks per cubic meter...” The chronological order is broken in my reconstruction. Closer to the chronology of the debate, the original example only informs us about the pending decision on water taxes after two sentences.

1968 was the first year that the inverted pyramid news structure was depicted graphically in an Estonian textbook. Even though the concept was not yet conventionalised. News presentation was tightly controlled in the Soviet press and did not invite innovations. The next book on the news writing technique came only in 1997 after journalism courses had become quite common. The author was a young university teacher – Priit Pullerits – whose ideas and teaching methods were strongly influenced by the training traditions in American journalism.

Chart 2 shows that the pyramid developed in the 1920s and peaked for a while in 1931. As the amount of news grew, quite considerably, in the late

1930s, so too did the newspapers usage of newswire, combining different pieces of translated news texts. This editing of newswire is probably one reason why the percentage of news reported in the inverted pyramid structure decreased about ten percent from 1931 to in 1938.

Chart 2. Share of Inverted Pyramid, Diamond and Quadrate Structure among the Definable News Stories in Estonian Dailies in the Composite Week in 1920, 1931, 1938, 1971, 1981 and 1999



The data also demonstrates that another reason, maybe that the censorship invoked in 1933 in unstructured news stories, was dominant in the 1920s and during the Soviet time. There was by contrast almost a balance between ‘inverted pyramid’ stories and ‘unstructured’ in the 1930s. After independence in 1991 the modern, American or international, news style is the dominant form of presenting news. However, it is important to discuss various related journalistic methods, which contributed to the development of news format.

A focusing technique is according to van Dijk (1988a) a premise to the “inverted pyramid” structure. The methods journalists use while preparing a news story are the selection of topics, summarisation of events or sub plots, deletion of unrelated details, and then the addition of new facts and substitution of given facts with additional and relevant information. The underlying principle of selection here is relevance of facts that put the event in the foreground. By such mental preparations the outline of the story is lifted to a higher level of generality.

The first three steps in van Dijk’s relevance model can be combined as one basic method, which I call ‘focusing’. Focusing denotes the mental preparations before a story is constructed in the “inverted pyramid” form. The use of this technique includes the conscious choice of an angle or a viewpoint, and the ordering of relevant facts etc. The development of focusing as a method is most easily identified by the steps in the development leading up

to the inverted pyramid structure: first the conventions of different sorts of stacked or decked headlines, then of different early forms of a 'lead'.

The Development of Headlines in the Estonian Press

As with most of the conventional changes in journalism, the role of the headline developed gradually. Before World War I Estonian dailies arranged news according to the traditional rubrics that categorised the text into 'Home news', 'Foreign news', 'News from Tallinn', etc., as was common for many European newspapers. Headlines, until the middle of the 1920s, – to the extent that they existed at all – referred either to the geographical place in which the event took place, to the information source as in 'Police news', or to a general topic like 'The current situation of education', 'The question of repatriation', 'Peace-negotiations between Poland and Russia', etc.

Another form of headline was constructed as an integrated part of the first sentence in a news story, set in bold types, like: **'In court ...on 25th of October, the following cases will be heard...'** This is what we would call subtitles today. Single stories appeared with headlines only when they were written in a column style, such as 'editorial', 'commentary' or 'overview'.

Changes in headlines began in the 1920s. Headlines were used to highlight the main point of the story focusing on a certain angle, which added news value to the story. The traditional headline 'News from Tallinn' for instance was turned into a page indicator for where a reader could find local news presented as several diverse and independent stories, all with their own headline. From the middle of the 1920s this development was taken a step further. Headlines increasingly signalled a particular news angle in a story, which also changed its status to an independent article and was given a journalistic structure within format conventions.

The adaptation of a sub-headline was the start of the development of summarisation, in van Dijk's terms, which gradually developed into a more clearly distinct 'lead' At the beginning of the 1920s newspapers only occasionally used a sub-headline, not to summarise, but to add newsworthy facts, which elaborated some of the introductory 5 W's (who, what where, when, why). The following example with a deck or a sub-headline was rare in 1923:

Päevaleht, October 2. 1923

Headline: **Cabman's accident at the port.**

Sub-headline: The horse has fallen into the sea

The headline and sub-headline together highlight the newsworthy facts. According to contemporary rules of news writing, the story would probably be presented by the lead: "Cabman's horse fell into the sea at Tallinn port yesterday."

In the second half of the 1920s, sub-headlines became longer. The purpose of the sub-headline was to provide a condensed overview of the matters covered in the article and not to focus on a given angle. The various statements containing the sub-headlines were usually not linked together, or composed hierarchically, as can be seen from the next example:

Päevaleht, October 1. 1929

Headline: The shares of the Estonian Bank.

Sub-headlines: Will be on sale in October? – Wide circle of people should buy the shares – The shares are not for speculation.

The use of long sub-headlines to summarise a story became more frequent when newspapers started to publish extended news stories from the mid-1920s. These stories included both background information and several sub-topics. It was comfortable for the readers to be given a preview of the story. Only in the early 1930s were subtitles beginning to be conventionalised. *Chart 3* provides a statistical overview on the use of sub headlines in the different time cuts.

As seen from *Chart 3*, sub-headlines became very popular during the 1920s when they were used to make long and complex articles more comprehensible.

Sub-headlines in news stories were used infrequently and casually during the Soviet time with a lack of focusing. Headlines were more “artistic” in style, like the ones found in feature-type stories. Headlines often lacked information of the contents.

The Sub-headline as a Forerunner of the Lead

Today the ‘lead’ is the first paragraph of the news article, often set apart from the body text in bold type. It summarises the most newsworthy facts. Different sub-headlines designed in a way that is nowadays recognised as the ‘lead’ were already in use by 1923. These stacked headlines are the first signs of a more conventionalised summary lead.

Päevaleht, October 2. 1923

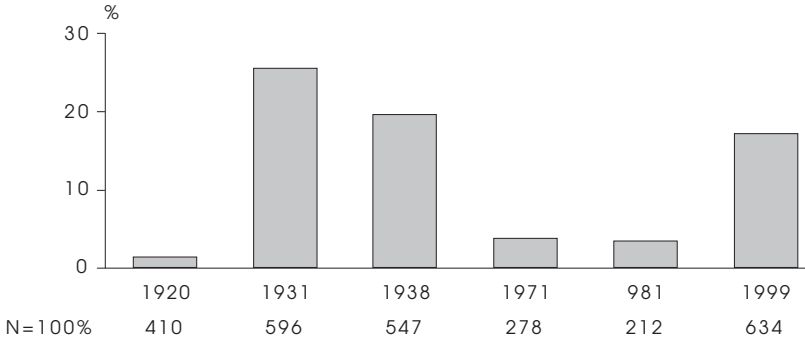
Headline: Estonian foreign trade in August 1923

Lead: Imports have been 2 309 026 pounds of goods, in value of 958 403 149 marks; exports have been 3 421 574,4 pounds of goods, in value of 627 291 519 marks. In sum the exports have been 65,5% of import. The leading import country has been Germany, the leading export country has been England.

As one can see from the above example, the lead still functions as a summary and not as a focusing (selection and deletion) technique. In this early lead the reader is given an abstract of the information, which was later ex-

plained and spelt out in more details. Journalists did not highlight certain facts as the most newsworthy – that the value of imports exceeded the value of exports by 35% – in either the headline or in the first sentence.

Chart 3. Percentages of the Stories that Included a Sub-headline in the Estonian Dailies in the Composite Week of 1920, 1931, 1938, 1971, 1981 and 1999



By the end of the 1920s Estonian dailies had acquired summarisation techniques, and used reader-attractive headlines, sub-headlines and some early forms of 'leads'. In some cases the sub-headlines substituted as a lead, but most often sub-headlines signalled various topics of an article. The larger dailies, from the very end of the 1920s, more often employed a kind of lead, which resembles the typical inverted pyramid news story, as we know it today, even if these early 'leads' were a bit more longwinded than we are used to seeing.

Päevaleht, October 1. 1929

Headline: Three men suffered because of the explosion of an engine

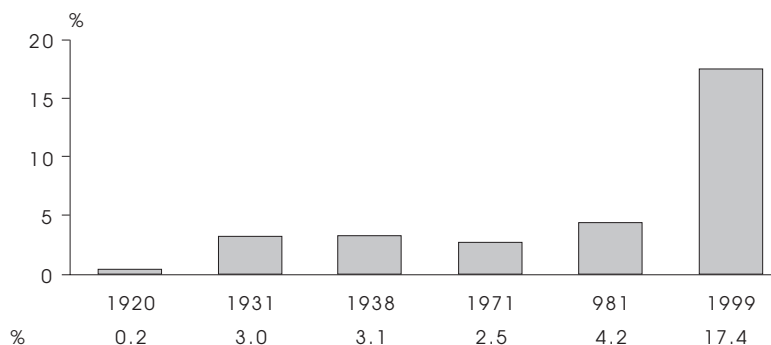
Sub-headline: An accident with motorboat at the port of Narva

Lead: Narva, September, 30th. Yesterday at noon at the port of Narva, a gas pipe on a motorboat, owned by Tallinn men, exploded. Three men were injured in the face and hands. At the same time the petrol bottle in the boat caught fire and the boat burst into flames. The fire was extinguished and three men with bloody faces were taken to hospital. One of the men will probably lose his eyesight. The others will only receive scars on face and hands.

As can be seen from *Chart 4* it was only in the 1990s that Estonian press started to use the lead structure systematically. The use of leads before the 1990s was too casual to be taken as a convention. Even today the lead is used mainly to introduce extended news stories.

Extended news-stories about crime and accidents were constructed as inverted pyramids from the second half of the 1920s, but especially from the beginning of the 1930s. There is a noticeable tendency to use leads as a fo-

Chart 4. "Lead" in Estonian Dailies in the Composite Week 1920, 1931, 1938, 1971, 1981, 1999¹



cusing technique, from the 1920s, in crime and accident stories. In 1931, 7 stories out of 18 that started with leads were crime or accident news. Later in the 1930s this tendency decreases. It is possible that this practice was not a conscious part of professional behaviour but originates in the dramatic elements present in these events. By comparison, a report of a town council meeting demands a high degree of journalistic intervention – the selection of a topic and an angle – for a story to be focused.

News Genre in the Soviet Estonian Press

As mentioned before, the news genre was an ideological tool under the Soviet imposed system and therefore news value and focus were either pre-ordained by the status of the information source or the story had no news value at all (see Epp Lauk's chapter on censorship in the Soviet time). The news should first of all be positive and support the socialist system. If something unexpected happened the text was more carefully controlled than usual, in order not to reveal any secrets or untimely information. 'News', therefore, was not designed to convey really new information. As news-values were missing most items that were presented as 'news' did not necessarily focus on current affairs but presented a list of procedural actions or rituals. The following example is a typical news story from the Soviet press:

Noorte Hääl, April 2, 1981

The Tallinn Pedagogical Institute arranged a daily course for teachers of the Jõgeva region. Rector of the Institute, Rein Virkus opened the session. Vice-rector Lembit Tünpuu chaired the plenary session. Professor Heino Liimets presented a paper: "Do we mediate culture or subject?" A candidate of philosophy, Toomas Alatalu, gave a very interesting presentation about the 26th Congress of the Communist Party and the foreign policy of the Soviet Union.

After the plenary session, teachers were divided into ten sections and in addition to the university lecturers, students also presented their papers.

A daily course provided the Jõgeva district teachers with knowledge about scientific research and young teachers training at the Pedagogical Institute.

In this quotation the elements of Soviet news-rhetoric is easily identified.

First, the whole article is positive about the event. Positive evaluation was added to the topic concerning the Communist Party. Positive evaluation was furthermore emphasised by sentences like 'Toomas Alatalu gave a very interesting presentation about the 26th Congress of the Communist Party and the foreign policy of Soviet Union.' Secondly, the main actors were named. Anonymity was usually not allowed in the Soviet press.

Yet, the way the news-story was structured under Soviet regime was similar to the 'meeting chronicles' in the 1920s and 1930s. The chronological order of the meeting set the structure of the story. Such news-stories do not contain professional journalistic filters or independent evaluations and are therefore comfortable tools for any authoritarian system or for powerful groups in society.

Important news could be significantly delayed or even denied for ideological reasons. News of unexpected events or accidents was never released immediately, as these had to be carefully scrutinised by censors. This was still the case at the end of the 1980s when the news editor of *Eesti Raadio* (the national state radio) recalls an incident, in which the station received information about a breakage in the main water pipeline. He compiled a news story but was not allowed to release it. He was told that the Central Committee of the Communist Party was investigating the damages. Hours later the Party officials provided a text for publication, which was identical to the one created by the editor (Nurmoja, 1993). A major train crash in the centre of Tallinn in the 1980s was never reported, despite the numbers of eyewitnesses and people injured. This news story would have disclosed a failure in the Soviet transportation system, which according to ideology was perfect.

Analysis of the news genres of the Soviet period clearly indicates that it covered mainly foreign events and was produced chiefly by news agencies. Qualitative analyses easily prove that the Soviet news genre lacked the main aspect of focussing on the newsworthy event. The news genre might also be vulnerable to any kind of manipulation. As factuality and the deletion of details are natural to the news story it is very easy to give biased information and to disguise facts that are ideologically "unwanted".

Concluding Remarks

Using content analysis and textual structures as coding units I have been able to outline some general features of Estonian journalism through most of the 20th century.

Most of my data concern what I have called the focusing technique. Focusing and the foreground placement of certain aspects give the journalist a method for reconstructing a real event into a modern standard news story. It is clear from my study that for the major part of the 20th century Estonian dailies mainly used different kinds of a summarisation technique, but not the 'inverted pyramid'. Focusing appeared randomly. This suggests that journalists used it only when the drama of the original event – crime and accidents – was suitable for the 'inverted pyramid' format. This news structure was conventionalised only in the 1990s.

It was clear from my own observations while collecting this material that several tendencies were at work, often simultaneously. The development of professionalism (using literature, imported concepts and techniques) clearly had a variable impact on the development of news presentation. The increased use of international news wires obviously had some of the same effects of modernising the newspaper text. However, the effects of changing political regimes were by far the most easily detected. In the early 1920s newspapers were still passive, ready to transmit received information rather than actively constructing stories from collected information. This clearly changed at the beginning of the next decade. The authoritarian period between 1933 and 1940, did not stop the progress in the modernising tendencies of journalism, but slowed it down. The focusing technique was a misfit in the Soviet news paradigm. The ultimate responsibility for reporting and highlighting important events rested with party officials, not with journalists. As a natural consequence the inverted pyramid could only develop into a convention after Independence in the 1990s.

Note

1. Data for 1999 is provided as an average of two dailies (*Eesti Päevaleht* and *Sõnumileht*) as the convention of using of "lead" was different in different dailies.

From Participating to Informing

The Transition of Journalism in the Russian Regional Press

Jukka Pietiläinen

Introduction

Soviet journalism was one of the vernacular forms of journalism according to Barnhurst and Nerone (2001) but in part it took over traits of the literary journalism from Tsarist Russia. Soviet journalism was introduced in the 1920s with the purpose of creating a new kind of journalism, which could serve the new Soviet society (cf. McReynolds 1991; Lenoe 1998; Brooks 1989); it received its final form in the 1970s and the 1980s.

In the 1920s Soviet journalism was still not far from contemporary Western journalism (McReynolds 1991, 284) but since then it remained largely outside the development, which took place in Western journalism, mainly because Soviet journalism was primarily based on political and administrative regulations, not on commercial considerations.

Soviet journalism collapsed with the disintegration of the Soviet system and new forms started to develop on the basis of Soviet and older traditions and foreign influence. Since 1991 Russian journalism has become closer to the Western news journalism in significant ways. The development has been most visible in the economic press of Moscow, but it has also happened at the regional level although a complete metamorphosis has yet to occur. This article is based on analysis of journalism in newspapers of the Republic of Karelia in Russia (cf. Pietiläinen 2002). The empirical analysis focuses on the traditionally dominant newspaper of Petrozavodsk. This paper was called *Leninskaya pravda* (Leninist Truth) in the Soviet era, changed its name to *Severnõi Kurier* (Northern Courier) in 1991 and finally to *Kurier Karelii* (Karelian Courier) in 2001. In addition to newspapers in Russian the analysis included newspapers published in Finnish and Karelian. The Finnish language newspaper *Karjalan Sanomat* (News of Karelia) that was in the Soviet era *Neuvosto-Karjala* (Soviet Karelia) is of particular importance since having had regular co-operation with Finnish journalists the diffusion of the news paradigm can be easily traced.¹

Journalism in the Soviet Press

Soviet journalism functioned as a collective agitator, propagandist and organiser, presenting the experience of the best working practices, criticising those lagging behind and organising workers for better results. Various official texts had a lot more importance and visibility than their frequency would have indicated. First page topics of a regional paper covered themes like meetings of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU); campaigns to increase the efficiency of the agricultural-industrial complex; discussions between party leader and foreign delegates and preparations for the congresses of the CPSU.

Even more important was the large amount of text provided by the non-staff authors. The Soviet doctrine emphasised the participation of "the people" in the making of journalism. According to this view only those personally involved in production could report objectively on the real state of affairs in one or another field of economy (Inkeles 1950, 179-180). As a rule non-staff authors were required to write between 40% and 60% of the material.

Letters to the editor were relatively rare in the pages of Soviet newspapers. They were often used as material for journalistic stories, and were published with an answer to the problem indicated in the letter, or were reported in the journalistic review of the letters. Public discussion with conflicting opinions was rare in Soviet newspapers.

Among the basic elements were cyclical stories like the sowing season in the spring and the harvesting in the autumn and various campaigns and plans. Reports of their fulfilment were published regularly, often pointing out the shortcomings in some factory or institution.

A News paradigm was not completely uncommon to Soviet journalism. Soviet textbooks mentioned *zametka* (notice) as one of the genres of the Soviet press. It was, however, applied only to short news stories that reported only the event and nothing else. Usually, the purpose of the story was to tell about successes or shortcomings (Zhanry... 1972, 24).

According to Murray (1992, 1994), several typical genres of the Soviet press lost their *raison d'être* and became redundant. The short front-page news item, the *zametka*, appeared with much less frequency in 1987 and was usually published on the second page. A new type of article that was closer to the Western news story replaced the *zametka*. The new Russian definition of *zametka* is practically the same as that of a short Western news story, even a picture of an inverted pyramid is published in the textbook (Informatsionnye zhanry... 1995, 7).

During the last few years of the Soviet system, journalism widened the limits of public discussion and challenged the system. It was in many respects a period when the best features of the Soviet journalistic theory came in to reality as a place for discussions, conflicting opinions and problem stories. But few solutions were provided. Journalism was nevertheless discrediting the system and therefore prepared the way for its collapse in 1991.

Journalism after the Collapse of the Soviet System

After the collapse of the Soviet system, journalism and media have started to develop in a market economy. In the regional press the major changes started to happen at the beginning of the 1990s. The end of the 1980s had been a time of lively discussions, but by 1991 more emphasis was paid to news items. These were positioned on the first page where they took the place of ideological articles.

The orientation of journalists has also changed. Journalists of the *perestroika*-era were primarily interested in relations with the public and to some extent fulfilled the function of a civil society, while the post-*perestroika* journalists are primarily concerned with the commercial sphere (Sosnovskaya 2000, 194).

The government support for the press decreased and real costs started to be charged for newsprint, postage and other material and services. Newspapers suddenly lacked resources which led to the textual, non-graphic, advertising which was very visible on the pages. It was usual to praise products and to inform where they could be purchased. At the same time the number of newspapers oriented towards the general public increased significantly in most of the large and medium-size cities, while national newspapers lost their favoured position (Pietiläinen 2001; Pietiläinen 2002).

The Western model was the closest at hand following the discrediting of the Soviet model (Murray 1992, 111). The post-Soviet press, or at least part of it, was eager to adopt Western models and aspired to appear neutral and objective (Murray 1994, 144).

The subjective presentation of news, from a personal point of view, was the first bold step in the direction of unbiased coverage and a challenge to the state-dominated message (Mickiewicz 2000, 107). During the *glasnost* era, "journalists adopted an egocentric view of themselves as missionaries, for whom expressing whatever they had on their minds was by far more important than satisfying the information demands of the audience" (Pankin 2001) and even now "many journalists understand press freedom primarily as the freedom to express subjective convictions publicly" (Veltmer 2000, 479).

The difficulty in adopting new practices was clearly indicated by the criticism of the *Kommersant* newspaper where the policy was that a newspaper should have a consistent editorial slant and a consistent style in each article and texts are often rewritten. Kagarlitsky (1998) pointed out that journalists who consider themselves creative quickly bail out of *Kommersant*.

Kommersant declares in its Web pages that its model has become a norm for the Russian press. At the beginning of the 1990s *Kommersant* was almost like a foreign paper. Stories were placed strictly in sections, they were constructed on the model of an inverted pyramid, headlines told the most important news and "only facts were presented, not any kind of evaluations, moral statements and especially not a personal, author's or citizen's, position" (Webpage of *Kommersant*, 2002).

Western news agencies also played a role in spreading Western news values although Russian news agencies remained the most important (Rantanen 2000, 260-265). This was rather similar to the situation at the beginning of the 20th century (Palmer 1998). Also new private news agencies were forerunners in setting the standard of news writing (Rantanen 2000, 261). According to a recent study on Russian news agencies, over 97% of the stories of the ITAR-TASS news agency and 92%-96% of those of Interfax and RIA Novosti followed the principle of the inverted pyramid and over 80% of stories had direct citations (Lashchuk 2003, 16-17). The most common deviations from the pyramid structure were the presence of several equally important news items in a story although the alluring or intriguing headline mentioned only one of them (ibid.).

In Karelia, the Finnish-language newspaper *Karjalan Sanomat* approached the news paradigm more rapidly and more completely than *Severnnyi Kurier*, mainly because of the more direct influence of Finnish journalistic culture. On the other hand, the new papers that started after the collapse of the Soviet system were not tied to Soviet practices but promoted an idea of the subjective view to news.

At least when in contact with Western scholars and colleagues, Russian journalists have become more careful in describing their success in combining PR-campaign and advertisement selling with journalism. If at the beginning of the 1990s they were eager to relate these new aspects, by the end of the decade they regularly denied it. It is likely that the change has happened with the development of PR and advertisement as separate professions as well as a practical expedient. One example is that of a representative of a major Russian PR-agency who told Finnish businessmen in a seminar in 2001 not to give money to journalists in order to get the story published but to find other ways to attract their attention.

Old and New Journalism

The transformation of journalism was largely complete by the second half of the 1990s. The newspapers of 2003 differed little from the newspapers of 1997, while both of them were quite different from newspapers of 1991 or even those of 1993. New Russian journalism is a mixture of Soviet practices, Western influence and Russian journalistic traditions. The market economy has become an important element in the development of the press and its role will certainly become more important as the commercialisation of the press progresses.

Contemporary Russian journalists link professionalism to themes like "the importance of providing accurate factual information, an openness to new (often western) ideas and practices and a growing recognition of the audience" (Davis, Hammond & Nizamova 1998, 84). Many journalists however

“see ‘educating’ the public as a legitimate, even vital part of their jobs” (Belin 2001, 338) and a similar view has been found among Finnish-language radio journalists in Russian Karelia (Remsu (2001). On the other hand, the position of journalists in their workplace has changed. At the end of the 1990s “journalists rarely formed and defended their own positions, but preferred to support the position of the owner of the publication”, in line with the Soviet spirit of corporatism (Zassoursky 2004, 93). The differences between publications are, however, great and there is not yet a professional culture based on shared standards of journalism and media roles (Gross 2004, 131).

Among the older journalists, the “commitment to a serving role in the public interest and restriction to mere facts are regarded as a devaluation of their professional status” (Voltmer 2000, 478) and “for many journalists giving up the traditional Russian forms means a restriction of their newly gained freedom” (Geisslinger 1997, 411). Not surprisingly, a Russian survey of regional journalists revealed that they considered their prestige to be highest during *glasnost* (42%) or even before *glasnost* (26.5%), compared with the few (14.5%) who thought that the profession had the most prestige in 1994 (Journalists and journalism... 1995, 39).

“Another distinction between traditional Russian and Western journalism is the importance of timeliness. For Western journalists actuality is one of the most prominent news values (...); for Russian journalists it is only of marginal relevance.” (Voltmer 2000, 478). The same was noticed in a Finnish study on the concept of news in Russia. Käyhkö states that while Russian news criteria are quantitatively close to Western ones the main difference is that qualitatively the press does not construct a unified picture of the world and that the important items and elements vary between quality newspapers in Moscow (1998, 99). One of the major news criteria is originality. The key aspect for Russian journalists wanting to cover something, that other journalists have not, is not the concept of a scoop, but to find their own unique point of view to the news event.

A recent textbook emphasises this point declaring that journalists have moved from from communicators to interpreters of information. The journalistic product is not a news story but a news event which has been packed in a publicist’s text. According to this view the publicist is not an observer of a described event but an equal participant of it. A personalised relationship to news has been augmented by the increased competition between media (Kroichik 2000, 127-130).

In another textbook on journalistic genres, news criteria (what happened, where, when, why, how) is presented as one of the variants of a notice (*zametka*). However, the second variant of notice, allows commenting on the news e.g. telling about its meaning and connecting it to a wider context. Even if the author emphasises the importance of separating news and views, the argument remains that newspapers should have both facts and points of view (Tertychnyi 2000, 72-75). Moreover, this kind of short news has been defined only as one of the informational genres of the press (the others are

analytical and artistic-publicist genres) and although informational genres form the major part of media texts, the more popular are those of reportage or the informative report (*otchet*) (ibid. 52-84).

The role of information has caused divided opinions among Russian journalists and scholars. For example, a recent dissertation deplored that newspapers have started to give preference to facts instead of analysis and that journalists write the majority of the material (Akhmetzyanov 1999).

However, "domination of ideological conviction over informative reliability" (Michnik 1998) remains one of the characteristic features of Russian journalism. "Ideological conviction" is no longer communist partisanship, but support for some politician, political party or idea. This kind of system assigns to the audience mostly the roles of 'pupils', citizens, partisans and followers (Jakubowicz 1999, 26).

In Russian journalism ideological conviction is often easily visible and not hidden in the selection of topics, sources and frames, as is usually the case in northern European journalism. One of the examples of this has been the "authored news programmes" (Dunn 1998), where news is filtered through the personality of a commenting journalist. They were a tempting option for top-level Russian journalists. Recently their importance has, however, been decreasing because of the procedures which have been called the "silencing of last independent television channels". "Independent" in a Russian context is applied to "media which are against the government and attack authorities" (Votmer 2000, 479). According to Gross (2003, 82) this adversarial relationship is "not professional in nature but political, even personal." The decrease of adversarial relationship has reduced the importance of the leading personalities of news broadcasts and therefore paved the way towards a more objective-style. This does not necessarily mean that the bias has disappeared but the role of the newscaster has been made much less important and the bias therefore more invisible.

During Vladimir Putin's presidency, several media experts have expressed a fear of the return to totalitarianism but in newspapers this kind of fear may only be about the content and point of view, not the style or function of the press. There is no return to the Soviet model in which the official documents and texts by outside authors would have been published. There are news stories about Putin, not about his speeches.

The media is oriented towards entertainment and actually the most important question of a freedom of expression concerns which film or which concert to show.² Soviet films are returning to Russian television but nationally produced foreign format programmes like "Who wants to be a millionaire", "Wheel of fortune" and survival games are extremely popular. In general it seems that popular forms of Russian media and journalism are closer to their Western counterparts while partisan practises have survived better in elite journalism (see Pietiläinen 2000a and 2000b).

Old and New Journalism in Practice

On the basis of a newspaper sample of the years 2001 and 2003 newspapers use a mixture of old and new practices and in one instance were combined in one news story. Open opinions and moral judgements have become rare, but many stories still end up with “conclusions”, even if they are no more as instructive as was the case in the Soviet era. Apparently, they are not constructed so that they could be cut in the middle.

The role of the journalist (or the newspaper) is often emphasised, by words like “as I was told...” or “a journalist of *Severnyi Kurier* called...” and expressions like “as was told to the correspondent of ITAR-TASS in the press service of...” are also common. They indicate the source, but do not require the use of citations or the mention of named persons. It seems that Russian journalism does not need to indicate sources and use citations to the same extent as northern European journalism. For example, a sport news story tells what has happened and the result, but without a comment from either a sportsman or a coach.

All the stories now have their own headlines, compared to 80% in the 1980s. The stories usually start with concrete facts, but it is still possible to start a story by describing the situation or source as in “As news agency ITAR-TASS informs...” It is also usual to refer to the headline in the first paragraph. Thus it would appear that headlines are not edited at the last moment without the author of the story. Even the stories of the press services have started to resemble news stories.

It is clear that in short stories some kind of pyramid structure has become dominant:

Sick children

Only about 17 percent of children are absolutely healthy in Karelia. As the correspondent of “Rosbalt” reports, these data were published by the minister of health of Karelia Valery Voinich in the meeting of the government of the republic on the health centre system for children on Monday.

According to the words of Valery Voinich, about 64 percent of young citizens of the republic had some kind of deflection of health, 18 percent of them have some kind of chronic illness... (*Kurier Karelii* 11.4.2003, first page)

This story came from a news agency. A similar news structure is common in shorter stories (up to 150-200 words) by journalists as well. It is remarkable that while the meeting was held on the Monday, the article was not printed till the Friday, three days late according to some news standards. A sense of speed is not among the news criteria of the Russian press, at least when it comes to stories that do not have a strict timeline. In this story, the active role of journalist is also remarkable. Also the headline is not very informative but more like a label for it.

In longer stories the pyramid structure does not have any major relevance, even if the content of the stories do have elements of the news paradigm. An interview is published entirely in question-answer format without interpretation or framing and reportage is a usual form of a longer story. A typical example of this is a first page story about the session of the local parliament:

To support – the countryside, to return – to the issue about the army

About 30 issues were discussed by the members of parliament of the republic in its session yesterday

By Nail Shabiev

Majority of them did not cause any discussion. The members of the parliament agreed, for example, about the changes in the law of RK "About the government support for the small enterprises in the Republic of Karelia"... (*Kurier Karelii* 11.4.2003, first page)

The major headline has an idea of news although its major content remains unclear. The strapline and the beginning of the story, however, report only facts, which are by no means "news" although they might be important to know. Unanimous decisions, lack of political battle and number of issues discussed would hardly be recognised as news by a North European journalist.

The recognition of news does not develop as quickly as the simple practise of writing stories in news form. Models such as 'conflict' have not yet completely developed and been applied in the making of the stories. Also in news agency materials stories with different, conflicting opinions make only 1-9% of all stories (Lashchuk 2003, 17).

In some stories quotation marks are used and their role is often the same as in northern European journalism, to add suspicion or to discredit the cited words: "I was told that 'the problem is discussed' and that it will be solved, at the latest before the end of April" (*Kurier Karelii* 11.4.2001).

Increase of News Narrative

One way to analyse how newspaper texts have changed is to focus on the variety of voices present in the text and their relationships. The narrative force field approach presented by Kunelius (1996) has been applied in the analysis of the narrative structures of the stories. It is based on analysis of the transparency and the identifiability of the voice of the story itself on the one hand, and on the other, the analysis of the independence or dependence of the story on outside voices. The movement between these narrative situations is also analysed.

As a result, six common types of narrative structure have been found.

1. The first type of structure represents narrative transparency and an independent voice. In these stories there is no quotation and the voice of the story does not speak from its own position as an actor (e.g. by using 'I' or 'we' forms).
2. The second type represents the Western professional news structure where the narrative moves between the transparent voice of the story and reported speech (including reported speech without direct citations). In some cases this structure might be incomplete, having only one long citation from the source.
3. The third type comprises identifiable commentary accompanied by reported speech. This could be called 'news from the author's position' in which reported speech is mixed with visible comments or participation of the reporter.
4. The fourth type is pure commentary, which includes an independent and identifiable voice of the story.
5. The fifth type includes interviews in which both voices are identifiable (interviews in question – answer form),
6. The sixth type includes only stories and comments from outside authors
7. Some more complex stories could not be included in these categories.

Table 1. Space of Different Narrative Structures in *Leninskaya pravda*/*Severnyi Kurier*/*Kurier Karelii* (%)

Narrative structure	Journalistic description	Modern style journalistic	News from author's position	Comment, editorial style	Interview, both voices visible	Plain foreign text	Other
1985	24.0	14.4	12.7	9.6	2.6	28.9	7.8
1987	22.2	12.6	12.0	6.5	7.0	35.3	4.4
1989	18.4	7.7	19.4	9.2	5.8	32.4	7.1
1991	25.3	13.1	10.8	7.7	10.0	28.8	4.3
1993	16.0	22.6	11.8	8.9	12.5	23.4	4.8
1995	18.4	26.2	14.2	9.5	11.8	15.6	4.3
1997	17.7	30.7	15.9	5.8	7.0	20.7	2.2
1999	24.5	18.5	21.8	8.8	9.7	12.6	4.1
2001	25.3	26.3	12.7	2.4	8.8	19.6	4.9
2003	15.7	36.8	10.1	7.3	18.4	11.0	0.7

Based on sample of two weeks (1985-1999) and of one week (2001-2003)

The change in narrative structures has happened slowly and it has not been unidirectional. The clearest difference is between the Soviet (1985-1989/1991) and post-Soviet (from 1991/1993 onward) periods. In the post-Soviet period,

there are more interviews, more professional news narratives and less 'pure news' (category 1), less use of texts from outside authors and less mixture of news and commentary.

A closer look reveals some interesting points, e.g. in 1985 the majority (57%) of the professional news narratives came from news agencies (most of them were foreign news by TASS), while in 1999-2003 the most of them were written by staff journalists and only less than 10-20% came from news agencies. Therefore, the decline of this kind of material at the end of the 1980s was due to the decline of news agency material. The one remnant of the 'author's position' that seems to have most resisted the passage of time is the practise of calling local people or conditions "us" or "our" as in "our hockey players" (meaning Karelian or Russian hockey players) or "in our city" (meaning Petrozavodsk).

The analysis of narrative structures does not directly take into account the pyramid structure, but in general it can be found in the first two narrative styles and to a lesser degree in the third style. It seems reasonable that within these categories the pyramid structure (or its elements) has become more common.

In *Karjalan Sanomat* the increase in the professional news narrative has been more rapid and more complete than in *Severnnyi Kurier*. The share of the professional news narrative and its less developed forms has reached over half of the space. It has increased mainly at the cost of both completely foreign text and journalistic monologue, but also at the cost of the opinionated news form (Pietiläinen 2002, 424-425).

In general, the move has been away from texts by both outside authors and identifiable narrative voices and towards narrative transparency and independence. The use of foreign voices in news narrative has not yet developed to a similar level, as is the case in northern European journalism although the commentator role is clearly declining.

Discussion

Russian newspapers are in the process of being Americanised, even at the regional level, as has happened elsewhere in Europe. The process has been amazingly rapid and it is only understandable that some practices of an earlier time still remain.

In Russia, as elsewhere, this move is criticised as a loss of opinionated journalism, major articles of discussion and literary critique. Contemporary Russia very much resembles France at the end of the 19th century (Chalaby 1996a, 309). It seems reasonable to expect that market development will push Russian journalism in the same direction as has happened, for example, in France (Napoli 2001; Chalaby 1996a, 1996b, 1998). That will mean the spread of the

news paradigm, less newspapers but more factual information and less opinions of an individual journalist but a stronger position of journalism in society.

It seems reasonable that the diffusion of the news paradigm takes time. Even if the Putin era has marked some possible setbacks in the development of independent television journalism on the level of structures and control, it has not had any major influence on the practice of journalism. The 'Euronews' channel that the state-owned channel *Kultura* (Culture) transmits in Russian represents a new kind of presentation and orientation towards news. Although the viewing figures of this channel are not large, it certainly has an influence on journalists. The news paradigm is largely imported from abroad and the relationship to foreign cultural imports has an influence on the level of its popularity in contemporary Russia.

Both journalism and those working in it need to change their attitude towards facts and they have to internalise a completely different position towards the world; not the one of a participant, but that of an invisible spectator. There might be several factors such as the competition between the media which may be obstacles to this change.

Also the orientation to the truth-value of facts needs to be changed before the news narrative can be considered to be similar with northern European journalism. Pure facts in invisible and independent narration are not enough in order to present the news, but quotations and foreign voices are needed as well. It might be that the traditional genre system of Russian journalism, which does not include a news report genre, is one of the obstacles to this. Another obstacle might be the working conditions in that facts and interviewees are difficult to find (cf Sosnovskaya 2000). However, the position of the journalist is the major factor, as northern European journalists would rather not file a story than write it from their own position without sources. This is still significantly not the case in Russian journalism, even though it has declined during recent years.

Notes

1. I do not use expressions like "Western journalism" in comparison with "Soviet" or "Russian journalism" but compare Russian journalism with northern European journalism which I know the best. The empirical material for this article is based on newspapers published in Petrozavodsk, the capital of the Republic of Karelia, mainly from the newspaper *Leninskaya Pravda* / *Severnyi Kurier* / *Kurier Karelii*. The methods and more empirical data are reported in Pietiläinen 2002.
2. This statement comes from Igor Yakovenko, the Secretary General of Russian Union of Journalists, in a seminar in February 2004.

Between East and West or Simply “Made in Poland”?

*The Many Different Styles of Today’s Polish Journalism**

Katharina Hadamik

The media system in Poland has changed remarkably since the fall of communism. The practice of censorship has been abolished, previous monopolistic structures in the press and broadcasting have been dismantled, and new players have been admitted to the media market. In the context of the media’s extensive transformation Polish journalism has undergone a number of alterations. It has shed its image as a vehicle for communist propaganda and – by providing new freedoms – it is perceived more than ever as an attractive and well-regarded profession. The reconstruction of Polish journalism and its values, standards and practices within a post Cold War context is a complex process and is still in flux. The evolving new paradigm of Polish journalism comprises a mix of long-standing traditions and original approaches going hand in hand with an adaptation to “Western” standards and global trends.

When the communist era came to an end in Poland, and elsewhere in Central and Eastern Europe, it seemed that as a consequence journalism and the journalistic practices that were shaped by the communist system for more than 40 years would also undergo severe changes. The direction of the changes also seemed to be predetermined. It was a commonly held assumption that after decades of the Cold War the abandonment of communism would naturally lead to democracy, the rule of law and a free market economy. It had also been considered that for the media and journalism in post-communist countries that an adaptation of Western models and patterns was a natural and desirable option. This teleological perspective has been widespread, certainly in the West but also in Central and Eastern Europe.¹ There was also the increasing feeling that assistance from outside was needed to assist in the systemic changes and democratic reforms.

It was a huge wave of know-how transfer from the West that flooded Central and Eastern Europe almost immediately after political changes occurred. It consisted also of hundreds if not thousands of Western experts who set out towards the East to foster the rebuilding of media landscapes and the reshaping of the journalist profession. The obvious assumption (putative self-evidence) underlying the expectations that a particular type of journalism as

practiced in the West but embedded in a different historical and cultural context and representing a different journalistic culture could easily be applicable to Polish reality and adopted by Polish journalists turned out to be questionable. The Polish case, but also experiences made in the 1990s in other Central and Eastern European countries, showed that Western efforts of exporting its own media system and its own journalistic philosophy were only conditionally successful in this region. Although foreign media aid, especially that of financial and technical support, had been undoubtedly necessary and was welcome in Poland and elsewhere in the former Eastern bloc, assistance from the West also encountered different kinds of barriers, structural, cultural and also psychological. As Janusz Adamowski, Director of the Institute of Journalism at Warsaw University concluded: "Many foreign experts did not want to teach us but to instruct. They did not intend to modify what existed; instead they wanted to destroy everything and to introduce something that did not fit in here at all. What we needed was someone who would help to build on and assist in repairing the roof."² A lack of knowledge of Polish history, the cultural background, the country and its people, not to mention the language, caused many misunderstandings. Wojciech Maziarski, a journalist of the first independent newspaper *Gazeta Wyborcza*³ captured the deep irritation felt by many Polish journalists: "Western journalists decided to be good to us, assuming that we are people coming from the bush and it is necessary to enlighten us" (See: Kwiatkowski 1995: 18). Perhaps, this has been the biggest misapprehension regarding foreign aid as Western experts anticipated a vacuum that they were supposed to fill. They did not realize that Poland and its journalists have had long standing professional traditions and a rich journalism culture.

An understanding of the reconstruction of post Cold War Polish journalism requires a more complex approach than simply seeing 1989 as the year when the oppressed times of the communist era changed to the victorious times of independence. Such a black-and-white division is ill suited for defining the multi-faceted and intricate media-scape that prevails in Poland. In order to determine the characteristics and gain an insight into the culture and practice of Polish journalism it is essential to study its fundamental aspects within the history of the profession in Poland and its cultural context.

The Roots of Polish Journalism

As in many other European countries, journalism in Poland has historically been strongly linked with the fields of literature and politics. In 1861, for example, the Polish general encyclopaedia defined journalism as "a branch of periodical literature, totally devoted to politics" (Nalecz 1982: 22). Thus, in the 19th century, it was largely common that the biggest and most important newspapers and journals were edited and published by writers, publi-

cists,⁴ and political and social activists (Lojek 1988: 28-47). The great importance of politics in Polish press and journalism was to a high degree interrelated with the partition of the country when it was shared between Russia, Prussia and Austria in 1795. Poland did not exist on the map of Europe for 123 years. In this historical context, the Polish press became a national institution, preserving the Polish identity, its culture and language, and also providing a political forum. "Dispersed in 120 cities, the press was a synonym for Poland, often the only organizer of Polish intellectual, social, cultural, and even sometimes political life. /.../ Until Poland was reconstituted in 1918, the press served as a 'parliament' by publishing the speeches of Polish members of the various imperial parliaments" (Johnson 1999: 10).

The evolution of journalism as an autonomous profession began slowly in the 1860s. The professionalization process comprised several elements: 1) honoraria became the main source of income for journalists; 2) the degree of specialization increased gradually, dividing journalists into political commentators, current news editors, feature writers and reporters; 3) new news genres emerged, including introductory editorials, news agency reports, local news, interviews, literary articles, and reviews; 4) the actuality factor started to gain importance. Especially in the beginning of this professional evolution, the term journalist was associated with a very low social status. Even by working up to 12 hours a day and spending all this time in the editorial office, journalists were then mostly considered as contributors to the technical side of the production (Gajlewicz 1998: 11-12; Paczkowski 1980: 337; Nalecz 1982: 19-52; Curry 1990: 17).

The elite consisted of literati and publicists, including Henryk Sienkiewicz, the winner of the Nobel Prize in literature (1905), and Bolesław Prus (Nalecz 1982: 22), were all prominent personalities with an individual style of expression and a mission to serve their non-existing nation and the Polish society.

It was later generations of Polish journalists who slowly began to be proud of their profession and started to identify with it. A clear signal of this change was several initiatives to establish professional organizations. Several of them – sometimes in co-operation with the literati – came into being between 1892 and the beginning of the First World War (Myslinski 1988a: 81; Nalecz 1982: 19-52).

The process of professionalization was completed in the so-called inter-war period between Polish independence in 1918 and the German invasion in 1939. Journalism became an acceptable and respected element in societal life, independent and influential professional organizations were established and journalists successfully fought for their rights and recognition as an autonomous professional group. Furthermore, the process of professional differentiation continued and standards of professional ethics were developed.

Eventually, a systematic preparation for journalistic work and appropriate training for newcomers were introduced at this time. While many countries proudly refer to their long-standing tradition in journalism education, including the USA, it is not widely known that Poland was among the early

pioneers. The year 1917 is regarded as the beginning of higher journalism training in Poland. First, the School of Journalism was established in Warsaw, followed by the Warsaw School for Political Sciences that shortly after opened its department for publicist science and journalism. Journalism schools were also founded in the following years in Cracow and Poznan.⁵

Looking at the roots of the profession in Poland, it can be concluded that between the 1860s and 1930s Polish journalism underwent a dynamic, severe and far-reaching process of modernization, including self-organization, differentiation and education. This process of professionalization was, however, different in several aspects from the professional model Anglo-American style (Chalaby 1996: 303-326). Firstly, the Polish approach to professionalization did not eliminate the traditional gap between commentators and publicists on the one side and “technical” journalists, responsible for gathering and rewriting news as well as for production, on the other side. It was still those in the first group who remained in the top ranks of the professional hierarchy. Secondly, journalism continued to be interconnected with the world of literature and arts. It remained common practice that literati and critics regularly collaborated with newspapers and journals. Thirdly, despite a process of commercialisation of the press that had already started in the 1870s but was limited through a lack of capital and high levels of illiteracy (Curry 1990: 69), Polish newspapers often remained either directly attached to or at least associated with certain political groups, organizations or societal movements. The period between the First and the Second World War is renowned for the emergence of excellent and famous publicists who represented specific political and societal movements. Almost every political group had members who combined their functions as representatives of the party, the parliament or the state with their work as journalists (See: Wladyka 1988: 127-128; Paczkowski 1980: 29-33 and 328-338). Finally, for many decades Polish journalists fulfilled a special mission for the benefit of their nation. They “were not only representatives of various political factions [...], but they were also representatives of the national interest and national culture during the entire Partition period” (Curry 1990: 4).

As a result a clear demarcation line was not set between journalists as an autonomous group and other professionals who traditionally occupied and claimed this field. The evolution of Polish journalism had a strong literary, intellectual and political connotation and those features shaped the professional culture for many decades.

Polish Journalism in the Communist Era (1945-1989)

The role that was allocated to journalists in communist systems is well known. Journalists were considered members of the so-called ideological front. Both the media and its employees were supposed to serve the ruling communist

elites and to help influence and control society. Due to the straight division into two blocs (free Western world versus Communism) in the Cold War era, the media systems and journalists of communication science were also divided into two seemingly homogenous units (See: Siebert, Peterson and Schramm 1956). Yet, just as it was never true for the West, the picture of a homogeneous bloc in the East never mirrored reality. There existed, among the countries behind the Iron Curtain many differences, especially in relation to journalism.

There is no doubt that Polish journalists struggled with censorship for decades. At times those who held ideas contrary to the communist regime were even persecuted and punished mercilessly as happened for instance after the imposition of the martial law in December 1981. Many hundreds of journalists that were actively involved or associated with the Solidarity movement were expelled from their profession. Nonetheless, despite such periods of suppression Polish journalists were allowed more scope and greater possibilities to carry out their profession in a decent manner. "One of the most consistently open media systems under communist rule was found in Poland. (...) many topics that were taboo elsewhere were vigorously discussed in the Polish media" (Johnson 1999: 28)

The press landscape in the People's Republic of Poland was much less uniform than conventionally anticipated in a communist state. This even held true for the official state controlled press that approached different target groups in different ways. Polish readers could not only find blunt party propaganda in their newspapers but also distinguished reports and essays as well as entertaining, even sensational news (Pisarek 1999: 136-137; Curry 1990: 70).

Also oppositional thoughts and criticism could be detected in some publications. "For a long time it used to be the only open window to the Western world for its neighbours. All this was mirrored in the press and the mass media" (Klossowicz 1999: 248).

Another phenomenon of Poland's communist press landscape was a small enclave that always existed even in the politically most rigid times, the Catholic weekly *Tygodnik Powszechny* and other Catholic publications. *Tygodnik Powszechny* – although also censored – was renowned for the excellence of its articles (Mielczarek 1998: 243). It was always regarded as the publication of the Polish Intelligentsia and a forum for alternative thoughts (Gielzynski 2001: 21-22). Finally it was in Poland, among all countries of the former Soviet bloc, where a wide range of underground publications that entered circulation as from the 1970s broke the near monopoly of state information.⁶

It is important to stress that the media situation in communist Poland differed from the expected norm of the Eastern bloc. There not only existed relative media freedoms but Polish journalists had also formed a strong professional group that succeeded in protecting themselves from the authorities for many decades (see: Curry 1990). Their putative role as members of the ideological front had never really matched the reality. "In describing their role, Polish journalists in the seventies emphasized that they were experts first and then

communists and not an amalgam of the two or simply professionals in service of the Party" (Ibid: 6). Even in the 1980's, after many hundreds of journalists who supported the Solidarity movement were prohibited from practicing their profession after the imposition of martial law in 1981 and moved to work for underground publications, and less than half of the working professionals possessed a communist party membership card (Ibid: 28).

By carrying out their professional tasks, Polish journalists of this era followed traditional patterns and stayed connected to the fields of politics and literature/culture. In their role as political actors, they either served the ruling elite as commentators and advisors in policy-making or they challenged the system by supporting oppositional movements and publishing semi-legal or illegal articles. Curry (1990: 204) who conducted an extended study on Polish journalists came to the following conclusion: " 'Journalism' in Poland is simply not the same as journalism in the United States or even Western Europe, the chief sources of our image of media professionals. Given their own self-definition of the profession, Polish journalists need to distribute and broker information and opinions. They need to lead the population." Some Polish journalists became active politicians, among them: the first Polish non-communist prime minister, Tadeusz Mazowiecki. Furthermore, journalists' political impact was also eminent through intervening and solving problems. According to Walery Pisarek⁷, one of Poland's most outstanding experts in media research, there was a lively model of combative journalism in terms of defending the weak⁸ although this did not mean that journalists were allowed to criticize the communist system as such. Yet, it was possible to address poor management on local levels on shortages of supplies and general problems like alcoholism. All important newspapers and magazines had extended sections dealing with reader's letters. When journalists picked up complaints addressed, by members of the public, to the press, then the chance was very high that these problems were solved rapidly. Culture and literature, those fields that had served as means to preserve Poland's identity in the 19th century, retained a high profile in the journalism of communist Poland fulfilling the vital societal function of reflecting oppositional views. This was especially the case in the various cultural publications used to smuggle forbidden contents between the lines (Klossowicz 1999: 247-250). The close relationship between journalism and literature was also mirrored in journalistic expression. The journalists' elite of the 1970s, for example, was nationally known for two particular features: an individual position on issues and the literary style of writing (Curry 1990: 148).

After 1989 – An Unleashed Journalism That Has to Be Tamed

The systemic transformation following the historic Round Table⁹ negotiations in early 1989 naturally had effects on journalism and journalists in Poland.

The first important changes in Polish editorial offices could be observed from the summer of 1989. Even before the Workers' Publishing Cooperative (RSW), a gigantic press combine controlled by the communist ruling elite, was wound up, the editors-in-chief and their deputies at about a hundred newspapers were dismissed. Staff changes also took place at the state radio and television as well as at the Polish Press Agency. The editorial offices did not only witness the mass return of those journalists closely associated with the Solidarity movement who worked underground. A new generation of journalists appeared on the scene, too. Increasingly free of censorship – it had practically ceased to exist since the summer of 1989 before eventually being abolished in April 1990 – the media became attractive to many young people. It was a combination of the returnees and the new entrants to the profession who took control of both the established editorial offices and at the various newly founded newspapers, magazines and pirate radio stations. A considerable number of long-serving employees, especially those closely associated with the communist nomenclature, were either forced to leave the media or resigned (Bajka 2000: 45; Hadamik 2001: 40-43; Frankiewicz 1994: 5).

The replacement of media people brought a wind of change to Polish editorial offices. The official, somewhat stilted writing style that prevailed in a number of Polish newspapers and magazines became livelier and less formal. The new guard, open to new ideas and easily accepting the new rules of a market driven press, started to experiment with new styles and formats (Frankiewicz 1994: 5). The selection of news also altered. Journalists chose topics that were closer to the reader's interests and they also did not hesitate to take up topics considered a taboo in the past. Bajka (2000: 45) called this new guard the group of "angry young rebels". These journalists, especially those who established the first independent newspaper *Gazeta Wyborcza*, were the main force in the development of the new style of journalism.

The new freedoms of an uncensored and uncontrolled media were undoubtedly widely appreciated. There were, however, many professionals and not only within the media who observed the developments in journalism with some concern. Whereas formerly established standards and attitudes seemed to have been discarded overnight, new rules were largely missing. This created a situation of uncontrolled journalism – with many problematic side effects. It is especially true for the first years of the transformation that reporting in Poland was often labelled as emotional and unprofessional and aggressive (Bochenski 1997: 13; Oledzki 1998: 294). Accusations were a daily occurrence and allegations were largely false, unchecked and biased (See: Weidemann 1999: 50; Zakowski 1999: 265-266; Margueritte 1995: 10). "Suddenly numerous young journalists appeared out of nowhere, although it is difficult to say if in fact they were journalists. These young people with a minimum of professional media experience began to comment on politics. Practically everyone appeared at press conferences, shouted ridiculous questions at the presidents and was convinced they were the best journalists in

the world. It was frightening!” (Monika Olejnik. Cited by Kwiatkowski 1995: 39).

This was not only due to the lack of experience and professional skills by the newcomers or the specific background (the combative approach) of those journalists associated with the underground press. It is more the case that all Polish journalists – be they newcomers, the returnees or the old guard – made the most out of their seemingly unlimited freedoms. A process of awareness developed in due course that certain standards must be observed to maintain the professionalism of journalism. Several factors contributed to this process: the passing of the media charter in 1996, with a fundamental code of ethics for journalists (Zakowski 1999: 267-269); the intense debates within the publications of the journalists’ associations or in the professional magazine *press* (See: Lis 1998; Paradowska 1998; Skalski 1998) and an increasing conviction that journalism required systematic training.¹⁰

What Changed, What Remained

Since 1989 Polish journalism has undergone numerous changes. It has become more competitive and there is more pressure on time, as the news needs to be made public much quicker. In the past, the lack of pressure to be exclusive and restrictions on information made it less important to work for a “scoop”. In the past presentation had been the most important element of a news article.¹¹

Contemporary Polish journalists are now, like their Western colleagues, under constant time pressure and on the hunt for the next top story. Journalism has become more up-to-date, more event-determined and more customer oriented as the readership have increasingly less time to read and demand information that is easy to digest. Consequently, news and reports in newspapers and magazines have become shorter and information has been packaged in a more reader-friendly way. Certain elements of the press that were popular and regarded as important in the past have lost their previous prominence. For example and with few exceptions, the cultural press that was famous for hiding ‘oppositional’ thoughts between the lines has not survived the process of transformation (Klossowicz 1999: 253). Furthermore, in all Polish media (press, radio, TV) it can be observed that different *Western* formats serve as a reference. Sometimes they are just imitations (for example, the magazine *Cosmopolitan*, or TV shows like *Big Brother*) and sometimes magazines, shows or soap operas that have been developed for the Polish market.

Although Polish journalism has changed, some traditional and characteristic features and patterns have remained that contrast to the philosophy of the Anglo-American professional *model*: First, Polish journalists are still inclined, as a study by Bajka infers (2000: 52), to take a position and to present their

own view. In this way advocacy journalism and political engagement are not deemed to be *unprofessional* (Gross, P. 1999. 169), and many would still seem to agree with Melchior Wankiewicz' statement "There, where no engagement exists, nothing exists" (cited by Owsiany 1996: 25).¹² Secondly, the ability not only to gather and package information but also to analyse reality and to express this to the public, preferably in an outstanding individual way, is still regarded as a very important professional skill. "We do not like dry journalism. Our best journalists are definitely not famous for their fact-centred journalism," Janusz Adamowski, Director of the Institute of Journalism at Warsaw University declared in an interview in 2003.¹³ Polish journalists, in comparison with their US-American or British colleagues, generally tend to give their story an individual touch by playing with words, creating pictures, using associations and providing interpretations. The beauty of expression of the Polish language, which due to its identity-giving role in the past has been always considered a national treasure, is still regarded as an important asset.

A British and a Polish Version of the Same Story

In 1994, Conell and Galasinski (1995: 50-73) undertook the attempt to identify similarities and differences between British and Polish news reporting. In their explorative study they analysed the coverage of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) that took place in September 1994 in Cairo, in two quality newspapers: *The Guardian* (British) and *Gazeta Wyborcza* (Polish). Arguing that a correct and neutral coverage of essential facts is widely regarded as the universal approach in professional journalism, Connell and Galasinski analysed which facts actually entered the newspapers and how they were presented. Although only exemplary and thus not representative, this little study showed how diverse professional approaches can be and how culture-related they are. The beginnings of both articles were characterized by contrast. While *Gazeta Wyborcza's* opening was *soft* – an extended, aesthetic, very atmospheric and dynamic description of Cairo – The *Guardian's* opening of the story was *hard*, telling the reader immediately about the events at the conference. Both articles referred in their coverage to the conflict between anti-abortionists and pro-abortionist that dominated the conference. According to Conell and Galasinski, the style of the newspapers was very different. *Gazeta Wyborcza's* reporting was much more indirect, the opposing sides were presented in less detail; their points of view were vague. *The Guardian* presented both sides and their arguments elaborately, among other things by using quotes. Conell and Galasinski concluded that the analysed articles, covering the same event, differed significantly from each other. *Gazeta Wyborcza* told its readers a *story*: the structure was narrative; the facts were chosen accordingly to the whole design of article; the text consisted also of interpretations which in

turn corresponded to different episodes told in the story. *Guardian's* article had a more evolutionary character: It presented a conflict, discussed it, and eventually identified possible solutions – an aspect which was totally neglected in the Polish coverage (Conell & Galasinski 1995: 71).

Publicist Writing, a Branch of Journalism

The example of *Gazeta Wyborcza* in Conell's and Galasinski's study should not lead to the conclusion that events are covered per se this way in the Polish media. Hard news and less narrative writing are not only common but also dominant (Bortonowski 1999: 53; Sporakowski 1996: 10-11). The chosen example should rather indicate that a special format of presenting journalistic items co-exists besides *conventional* journalism (Bauer 1996: 114-115; Pisarek 2002: 241-256).

"Information constitutes about 70 percent of all materials allocated in the press. There remain 30 per cent for solving problems, publicist writing, feature article, reportage and other genres, in which your individuality can come to light" (Bortonowski 1999: 53). This statement from a recent practical guide reveals that a hierarchic gap exists between news and news reports that are considered as basic skills, and genres like reportage, publicist essays, feature articles, and comments that are regarded as sophisticated and professionally challenging (Nieczyperowicz, 1996). The existing gap is also mirrored in other practical manuals addressing future journalists. The practical handbook *ABC for Journalists* by Nieczyperowicz (1996), for example, devotes merely nine pages to information-centred news and news reports, but more than sixty-five pages to the other genres.

Publicist writing and approaching topics in this way has always been an independent branch of journalism in Poland. It may be argued that being a product of the historical roots of the profession, it has in the meantime become an outdated¹⁴ format. Nonetheless, it is embedded in Polish journalism culture and still constitutes a definite component of it. A clear proof that the skills of a publicist matter a lot to journalists of contemporary Poland is that masters of this discipline are frequently asked to reveal their experiences in media workshops of professional journals (See: Paradowska 1999: 44; Bogucka 2000: 30-31; Unger 1998: 48-49; Majcherek 2000: 36-37; Szczygiel 1998: 30-32).

Role Models and Authorities

The journalists who, at the top of their profession, and thus serve as role models for contemporary Polish journalists are a mixture of those who have already

worked during the interwar period, in the state controlled environment of communism and those who entered the profession after 1989 (Bajka 2000: 56). Polish journalists who rank highest in today's professional hierarchy are either highly visible journalists who anchor TV news programmes and TV political magazines or publicists who are famous for their brilliant analyses and critical articles (See: Pisarek 1995: 161; Bajka 2000: 56-57). The first group, representing the current generation, includes prominent journalists like Monika Olejnik who was selected as journalist of the year in 1999, and Tomasz Lis one year later (See: Grand 1999 and 2000).

The second group consists of well-known current political commentators and publicists like Adam Michnik or Janina Paradowska as well as journalism legends like Ryszard Kapuscinski¹⁵ and Hanna Krall¹⁶. In the year 1999, the popular monthly magazine *press* concluded a survey among media people asking them to nominate the most important Polish journalists of the 20th century (Najwieksi 1999: 24). The result was interesting: Six of the top ten role models belonged to a generation that started their professional career during the interwar period (1918-1945) of Poland. Amongst the relatively younger generation that started their career after 1945 there were Ryszard Kapuscinski (he was elected as the journalist of the century), Hanna Krall, Jan Nowak-Jezioranski (who for many years was the director of *Radio Free Europe*), and the famous dissident Adam Michnik (who after 1989 became co-founder of the successful daily *Gazeta Wyborcza*).

Belonging to the old guard of journalists does not have a negative connotation. On the contrary, many journalists who were already ranked on top positions in the communist era are still regarded as masters of the profession. According to some observers, it is primarily the old generation that constitutes the real craftsmen of the profession.¹⁷ Tomasz Lis, the very popular anchorman of the news programme *Fakt* and representative of the new generation, praised those journalists who entered the profession in the communist period and who mostly struggled with the system: "God thanks, they exist, because it is possible to copy someone, to listen to them, and to learn from them" (Lis 1998: 39).

An Unsolved Question: How Much Objectivity is Necessary

External observers frequently conclude that "Western style objective reporting" (Hiebert 1999: 110) has not become the predominant news paradigm in post-communist countries, and that the *golden rule* of modern journalism of reporting in an objective manner and drawing a clear line between facts and opinion, has been often ignored (Weidemann 1999: 50; Margueritte 1995: 4). Furthermore it is widely discussed in Poland, if and to what extent objectivity and the separation of facts and opinion are indispensable and if

journalists can be objective at all. The professional imperatives of modern journalism are in conflict with the long-standing Polish tradition of advocacy and interventionist journalism. The views within the Polish journalist community on this issue vary considerably and mirror the ambiguity of professional positions. On the one hand, for example, in the introduction of the 1996 published guide *ABC for journalists* it is stated that, “journalism is not and has never been objective. Engagement and the author’s comment are its essence, because it is the task of journalists to repair the reality” (Magowska 1996: 6). On the other hand, however, in a survey among Polish journalists a group of the interviewees explicitly stressed that journalists have “to try to be the most objective, and not select news according to what pleases” them, that “a professional journalist always strives for objectivity”, and that a journalist is a person “for whom such terms as impartiality, objectivity, honesty, integrity, exactitude, compactness” are familiar (Oledzki 1998: 282). Walery Pisarek, for many years director of Osrodek Badan Prasoznawczych (OBP) the famous press research centre in Cracow, observed a discrepancy between normative hypotheses and everyday practice. Pisarek pointed out that although the new ethical codes stress to a much higher degree than in the past that readers must be able to distinguish between news and opinion, it has become even more difficult to find news in contemporary Polish newspapers that does not encompass comments (Pisarek 2002: 253).

Conclusion

During the last fifteen years of transformation Polish journalism has not become a particular Western model or concept¹⁸ that has been ‘The profession’ as its news paradigms changed and developed in a multi-layered process. This took place by redefining tasks, experimenting with the new freedoms and possibilities, learning from mistakes, maintaining original formats and genres, and also by adapting some practices which are applied by journalist colleagues in the West. The result of this mode of transformational evolution is a mixture of old and new: On the one hand, a number of traditional treasures of the Polish journalism culture have been preserved; on the other hand journalism practice in Poland underwent a process of modernization by adapting to global developments and trends.

Looking at the practice in Polish newsrooms, it can be concluded that some features still prevail that do not match with what is considered *professional* according to the model of modern journalism Anglo-American style. The actions of taking a point of view, expressing a position and paying a lot of attention to an aesthetic and expressive writing style are crucial elements of the work of publicist journalism – a branch of journalism that is deeply rooted

* The Author is responsible for the translation of all Polish quotes in this text.

in the Polish press but hardly known and evaluated in other journalism cultures. Publicist journalism constitutes an original element of the professional philosophy in Poland and is able to co-exist with the conventional fact-oriented formats of Western models.

Notes

1. This applies especially for countries that traditionally had a strong orientation towards the Western World (see Lauristin 1997: 25). One other teleological perspective for the development in Central and Eastern Europe has been based on discussions and concepts of dissidents and oppositional movements. It has been the creation of a new type of civil society respectively the so-called third way between socialism and capitalism.
2. Interview between the author and Prof. Dr. Janusz Adamowski, carried out on November 10, 2003 in Warsaw.
3. Wojciech Maziarski, was a journalist of the first independent newspaper *Gazeta Wyborcza* (Election Newspaper) that was founded in May 1989 before the first, more or less, free elections. It soon became Poland's most successful daily.
4. A publicist, in Poland, is a writer with creative / artistic skills who publicizes on a regular basis in the print media. The main task of a publicist consists of analyzing the reality and in the assembly and presentation of arguments. The main tasks of the journalist, on the other hand, are the collection and presentation of facts to the public. Therefore a basic knowledge of events and creative writing skills are regarded as indispensable for publicists.
5. It was characteristic of the training formats of the pioneer years that the focus of the training was placed on practical skills. Ten years later, however, this approach was reconsidered as many professionals criticized the prevailing practical orientation and proposed to upgrade journalism training at university level. This happened in 1927 when the Higher Journalism School in Warsaw was founded. It rapidly gained a high reputation through employing the most famous journalists of the time as lecturers. (See: Gajlewicz 1998: 11-12; Paczkowski 1980: 337; Nalecz 1982: 19-52).
6. These publications fulfilled a vital organizational function for the Solidarity movement and formed an important forum for political and ideological discussions of Poland's problems and future prospects. The debates were an important element for the preparation of the systemic transformation. (See: Holzer 1997: 65).
7. Interview with Prof. Dr. Walery Pisarek carried out on November 12, 2003 in Cracov.
8. One notable example of the moral duty of defending the weak was the foundation of the Committee for the Defense of Workers (Komitet Obrony Robotników/KOR) in 1976 by a group of leading Polish intellectuals and journalists, among them Jacek Kuron and Adam Michnik. Its members provided legal assistance and practical help to workers (and their families) who had been arrested and sentenced to jail for up to ten years after protesting against price increases (Bingen 2001 : 11).
9. The Round Table negotiations in Warsaw, between the Communist Party and the representatives of the Solidarity movement, lasted from February to April 1989. It was during these negotiations that the opponents agreed on a compromise in order to initiate reforms of the country. The Round Table concept served as a model in other Central European countries.
10. Journalism training has been a booming business in Poland since the beginning of the 1990s. Other than the established study programs at state universities, which struggled to get rid off their communist past, many new state and privately run schools mushroomed across the country. In 2002, more than 30 journalism schools existed in Poland. The image of the institutions is mixed. Future journalists are often advised, by the professional community, to study anything but journalism since the programs at universities are often regarded as too theoretical. Nonetheless, journalism studies are amongst the most popu-

lar courses in Poland especially at the universities where the demand for places exceeds the supply. (Bajka 2000: 46-47; Planeta 2002: 14-17). Furthermore, in order to ensure a minimum on standards in journalism training, a new institution, the State Commission for Accreditation, started work in 2002.

11. "This decision about how to say things is not only the basis of what will give an article power and popularity but also what will camouflage its intent and allow it to pass through censorship and still be understood by readers." (Curry 1990: 114)
12. Melchior Wankiewicz was an important journalist from the interwar period (1918-1939) who became famous due to his political engagement.
13. Interview with Prof. Dr. Janusz Adamowski carried out on November 10, 2003 in Warsaw.
14. Critical positions in this respect are sometimes taken by the young generation of journalists. The columnist of the journal press, Mariusz Ziomecki (1999: 72), argued that a publicist article is a "deterrent for busy readers. (...) Publicist writing is not only a genre that is sluggish, but also frighteningly boring."
15. Ryszard Kapuscinski, born 1932, is regarded as the pre-eminent Polish writer and reporter. He became famous as foreign correspondent who reported all over the world. In the 1970s Kapuscinski began to publish a series of books that increasingly showed his craftsmanship. To his most famous books belong *The Emperor and Imperium*. See: http://www.culture.pl/en/culture/artykuly/os_kapuscinski_ryszard.
16. Hanna Krall, born 1937, specialized as a reporter in describing the everyday lives and situations of apparently ordinary people. In the 1970s Krall started to publish books, her best-known work became *Shielding the Flame*. Krall became especially famous for using the techniques of reporting in her fictional or fictionalized writing. See: http://www.culture.pl/en/culture/artykuly/os_krall_hanna.
17. Many journalists who have been pushed aside by the new entrants at the beginning of the 1990s, are at least tolerated by the young generation today, often even highly respected as professional experts (Bajka 2000: 58-59).
18. Sparks (1995: 11) has accurately pointed out that in "neither structural features (...) nor the characteristics of media is there a single uniform 'western model' against which we can compare the development of the mass media of the former communist countries". Also in respect to journalism, the reality of Western countries does not provide one single model that could serve as prime example. Instead, we can observe a remarkable variety in journalism and journalistic practices (see: Kopper & Mancini 2003).

Alternative Perspectives

The Industrialization of News

The American Experience

Hanno Hardt

The industrialization of news has its roots in the social and economic spectacles of urbanization, immigration, and commercialisation that characterize life in the United States at the end of the nineteenth century. The process is vigorously supported by the owners of the press as news becomes a commodity and subject to the demands of an expanding market (cf Fritz Machlup 1962). Consequently, journalism completes a historic transition from an intensely personal, even political, endeavour to a commercial product for consumption by mass audiences. This change is accompanied by the emergence of marketing strategies that will eventually affect the nature of news itself, as the press, in particular, focuses on select middle-class readers as potential consumers.

In *The Form of News*, Barnhurst and Nerone (2001, 73) describe this shift in terms of market forces that eventually transformed the press, when “the editor’s newspaper gave way to the publisher’s newspaper.” They suggest that the “line between newsgathering and manufacturing, which had divided the tasks of editing from printing in the editor’s newspaper, became more marked, and the work of advertising, circulation, and finance became relatively autonomous from both editing and printing” (Ibid. 74). Indeed, proprietors of the press, more often than not, began to think in terms of maximizing profits, which also meant the industrialization of the newsgathering and production process. Today, newspapers’ advertising departments have erased such boundaries to be involved in the editorial production process with demands on journalists and the production of news (Leonard, 1995). The success of such demands has resulted in a working definition of news that includes promotional messages or sales information, which had been hitherto rejected as “free advertising” by editors and reporters.

The industrialization of news and its consequences for a societal discourse is a historical outcome of the successful merger of capitalism and democracy, which defines the social, cultural, and economic determinants of an American vision of society. It is a vision that embraces technological progress in the name of democratic goals.

A review of journalism as an industrial practice in the realm of the American ideal, reveals that democracy relies on the intent and generosity of those in control of economic power, for whom culture – including the media – becomes a business and participation a financial investment (cf. Hanno Hardt 1992). Since news is vital for securing the commodification of society, its production – in the spirit of standardization – remains a major ideological commitment to reinforcing the dominant social, economic, and political order.

The process of industrialization, as outlined in this chapter, occurs in two interrelated arenas of production; the output of news by media institutions (with the help of news workers) and the construction of news by individuals on the basis of their exposure to the products of media organizations. It is a complicated, ideologically charged process that involves the management of perception and the explication of worldviews under changing historical conditions.

The idea of news,¹ initially identified with the needs and desires of community life and materialized in the pages of the local newspaper, represents an organized form of information gathering and dissemination that characterizes the press as a social, cultural, and political institution. Established and nurtured in small towns and villages, the American newspaper – unlike its European predecessors – is an intensely communal, if not personal institution, for which news serves to promote local loyalties while satisfying individual curiosity about the ways of the world. It plays a central role in the representation of an American life, particularly at a time, when the roles of editor and publisher were either synonymous, or publishers acted on their strong convictions regarding the obligations of the press to the community. Indeed, the presence of a partisan press – either in the form of party newspapers or strong editorial leadership – had cultivated subjective, experiential, and therefore often relevant approaches to news coverage that faded quickly with the economic demands of mass markets.

Among the classic examples in American press history, for instance, is Joseph Pulitzer, who announced upon buying the *New York World* that it would be “dedicated to the cause of the people rather than to that of the purse potentates” with the resolve to “battle for the people with earnest sincerity” (Mott, 1950, 434). He created a new journalism, based on a news policy that involved good reporting, colourful stories, crusades for popular causes, and stunts (like Nelly Bly’s journey around the world) as well as great illustrations and solid editorials; it was helped, in general, by promotional campaigns and an inexpensive per copy price. But his best intentions – and those of other publishers with community-minded ideas about the role of their newspapers vis-à-vis the masses – always remained subject to economic considerations, including cost efficiency in the production and presentation of news. After all, mass circulation guarantees higher advertising rates and, thus, offers greater profits to engage in even greater service.

As a contemporary observer Francis F. Leupp suggests, the “circulation must be pushed, and the advertising patronage increased. More circulation

can be secured only by keeping the public stirred up... A craving for excitement was first aroused in the public and then satisfied by the same hand that had aroused it" (cited in Dicken-Garcia, 1989. 63). Under these circumstances, news becomes an effective means of arousing and satisfying the curiosity of the masses as it is applied to create audiences for advertisers.

More specifically, news is professionally treated information (by journalists) on its way from sources to readers or audiences. It relies on rapidity (or timeliness), which becomes part of its definition as the twentieth century reveals its preoccupation with speed, which characterizes each subsequent medium of public communication. The industrialization of news is a consequence of commercial opportunity and technological advancement at a specific historical moment, when diverse demands for information combine with a need for personal identity and political (or collective) goals of social control. The press (like radio and television much later) becomes an ideal instrument of social engineering with its potential for reaching large numbers of individuals in all parts of the vast country almost instantaneously, while news provides the consummate context for identifying and controlling the image of the world.

However, the notion of industrialization (of news) refers not only to the potential of industrial production, but also to the social, political, and cultural consequences of news making in modern America. Thus, industrialization also means effecting *Weltanschauung* and self-image of society in its own attempts to understand its existence in the world. It is, in the final analysis, the industrialization of perception that signals a significant break in the social and cultural history of information and society.

Technologically, newspapers could be produced in large quantities since the latter part of the nineteenth century due to the introduction of the cylinder (1840s) and "sextuple" (1889) presses, accompanied by the introduction of the linotype (1886), as well as typewriters (1881) and telephones (1890s) that followed the use of the telegraph (since the 1840s) in American newsrooms. In other words, before the beginning of World War I the machinery of news production was fully installed for the challenges of the twentieth century, which would become the century of information. The subsequent introduction of photography, radio, television, and the Internet become significant chapters in the evolution of social communication, as the industrialization of news responds to the potential of new technologies.

At the same time, each technological break in the unfolding of modern-day journalism contains the threat of change and effects the form of the news narrative with the rivalry between word and picture, print and radio, or radio and moving images (like television), for instance. It concerns primarily those who produce the news and their professional ideology, e.g., journalists and reporters, while management embraces each advantage gained through new media technologies.

Technological advancement in a capitalist society is a response to demands for more goods or information. An increasing urban population, due to immigration – mostly from Europe – and migration from rural areas and the

South, in particular, as well as an increasing literacy rate, provide the social and cultural context for the development of a metropolitan press. But technological advancement also helps change the nature of news, from an idea-focused to an event-centred approach (Ibid. 63) that reflects the abilities of editorial staffs to observe and report events rapidly, even over long distances. The blatant partisanship of earlier years was being abandoned (after the Civil War) for a celebration of the event as an objective outcome of a chain of factual circumstances that could be observed and reported.

Despite these changes and a rapid settlement across the country, newspapers remain local or regional in their outlook or editorial intent with their continuing focus on the individual, reflecting the tradition of the community newspaper rather than the potential of a national press. They become, in effect, caricatures of the small-town press, with the style and intimacy of the local gossip, the pride of the local businessman, and the parochialism of the local politician projected onto an oversized locality with a diverse population, whose existence under various economic conditions generates different needs and interests regarding news. The United States knows no national press, unlike other countries. Instead, it relies on the strength of metropolitan newspapers beyond their geographical centres, and the service of news agencies, to provide a desirable level of conformity with their widespread adoption by local and regional newspapers. Implicit in this observation is the notion that news, like journalism in general, is a specific cultural form, whose production and content vary in different social and cultural settings.

The initial, institutional vehicle for the delivery of the news in its modern, American form, is the penny press –beginning in the mid 1830s² – a mass circulation product, sold cheaply by newsboys, which revolutionizes the more expensive, subscription-based commercial or political newspaper of the time. Penny papers soon had a larger appeal and attracted more advertising. Moreover, by addressing the common reader instead of the interested political or business elite, the content of the press, including its advertising, shifts to socialize the reading public into a market-driven, capitalist system of communication that caters to the interest of a commercial class in the buying behaviour and purchasing power of the reader.

Now, the owner of a major newspaper is, by and large, a businessman, who, according to Edward A. Ross, “finds it hard to see why he should run his property on different lines from the hotel proprietor, the vaudeville manager, or the owner of an amusement park” (1910, 304). Thus, the democratisation of the press – more newspapers for more readers – is, at the same time, a calculated political process of incorporation into an economically driven system of mass communication, which, eventually, will embrace and control the political spheres. Or, as Gaye Tuchman (1978, 210) expands on this idea, news “confirms the legitimacy of the state by hiding the state’s intimate involvement with, and support of, corporate capitalism.”

The rise of the penny press is accompanied by the rise of the reporter in the battle for market control, because only the reporter is ultimately capable

of creating and presenting news in ways that will distinguish newspapers from each other and, finally, appeal to the reader (Salcetti 1995, 48-74). This division of labour, with editors and reporters sharing the task of editorial production, marks the beginning of specialization and an increasing isolation in the modern workplace as it cuts across types of newspapers with appeals to different and pronounced class interests.

The second half of the nineteenth century contains the most sweeping changes of the press that would dominate the development of media through most of the next century. As Dicken-Garcia (1989, 184) summarizes these developments, "In an era that stressed business goals, and during which the press increasingly took on a corporate structure, discussions defined journalism as a business first and foremost ... Terms such as 'manufacturing,' 'product,' and 'commodity' in reference to news gathering and news permeated even those discussions that did not address the profit motive."

Thus, the historical stage is set for the standardization of the news-making process, which is determined not by the citizen as reader, for instance, but by the (intimate) relationship between the reporter and the (institutional) source and a shared belief in an objectively visible (and recordable) world. It is driven by an event-orientation of the news and a focus on the individual as a potential source of revelations about good or evil.

In this context, objectivity rises to an important professional canon of American journalism as a "strategic ritual" (Tuchman, 1972). The standards of objectivity, which are rooted in a "mirror" phase of interpreting American journalism, constitute key elements of a "reflection" theory that insists on a world "out there" about which media (with the aid of reporters) will construct objective narratives. These standards of objectivity also become the measure for the work of news agencies. Indeed, the objectivity of wire services is credited by some authors with the growth of "unbiased" reporting (Siebert *et al.*, 1963, 60), others see its value in a reduction of costs by serving several clients (Bagdikian, 1971; Gans, 1979), without any agreement about the chronology of these events, however (Schiller, 1981, 3-4).

The process of "news broking," as Richard A. Schwarzlose (1990, ix) names the process of collecting and distributing general news dispatches, calls not only on the technological capabilities of the communication system, but produces a style of writing that helps facilitate the processing of large quantities of information for multiple and diverse outlets. Thus, the "AP style" (with its convenient inverted pyramid form for effortless writing and editing) creates a recognizable wire news narrative – and a widely used genre with the participation of large numbers of newspapers in news exchanges.

There is an emphasis on bare facts, and news presentation – which differs significantly from that of individual newspapers – is shaped by the early managers of the Associated Press, for instance. According to Menahem Blondheim (1994, 195), they are not "journalists but news vendors, and to them news represented merely a 'saleable commodity,' not different from 'a string of onions.'" In fact, by the 1920s, the Associated Press considered "day-

to-day news ... the essential commodity", realizing also that more sophisticated technologies had made news "a more perishable commodity than ever" (Gramling, 1940, 313). With the arrival of United Press and Hearst International News Service prior to World War I, the liveliness of stories had increased as a result of competition; at the turn to the twenty-first century, competition had ceased remarkably, but the need for news agency products remains high with the Associated Press leading the field of suppliers.

Encouraged by a general turn to science during the final decades of the nineteenth century, which breeds a scientific outlook on the world, the idea of the fact, and the objectivity of scientific observation become constructive visions of a social existence that are carried forward into everyday life and in particular into the work of journalism. The proximity to science strengthens the self-defined position of journalism as a merchant of facts, even after claims of impartiality are exposed as impossible goals or "perfect nonsense" by such critics as William Corbett who suggest that the power of beliefs or biases typically guides journalistic work (cited in Stephens, 1988). Indeed, as George Gerbner (1964) suggests, "there is no fundamentally non-ideological, apolitical, non-partisan, news gathering and reporting system." In fact, "all news is views" (Ibid. 495). And journalistic objectivity is the expression of a technical rationality that makes its entry into the social and cultural arena of society during the age of certainty. Although modified more recently by quests for balance or fairness, objectivity, nevertheless, continues to remain an important reference point in the professional catalogue of journalistic practices.

The strategic ritual of objectivity is accompanied by attention to the form or style of news. As American journalism comes of age with the introduction of the penny press, news becomes its most important product, and its construction, recently mindful of accuracy and timeliness, helps create a popular genre that will sell newspapers in large numbers and on a daily basis.

In the following decades of industrialization and urbanization and into the twentieth century, the discourse of journalism begins to change from a personal narrative, featuring the expressive skills of the reporter as writer to the impersonal account that relies on the professional skills of the journalist as chronicler of events. Although the standard 5W-H summary lead (who, what, when, where, why and how) is eventually modified in the 1940s under the rise of interpretation and features in the press; there is also the venerable tradition of the inverted pyramid in news writing. But newspaper style books and college-level journalism courses remain the major contexts in which news writing is reinvented and expressed in formulas that typically favour short sentences, short paragraphs, and simple words (not more than two syllables, if possible). The result is a language of news prose, according to Tuchman (1978) that "contains a special relationship to the everyday world, for, like any other language, it both frames and accomplishes discourse. It is perception and it guides perception; it reconstitutes the everyday world."

Thus, socialized into a professional discourse that combines the celebration of the fact with the efficiency of the journalistic form (the news story) and knowledge of audience (or reader) demands, journalists reproduce a vision of their environment that relies on a routine practice of gathering and packaging facts. The predominant practices of the Associated Press, in particular, as an early participant in the creation of a news culture in the United States, promote social, political, and cultural integration and provide the larger thematic frame for the construction of a reality in which readers would find their place as citizens, neighbours, and individuals. They also influence the development of objectivity as a journalistic standard (Emery & Emery 1988, 217).

Yet, economic considerations remain important, and not only in the United States. Boyd-Barrett (1978) observes in the British context that, "the way in which the [news] agencies developed in response to market forces, and their strategies of conflict and co-operation in the struggle for economic security, are consistently under-emphasized." Even earlier in the twentieth century, the realization of a more radical change of the British press, in general, surfaced as well. A 1911 account suggests that "the capitalists, whether individuals or corporations, who, during the first decade of the present reign, have acquired almost a monopoly of the newspaper press, are the lineal descendants of the resolute adventurers, literary or commercial, who began to create the press even before the fall of the Stuarts and the freedom of speech following on constitutional kingship had made it possible quite to complete their work..." The newspaper, it has been said, has been from the first a commercial undertaking. Its promoters, however, often had other motives, such as the support of a party, the advocacy of a cause, etc. Today political championship or attack is largely subordinated to improving the dividends of shareholders in the venture" (Escott, 1911). An expanding news industry in the 1920s – likewise in England – sees "the rise of a new type of entrepreneurial proprietor for whom newspapers were primarily a commercial proposition," according to Murdock and Golding (1978), who relate Lord Thomson's later remarks to the 1961 Royal Commission on the Press that his purpose was to run newspapers as business to make money. "That is what you do business for."

By the mid-1920s it had become clear that journalism worldwide had taken a turn towards commercialisation. Thus, the first international survey of journalists by the International Labour Office in Geneva concludes in 1928 that, "industrial methods have penetrated into all branches of journalism. . . . A new phenomenon is looming in the newspaper world and tends to accentuate this character of capitalistic enterprise: it is a process of concentration, the formation of vast trusts aiming at controlling all or a part of the press" (International Labour Office).

A generation later, a modern assault on objectivity occurs in the United States, when the lines between fact and fiction are blurred with the "new journalism" of Tom Wolfe and others in the 1960s, for instance, which descends on the course of industrializing news. The latter emerges as a crea-

tive, highly subjective and individualized, that is authored, product beyond traditional notions of news that had risen from the earlier part of the twentieth century. Trafficking in the world of facts remains important, but borrowing techniques from the novel becomes a legitimate way of facilitating the production of news as a social narrative. It reflects what Philip Rahv (1978, 19) identifies as the “urge toward and immersion in experience” as a unifying principle in American writing. It is also a reminder of the “I” form of earlier, nineteenth century news writing, which grew out of the personal experience of the journalist, making news an eyewitness account.

But its independent approach, while innovative, entertaining, or even informative, contradicts the industrial nature of news and becomes more difficult to control. Consequently, the “new journalism” remains an excessive professional practice, which quietly retreats into the history books as a modern example of the common origins of newspapers and the novel. Lennard Davis (1983, 51) calls it the “news/novel discourse”, which he dates back to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Although novelists continue to borrow from journalistic methods and topics, the process of industrialization regains speed, and news resumes its traditional role in American society. However, not without other, conceptual changes that relate to appeal and/or relevance to readers, for instance. While news, in its original form refers to the public events ranging from the affairs of government or commerce to the activities of the community, its modern version crosses into entertainment and advertising to cater to the desires of a public that wants to be amused – to speak with Neil Postman (1985) – and a media organization that wants to sell consumers to its advertising clients. After all, as the nineteenth century journalism historian Frederic Hudon (1872, 470) already proclaims, advertisements constitute “practical city news,” and “each advertiser is a reporter.”

Moreover, readers are drawn into a repetitive, formulaic construction of the world that reproduces and reinforces a specific understanding of their relations to others and to themselves. Such constructions begin with a geography of information, or with the familiarity of space, in which the news discourse (of press or broadcasting) occurs. That is, the sequencing of content, the designations of specific spaces for news or opinion, domestic events or foreign news, the location of crossword puzzle or weather report combine to form a reliable mapping of ‘facts’ that matter.

The result is a constituted, reinforced, and re-described territory of social knowledge on which the individual roams among familiar signs of life. It is also a form of standardization, which involves the design and layout of newspapers by following strict rules about the categorization of news (e.g., local, national, international, sports, business, etc.), as well as the placement of services within the newspaper (e.g., from front page news to the editorial page, or the crossword puzzle). These rules are rarely violated, since readers demand easy access to information or entertainment and rely on the familiarity of the reading environment. The resulting condition of intimacy or even trust becomes a foundation for selling ideas (or ideologies) more

effectively. Therefore, the form of the medium as well as the content, in their standardized or commodified ways, combine to constitute the modern newspaper (or broadcast news program), which became, particularly after World War II, the model for democratic media systems in Western Europe.

Differently expressed, the conception of news extends beyond the process of gathering and reproducing factual (of fictional) accounts to include the embeddedness of the specific account as it evolves from the design of the medium and the surrounding narratives. News, in this sense, is a continuous flow of information (in all forms or genres) that benefits from its context, rather than a series of distinct, identifiable items.

The decreasing number of independent news outlets, combined with increasing corporate control of public communication, with local news monopolies prevailing on the American scene (cf. Bagdikian, 1997), translates not only into fewer choices for individuals looking for genuine differences. It also means increasing control over the industrialization of news and information generally. For instance, considerations of news as a commodity – typical of news agencies, like the Associated Press – has spread to larger and more prestigious newspapers (like *The New York Times*, or the *Washington Post*) and broadcasting organizations (like CNN), which sell their news at home and abroad, as well as to chain operations (like Gannett), which exchange news among their media outlets. The result is an increasing homogeneity of the news content in American media.

With limited news sources, from a lack of access to print media for economic reasons to fewer sites of news production, in general, and with limited intellectual resources, due to poor educational standards, reader perceptions of the world are either restricted or more easily controlled. The repetition of style and form together with the conventional use of news sources that reflect a specific political, economic, or social authority, provide limited and, therefore, predictable options for constructing a particular vision of the world.

Thus, the history of journalism in the United States – and elsewhere by extension of its social, political and economic conditions – is also a history of industrialization. It ranges from the waning sovereignty of the journalist as intellectual worker to an increasing dependence as news-worker and includes the rising standardization of news sources and the processes of gathering and presenting news under a new definition of journalism as customer service. The latter creates a form of journalism that is not only predictable (and therefore safe), but also contained (and not adversarial or even revolutionary), since it refers to a specific social setting, class, or cultural condition. As such, journalism responds to rather than challenges the social, economic, or political environment; it acknowledges requests for information and satisfies demands for social knowledge, not unlike libraries or search engines on the Internet.

Journalism has undergone fundamental definitional changes during the last decades of the twentieth century, when advertising and public relations

become legitimate journalistic practices in the interest of serving a specific, information-oriented clientele. By elevating public relations as a social or political institution to a legitimate producer of news, journalism undermines its previous professional standards, which concentrate on facts and a search for truths and a fierce independence from advertising policies and practices, to embrace a new understanding of journalism that celebrates submission rather than independence; journalism is reduced to a service industry operating with a vocabulary of middle-class interests.

With these developments arrive changes in the concept of news itself, not just in terms of extending the definition of news to future events, but also in terms of content, form, and appearance with the emergence of “soft” news, headline news, or infotainment, the impact of broadcast language on print news, and the use of colour in newspapers to imitate television screens.

These developments are a result of the changing nature of society, and constitute adjustments to the product (news) that reflect the commercial interest in the success of public communication; while reaching the masses remains a desirable goal of electronic media, targeting selected groups (of middle-class consumers) has become the preferred strategy of print (newspaper) media in their attempts to secure a potential market. In these attempts media have discovered what Horace Greeley already knew in the mid-nineteenth century when he advised a friend on the verge of publishing a country newspaper that “the subject of deepest interest to an average human being is himself; next to that he is most concerned about his neighbours. Asia and the Tongo Islands stand a long way after these in his regard...” (cited in Lippmann, 1922, 210).

Consequently, over a century later, media focus increasingly on the individual with issues of health, personal relations, consumer tips, and lifestyle displacing genuine news reporting. The emerging understanding of news is a perception of self in need of improvement, in competition with neighbours, and ignorant of the (foreign) affairs of the state. The ultimate definition of news centres on the well being of the self, isolates the individual from the political realm, and caters to physical and psychological needs that can be served by the market.

In other words, news becomes a key element in the production of readers or audiences and their delivery to advertisers. Disposable income and status are important determinants of newspaper content, for instance, and the type of news or information that is generated for the purpose of attracting and keeping readers, while electronic media and television specifically, cater to the curiosity of individuals about themselves and others and aid in the standardization of taste cultures. Thus, the concerns about the conduct of an emerging, modern media system at the end of the nineteenth century regarding sensationalism, invasion of privacy, and trivialization have become acutely contemporary issues as media engage in journalism as show business.

The success of the industrial process is tied to the need to control for political and economic reasons; it finds support in the technological advance-

ment of communication systems, which permits instantaneous, large-scale dissemination of news, and in the social-psychological condition of individuals, who must rely in their access to news on conformist constructions of the world, including perceptions of their own lives.

Insisting on the liberating tradition of enlightenment and the independence of thought, media, paradoxically, engage in the process of industrialization of news in ways that deprive the enlightened individual of choice and reinforce dependence on specific versions of news (or of the world). News workers, or intellectuals engaged in the process of news communication, suffer the same fate. Their professional practice is limited by the interests of the ownership and directed to serve the reader/audience as consumer rather than as citizen. Their communicative competence remains focused on the task of advertising excess and selling consumption as freedom of choice, while their own sense of what is news, or how it should be presented, is marginalized, if not suppressed as a matter of professional survival.

Ettema and Glasser (1983, 183) observe correctly that, “news remains an essential form of knowledge about the social world – though a form met with deepening distrust within that world.” But their proposition that Habermas’ understanding of solidarity contains an “explicitly moral purpose for the news media – an opportunity for journalists to participate in the crafting of a moral order worthy of their open and candid support” becomes an imposition for a media system that is driven by commercial demands rather than by the call of a moral order and served by a profession that is identified with corporate goals rather than with independent visions of what news ought to be.

Perceptions of the world rely on versions of truth, objectivity, or reality that continue to be offered by a media industry, whose mission from within the dominant ideological structure is to secure consent by guiding the imagination of the masses (cf. Hardt, 2004).

Notes

1. The development of the concept of news has been described by Frank Mott who wrote: Newses originally meant novelties ... Its use in the more limited meaning of tidings was common, however, in the sixteenth century, when it was used in the plural, as ‘these newes.’ But it was often used in the singular by 1600 with an emphasis on ‘the newness of news.’
2. The first penny paper was the *New York Sun*, followed by the *Evening Transcript*, and the *New York Herald*; penny papers quickly sprang up in other urban areas with similar success, beginning in the mid- 1830s.

News Ideology in The Twentieth Century¹

Kevin G. Barnhurst

Introduction

Scholars, journalists, and the public share a picture of journalism at the end of the twentieth century. It is a high-pressure activity, in its production processes and its presentation. Coverage is fragmented and episodic, focused on the now, on latest update available. The imperatives of marketing and the limits in the attention span of audiences drive journalism to the briefest forms, following the trends elsewhere in popular culture. Despite its being shorter, there is just too much news, too many events flooding the 24/7 cycle of reporting that reaches through digital networks of communication. Competition among news media pushes journalists to focus more on people, on so-called news-you-can-use, and on local angles. In sum, news today is more densely populated, more action-packed, more up-to-date, more localized, more event-centred, and above all much briefer. Such is the commonsense view.

Two experiences more than a decade ago startled me out of that view. First, while working on a content analysis, coders on a news project began to complain. They had read with enthusiasm the newspaper stories from the early 1900s, even though they had to hand-crank the old machine readers through microfilm rolls containing scratched or negative images. When they turned to news from the late twentieth century, they called the stories long and boring, and, even though they had paper copies, they said the same coding work now seemed overly complicated. My second experience involved broadcast news. While listening to U.S. National Public Radio (NPR), I began to notice journalists interviewing each other. Instead of talking to, say, an Israeli, the host in Washington, D.C. would get the U.S. reporter in Tel Aviv on the line and ask questions. Without any taped actualities, only the scratchy connection of the telephone line (or transmission) gave the story any realism. The host played the reporter's role, and the reporter acted as the source. Once I had noticed this role reversal on the radio, I began to see it wherever I turned, and especially when watching the evening network news and nightly local newscasts.

These activities seemed to contradict what defines news. The newspaper reports were longer, not shorter, and the broadcast reports focused on journalists, not on other persons. When I would mention the contradiction to students, colleagues, and neighbours, they would give me puzzled looks at first, but later come back to say they had started noticing the same thing. Something odd was afoot, and I wanted to find out what. Contradictions between commonsense and experience can reveal interesting changes, but common knowledge is intriguing in other ways. Everyday notions often hide deep-seated ideologies, the shared beliefs that groups use to shape their world, and ideologies almost always involve contradictions. Ideological processes are often at the heart of paradigm shifts as well.

Suspecting a contradiction led me into a large project (Barnhurst 1991), begun in the late 1980s and now comprised of a dozen studies so far (and available on line; see Barnhurst forthcoming). In our studies, my colleagues and I have been examining commonsense assumptions about U.S. journalism, couched in terms journalists understand. We studied different media separately – newspapers, television, radio, and the Internet – we took measurements that journalists take of their own work (column inches and stories, sound bites and packages), and we observed the five W's, the elements of news they use themselves: who, what, when, where, and why. Once the results were in, I then interviewed journalists about their beliefs, showed them the results of the studies, and asked them for their thoughts.

This essay gives an overview of the project. It begins by reviewing the current state of knowledge about ideology and ideological processes. Little is known about how ideologies shape the texts that groups circulate. The literature review points to some key questions and debates, proposing how a study of news can shed light on them. The essay then summarizes the results for the length of news stories and for two of the five W's: the *who* and the *what*. For each of these three aspects of news, an outline of commonsense views, as found in popular discussions and among journalists, precedes a summary of results from content analyses designed to measure the trends in news content. My aim is to document whether systematic differences exist between widely accepted notions of news and the texts journalists create, and the three aspects illustrate the pattern found throughout our studies. Finally, the essay returns to the question of ideology in light of the evidence showing those differences. Where contradictions occur, the discussion section explores the institutional settings and work routines – the conditions of production – that give rise to them, drawing on the sociological literature and my own interviews. The essay concludes by suggesting some of the consequences the contradictions produce for journalists, audiences, and society.

The Ideology Concept

Ideology, which began as the study of ideas from a scientific rather than metaphysical perspective, has had a long and bifurcated career in history, political economy, sociology, literary criticism, and cultural studies. In my survey of the literature on ideology, two books proved especially useful, the assessment of sociologist Jorge Larraín (1979) and the landmark overview of Terry Eagleton (1991). Since Karl Marx employed the term, it has had two principal meanings, one broad and descriptive and the other limited and critical, both of them under attack. Clifford Geertz (1973: 194) characterizes the two definitions as a choice between the “tendentious or mindlessly empirical”.

The broad meaning, preferred among some social scientists (e.g., Barnett and Silverman 1979), defines ideology as any set of shared ideas that order and direct group life. Unlike a culture or a worldview, which may encompass all of the group’s beliefs and activities, ideology operates within the narrower zone of ideas that define, justify, and channel power. Notions involving power – who should wield it and how – have a particularly tortuous existence, often involving open conflict or covert deception and illusion as groups seek to downplay or ignore their own power relations. The negative dimension of ideology gives rise to the second definition.

The narrower meaning, preferred among critical scholars and in cultural studies, defines ideology as the particular set of shared ideas that obscure how powerful groups dominate others. This sense of ideology also predominates in ordinary speech. Eagleton (1991: *xiii*) calls it, “what persuades men and women to mistake each other from time to time for gods or vermin”, and he lists six ways that “meaning sustains domination”: by promoting the dominant group’s view of things, making it seem natural, treating it as the universal case, denigrating other views, excluding anyone who holds them, and obscuring all of the above operations (Ibid: 5). The last strategy, sometimes called *mystification*, involves more than the premeditated action of one group upon others. Instead, each person re-enacts the group’s ideology during any interpersonal contact, according to Louis Althusser (1984). Hailing another person, for example, also calls up and re-inscribes a set of power relations for the hailer and the hailed. Althusser calls the process *interpellation*. As Stuart Hall puts it, people are “spoken by, as well as speaking, their culture” (Hall 1980: 30). As a result, everyone may participate in his or her own subjugation to the ideological arena (Foucault 1980), but dominant groups benefit. They sustain their position through *hegemony*, the maintenance of domination through means other than violence or direct state control (Gramsci 1971).

In its narrower meaning, the contradiction at the heart of ideology is the distance between one’s own performance and the mendacity of power. Eagleton says these hidden falsehoods are of three orders: *epistemic*, *functional*, and *genetic* (1991: 24-25). Epistemic falsehoods are unwarranted beliefs about the world, functional falsehoods are the unjust benefits and

consequences of those beliefs, and genetic falsehoods are their illegitimate origins. Examining the types of distortions involved in ideological processes shifts the analysis away from criticism, which can become a broadside attack on a group's ideas, and toward critique, which attempts to enter into the group's perspective and find the sources and sense-making that produce patterns of prevarication. Studies that attend to the pattern of distortion in ideas sustaining hegemonic power are *critical* (and sometimes tendentious, in Geertz's phrase).

Studies that attend to the ideas that groups share about power, without specific regard to the patterns of distortion involved, are *descriptive* (and open to Geertz's charge of being "mindlessly empirical"). Although the literature suggests that studies of ideology are of two types, critical and descriptive, that distinction may not bear out in practice. One challenge for research is to observe where description leaves off or blends into critique. An important part of analysing ideology is to attend to the imagery associated with power, the picture of power relations (Mitchell 1986).

Little is known, however, of how ideology shapes texts. Recent work in the analysis of discourse has suggested doing fine-grained studies of ideological processes, to show "what they actually look like" (van Dijk 1998: 7). Such semantic analyses must accompany study of the "contexts, situations, participants" and their pattern of power relations (Ibid 12). Theorists suggest the media, as technical and institutional actors that can reach across space and time, play a pivotal role in transmitting the symbolic and economic values underlying ideology (Marcuse 1964; Thompson 1990). For some scholars, the media bear particular responsibility for severing ideologies from their original, physical locales, enhancing the power of dominant groups (Hawkes 2003). The media also provide the crucible for what Pierre Bourdieu calls *social alchemy*, the process that transforms "arbitrary relations into legitimate" ones (Bourdieu 1977: 195). Mass cultural texts do not simply impose power relations but also offer substantial incentives needed to win ideological adherence from an audience (Jameson 1981). Most scholars agree that a central concern is the connection between the ideological process and the relations of production (or between the *superstructure* and *base*, in Marxian terms).

Studying ideology involves some risks. One is that, on the one hand, a study that treats patterns of domination as neutral processes may suffer from relativism, ignoring injustice in an effort to remain objective or above the fray. On the other hand, any claim that a group's ideas contain some form of false consciousness positions the scholar as all-seeing or outside history. Jameson criticized the content analysis of George Lukács, Jacques Derrida, and others, "which explores the inscription of ideology in an ensemble of purely formal categories", unmasking "such categories and their ideological consequences" (Jameson 1981 note 2: 283). He calls the impulse driving their critical practices "an immanent one", because the methods ignore the wider context and assume that the formal properties "always and everywhere bear the same ideological charge" (Ibid: 283).

Another risk is that any claim about what others believe may suffer from the hubris of assuming the scholar has access to the real reality, a pitfall especially likely for those conducting statistical analysis (Hawkes 2003), but also for those claiming to identify distortions. A classic way of describing this risk comes from a French scholar of the Enlightenment, Claude Adrien Helvetius, who “pointed out that insects living on grass eaten by sheep were liable to look on the sheep as ferocious predators but on the wolves, who preyed on the sheep, as entirely beneficent” (McLellan 1986: 5). The analyst may avoid these pitfalls by taking wherever possible the viewpoint of the group and revealing his or her own perspective, interests, and allegiances.

An aspect of ideology sometimes overlooked is that even its dark or negative side – the duplicity and unfairness in power distribution – implies the opposite, the shared vision of Utopia a group imagines (Mannheim 1985/1936). Fredric Jameson (1981) proposes that any study of ideology contain two parts, an analysis of how the form and content of texts legitimate class domination (ideology) and also an analysis of how they embody universal values that produce solidarity (Utopia).

Although some critics see little chance of escaping the iron grip of ideology (Horkheimer and Adorno 1972), most authors are more sanguine. The study of ideology then becomes an intervention, proposing a cure or a solution. The fact that, as Antonio Gramsci (1971) suggests, commonsense is the ground where ideology intervenes, itself opens the opportunity for what Hall calls “formative and educative tasks” to effect “a profound revision of the whole social foundation” (Hall 1980: 36). The belief that empirical research or critique can influence commonsense is a hopeful one, expressing confidence in the group under study. The challenge is to reveal to the group the “real motives” that “remain unknown” to individual actors, in the words of Fredrick Engels (quoted in Williams 1983: 155). Eagleton (1991: 223) suggests that the process can transform ideological consciousness but requires “active political struggle”.

The literature of ideology suggests several aims for the present study. One is to explore the boundary between descriptive and critical definitions. Another is, wherever distortions seem apparent, to pay close attention to the order of falsehood involved and to adopt the role of offering critique from within rather than criticism from without. A lacuna in the literature is the paucity of close analyses of the texts involved, and research on the media can make an important contribution. Due caution is needed to avoid the risks of relativism, immanence, and hubris. Study involving group members must supplement close content analysis of the text, and the historical context and conditions of production require attention as well. The research must also look for the positive side, the vision of Utopia that even the most dishonest ideologies imply and the ways these also build social solidarity. Finally, ideological research should reveal its own political agenda and expected outcomes.

News Definitions

The next sections examine three commonsense aspects of news, describing the logic behind them and citing examples of journalists who invoke them. The results of content analyses of the aspects follow, to show whether the texts that journalists produce contradict their assumptions about what they are doing. I return to the ideological analysis later, after documenting the background of common sense and any pattern of contradictions.

Length

Common sense insists that everything is going faster these days. Radio and television have picked up their pace, requiring shorter attention spans. Other technologies – faxes, electronic mail, and text messaging on cell phones – allow speedier communication. Television commercials have gone from a one-minute standard in the 1960s to fifteen seconds, telling mini-stories in an abbreviated style first developed for music videos.

Journalists assume that daily news has gone along with the trend. When Andy Glass, until recently a columnist for the Cox newspaper chain, began working as a journalist at the New Haven (Connecticut) *Journal Courier* in the 1950s, news came in on a teleprinter hooked to a teletype machine that set the type and justified it in columns. “It was virtually impossible to edit,” he says, and so “stories tended to be longer” back then. “You couldn’t go in and cut a paragraph, other than to go to the stone and physically throw the type away after it had been set” (Glass: 2001, n.p.). Since then, changes in technology have allowed editors to make stories shorter, according to his argument.

Critics point to the impact of *USA Today*, which began in 1982. Science writer James Gleick, in his book, *Faster: The Acceleration of Just About Everything*, summarized this view: “*USA Today* caters to your more modern reading habits by keeping copy short. Other newspapers have catered to them by going out of business” (Gleick 1999: 140). In the late 1980s, attention to shorter TV sound-bites during election campaigns furthered the impression that news was getting shorter (see Hallin 1992). Here again technology plays a role, as faster, more-flexible video replaced slower film techniques. Critics cite a related trend: the rise of images everywhere. As pictures became more prominent, they squeezed out words. In magazines, according to the *New York Times*, “the 4,000-word article has become a relic, first replaced by the 800-word quick take and then further boiled down to a 400-word blurb that is little more than a long caption” (Carr 2002: C-8). Following the trend in magazines, critics say, daily news has gotten shorter.

These arguments make sense and seem to have the support of evidence: common experience among audiences, direct involvement in productive processes by journalists, and observations of the outcomes by critics. The pattern seems clear, and so it may seem quixotic to question the texts jour-

nalists produce within media organizations. That step, however, reveals a contradiction. A series of analyses measuring the content of journalism texts shows that news – at least in the United States – is getting longer.

For newspapers, we examined the changes in two different studies of the contents over a century. One measured the number of stories that fit on the page (Barnhurst and Nerone 1991). We selected three newspapers for study: the San Francisco *Chronicle*, to represent metropolitan dailies; the Springfield, Illinois, *State Journal-Register*, to represent smaller urban dailies; and the *Peterborough* (formerly *Contoocook*) *Transcript*, of New Hampshire, to represent small-town weeklies. No selection of newspapers is representative of all the U.S. press, but these three papers covered a range of newspaper sizes – small, medium, and large – and geographic locations, including the West Coast, Midwest, and East Coast of the country. We sampled a reconstructed week of the dailies and a reconstructed month (four issues) of the weekly, balanced among the four yearly seasons, at ten-year intervals. As part of the larger study, we took a simple count of the number of items and the number of stories (groups of items related to the same event) on front pages.

The front pages clearly became less dense, with fewer items and stories. In 1885, the newspapers ran about fifty items and about twenty-five stories on their front pages. In 1985, they ran about nine items in six stories. The average number of items (such as images, heads, and blocks of text) on the front page declined from a high of 58 for the *Transcript* of 1885 to a low of 7.29 for the *Chronicle* of 1985. The average number of stories on front pages declined from a high of 32.3 for the *Register* in 1895 to a low of 5.25 for the *Transcript* in 1985. These data show a dramatic decline in the number of stories that newspapers publish on their front pages, which, after some ups and downs early in the century, have fallen steadily since the 1930s. But other factors might account for the changes. Over the same period, the physical dimensions of newspaper pages shrank, and publishers also enlarged the sizes of type and illustrations.

To eliminate other factors, we ran another study that measured the length of individual stories (Barnhurst and Mutz 1997). Very few U.S. newspapers published continuously over a century, but we identified three others with differing circulations originating in geographically dispersed cities of varying sizes: the Portland *Oregonian*, serving a small city on the West Coast; the *Chicago Tribune*, reaching a wider region in the Midwest; and the *New York Times*, distributing eventually to a national audience from the East Coast. We drew independent samples from random weeks at twenty-year intervals, drawn to include a balanced number of stories on three different topics. We studied accidents, crime, and jobs – topics general enough to persist over a long time period but narrow enough to allow reliable coding. As part of the larger study, coders rated the length of each article on a five-point scale, from very brief to very long (their coding proved highly reliable on this item).

The news stories clearly got longer from 1894 to 1994. The overall trend was positive and statistically significant, and for each topic and each newspa-

per the average length of articles increased. Stories in the *New York Times* tended to be longer than those in the other two newspapers. Across all three newspapers, jobs stories also tended to be longer, and accident stories shorter. But regardless of the differences between topics and newspapers, all the articles grew longer gradually and consistently, and statistical tests confirmed the trend. U.S. newspapers did grow bulkier, with more pages and sections, during the century, but the results held up even after correcting for the more ample space available in what journalists call the *news hole* by the end of the century. The trend toward longer stories was in every case highly significant. Newspaper journalists wrote longer stories, and editors and publishers allowed stories to expand in length, despite what they believed they were doing.

But what about television news? Overall, news reports on television have also grown longer. Studies of national broadcasts show that the number of news stories has declined (Riffe 1996; Riffe and Holm 1999; Riffe and Budianto 2001). The overall length of newscasts shrank, however, just as newspaper front pages did. One study that measured story length found that the average report on the network evening news declined from the 1960s to the 1980s, but most of the change resulted from the shrinking sound bites for sources (Hallin 1992). The length of television news reports then grew from the 1980s to the 1990s (Jones S. n.d.). To explore more closely what journalists themselves did within their texts since the 1960s, when television news came into its own in the United States, we conducted two studies, one to examine the content of their stories and another to look at the ways they presented themselves visually – an important dimension in television.

The first study replicated the original sound-bite research, but this time focusing on what journalists said, rather than on what politicians said (Steele and Barnhurst 1996). The original study of U.S. news from the three broadcast networks, ABC, CBS, and NBC, included political stories during quadrennial elections from 1968 to 1988. Using the original sample videotapes, we took several measurements of length for journalist speech: how long they went on each time they talked, how often they talked in a report, and what share of the total time they spent talking in a report. By these measures combined, journalists gained ground. Although their segments of speech ran slightly shorter over time, they spoke more than twice as often, and their share of the average election report grew significantly. In other words, when the sound bite for sources became a household term, the debates among media critics and journalists obscured another trend: journalists themselves were consistently talking more throughout the period since the 1960s. One final note on the study: it found that over the period the substance of journalist speech shifted in focus away from giving information and toward expressing opinions about events.

The second study used the same sample again, but added the 1992 election and measured the visual aspects of the journalists' text (Barnhurst and Steele 1997). Over the period, the number of times journalists appeared on screen more than doubled. In the 1960s, a typical report included the news

anchor alone reading the text and perhaps showing a filmed actuality, and a correspondent appeared in only half the stories. By the 1990s, the anchor would appear twice during an election story, usually at the beginning and at the end, and the reporter who was covering the campaign would appear twice during the middle of the story. That means the correspondents were appearing four times as often as they did twenty years earlier.

Whether examined in their textual utterances or in their visual presences, journalists became more prominent and took more of the viewer's time. Their longer speech and on-screen time during news reports accompanied the declining number of news stories in a typical evening newscast, in which the average report grew somewhat longer.

Newspapers and television are main sources for daily news in the United States, but both were losing audience numbers (circulation and ratings) during the last quarter of the twentieth century. Meanwhile, other venues grew in authority and popularity. To discover whether the trends toward longer news extended to newer venues, I conducted two additional studies, one of public radio and one of the Internet.

The first study examined National Public Radio (NRP) news in the context of its institutional development in U.S. history (Barnhurst 2003a). In the 1970s, the network established its main news programs, "Morning Edition" and "All Things Considered," and began to reach an audience of commuters during the morning and afternoon rush hour traffic in major cities. Affiliate stations existed in every state and expanded to blanket many rural areas. The two programs have consistently enlarged their audience numbers and their authority as national news outlets. From the earliest broadcasts, NPR news programs preferred extended reporting, rather than the kind of headline service available on most of commercial radio. NPR informational programming tended to take alternative and creative forms at first, but as news operations grew, attracting establishment journalists and mainstream audiences, one might reasonably expect to find that the formats for news stories became more standard and perhaps shorter. A study of NPR seemed one likely place to find a counter-example to the trends in television and newspapers.

The research drew a randomly reconstructed week for each election year from 1980 through 2000, and as part of the comprehensive study, coders also measured the length of each day's broadcasts, reports, and individual speech acts. Because transcripts and audiotapes provided actual measurements of length, the coding proved highly reliable.

In every dimension, journalism on NPR lengthened. The broadcasts expanded from ninety minutes to two hours. Contrary to expectation, the length of all kinds of reports grew over the period. Political coverage grew longer as well, so that reports in 2000 were a third longer than in 1980. Speech acts during all reports on NPR declined by about a fifth in length, and the same occurred within political coverage. The length of journalist speech, however, remained about the same, so that they became more prominent as others' sound bites shrank. Their speech grew longer relative to others' speech.

In the substance of their talk, the NPR journalists shifted away from giving information and from asking questions. Instead, they moved toward expressing opinions, just as had occurred on television news. The data also show that the journalists talked to each other more. Journalists interviewed other journalists more often, as the frequency and share of reporters acting as sources or experts more than doubled. In other dimensions of speech, providing background information declined by half, and offering interpretations of events more than doubled. In short, journalists became more prominent on NPR, talking more in longer stories.

The second study examined another new venue for news, the Internet (Barnhurst in press). On-line information is so new that historical analysis is impossible. To allow some comparison to previous trends, the research sampled on-line sites from three newspapers studied previously (Barnhurst and Mutz 1997). The three represent a range in the spectrum of the on-line press. The *New York Times* attempts to reproduce the authoritative quality of its print edition in an interactive setting, the *Chicago Tribune* comes closer to a comprehensive city-based web portal, and the Portland *Oregonian* exists as a separate news site that provides local content without being fully integrated into either a city portal or its interactive setting.

The study drew a purposive sample of stories during three consecutive weeks in July 2001, a period selected to avoid the predictable distortions of major holidays and other regularly occurring major events. The sampling of stories followed the protocol established in the previous study, and coders used the same procedures, rating the length of stories using the same scale with similar reliability.

As the newspapers moved onto the Internet, their stories continued to grow longer, following the trend established over the previous century. By 2001, news stories had grown even longer, as measured on the scale. The increase matched an earlier jump in the 1970s and continued the trend that had levelled off between 1974 and 1994. Although the Internet environment can accommodate unlimited amounts of text, on-line users must scroll or click through screens to read, a process that discourages lengthiness. In other words, the technology did not itself push the news text in either direction. U.S. newspapers have tended to reproduce their print copy on line, and a comparison of printed and on-line versions of the stories in the study confirmed that there were very few changes. The study concluded that the trend toward longer stories has continued, even as news organizations ventured into cyberspace.

In newspapers, on television, on public radio, and on web sites, the news has grown longer during the past century. The trends found within the texts (visual, audio, and printed) contradict widespread assumptions among audiences, critics, and journalists about the first aspect under study, the length of news stories. The contradictions between common sense and observed textual products deserve further ideological analysis.

Who

A growing element in the media landscape of the past quarter century has been so-called people news. The trend began in magazines during the 1970s, spread to newspaper human-interest stories, and became the focus of prime-time shows on television in the 1990s. Time, Inc., founded *People Weekly* in March 1974, and the Family Circle group brought out its first edition of *Us* magazine in late 1976. Other media outlets followed suit, increasing the number of people feature coverage. By the 1990s, a growth area for U.S. television networks was the news magazine, a genre oriented to people stories (Committee 1998). News can not happen without people, and the assumption is that daily journalism increased attention to people, going along with the rest of the media.

These widespread beliefs do not turn up in the texts journalists produce. Studies show that people have been disappearing from the front page for decades (Danielson and Lasorsa 1997). References to people have fallen by more than a quarter since 1900. Here the same caveats apply, because pages have gotten smaller, and fewer stories now fit on them. To find out whether the numbers of persons declined within stories required further study. Several of my studies with colleagues, described earlier in this essay, also included a measurement of the *who*, counting the number of appearances of persons *per story* to avoid the problems of other research.

In our study covering a century of newspaper content (Barnhurst and Mutz 1997), we coded every individual and group in each story and indicated whether reporters merely named or also identified each one in other ways. Coders noted what role each person played, such as actor or victim in the story, official directly or indirectly involved, expert observer, or bystander. We found that fewer named individuals appeared in newspaper stories in the course of the century. In 1894, the typical newspaper article referred by name to more than one person, but by 1994 only about one story out of four referred to an individual by name alone. As named individuals disappeared, groups became more prominent. Over the period, the number of groups went up by more than half, and when mentioning individuals, reporters more often used group affiliation as a form of identification. Fewer individuals stood alone.

In the roles they played in the news stories, individual actors or victims declined, while official sources increased. A century ago, outside experts almost never appeared in the news, and an official source turned up in only one of every four stories. Today, fully one fifth of the actors or victims have disappeared from the average story, replaced by experts and officials. Almost every story includes an official source, and outside experts appear in one fifth of the stories. The changes understate the magnitude of these changes because, at the same time, stories grew longer. From the perspective of the reader, the landscape of grey text had become depopulated beyond what

these average figures suggest. The results show why other studies have found that persons have been vanishing from the front pages.

Studies of other news outlets show similar trends. On television, experts multiplied. In the decade from the late 1970s to the late 1980s, the number of analysts, consultants, and the like almost tripled on the three national broadcast networks (Soley 1992). The well-known sound-bite study, documenting the decline in politicians' speech on television from 1968 to 1988 (Hallin 1992), also observed a large growth in what journalists call *wrap comments*, the concluding words that summarize the correspondent's expert conclusions. My own detailed study of journalist speech on National Public Radio also found more journalists acting as experts (Barnhurst 2003a). NPR journalists began interviewing each other on the air, and the share of talk by all experts, journalists and others combined, grew from 15 to more than 25 percent of all speech from 1980 to 2000. Meanwhile, reporters shifted away from using as sources the citizens involved directly in the events being covered (Barnhurst 2003b).

On the Internet, the trends for the *who* of news continued. My follow-up study that looked at web editions in 2001 found the patterns for U.S. newspapers continuing (Barnhurst in press). Named individuals have all but vanished from the stories, and groups continued the upward trend that had paused briefly in the 1970s. Reporters described individuals according to group affiliation even more often. The number of officials kept growing, and more than two officials appeared in the average story (the internet data also include political stories). Officials and other sources now outnumber individual actors in the average story.

Once again, the impression – of more reporting on people and personalities – does not square with news content, which included fewer people overall but emphasized group affiliations, official status, and expertise. Such a contradiction suggests the operation of ideological processes in the background.

What

Since the early twentieth century, the number of news outlets has grown. Although many newspapers have closed their doors, radio expanded its news reporting, and then television news came on the scene. The outlets for news grew with the advent of cable and satellite systems. The conveyances for news also multiplied over the century. Early in the century, telegraph lines expanded their reach, air flight made airmail possible, and transoceanic cables were laid and the first transcontinental telephone calls placed in North America. Later fax and Teletype machines allowed instant document transmission. The reach of news organizations grew as well. By mid-century, the news-wire services had built networks that circled the planet. Although some newspaper and television network bureaus began to shrink late in the cen-

tury, the rise of the Internet and cellular telecommunications gave reporters access to ever more remote events.

The multiplying modes of communication (physical and virtual), the growing number of news conveyances, and the expanding reach of news gathering suggest a common place assumption: that the public today can get access to more events than ever before. When people believe a thing to be true, they tend to act on that belief, and it becomes true in its consequences. In the case of news events, public opinion polls report that more U.S. Americans, especially those attentive to news, feel overloaded (Pew 2000). There seems to be just too much going on. Critics argue that "people are intellectually and emotionally capable of absorbing only so much" (Rosenblum 1981, 14). And some studies indicate that television news has become more episodic, that is, more focused on events (Iyengar 1991).

Journalists call the flow of events a deluge, a glut, or a blizzard. Even a century ago, when Will Irwin, the famed muckraker for the *San Francisco Chronicle* and the *New York Sun*, wrote an assessment of U.S. journalism, a huge number of events entered the flow of news. "Every night", he said, "there happen in New York, Philadelphia, and Chicago a thousand events which fit the definition of news", and then he added with great confidence, "information on most of them reaches the newspaper offices" (Irwin 1969: 34). Fifty years later, the wire editor of the morning *Peoria Star* in Illinois reported receiving twelve thousand inches of wire copy during the week. A well-known study of news described his work as *gatekeeping*, what journalists do to manage the flow of occurrences (Reese and Ballinger 2001).

Commonsense, critical observations, and practitioner knowledge suggest that news has become more centred on events. The growth in technology and communication points to more events being covered in news reports, people say they feel overwhelmed, critics and some studies agree, and journalists say they are covering more. The texts that journalists produce, however, show the opposite. Fewer events get reported.

Studies that demonstrate the declining number of articles and items on the front page imply that fewer events get reported, but longer stories might themselves include more events. To find out whether each newspaper story combined multiple events, our one-hundred-year study counted them (Barnhurst and Mutz 1997). We found that the number of events per article declined significantly, regardless of which newspaper we examined. The two large newspapers in the study, the *New York Times* and *Chicago Tribune*, moved strongly away from including more than one event in a story, and even at the smaller Portland *Oregonian*, the trend was significant. Events in crime stories stayed about the same, but accident stories included fewer events, and the number within stories about employment declined sharply. No topic went against the trend. The general consistency for newspapers and topics indicates a pervasive change.

We then turned to television. One way to measure broadcast event coverage is simply by counting the number of stories in the average show. The

thirty-year analysis of ABC, CBS, and NBC evening news cited earlier found a consistent decline on all three networks, toward fewer and fewer items each year (Riffe and Budianto 2001). “World News Tonight” on ABC, for example, included a dozen stories on average in 1970, but had fewer than eight in 2000. The negative trends were statistically very strong.

But once again, it seems possible that the number of stories might not give a complete picture of how many events they include. Another way to examine event coverage is to look inside each story to take stock of the elements of news reporting. In our twenty-year study of network newscasts (Steele and Barnhurst 1996), we measured how often journalists gave information about current events and found that event coverage continued the trends found in print. On U.S. network news, the share of event coverage went down in journalist voice-overs, stand-ups, and other speech. In 1968, they stuck entirely to giving information about occurrences at least a third of the times they spoke on the air, but that share of event coverage declined over the next two decades. The data followed a sawtooth pattern, going up and down – the study looked at four-year intervals during national elections – but the negative trend was statistically significant. Television journalists became less involved in the basic informational task of communication, spending a greater share of their activity on other things, such as offering opinions, showing agreement, and voicing reactions.

On the radio, NPR news faced less market competition and fewer advertising pressures, but its programs also followed the trend (Barnhurst 2003b). The 1980 election was the first when “Morning Edition” and “All Things Considered” were both on the air. Over the next few elections, NPR journalists managed to stick to informing the audience about events nearly half – or even more – of the times they spoke. But then a steep decline began, dropping the share of information to nearly a third. The averages went up and down for the next few elections, but the pattern was clear and significant. The archetypal activity for journalists – reporting what was happening – declined during the NPR political coverage. From 1980 to 2000, NPR journalists moved away from the denotative focus on events.

Again the texts of U.S. news reporting contradict the common place assumptions that the public, news workers, and critics share. Although ample evidence and argument seems to suggest a greater access to more news events, the texts journalists have produced during the last century have increasingly done just the opposite. Here again the contradiction suggests the need to explore what ideological processes might be at work.

Although I cannot go into detail about them here, the *where* and *when* of news followed the same pattern. Common belief suggests a growing emphasis on the local (even stories about the U.S. invasion of Iraq took a hometown angle) and a growing emphasis on the now (the immediate, latest events, especially on the internet). These assumptions also fail to pan out within the texts of reporting. My studies with colleagues cited earlier in this essay demonstrate that news stories during the past century have moved away from the

immediate surroundings and toward ever-larger domains. The reports have also shifted more and more away from the present, to speak in the future tense. A similar pattern, although much more pronounced, occurred in the *how* and *why* of news. A standing criticism since the Commission on Freedom of the Press (1947) assessment at mid-century has been the failure of news to put events in a context that gives them meaning. Journalists and critics continue to cite the lack of explanatory reporting, and they say that faster, briefer news limits their ability to fill that need. But measurements of news texts show dramatic increases in analysis, and interpretation, if not explanation.

Across the board, journalists, critics, the public, and even some researchers assume the five Ws of news to be one thing, but common belief in each case proves contrary to what journalists have done in the texts they produced. In the course of the century, news became *less* densely populated, *less* event-packed, *less* up-to-date, *less* localized, and *much less* brief. The contradiction is stark and runs deep, with strong statistical significance across news media and news topics.

Ideology in Context

Some scholars consider news a natural response to biological needs, springing from the urge within the human organism to survive by keeping the world under surveillance (Shoemaker 1996). Except in the glacial sense of evolutionary change, the natural science conception considers the news appetite something beyond history. In this view, the news instinct may require neuropsychological rather than sociological study and cannot be ideological. The measurements my colleagues and I have taken indicate otherwise. Whatever its relation to the organism, news is a product of social life which changes through practice. If not, its core definition would have remained unchanged, but my studies with colleagues have shown the opposite. Historical studies have found similar long-term changes in what news has meant since the colonial era in U.S. history (Schudson 1982; Barnhurst and Nerone 2001). The direction of change that the studies summarized here reveal is away from the places and sources of current events. Instead of what dictionaries define as journalistic – the “direct presentation of facts or description of events without an attempt at interpretation”, to quote Merriam-Webster – news today has become primarily a location of interpretation, a place where journalists explain *opinions about* events. News is a product of human meaning making, and journalists have taken the manufacture of social meaning as their primary task.

But to be ideological – a set of shared ideas that organize group life – news must also invoke, justify, and guide power. Journalists do not hold public office and do not have executive power within political institutions. They do not have behind them the force of state apparatuses over life and death, but they do work through hegemonic means. They can highlight events and issues, bring-

ing them to the attention of legislators, courts, and executives as well as the public. Stuart Hall and his colleagues found that the “media define for the majority of the population *what* significant events are taking place” (Hall *et al.* 1978: 57). Journalists hold an advisory and adjunct power, but it is power nonetheless. When news reports interpret war as a reasonable alternative, for example, the impact of such ideas can contribute to state action that destroys lives. Journalists and critics began documenting such cases after World War I (e.g., Lippmann and Merz 1920), and during the last three decades John Hartley (1996) and others in cultural studies have analysed how news constructs public priorities. Journalists also exert control within their own institutions, as editors and managers, and within their profession and their industry.

To say journalists hold power and exert influence does not make their productive activities – the manufacture of news – ideological. The way they live out the definition of news must also direct the operation of that power. In the case of news during the twentieth century, the changes in their practices, as registered in the news texts they produced, have in most cases shifted attention away from politicians and citizens and toward journalists. By redirecting attention, journalists exercise their advisory and highlighting influence to change the balance of power. Such shifts clearly move news into the realm of ideological processes.

The next question, then, is which definition of ideology holds in the case of journalism. A sociological description of news ideas would outline journalistic notions of power and show how the ideas guide news workers as a social group, in their relations among themselves and with others such as politicians and audiences. One would expect that such a description would map fairly faithfully onto the ground of common belief, if it had the neutral qualities the broader definition of ideology requires. In this instance, news work from day to day, as our studies measured in their output, reveals processes that contradict widespread beliefs. Those processes are not only ideological, but they fall within the narrow (and negative) definition of ideology. It is the presence of contradictions between the ideas surrounding power and the ideas held in common belief that define the boundary between the two definitions of ideology. The task in light of those discrepancies is to critique the hidden operations that sustain power.

The distortions are readily apparent. Widespread beliefs in shorter news, in a greater focus on people, in more access to more events, and so forth suggest a closer tie between audience members and the persons involved in news events. That is not the direction news texts have taken. Furthermore, journalists, in the common picture, are at the mercy of events and serve as mere go-betweens in a transaction connecting citizens with social and political actors. That is not where news texts have gone. In common belief, the prime movers driving news include impersonal market forces, such as the competition for news scoops and audience attention, and impersonal technological developments. These forces have not driven news in the expected direction, toward briefer, person-centred, more-replete reports.

Each of the contradictions relies on at least some factual basis. A series of technical changes *has* buffeted journalists: metal to photo to digital typesetting and printing for newspaper journalists, film to video to digital image processes for television journalists, and tape to digital processes for radio journalists. Internet journalists surf a constant wave of technical innovations. In the experience of news workers, pressures from competitors include macro – those new outlets, faster conveyances, and wider networks for journalism – and micro sources, such as the individual reporters who cover the same beat. Competition is a process in which journalists construct a narrative. Each competitor makes moves that the news institution or industry must counter, and journalists experience those moves as a series of feints, bobs, pot-shots, and knock-outs. The actions may exist in fact, but they emerge as journalists frame their work as a competition. The narratives of competition and technology not only guide but also explain and justify the craft of news work. Markets and innovations that buffet journalists also supply a ready rationalization, because such stresses, journalists argue, inevitably prevent calculated and self-interested activity. Concrete change in technology and market conditions thus absolves journalists of responsibility for making whatever transformation occurred in the text of news.

A continued belief in the picture has other consequences. First, it unifies the audience with the journalist, both of whom confront similar changes in work and everyday life. In the face of an information deluge, the journalist proposes to overwhelmed viewers and readers a spurious identification. We are just like you, the journalist implies. Our common enemy is impersonal: markets and technological changes. These forces seem natural and universal, at least in the industrialized world. The assertion denigrates any outsiders who have no access to technology and the market, excluding them as the Other while universalising the commercial subject. The belief then rationalizes whatever journalists do as the immediate, unintentional response to indifferent, intractable forces. The product is nobody's fault (except, perhaps, for the audience and its insatiable hunger for fast news served with plenty of spice). Finally, the common picture obscures the textual practices that do just the opposite of what the picture holds to be the case. These devices – unification and spurious identification, naturalization and universalization, denigration and exclusion, rationalization and mystification – are classic ideological moves (Eagleton 1991).

On their face, the unwarranted beliefs about the world belong to the epistemic order (Eagleton 1991). All sorts of individuals participate, and even scholars accept the picture of fast-paced, eventful, person-laden news, although that is not what U.S. journalism produces any more. The beliefs do not involve genetic falsehood, because their origins in an earlier journalism were not necessarily illegitimate. Event-centred news, in which journalists sought to find occurrences happening to nearby persons and tell above all a lively story, did not exist independent of partisan news at the end of the nineteenth century, but it was an ideal that the Progressive Movement, among

others, proposed and that journalists followed, more or less, to judge from the numbers and contents of stories in *fin de siècle* newspapers.

The falsehood also belongs to the functional order, because it distributes the benefits and consequences of those beliefs unjustly among groups. Scholars have amply demonstrated that politicians and political institutions have lost ground and attention in the press (Patterson 1993), and audience members have weaker connections to news (as circulation and audience ratings figures show), while receiving the blame for getting the news they deserve. As the changes in news happened, journalists themselves took control, talking or writing longer. Even as they closed down space for others to speak, my studies show that they focused on their own judgments and opinions. Interpretation replaced denotative news of people and events. The commonsense beliefs, then, are an “interested fiction” that excuses journalists and presents an honourable account of their condition (Bourdieu 1977: 196), while serving their specific interests. Although they form a “body of specialized agents” (Ibid: 184), journalists do not themselves gain wealth in the classic sense of ideological influences on the means of production. In advancing their interests, they help constitute wealth for corporate owners who control capital, the institutional equipment and mechanisms to function in their field and to appropriate profits. Through the action of journalists as agents, the system reinforces existing power as a matter of course. In other words, although journalists promote their own interests through their symbolic activity, the falsehoods involved arise more from external conditions than from conscious dissimulation.

In the wider historical context, journalism has, actively exercised at times – and at other times recoiled from – its power. After World War I, critics began to identify a tendency away from reporting events in newspapers. In 1920, *The Brass Check*, Upton Sinclair’s best-selling attack in the press, called the newspaper a mental “munitions factory” that was building the “bombs and gas-shells” used to impose ideas on and instil fear among the people (Sinclair 1936: 412). The progressive solution he proposed was a different kind of newspaper, not “a journal of opinion, but a record of events pure and simple” (quoted in Goldstein 1989: 157, from a final section of Sinclair 1920, that was omitted from subsequent editions). The following year, Walter Lippmann, who would later become the dean of intellectual columnists, and Charles Merz, who eventually left the *New York World* to become editorial page editor of the *New York Times*, published “A Test of News,” in *The New Republic*. Their article examined three years of the *Times* – more than a thousand newspapers – for coverage of the Russian Revolution, documenting the handling of copy and other text. The two young journalists called the paper’s coverage “nothing short of a disaster” (Lippmann and Merz, 1920: 3). In its news columns, the *Times* had reported events that never happened. And the stories and accompanying headlines and captions also emphasized unsupported (and, as it turned out, unsupportable) interpretations. How, the journalists asked, did such systematic misrepresentations occur in the *Times*?

Driven by the wish for an outcome favourable to the Allies in World War I, the *Times* published not news of actual occurrences but “semi-editorial news dispatches” based on “what men wanted to see”, wrote Lippmann and Merz. They concluded that “a great people in a supreme crisis could not secure the minimum of necessary information on a supremely important event” (Ibid: 2). In the decades following these critiques, the number of events covered in the average report appearing in the *New York Times* and other newspapers increased slightly, but then fell after 1934.

During the downturn, fear of propaganda gave way to another urgent concern: that giving bare-bones information about occurrences could itself become misleading. This notion grew in reaction to the Great Depression and World War II, pioneered oddly enough by the wire services, first United Press and then the Associated Press (Mott 1952). The crisis that finally solidified thinking against event-centred news was the McCarthy hearings. When Senator Joseph R. McCarthy mounted his virulent attacks in early 1950, accusing the Truman Administration of harbouring Communists in the State Department, the press simply reported who said what. After the Republican Party won the 1952 election and took control of the Senate, McCarthy became committee chair and expanded his attacks, going after defence industries, universities, and the broadcasters themselves. ABC Television came into national prominence by airing the hearings about supposed Communist infiltration of the U.S. Army, riveting national attention with the live proceedings.

But the events could not really speak for themselves. Every name named exacted a human cost, as McCarthy dragged innocent people into the public eye, and his baseless accusations harmed their relationships and destroyed their livelihoods. Under the existing definition of news, the front pages could report a rebuttal to Senator McCarthy only when another *usable occurrence* took place. It happened in front of the camera on June 9, 1954, when Special Counsel for the Army Joseph N. Welch, in his now-famous testimony before the committee, challenged McCarthy’s needless defamation of a young lawyer. “Until this moment, Senator, I think I never really gauged your cruelty or your recklessness”, he said, and then, after further exchanges, concluded, “Let us not assassinate this lad further, Senator. You have done enough. Have you no sense of decency sir, at long last? Have you left no sense of decency?” (Red Scare 1998: 149–50).

Prominent broadcasters took up a spirited critique of news in light of the McCarthy hearings. Eric Sevareid, who had started at CBS News as one of Edward R. Murrow’s so called *boys* covering World War II, observed that “the warp and woof of what the papers print and the broadcasters voice – our flat, one-dimensional handling of the news, have given the lie the same prominence and impact that truth is given” (Casey 1963: 84). Elmer Davis, who left reporting for the *New York Times* to become a commentator on CBS Radio, in a speech to the Newspaper Guild criticized “this kind of dead-pan reporting – So-and-so said it, and if he is lying in his teeth it is not my business to say so” (Ibid: 62). He proposed that journalists instead provide “a

mixture of news and interpretation” to “illuminate and explain the news for the customer” (Ibid: 63).

The interpretative approach to news has held sway since then, so that stories ran ever longer, included fewer persons but more officials and experts, and gave more of the journalist’s judgments about an event. Rick Kaplan, who started out as a copy boy in Chicago and rose to become president of CNN News, says journalists now offer knowledge, not just events. “Ted Koppel is one of the smartest people I’ve ever met”, he says. “I *want* his knowledge. This is a respected, trusted colleague, and he knows what he’s talking about” (Kaplan, Rick 2001: n.p.). Kaplan produced national programs with Koppel, as well as with Walter Cronkite and Peter Jennings, among others, but he felt very uncomfortable with being interviewed for publication (although he did grant permission). His comments typify the responses from other journalists I interviewed. News has become a body of interpretation about a small number of events, which takes its authority more from the journalists themselves than from their sources or their access to occurrences.

Contradictory Conditions

The conditions of news production encourage Kaplan’s assessment of journalistic authority. Individual journalists experience contradictions within their work lives. On one hand, the work in corporations, many of them very large conglomerates, reduces journalists to piece-workers, under pressure to manufacture a stream of product units or stories. Young journalists start out labouring long hours in unpleasant conditions, requiring constant travel and encounters with persons more powerful and sometimes less than cooperative. If they succeed in getting insider knowledge, their stories may endanger relationships with the sources they depend on. They work for unpredictable supervisors, move frequently (especially those in broadcasting) to unfamiliar cities, and wash out of news work in large numbers, going on to take other employment. A notable quality even among the elite journalists I interviewed was their skittishness about what their bosses, present and future, might think. They believe in the power of the published word. In short, working journalists face job insecurity and instability and do repetitive, high-speed, risky work on tight deadlines. These conditions encourage them to think of their output as short and event-centred.

On the other hand, they are knowledge-workers, who create original symbolic output. In his 1975 essay, “Writing News and Telling Stories”, historian Robert Darnton concluded that reporters “bring more to the events they cover than they take away from them” (Darnton 1975: 192). Their output is in that sense literary. As knowledge workers, journalists aspire to or have acquired elite status. Their educational levels have increased, so that the requirement for entry went from little or no education a century ago to

a college (and sometimes a graduate) degree today. Sociologists have confirmed that, as a group, journalists occupy a higher economic and cultural standing than any mere piece-worker (Gans 1979). Their claim to professional rank institutes a different set of material relations. Within corporations, journalists as knowledge-workers help accumulate symbolic capital. They deal in the currency of public awareness, making their sources notable or notorious, and each article they write gives a gift of exposure to others, at the same time amassing symbolic credit, which is “a sort of advance” against “material and symbolic *guarantees*” of other institutions and powers – an arrangement between social actors and media institutions as holders of a “symbolic patrimony” (Bourdieu 1977: 181).

These conditions encourage journalists to produce the kind of copy found in our studies. They write longer stories because longer stories win immediate praise and garner prizes. They focus their attention on fewer people because the very powerful among elites and the most unusual among non-elites win space on the front page in top stories. They concentrate on fewer events, chasing the main story of the day to find a unique angle, because a scoop or exclusive about the big news event makes them stand out from the pack. They make assertions about the future because prescient statements enhance their standing among peers. They avoid events at the level of the street address because authority flows to those who talk about larger domains. And they infuse their stories with their own opinions because individual judgments mark events as their own and lend events the quality of branding so valuable in a corporate setting. Given the material conditions of knowledge-work, these outcomes seem predictable.

Journalists, however, face both sets of material conditions at once. Each set is incompatible with the other, and the contradictions between the two complicate journalists' lives. Piece-work is exhausting, knowledge-work exhilarating, and news workers experience both. Under stress, they show hypersensitivity to any slight (Bourdieu 1977). As a result of the contradictions, they identify with the person-on-the-street, and they share common but counter-factual beliefs about news. Their commonsense assumptions about news may sometimes approach a kind false consciousness. The contradictions also help explain why the oppressed (journalists as piece-workers) may participate in their own subjugation. They simply don't believe they are doing what they do. When presented with the charts and data showing how the content of their texts has changed, the journalists I interviewed expressed scepticism. It looked like statistical fakery to them.

On the positive side, journalists project a vision of Utopia. In it, they do public service when acting as go-between for government and citizens. This Fourth Estate vision sees its mission as explanatory, in that is, giving a clear and simple account of the complexity of government, economics, and society in the industrialized nation. Politicians benefit by having watch-dogs that prevent incursions of falsehood onto public truth – even those caught and exposed provide an example of what to avoid. Citizens benefit as they re-

quire less of their busy lives not only to sort out the complexity of political and other aspects of life, but also to make rational choices in the voting booth and elsewhere. The positive vision of the new, long journalism builds social solidarity among all parties to the social contract. The one check or balance journalists see as necessary to their role is their own honesty and professional commitment. As befits knowledge work, journalists are idealistic about their prospects and modest about their own power in this vision of news.

The conditions differ for a researcher studying news. Reporters have said bluntly to me that I have no business writing about news because I've never been a journalist. I explain to them that I'm a member of the audience, not the press corps. I love newspapers and hope for their success, and I can't go a day without watching a newscast, if only to find out the weather forecast. As an audience member, I have the unusual privilege of asking questions about news and having the resources to pursue some answers. "Proper dialectic work" begins with "self-criticism and its obverse, an act of historically sympathetic imagination" (Mitchell 1986: 204). My own political agenda has become less sure along the way. I started out confident that the new long journalism was entirely harmful, but close work with the texts of news has moderated my view. The long news is different, but the results of such formal changes are not entirely predictable. In newspapers, the longer stories driven by ideas rather than events probably discourage reading, and they may have helped lose a generation of young audience members. In television, the longer stories with a greater variety of visual images and faster pacing probably encourage viewing, although they may also discourage critical thinking (Graber 1990). On the radio, every aspect of NPR news seems preferable to what commercial stations – even the all-news variety – serve up, but I have found my patience wearing thin as journalists talk more and more among themselves. Recent innovations have amounted to alliances in which NPR reporters team up with another medium and present their cross-talk as news (as in the new midday program involving the on-line magazine *Slate.com*). The internet, so far, has had little net effect on newspaper content but has damaged the presentation of television news, especially on cable, where clutter and confusion prevail. The formal characteristics of news can serve almost any political agenda. Longer, larger formats (for books, images, and other cultural productions) in Western culture, despite their consistent association with authority since the early modern era, need not retain that affiliation. Conditions of production reiterate those older definitions, in a cycle that has proved difficult to break.

Consequences & Outcomes

Forms of news, however, do track with power (Barnhurst and Nerone 2001). My project shows *how* journalists used news form to increase (whether consciously or not) their control over the selection, definition, discussion, and analysis of issues in the public airwaves and in the press, the principal ven-

ues for citizens to seek information. As the unannounced project of new long journalism advanced, U.S. news became more uniform, offering a wider range of brand options but fewer substantial differences between outlets or venues. While attempting to remain honest, and, to the degree possible, neutral, my description of the changes cannot ignore the injustices they permit. There is no risk of relativism here: politicians and citizens have lost space, time, and attention in the news. My analysis is also anchored in history and avoids using formal categories as markers with unchanging ideological alignments. The limits of measuring news text do not presume access to an external reality – as against the risks of immanence and hubris. Instead, our studies demonstrate the articulation of form with ideology, “which binds the inner discourse” of news “to the ideological universe of the society” (Hall 1981: 234).

Stuart Hall has called news, that is, its operational practices or news values, “one of the most opaque structures of meaning in modern society” (Ibid.). Journalists acquire a nose for news, but they cannot describe its smell. News seems to happen to them, “as if events select themselves”, says Hall. “We appear to be dealing, then, with a ‘deep structure’ whose function as a selective device is un-transparent even to those who professionally most know how to operate it” (Ibid.). My project does, I hope, open the ideology of news to observation. Ideology advances the power of some groups (such as journalists) in support of power elites (who may include journalists).

My project is also an intervention with a few expected outcomes. One tool for disarming ideological processes is exposure. There are many examples of recent work that exposes the ideological workings of news. For example, in a 1920s scandal, New York socialite Leonard Rinelandier sued to annul his marriage to Alice Beatrice Jones, a working-class girl from New Rochelle (Ardizzone and Lewis 2001). The case turned on the question, Did Leonard know Alice’s race? At the trial, reporters scrutinized Alice and called her *fair* or *slightly tanned* or *dusky* or *ebony*, depending on who seemed likely to win. At one point Alice had to disrobe partially before the court (baring her breasts, back, and legs) to prove that Leonard must have known she was not white. Journalists along the way constructed race to fit their expectation of what would happen. Scholars continue to examine race as a category in news, to show that reporters are active agents in its construction. The same is true of other aspects of news.

Sometimes journalists observe the ideological dimension of news-work. In New York during the mid-twentieth century, Nora Ephron, then a young reporter for the *New York Post*, recalls standing outside, waiting and waiting. And then, when the *New York Times* reporters arrived, the activity would begin, and she would stand there wondering, “How do *they* always know when an event will really start?” (Ephron 2001: n.p.). One unexpected result of my research has been an epiphany for some of the journalists I interviewed, who came to recognize the constructedness of news. A *New York Times* staffer during the reign of the first George Bush recalls the Washington bureau re-

ceiving advance warning that the Gulf Conflict was about to begin. The tipster said, “Don’t leave for dinner yet”, and they stayed, scooping the competition and reconfirming the power of the *Times*.

Despite the limits to what scholars can do in an active struggle against deception, one way to counterbalance the ideological drift of journalism might be to measure it, document it, and make it public. Current measurements of news – circulation and ratings – are entirely in the service of advertising. No ratings system exists for news content. If media executives had to face data showing their own news operations were covering fewer events, fewer people, and fewer nearby places, the numbers might get them thinking. These formal markers might assert wider authority for a news organization and its staff. They might appeal more to upscale audiences that attract more advertisers and generate more revenue. Or they might distance the general public from events and from their hometown newspaper or news broadcaster, resulting in shrinking audiences, business failures, and the silencing of a variety of voices, journalists among them. As it stands, few seem to recognize what is happening, least of all the public. The power of news will not go away, but perhaps the common understanding might catch up with what journalists actually do in practice as they manufacture news.

Note

1. Kevin G. Barnhurst, Professor and Interim Head of the Department of Communication, University of Illinois at Chicago, is the author of *The Form of News, A History* (New York: Guilford Press) with John Nerone, and of *Seeing the Newspaper* (New York: St. Martin's Press). Earlier versions of this chapter were presented during the symposium, Construc(t)ing the Current: Theorizing Media in the New Millennium, May 14, 2004, at the University of Chicago; at a colloquium of the Department of Communication, University of Michigan, October 14, 2004; and at the Center for the Study of Public Scholarship at Emory University, February 28, 2005. The author thanks the organizers and participants of these events for their comments and suggestions and especially appreciates the invaluable research assistance from Michael Vari of Lake Forest College, Chicago.

Epilogue
Perspectives on the Development
of the News Paradigm
The Quest for Autonomy

Horst Pöttker*

In the introduction we defined the term news paradigm by naming the five elements it consists of: The event, news value factors, the news interview, journalistic objectivity, and the inverted pyramid. Also, we characterized the diffusion of the news paradigm as a process, where these factors as an ensemble – and thus the news paradigm itself – are not being deformed and torn apart beyond recognition, but are exposed to influences of society, and because of that can appear in multifaceted variations.

We differentiated between three perspectives on the news paradigm and its diffusion, and with these we distinguished between three types of social factors that can influence the news paradigm: technological, cultural, and political-economic.

The strong influence, especially of the latter, can be seen in the fact that the conditions in dictatorial and authoritarian systems can hinder the diffusion of the news paradigm; Germany before 1945, and Eastern Europe before 1990 serve as impressive examples. However, explanation approaches that are reduced to one of the three types of factors are affiliated with certain weaknesses, which we named in the introduction as well.

This constellation, as it has been described in the introduction, raises questions whose answers emerge from the passage that this book makes through various epochs in four regions and their contrasting cultures.

In the beginning there stands a methodological question, resulting from the insight in the shortcomings of solely technological, cultural, or political-economic approaches:

- Could an explanation approach with an all-embracing perspective be found that unites the technological as well as the cultural, and the political-economic approach?

A meta-perspective like this gives hope for answers on two other categories of questions. The first is theoretical:

- Does the diffusion of the news paradigm, which is rooted in Anglo-Saxon journalism, result from a growing Anglo-Saxon superiority in the world, culminating in the present Anglo-American hegemony? (At least in Germany the news paradigm was grafted onto journalism by the Western occupying powers after the demise of the National Socialist – NS – regime.) Or have discrete inner developments in the societies of continental Europe been the crucial factor, and would the news paradigm have prevailed there without the military, economic and cultural supremacy of the USA and Great Britain?

The second is of a material nature, concerning the future:

- How will things develop? Did the diffusion of the news paradigm come to a halt? Does the reduction of the prestige of the objectivity ideal in American journalism that some observers (Gross 2004) have diagnosed, herald the end of the news paradigm?

The News Paradigm and the Process of Modernization

None of the contributions to this book question the historic sequence, in which its essays have been arranged. It seems to go without saying that the news paradigm spread according to our sequencing. Having emerged in the Anglo-Saxon countries, USA and Great Britain, in the second half of the 19th century, it became accepted in Scandinavia in the first third of the 20th century; only then did it spread to Germany after the military surrender in 1945 and in East Europe since the breakdown of the socialist systems around 1990.

Despite disavowals that are due to the political structures in these countries – especially in the NS regime in Germany and the Soviet dictatorship in East Europe – this sequence seems like a schedule of the historic process of modernization. Three centuries ago, in England, those concepts that have shaped the modern Western world ever since were minted: Parliamentarianism, human rights, free enterprise, regulation by the market principle, and the freedom of the press. In this context, a profession has emerged that is crucial for the coordination of the elements of modern societies: journalism. The founders of the first political weekly magazines, Daniel Defoe, Richard Steele, Jonathan Swift, and Joseph Addison, proved their consciousness of the tasks and prerequisites of the profession by openly engaging against false reporting and for freedom of the press (see Pöttker 1998).

The developing modernity of the mother country rubbed off on its colonies in North America. The War of Independence, and the liberation of the United States of America from colonial power, subsequently added another component: the pride of being independent. Thus it is no wonder that the United States appears to be the most modern country in the 19th century, with a journalism that developed faster and stronger than elsewhere, being based

on the freedom of the press as it had been granted in the “First Amendment”. An important part of this progress lies in the development of the news paradigm that congruously fell on fruitful cultural ground in Britain in the first instance.

Scandinavian countries were, if we ignore France, the next to follow the process of modernization. This shows for example in the political development of Norway in the 19th century. The Norwegian Constitution, which anchors the constitutional monarchy, originates from 1814, and thus it is almost as old as the Constitution of the United States. It wouldn't have stood the test of time, if it hadn't brought modern political institutions into being from the onset.

In 1821, the Storting confirmed the abolition of the aristocracy and in 1824 the King's right to veto laws was restricted, for the first time. In 1884 civic parliamentarism became part of constitutional law when the Norwegian parliament after a lengthy and bitter conflict with the Swedish King broke his power to appoint his own Norwegian government, reducing his role to a political figurehead in domestic politics. It suits the relatively early political modernization that Scandinavian journalism adapted the news paradigm in the first third of the 20th century, as described by Sverre Høyer, John Nonseid, Søren Kolstrup and others in this volume.

Agreement exists that the modernization of Central Europe and especially of Germany, in contrast to the western and northern nations, was delayed and came not so much out of society itself, but was enforced in a top-down manner (see Wehler 1987-2003). As a result it tended to be especially abrupt in the years that followed the foundation of the Reich in 1871, which caused feelings of alienation, and regressive longing for pre-modern guardedness, culminating in the national socialist ideology of the national community, the so called “*Volksgemeinschaft*” (see Plessner 1974; Pöttker 1997, 271-283). Even though the NS regime, in contrast to its own ideology, caused rationalizing advances in many material and structural fields, Germany reached modernity in cultural terms only after 1945, and then after a long process of Westernization, which from the beginning was implanted by the victorious western powers. Part of this process was the adaptation of German journalism to the news paradigm, which was connected to misunderstandings (see Pöttker 2004b, 90f.). The more so in East Germany, whose liberation from the Soviet dictatorship only dates back one and a half decades, for where westernization has not yet been completed.

This brings us to East Europe, especially to Russia, where modernization is even more delayed. Until 1917 the nation was autocratic to the core, because bottom-up liberalization and rationalization efforts of the 19th and early 20th century failed even more thoroughly than in Germany (see Kappeler 2002). Seven decades of Soviet governance tended to consolidate archaic authoritarian structures rather than overpowering them, abstaining from the enacted industrialization. Whether here the news paradigm is rooted deeply enough to be able to develop healthily, remains to be seen.

Modernization – we have not, until now, defined how this term has to be understood. Can the meaning of modernization be coined as a term that contributes something to the understanding of the news paradigm as well? Sociology makes an offer, characterizing modernization as a process of progressing division of labour, respectively “functional differentiation”. This interpretation approach was noticeable in the 18th century with Immanuel Kant (see Kant 1994, 4), then found its professional specification with Emile Durkheim (Durkheim 1893/1930) and Georg Simmel (Simmel 1983) in the emerging sociology, and is carried out in socio-scientific system theory (Parsons 1996) on a broad and differentiated level, but especially with regard to journalism as a system of action on a not always convincing basis (see Luhmann 2004).

So, what does it mean, when a society is “modern”, that is organized according to the principle of division of labour or functional differentiation? “Modern” or “not-modern” have to be seen not as absolute but as relative attributes, and modernization as a process, which never leads from none to perfected, but always from a little to more modernity.

In the modern society, in contrast to earlier, less modern ones, most people are specialists. Indeed specialized institutions and professions exist for (almost) all needs: Physicians and hospitals are competent to cure diseases, schools and teachers are concerned with the education of children and there is social security and trained experts to help with old-age benefits.

The drive of the growing functional differentiation is an increase in efficiency. Someone, who concentrates on one task, can fulfil it faster and better than someone who’s doing everything. Efficiency includes a certain amount of bureaucracy within institutions. Efficiency includes that institutions and professions are often accompanied by sciences such as medical science, education science, or actuarial mathematics, thus founding practical experience on a rational and empirical basis. And efficiency includes a justifiable confidence of the entire society that every profession really concentrates on its task and does not give way to other interests and goals. Efficiency calls for professional independency and autonomy. In more common terms, Niklas Luhmann talks about “autopoiesis” of the sub-systems of society, which are characteristic for a high level of functional differentiation or modernity.

The journalistic profession is also the result of functional differentiation. The level of its professionalism and its adherence to its own specific rules and routines that are secured by a special education, indicate the level of modernity that a society has reached, and that the journalistic goods and services are for. But journalism is a special case and system theory confers this, because it is not only subject to the iron rule of functional differentiation and evolution of autonomy, but because the task is specialized upon, only evolves from the problematic concomitants of the progressing division of labour and modernization.

In a complex, very much differentiated and thus highly specialised society, immediate experiences of people are limited and isolated from one

another, so that people have to catch up second-hand realities that lie beyond their own, in order to be able to shape their life, levelling off with the possibilities their culture offers – and also, to enable society, whose members they are, to work on problems and finally solve them. In order to lift narrow-mindedness in experience and knowledge of individuals, and compensate the regulation deficiency that thereby emerges, complex societies need institutions and professions, which concentrate on the special task to overcome geographical, temporal and social communication barriers, and thus create a sphere of unhindered social communication, which we call “public sphere”.

The relative autonomy of journalism, which emerged in the course of modernization, has no end in itself, but, just like any other profession, serves the aim to fulfil the professional task as effectively and reliably as possible, which in this case is the specific task of the “public sphere”. In order to create a public sphere, journalists have to report impartially, truly, all-embracing, and comprehensively about everything that is important for the public. With regard to any of the four named relations, the news paradigm is an appropriate means to fulfil this task. To put only its most important elements in this functional combination: The news interview and the strive for objectivity, which because of the inescapable selectivity of the journalistically perceived and reported can never be accomplished, are unmistakably focussed on an impartial, all-embracing and true coverage that is designed according to the news paradigm, which guarantees credibility among the largest possible audience. Furthermore, an event-like structure, as well as the pyramid design according to the principle of relevance, makes for reception-easing timeliness and comprehensibility, so that the largest possible audience can actually be reached by this information.

But the news paradigm serves not only the journalistic task to create a public sphere, it also serves professional autonomy by subordinating journalistic work to fixed rules whose non-compliance can be sanctioned, and which can be taught to prospective journalists. It is not by chance that it is in the USA, where the news paradigm originated, where the rational legitimacy of the profession by scientific journalism research and education at universities has its longest tradition, and belongs to societal normality. The contrast is, for example, in Germany where people often stick to the traditional or even charismatic, in either case representing a pre-modern tradition of legitimacy as a profession for the gifted (“Begabungsberuf”). The news paradigm, as well as the scientifically founded education of prospective journalists, show a high level of professional autonomy of journalism, which itself can be taken as a sign for the level of complexity and modernity of a society. It is not by chance that the diffusion of the news paradigm appears like a schedule of modernization.

Internal or External Driving Forces?

Interpreting the diffusion of the news paradigm as a component of the great historic process of modernization, releases us from the pressure of having to choose the technological, the cultural, or the political-economic approach, all of which we know have specific deficits that have been explained in the introduction. In the context of modernization theory all three – or even four dimensions, if one does not want to force the political and the economic into one – are well taken in consideration. At the same time the modernization-theoretical explanation releases us from the temptation to solely attribute the news paradigm and its diffusion to the conditions that effect journalism from the outside. This temptation is especially true in the tradition of Marxist or non-Marxist analysis of media structures, where the hard material or organizational frame is presumed to be crucial for communication processes and forms. From this perspective, the news paradigm has to appear as a standardization that was forced upon them, and to which they can not help but adapt. More suitable to journalism education is the modernization-theoretical perspective, in which the news paradigm turns out to be not least the result of a consequent inner development of journalism and its strive for professional autonomy. At least this goes for its genesis in 19th century American journalism.

Is this also valid for the other three culture groups and regions where it is credible that the news paradigm was only accepted as an export article from the USA and Britain? Or had it developed and become accepted in Scandinavia, Germany and East Europe without the Anglo-Saxon example as well?

This question is hard to answer, at least empirically, because historical observations or experiments without the early existing Anglo-Saxon news paradigm can not be made. And in front of the outlined background no compelling theoretical answer can be expected either, since because of the asynchrony of modernization processes in different cultures one has to calculate the incline among developments of autonomy in journalism, which lets an internally, as well as an externally, generated development appear possible. Nevertheless it is worthwhile thinking about this question, while looking separately at the three different culture groups and regions.

Seeing Scandinavia, in contrast to Germany and East Europe, on an earlier path to modernization and towards democracy, points to a societal process of modernization where later on the news paradigm emerges as an independent cultural achievement. At this point, one also has to include religion and its impact on mentality and conduct. Max Weber is known to have explained the formation of capitalism, of whose expansion the modernization impulse by way of rational enlightenment is a part, as deriving from the ethics of ascetic Protestantism. In doing so, he assumed the religious powers that asserted themselves in everyday experience of the early modern times, were the deciding influence on the “character of the people” (Weber 1968, 357).

The “English *Puritanism* that evolved from Calvinism” (Weber 1968, 357) was of special importance to Weber because it ideally embodies the Protestant ethic. But he wanted to treat “the ascetic Protestantism as *one*” (Ibid.), for his discussion on the driving forces of capitalism and modernization. For the explanatory power of Weber’s modernization theory, it may be regarded as ephemeral, if Calvinistic and Puritan traditions do not play a dominant role in Scandinavian Protestantism. Crucially the Scandinavian culture embraced and was deeply thrilled by the emergent Protestantism. Active protestant engagement, deriving from this culture, is symbolized in the Swedish king Gustav Adolf and his leading role in the Thirty Years’ War. The dominant Lutheran tradition in Scandinavia is especially apt as a medium for rationalization in the framework of progressing division of labour, because it brings forward the priority of word and script at least as much as Calvinism and Puritanism, who with their ascetic creation of capital brought forward especially the economic modernization. Scandinavia, after Japan, is the region with the highest newspaper spreading today (about 600 copies per 1000 inhabitants, in contrast to 300 in Germany, 150 in France, and 50 and less in other catholic and orthodox Mediterranean countries). With regard to these conditions, it can be assumed that the news paradigm as a means of rationalization of the profession in Scandinavia did not have to be engrafted from the outside, even if the Anglo-American example may have served as a stimulus.

This is different in Germany. It is true that, there also, protestant regions in the north characteristically have been touched by industrialization earlier than the catholic south. But as a whole, the German middle classes came too late and were too weak, in order to realize successfully the rationalization program of enlightenment in politics and (journalistic) culture. Still being democratically, and patriotically, minded at the same time in the first half of the 19th century, and self-consciously struggling for modern freedom rights and national unity – it is not by chance that Heinrich Heine (see Pöttker 2000), Karl Marx (Marx 2001) and other writers of the “Vormärz” made the first steps towards professionalization of journalism in Germany if the many disasters and humiliations after the political defeat of 1848/49, first with the ‘top-down’ foundation of the Reich by Bismarck in 1871; then World War I and subsequent defeat; the plebeian revolution in 1918; the inflation in 1923; the NS regime of 1933-1945 and even the communist dictatorship in East Germany till 1990 took away its self-esteem and certainty about values. If there were any attempts to independently establish an objectivity-oriented news paradigm, as one might discover in the writings of Karl Bücher during the World War I (Bücher 2001) who seems to have been inspired by the austere, reserved reporting from the war of the British journalist William Howard Russell (see Hudson 1995), then these attempts were nipped in the bud with the empowering of Hitler in 1933. The NS orders for the press during the years preceding World War II (Bohrmann & Toepser-Ziegert 1985ff.) clearly show that the National Socialists took the German tradition of partisan journalism

that was considered to be a part of the political power struggle, and pushed it to the extreme of open propaganda, in doing so were able to build on the practical experience and resulting from that gained the agreement of many journalists.

The assumption that Otto Groth, building upon his experiences as an editor of the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, had already in the 1920s independently developed a concept of journalism as a mediating profession, which would come close to the Anglo-Saxon news paradigm (Groth 1928 ff.), was refuted by research of Michael Bodin at the University of Dortmund that has not yet been published. Groth only developed this concept during the 1950s and 1960s (Groth 1960ff.), after the occupying powers shaped the German media landscape according to their ideas in the framework of denazification and re-education. This also indicates that the news paradigm in Germany can less be traced back to an inner cultural development that occurred in Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian countries, and more to the influence of the victorious powers of the World War II, especially to the Anglo-Saxon occupiers.

This assumption does not exclude that the external progress was just an impulse for an independent development, which finally deeply rooted the news paradigm in the journalistic culture in Germany. But it also gives way to insights on two possible problems: First, the old tradition of partisan journalism hasn't fully disappeared, but subliminally is still at work. Distinct but disparate clues in journalism research see this occurring to the present day (see Donsbach 1999; see Hachmeister 2002). Secondly, due to the lack of tradition, the conditions for misunderstandings and ideologization of the news paradigm are especially advantageous in Germany. Distinct clues exist that prove this to have happened, especially in the 1970s (see Pöttker 2004b: 90f.).

As far as East Europe is concerned, we do not think we are capable of formulating a decided thesis. On the one hand, chances for an independent development of journalism in Russia were even smaller than in Germany. On the other hand, no foreign occupying forces could have engrafted the news paradigm after the end of the soviet power. It may be that the chances for a merging of the news paradigm with the own tradition of a rather literary journalism, and with this for its creative development, in East Europe are especially high.

Is the News Paradigm Drawing to an End?

Kevin Barnhurst's findings that the news was "less densely populated, less event-packed, less up-to-date, less localized, and much less brief" (Barnhurst, 2005, p. 253) in the course of the 20th century, can be interpreted as the decay, even the downfall of the news paradigm. If it was true that the news paradigm expresses the independent autonomy of journalism, then these find-

ings would mean that it had been going downhill with journalistic independency and professionalism for quite some time, and will probably soon be at a complete end. It is true that journalism scientists of several countries deplore that since the 1990s journalists orientate themselves less and less by the ideal of objectivity (see Gross 2004), and that professional standards such as the division of editorial and advertisements (see Branahl 1997), or the division of news and opinion (see Weischenberg 1995: 154-168) are being increasingly put aside. The trend towards "Infotainment" that goes together with the ongoing commercialization of the media, is being interpreted as the beginning of the end of professional journalism.

Such apprehensions are a considerable challenge to our thesis that the news paradigm spread as an expression of journalistic autonomy, because of and together with the ongoing professionalization of journalism that is embedded in functional differentiation. If this thesis is correct, then the process of modernization has to have come to a halt, or decline, concerning journalism. This stands in contrast to the consensus, existing in social science since Georg Simmel, that functional differentiation has to be seen as an iron rule of societal progress. But if one holds on to this consensus and presumes that in the case of journalism the process of functional differentiation can not have declined – wouldn't that mean, with regard to the undermining tendencies of the news paradigm, to give up on the thesis that it is an expression of journalistic autonomy?

A third interpretation seems possible here, going together with the developing principle of functional differentiation as well as with the news paradigm as an indicator of journalistic independency. In the background lies the insight, which is not being shared by system theory, that journalism not only obeys the laws of functional differentiation, but that its special task also stems from the necessity to compensate the narrow-mindedness of the horizon of experience and knowledge of the members of society, which is due to the differentiation of society, by overcoming communication barriers via the creation of a public sphere. In the centre of this interpretation lies the idea that the news paradigm might be misinterpreted, over-stretched and dogmatized to an extent that makes it become contra-productive as an orientation for journalists fulfilling the task to create a public sphere.

Over-stretching and dogmatization can make the objectivity ideal be a communication barrier itself, which excludes certain subjects and modes of mediation from the journalistically created public sphere. If the division of information and advertisement develops towards a ban to talk about oneself, this contributes to the obscuration of media production; if the division of information and fiction means the exclusion of literary creativity from journalism, this means that everything that goes beyond the hard facts, remains excluded from societal talk; and if the division of news and opinion is being made the reason, why would journalists have to suppress expressions of their own opinions, this does not only cut a human right, being valid for journalists as well, that was gained after hard struggle, but again it excludes events

that are not easy to investigate on a factual basis as well as the driving forces of journalistic action itself from the public sphere (see Pöttker 2004b).

Not only the news paradigm, but its over-stretching and dogmatization as well, came into being during a phase of development of modern society, in which the bourgeoisie, who had been revolutionary themselves during the 18th century, tried to reject emancipatory claims of workers, women and the youth. Not only did the rules of a professional news journalism with its strive for objectivity, and the division of advertisement, literature, and – at least in Anglo-Saxon countries – political propaganda from serious information, develop in the course of the 19th century, but also the division of the serious, rational, male sphere, from the playful, emotional, female part in the social division of labour, and the division of serious, informing elite culture from entertaining popular culture. Seen like this, the news paradigm in its ideologised shape appears as a cultural instrument, being used in journalism by the bourgeois elite of democratic societies to defend their privileges.

Might it be that at the turn of the 21st century, this hierarchization of culture weakens, because the economic perspective of capitalism, which is forced to extend its markets (globalization) as well as to intensify them, has to overcome sales barriers that have a cultural background? This would have consequences especially for the media, which not only wants to sell its own products but also works for the marketing of products from other trades.

There is little hope for success, if the science that accompanies journalism understands itself as a stronghold against this development. A merely defensive strategy, which tries to keep the news paradigm in its original shape, would not be necessary, if the described development of the media corrects its publicness-opposing deformation. It might be that due to the present development, the news paradigm will be traced back to what it might be without over-stretching and dogmatization: an expression of respect for the audience and its ability to differentiate, which accordingly can handle a greater amount of authentic, possibly subjective information than the guardians of objectivity may think. Nowadays this does not only mean an elite, but the entire audience, including women, workers, unemployed, the youth, and ethnic minorities.

This would be a development that does not lead the news paradigm to its end but modifies it. Scientists can not conscientiously predict this to occur but they can work in this direction by creatively aiming for an understanding of the news paradigm that frees it from dogmatization.

* The author wishes to thank Anne Fölting for language help with English.

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Towards the turn of the 19th century, newspapers in the US were expanding more rapidly than elsewhere. Was it this burgeoning market, which inspired journalism to reinvent itself into a 'new' and different kind of texts: clearer, fact oriented and without any obvious ideological bias? Or were also broader cultural currents at work?

This anthology is one of a few, which compares the developments of news journalism cross-nationally. The creation of a 'news paradigm' in US is traced from its beginnings up to the present; its varying impacts on European journalism is discussed and documented for England during the 1880s and 1890s, in Scandinavia between the 1870s and the present, in Germany before and after 1945, and in Central/Eastern-Europe before and after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

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ISBN 91-89471-30-X



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