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Journalism Education

Journalism Education is the journal of the Association for Journalism Education a body representing educators in HE in the UK and Ireland. The aim of the journal is to promote and develop analysis and understanding of journalism education and of journalism, particularly when that is related to journalism education.

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Articles

All papers in the Articles section are peer reviewed and discuss the latest research in journalism and journalism education. These are intended to inform, educate and spark debate and discussion. Please join in this debate by going to www.journalism-education.org to have your say and find out what others think.

Telling tales together: creating good collaborations between journalism and computer science students

By John Price and Lee Hall, Centre for Research in Media and Cultural Studies, University of Sunderland

Abstract

Technology keeps offering journalists new tools and techniques for exploring fresh ways of finding, researching and telling stories. This provides journalism educators and students with an ever-changing range of challenges and opportunities. One possible response is for journalism students to learn to collaborate with students from other subject areas, such as computer science, to

enhance their storytelling. This article critically discusses the potential of such collaborations by using the Knight Lab, at Northwestern University, Chicago, as a case study. The Knight Lab is a world-leading community of journalism educators and students, designers and developers, who work together on experimental projects aimed at finding new ways of doing journalism. The article's findings are based on an observation of a Knight Lab class, interviews with Knight Lab staff, and an online survey of its students. Among its findings are that such collaborations work best when embedded in courses as optional modules, scaled properly and employing a selective process. Journalism students benefit from some prior coding knowledge, while classes need the support of specialist staff to be effective. The evidence also suggests there are pedagogical and employability benefits for students from these collaborations as they mirror current best practice in many newsrooms.

Introduction

Journalists and journalism students now have access to more data than ever before. This means they have more potential stories to tell than ever before. But how as practitioners and educators can we help our students make best use of these resources? One approach would be to train budding journalists in a vast and comprehensive range of new skills - to ensure they are experts in data, coding and programming as well as the traditional skills of interviewing, writing and finding stories.

Another approach would be to help them learn how to work with students from complementary subject areas – students who could help journalists find stories within data, make sense of that data, and tell those stories in compelling ways. It is this second approach which will be the focus of this article.

The article seeks to address the following core questions:

What are best conditions for creating successful collaborations between journalism and computing science students?

What can journalism educators, and their institutions, do to promote these conditions?

What value do such collaborations have for journalism students?

These questions will be explored via a case study of the Knight Lab – a world leading organisation in collaborations between journalism and computing students. The Knight Lab is based at the Medill School of Journalism, Northwestern University, Chicago. The School is regularly listed at or near the top of leagues of

the best journalism schools in the US, its course fees are around \$50,000, and it accepts approximately 13% of applications it receives. The Lab itself is billed as a 'community of designers, developers, students, and educators working on experiments designed to push journalism into new spaces' (Knightlab.edu). Physically, the Lab takes up a small wing of the journalism building, comprising two workshop rooms, a meeting area and staff offices. Founded in 2011, the Lab was originally funded by a grant from the Knight Foundation. It is perhaps best known for the range of open-source media tools it has produced for reporting, data gathering and storytelling. These include TimelineJS, which is now available in more than 60 languages and has been used by more than 300,000 people worldwide.

The formal, curriculum based part of the operation is the Knight Lab Studio, which is a 10-week class running quarterly across each year. The class is credit-bearing for journalism and computer science students, but also open to students from other disciplines, and brings together small multi-disciplinary teams of students and staff to work on small-scale media related projects. Students attend a two-hour workshop in the Lab, twice a week, and are expected to do a further six hours of work each week in their own time. These workshops consist entirely of group work and there are no formal lectures in the module. Students wishing to take the class must apply to take part in specific projects, which are proposed and designed by staff in the Knight Lab and wider journalism team. Groups of four or five students are then selected to work on each project. In the most recent round of selections, more than 80 students applied for around 20 places. Students taking the Knight Lab class are assessed on a critical evaluation of their experiences in the Lab, rather than on the outcomes of the projects themselves. Examples of recent projects include a tool to help journalists make sense of US Census data, experimenting with best use of sidebars and glossaries in storytelling, an audience study of when and how to deliver news on mobile, and a tool to help citizen journalists record and report public meetings.

The inspiration and funding for the empirical foundations of this article come from the authors' participation in Creative Fuse North East. This three-year, AHRC funded research project has involved partnership between five north east universities (Sunderland, Durham, Newcastle, Northumbria and Teesside), working with the region's creative, digital and tech industries. One of the aims of Fuse has been to explore potential new collaborations across these sectors. Academic staff at the University of Sunderland have been involved in a number of activities bringing together specialists from the worlds of journalism and computing – these include a mini-conference, an investigative journalism project researching online abuse of female politicians, and the running of a short-course in journalism skills.

Creative Fuse provided funding for the authors to visit the Knight Lab in early 2018, to observe the Lab in action, meet staff and students, and collect some of the data on which this article is based. The visit, and the resulting findings discussed below, will also inform curriculum development bringing together staff and students from journalism and computer science subject areas. Furthermore, they have led to a successful bid for a Google DNI grant to fund a collaborative project at Sunderland University aiming to create an app to help journalists research and report stories about hate speech on social media.

The following section of the article provides a critical discussion of some relevant previous literature about collaborations between journalism and computing, the subsequent section outlines the methods used to gather empirical material for the article, before the findings of this empirical work is presented and contextualised. The article finishes with a conclusion directly addressing the core research questions set out above.

Research Context

As Lewis and Usher (2014) have argued, two major factors have encouraged intersection and collaboration between the worlds of technology and journalism - an increase in data driven journalism requiring programming skills, and new forms of news presentation that rely on interactive web design. In terms of data, journalists and journalism students now have access to more data than ever before. This presents opportunities and challenges in terms of identifying, researching and visualising stories. This, in turn, requires a new set of skills and approaches to doing journalism. Without such progress, the danger is that journalism will waste the potential benefits that new access to data can bring. As Long argues: '...there can be floods of open data pouring into newsrooms every day, but without the ability to extract it, and the ability to place it in context, it is not going to be much advantage to newsrooms' (2014, p.33).

The above challenges have led, in part, to the development of computational journalism (Gynnild, 2014) – the concept of journalists using computers to tackle problems and produce content that would not other-

wise or previously have been possible. One approach is for journalists themselves to learn the coding and programming skills required to perform this type of journalism. For a while, particularly in the US context, there was a growing consensus that journalists would need to be all things to all people and embody a mix of journalistic and technical/computer skills - what has been termed the hybrid, programmer-journalist model of journalism (Parasie & Dagiral, 2012). In response, and following the lead of Columbia, New York, in 2011, a number of educational institutions now offer courses combining computing and journalism.

However, more recently, there is growing evidence to challenge this idea of the programmer-journalist model, and to suggest the idea of the 'newsroom unicorn' is a myth. For example, Howe et al (2017) conducted some international research based on 72 interviews with data journalists, web developers and design editors. They found the reality of how newsrooms operate to be based on collaboration rather than individual, hybrid specialism. The best, and most common, practice identified involved small, nimble teams combining journalists and computing specialists coming together to work on short-term projects to create editorial content or products. Hannaford reached similar findings in a case study of computational journalism in the newsrooms of the Financial Times and BBC, concluding:

A team approach is adopted whereby journalists, programmers and designers work closely together to produce multimedia, interactive news products... In this model, the journalist is responsible for sourcing the data and carrying out the initial analysis in order to find the news story to be pursued and then contextualising it. Indeed, the story remains central to the whole team's approach (2015, p.14).

Hannaford (2015) also found that most journalists working in teams on computational journalism projects did not identify themselves as coders, but did have skills in data analysis – and with Excel in particular. There is a need to be careful about relative and subjective definitions here, as the journalists interviewed were tech savvy and knew enough to communicate effectively with coders. They may not have felt their skillset merited the term 'coder', but this was in comparison with the experienced developers they were working alongside. As Hannaford observes however, the journalists did 'have enough knowledge of some programming languages to enable them to carry out, for example, important data-gathering tasks such as web scraping' (2015, p.16)

These findings have important implications for journalism educators and decisions about the curriculum they should be teaching their journalism students. At the heart of these decisions are questions about whether journalism students should be taught how to code and, if so, to what level? The emerging consensus seems to be that most journalism students would benefit from some teaching in how to code. However, students do not need to become proficient coders and programmers themselves, rather they need to reach a level that allows them to communicate effectively with coders and understand what is possible with code. As Anderson et al have argued: 'Journalists should learn to code... every journalist needs to understand at a basic literacy level what code is, what it can do, and how to communicate with those who are more proficient' (2012). Journalists and journalism students need to be able to understand coding and programming skills in order to communicate and think about problems, and their potential solutions, in a useful way. Long has suggested this is very similar to some traditional relationships journalists have had with others in newsrooms, such as page designers – 'I didn't have their talents, but we could talk about the aim of the page, and how to achieve it stylistically' (2014, p.30).

Communication and understanding across subject specialisms are important because, as Lewis and Usher (2014) have identified, a deficiency in these has previously provided barriers to successful collaboration between journalists and computer specialists. In their study of the Hacks/Hackers network they observed problems relating to 'technical jargon that developers knew and journalists did not; others were about differences in thinking – such as journalists' concern with short-term, one-off stories compared to developers' interest in long-term, ongoing software development' (2014, p.389). A jarring of working cultures, exacerbated by limits in effective communication, can therefore hinder projects.

All of this has implications for journalism educators and suggest that, particularly for those interested in teaching data related journalism, there is value in helping students learn to collaborate so they can succeed in the 'inextricably social nature of the workflow' (Howe et al 2017: 4). Previous studies have discussed how a culture of professional independence and autonomy can lead to resistance among some journalists to working with others from outside of their immediate network (Deuze 2008). By introducing journalism students early to the potential benefits of collaboration, and the skills and qualities necessary to make it work, we can help overcome some of this resistance. There is also evidence that working in interdisciplinary groups can help journalism students reduce anxiety and improve understanding. For example, Chowdury et al (2018) concluded that students 'found collaboration valuable in learning computational thinking by allowing them to ask about and explain problems, especially with students from different disciplines who

perceive and explain a problem differently' (Chowdhury et al 2018).

Such collaborations could be conceived of as communities of practice. These are often self-selecting groups of practitioners who come together around an idea or issue with 'shared commitment and expertise, committed to interaction and learning' (Das and Clark, 2017, p.3). Communities of practice can form across spatial and institutional boundaries, or across boundaries within individual institutions. Schmitz-Weiss and Domingo (2010) have used this framework to examine collaborations across departments within newsrooms, such as between journalism and technology teams, and argue it provides a useful approach to understanding how innovation can occur through 'the learning and sharing of knowledge'. Those studying communities of practice seek to understand how skill-building and professional development occurs through a process of collaboration across traditional boundaries. Meltzer and Martik (2017) have argued this approach can be usefully applied to the study of journalists, and the same could be argued for the study of journalism students and education. As Hannaford observes: 'A useful model would be to 'bring together the social worlds of journalism and technology students within a university setting to foster greater understanding and collaboration' (2015, p. 19).

This leads to questions about what makes for successful communities of collaboration? What conditions make for good collaborations between journalism and computing students? And how can these conditions be developed or encouraged? These questions will be addressed in the following sections.

Method

This article takes a case study approach to its subject. While this must place some limitations on the extent to which its findings can be generalised, there are benefits to the detailed and focused nature of this approach. As Flyvberg has argued: 'The advantage of large samples is breadth, whereas the problem is one of depth. For the case study, the situation is the reverse. Both approaches are necessary for a sound development of social science' (2006, p. 241). The Knight Lab provides an interesting and useful case study as it is one of the world leaders in this subject area and has gone through a series of changes and 'improvements' since its inception (discussed above). Understanding these improvements, the reasons behind them, and how they are perceived by staff and students, is therefore of wider benefit and interest to other journalism educators. That said, the fact that the Knight Lab is such a well-resourced centre within one of the world's best regarded institutions, means it has a relatively privileged position in this field. Findings need to be thought of and considered in this light and issues, such as resources, will form part of the later discussion.

The methods used to gather data for this article have combined observation, interviews and an online questionnaire. The authors spent a day (January 2018) visiting the Knight Lab and watching a class in action. During and after the class, authors talked to students and staff about what they were doing and their perceptions of how the class worked. This included conversations with two key members of the Knight Lab staff:

Zach Wise is Associate Professor in the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University and one of the founders of the Knight Lab. He was formerly a Senior Multimedia Producer at the Las Vegas Sun, where he won a Pulitzer Prize, and then part of the New York Times' Multimedia team – where he won an Emmy and received various other honours. He is creator of the Knight Lab's TimelineJS and StoryMapJS products.

Joe Germuska is Knight Lab's Chief Nerd and is in charge of the Lab's technology professional staff and student fellows. He previously worked for the Chicago Tribune as part of its News Apps team.

In addition, an online questionnaire was sent to students doing the Knight Lab class, asking them about their experiences of taking part in a collaboration between journalism and computing students, and what they felt had and had not worked. The questionnaire was completed by 10 students which included a mix of students from the journalism and computer science subject areas.

Findings and Discussion

In this section we will draw on our observation of the Knight Lab, and interviews with its staff and students, to identify key lessons about what makes for good collaborations between journalism and other students.

Creativity and exploration are core to the philosophy of the Knight Lab, and a key part of this is giving students the space to fail, and to learn from this. As Joe Germuska identified: 'The path to journalism innovation is diverse, nimble and creative teams focused on identifying real human needs and experimenting with solutions to them. It's about moving quickly, trying things, failing, learning, and trying again' (Interview, 2018). Germuska also reflected on the fact that this philosophy can lead to problems with external partners who place more priority on 'successful' outcomes from projects, and that creativity and innovation within education is sometimes easier when free of such partnerships. In its early stages the Lab had more formal project partnerships with external organisations but has, more lately, reduced these to protect educational freedom and creativity.

This freedom, and the freedom to fail, is also reflected in the nature of the assessment in the Knight Lab Studio, in which students are not assessed on the outcome of the project, but on an individual critical reflection of their experience of the class. This is designed to encourage innovation, reflection and learning, rather than specific outcomes. In the UK, data journalism educator Paul Bradshaw has similarly reflected on the importance of designing assessments to promote experimentation and depth of learning. As part of his data journalism MA course he has an assessment in which students participate in such communities and are assessed on research, reflection, and creativity. He said: 'The design of the assessment is geared to ensure that students focus more on learning than execution, and are therefore prepared to take more risks in their work' (2011).

The evolution of the Knight Lab class over the last seven years has seen staff adopt a design centred approach to projects. This involves putting people at the heart of the process, considering what problems they have, and then coming up with solutions to help them solve or deal with these. Knight Lab staff believe such an approach helps students, and journalism students in particular, see the relevance and usefulness of their work.

We really see this as a design operation. You have only limited time and skills to work with technology, so you'd better be doing it for good reasons. So we start with design process to identify the right thing to do and design methods that allow you to do research and experimentally evolve into the right thing. The other thing we like about design as a frame is it is maybe a little more inviting for example journalism students. There is a lot of language about design thinking and design approaches that is really about a balanced approach. (Germuska interview, 2018)

These ideas resonate with the findings of Howe et al who found digital journalism collaborations within newsrooms often working best when they followed a design approach which can involve 'brainstorming, human-centred design, iteration, collaboration, rapid prototyping, user testing, and an open process that doesn't shut out personnel' (2017, p.4).

As well as having the right underpinning philosophy and educational approach to projects, the Knight Lab experience tells us it is also important to create the right structures around the class. As outlined above, the class works on the basis of students applying to take part in specific projects proposed by staff. The staff set out the foundations of what the project is about and aims to achieve. In the most recent round, more than 80 students applied for around 20 places. Staff believe this approach, adopted recently, has had a number of benefits.

One benefit is that it tends to produce teams of highly motivated and enthusiastic students who value their place on the module and try to make the most of it. It is interesting that, even at such a highly ranked and selective university as Northwestern, staff still complain about student attitude and apathy in some core classes:

One of the things is we kind of get to cherry pick, especially with employing students. I love to work with people who are learning and have never been enthused by the idea of teaching a class where people were obliged to be there. Every Journalism student goes through fundamentals that include basic web stuff, but it's one of the staff's least favourite things to teach because students are doing it because they have to. (Germuska interview, 2018)

That said, the Knight Lab has also found that embedding the class within degree programmes, by making it credit bearing, has helped improve student engagement:

Last year it was listed as a journalism credit and over the summer we were able to reconnect more directly with the computer science department, so now you can get a computer science credit for it which has helped us get better participation. (Germuska interview, 2018)

The right balance for a class of this kind appears to be to give it value in terms of programme credits, so participating students get something tangible in terms of their degree, but to make it an optional, selective

module within that degree.

A second benefit of the selective process is that it allows staff to scale the process more efficiently. Projects have, from the start of the class, already have some definition to give students direction. In addition, students will have given the project some thought as part of their application. Staff have found this works much better than a situation where students arrive to the class in week one with no idea of what their project will be – particularly in a relatively short class of 10 weeks.

At the conference table we lay out applications in a stack and say ‘this seems good’, but the real part of that is to make sure students are engaged in a specific project idea rather than learning about it the day the class starts. (Germuska interview, 2018).

Students also identified getting the correct scale to projects as being crucial to making the class work. One said: ‘It is important to ensure students choose reasonable end goals as it is easy to over or under estimate the amount that can be done in a given timeframe’ (Student, online survey, 2018). If projects are not finished by the end of the 10 week class then staff will sometimes role them over into the following term. Students are also permitted to take the class more than once and so can continue on an unfinished project or start work on a new one.

Projects don't all have a life beyond the class, but if they do have promise we are in a position to carry them on, whether because we can repeat it the very next quarter or because we know we can break it out of the class and carry it on with paid work either by professional staff or student employees. (Germuska interview, 2018)

A third benefit of the selective approach to the class is that it helps staff create groups of diverse and complementary skills. It has been found in the Knight Lab that the ideal group size for such collaborations is four or five students, with the right balance of journalism and computing students:

Having a good ratio of technical to journalism students is key to success. Having a 1:3 or 1:2 ratio of journalism to technical students is likely ideal. (Journalism student, online survey, 2018)

As the Knight Lab is essentially a computational journalism class, focused on producing storytelling tools, it is likely to require a higher proportion of computer science students than, for example, a data journalism class in which the outcome of a project might be a story, rather than a piece of software.

In terms of roles performed within project teams, journalism students often provide management of the group, keeping a focus on the people-centred problem at the heart of the project and how potential solutions will work for the audience – in the world beyond the Lab. Knowing your audience and keeping them in mind when producing content has always been a core skill for journalists and journalism students. For example, one student said:

The journalism students act as nontechnical project managers and provide background knowledge and some direction to the computer science students. The computer science students do the bulk if not all of the programming work to build prototypes/projects. (Computing student, online survey, 2018)

Another commented:

I feel like journalism students add value by bringing a solid vision to the project and a good grasp of audience engagement. Students with computing skills have, in many respects, the harder job of making these ideas and informational interviews come to fruition (Journalism student, online survey, 2018)

Another function of the journalism student(s) within the group often relates to how the results will be communicated – again drawing on traditional, core journalism skills:

The journalists should be working with the computing students to create widely-understandable tutorial and testimonial content/documentation for the projects. (Student, online survey, 2018)

These findings correspond with the observations from Hannaford (2015) and Lewis and Usher (2014) about roles usually played by journalists in computational collaborations in newsrooms. They found that it was the journalist’s role to keep the work focused on the story, and to provide direction and grounding to the more technical work of their colleagues.

Another important factor in creating effective collaborations is that of resources. While the Knight Lab is clearly a very pleasant place to work, it is not filled with expensive looking or state of the art equipment. It is an average-sized, well-lit classroom, to which students bring along their laptops and sit and work together in groups. The blackboards on the classroom walls, filled with doodles and brainstormed ideas, give a sense of the work that goes in there, but they would be within the budget of almost any educational institution. Instead, the most obvious and powerful resource on show were the staff. For a class of around 20 students, there were two academic staff and two technical staff. As Germuska observed:

We are fortunate that Northwestern has a lot of resources... Direct staffing is two assigned Faculty because project classes just require a lot of oversight. They have obligations of evaluation. (Germuska interview, 2018)

This is important as Heravi (2018) and Treadwell et al (2018) recently identified a shortage in specially trained staff as a major challenge in this area of journalism education. Lewis and Usher (2014) have also previously identified institutional support as being crucial in establishing effective collaboration. While many institutions will not be able to match the resources of Northwestern, it needs to be recognised that classes of this kind require the support of enough staff with the requisite specialist skills if they are to be successful.

The Knight Lab have also used external grant money to pay student fellows to support teaching staff. These student fellows are students who have previously studied the Knight Lab class, and shown aptitude, who are paid to provide teaching support to project groups in class and help other students who just want to come to the Lab in their own time to work on material of interest to them.

We were really fortunate to have a grant from one foundation that is very loose in its expectations except that it needs to be spent on student experiences. And we interpreted that as we can pay students to do work for us, so we started hiring student fellows. (Germuska interview, 2018)

Another important consideration is the level of computing and coding skills required by journalism students to take part in collaborative projects. As discussed above, this has been a longstanding discussion within this field of journalism education and the findings here support an emerging consensus – that while journalism students do not need to be skilled coders themselves, they do need a minimum level of proficiency to effectively participate in computational journalism collaborations.

One reason for this is to do with communication within the group. As one student said:

Not every journalist involved needs to have coding skills to define the problem and provide feedback, but for teams that have more than one journalist, one journalism student should have ample coding experience to communicate solutions-oriented feedback from the journalism students that may struggle to communicate with engineers. (Journalism student, online survey, 2018)

This potential communication gap can also be helped by students being willing to avoid jargon and make allowances for the various levels of knowledge within a group:

Explain yourself clearly on both sides, avoid industry terms, meet the other person at their level, use basic explanations and analogies for technical terms or ideas, and be patient and understanding. (Computing student, online survey, 2018)

Cross-collaboration and being willing to answer even seemingly silly questions has been particularly important too. (Journalism student, online survey, 2018)

I have found that providing a lot of structure as to how to talk about a project on a micro (conflict resolution) and macro (outlining next steps) level is helpful at a beginners' level, as it provides clarity on what each person is responsible for on the team. (Computing student, online survey, 2018)

Another reason for journalism students to have some grasp of coding is to do with understanding the potential paths a project may take:

It is important for them (journalism students) to understand what is feasible with current technology in the given time frame. Experience with programming can help provide this knowledge. If they would like to help build the prototype/project more programming experience is definitely helpful. (Computing student, online survey, 2018)

Also, do as much research together as possible. Journalists are often observers, when they can see how small tweaks to the engineer's code directly manipulates product-solutions, they more quickly understand the potential and restrictions for the engineering solution. (Computing student, online survey, 2018)

Heravi, in an international review of data journalism courses and modules, found that students tend to have received a lack of education 'in the more technical areas of data journalism, such as data analysis, coding and data visualisation' (2018). This supports the findings of Treadwell et al (2018) who identified shortage of student competency in these skills as a major challenge in the teaching of data journalism. Students who are selected for the Knight Lab class are well aware of this shortage of technical and data skills among some of their peers, and how having such skills can give them an advantage in both their education and future careers:

I was a Journalism and Computer Science double major throughout my first year at Northwestern, and I saw a gigantic dearth of technical skill on publications and in classes. I was seen as very valuable on publica-

tions for this reason. (*Journalism / computing student, online survey, 2018*)

Not having a basic understanding of HTML, CSS or and how a CMS functions are pretty major hurdles to overcome as a journalist today. It also seems like a lot of the emerging jobs relate to data in one way or another, so having some facility with that is super helpful too. (*Journalism student, online survey, 2018*)

I think it's extremely important for all students to have coding skills. It allows them to explore a different career path that they may not have considered before and even if a journalist chooses to stay in a traditional role, a coding background allows them to work better with product and graphics teams in the newsroom. (*Computing student, online survey, 2018*)

The message, in terms of collaborative working, is that it is important for at least one of the journalism students to have some coding knowledge and vocabulary. Journalism students can manage groups and maintain focus on audience at the heart of the story or problem; CS students can bring their coding and programming skills; but some knowledge of coding among journalism students is required to bridge the gap between the two.

The above discussion has looked at some of the conditions required for creating healthy collaborations between journalism, computing and other students. Staff and students at the Knight Lab are convinced there are huge benefits to creating such communities of practice within journalism education. Some of this benefit is pedagogical in value – learning how to learn within groups and learning from others with a different, complementary set of skills and mindsets:

I think the exposure to an alternative way of thinking is really valuable. For Journalism students, they get exposed to different ways to think about problems. It's really valuable for them to get some sense of what things can be quantified and computationalised. (*Germuska interview, 2018*)

Another benefit lies in the longer term employability advantage it provides students who go through a class such as the Knight Lab. Howe et al (2017) and Hannaford (2015) have identified how newsrooms are increasingly employing small, temporary, collaborative teams of journalists and programmers to work on computation, data driven projects. Journalism graduates who can demonstrate experience and talent at working in such collaborative groups therefore have great potential value to employers. As Joe Germuska said:

The philosophy is that the team as a whole can do more than the individual student. Newsrooms for a while seemed to be looking for news unicorns, the person who has all the skills and can do everything – but this is just not realistic. Instead the truth is that diverse teams, working well together, will find the way forward for journalism.' (*Germuska interview, 2018*)

One of the tasks for journalism educators therefore is to provide opportunity and support for journalism students to learn how to contribute and work effectively in such teams.

Conclusion

This article has explored the best-practice conditions for educational collaborations between journalism and computer science students and considered the role journalism educators and their institutions can play in encouraging such environments. Based on a study of the world-leading Knight Lab, it has identified the following recommendations:

Ethos and approach:

The importance of creating an ethos of creativity, experimentation and freedom to fail within classes.

The value of a design-centred approach which places the audience and human focused problems at the heart of projects.

Curriculum design:

Modules benefit from being embedded (ie credit-bearing) in both journalism and CS programmes.

But should be optional as this tends to result in higher levels of perceived value and motivation among students.

There is value in having an application and selection process as it tends to create more motivated and efficient project teams.

Pre-defined projects give focus to groups and help scale classes more effectively.

Groups of 4 or 5 students work best – containing one or two journalism students.

Journalism students should receive some prior instruction in coding – but this is only required to a level that will allow them to communicate with CS students and understand the potential scope and solutions of the project.

Assessments that reward experimentation and reflection, rather than project outcomes, tend to have more value and help engender the ‘freedom to fail’ ethos.

Institutional support and resources:

Collaborations require resources and the support of enough specialist staff.

Creating paid roles for former students can be a useful way to support these staff.

The evidence gathered from this case study, and supported by the recent literature discussed above, suggests there is great value in fostering healthy collaborations between journalism and computing students. In doing so, educators are preparing students for how many newsrooms work on data and computational journalism projects, thereby increasing their employability and value. By working effectively on such projects, journalists are making the most of the data now available to them and that might otherwise go to waste. Furthermore there is pedagogic value in the process of collaboration itself, in gaining confidence, empathy and a wider appreciation of how to learn and work.

The Knight Lab was selected as a case study because of its excellence in this field and it has many lessons from which others can benefit. It is also a highly privileged institution in terms of resources and the quality of staff and students on which it can draw. More work now needs to be done to explore how the findings presented above can be applied in a variety of other educational contexts and institutions with different sets of priorities and challenges. At the heart of these variations though, one message holds true – that by teaching journalism students to tell stories with others, we can help them tell new, better and otherwise untold stories.

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A three-way intersection to *The Junction*: publishing opportunity, aspiration and reticence of journalism students at an Australian regional university

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Abstract

Over the last several years, Australian universities have taken part in an initiative where journalism students report and publish on a national publication platform. Instigated in 2014 by Associate Professor Andrew Dodd from the University of Melbourne, the *UniPollWatch* (UPW) project and its successor, *The Junction*, are a national and participatory collaboration between Australian journalism schools and programmes. *The Junction* is a national initiative to publish the best student work and ‘to encourage journalism students through collaboration and work integrated learning’ (Dodd and Davies, 2018). It is underpinned by the Journalism Education and Research Association of Australia (JERAA) and is an extension of the 2016 UPW project where approximately 1000 university journalism students from 28 universities reported on the Australian Federal election. The University of Newcastle (UON) is one of the universities taking part in *The Junction*

and it also participated in the *UPW* initiative. As academics coordinating *UPW*, we found encouraging, stimulating and maintaining motivation around student involvement to be challenging. Those challenges have helped inform how we have approached encouraging student contributions to *The Junction*. This paper is reporting on the challenges we found in *UPW*, the approaches we are taking with *The Junction* and how we might encourage student involvement in the future.

Introduction

In 2016, journalism students and educators from Australian universities collaborated in what has been called ‘the largest newsroom in the country’ (Dodd, Davies, Snowden and Ricketson, 2018, p.47). *UniPollWatch* (*UPW*) was a national project where student journalists from J-schools in Australia reported on the 2016 Australian Federal election and published on a custom-made online platform.

Around 1,000 students from 28 Australian universities, with journalism educators as editors, sub-editors and supervisors, published 670 articles (Davies, et al., 2017) on candidates, electorates and key election issues. So successful was the *UPW* initiative, that Australian journalism educators agreed to continue with the collaboration by developing an ongoing national publication *The Junction*, an online initiative to publish the best student work and ‘to encourage journalism students through collaboration and work-integrated learning’ (Dodd and Davies, 2018). Both initiatives are examples of work integrated learning (WIL), a pedagogical approach that is becoming increasingly important in a university context.

The University of Newcastle (UON) was one of the 28 Australian universities whose journalism students participated in *UPW*. The UON is also involved in *The Junction*. The rationale behind the decision by journalism academics at UON to participate in these initiatives is a commitment to the pedagogical approach afforded by experiential learning, as well as a belief that student participation will build confidence, enhance professional practice and expose student work to a global audience, potential employers and possible future collaboration opportunities. A further rationale is based on an understanding informed by experience that students at UON approach coursework with a higher level of engagement if it is being produced for an audience beyond the classroom and driven by motivations other than the marking boundaries of the rubric.

However, we found several challenges in our experience of both *UPW* and *The Junction*. Firstly, inflexible university systems meant we were unable to tailor our courses in the timeframe of the Federal election to accommodate embedding the initiative as coursework, thus leading to an increased workload for the participating students and academic staff. Secondly, the timing of the Australian election did not fit into the University’s teaching period, meaning students were working outside semesters, resulting, in some cases, to a reduction in motivation. Thirdly, UON is a regional university with a higher than national average of students from low socio-economic backgrounds, which made it difficult for students to balance their work/university commitments on top of their commitment to *UPW*. While these challenges were difficult, it did mean that we could take on the lessons learnt and tailor our engagement with *The Junction*.

A further challenge at UON, and one that is common to both *UPW* and *The Junction*, is the level of student engagement and commitment. Ensuring students who aspire to work as journalists understand the importance of developing a portfolio, and respond to invitations to seize publishing opportunities, is not as successful as it has been in many other universities involved in the two projects.

This paper is reporting on the UON’s journalism teaching team’s experiences with *UPW*, how we learnt

from those experiences to tailor students' engagement with *The Junction*, the challenges we have found with our initial foray into *The Junction*, and how we intend to continue improving the student experience with this national model of student experiential learning.

The paper also signposts future research opportunities in this space.

Background

The University of Newcastle and journalism education

The University of Newcastle is a regional university situated in Newcastle, Australia. Newcastle is located approximately 160 kilometres north of Sydney and is the second largest city in the state of New South Wales and the seventh largest city in Australia. Newcastle is a one-university city and in 2018 the University had more than 37,000 enrolments. In terms of student population, UON has a higher than sector number of students from low socio-economic status (SES) backgrounds: one in four domestic students in 2017 were from low SES backgrounds (University of Newcastle, 2017). Students from such backgrounds have been identified as underrepresented in higher education (Pitman, et al., 2016) and in 2017 the National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education reported that around 17.1 per cent of higher education students from around the country were from low SES backgrounds. UON's figure of approximately 25 per cent of the student population coming from low SES backgrounds is substantially higher than the national average.

In a study that explored the economic factors impacting student learning in higher education in Australia's regional universities, Devlin and McKay (2018, p.1) found that 'financial challenges were found to be one of the most significant barriers to student success' with 'competing priorities relating to carer duties, parenthood and paid employment with study' (ibid., p.2). Australian Census data demonstrates that participation and attainment rates for bachelor-degree qualifications for people in inner regional, outer regional and remote areas remain behind people from metropolitan areas (Nelson, Readman and Stoodley, 2018). National data show that students enrolled in regional universities have higher attrition and lower completion rates than students who study in capital city universities (Australian Government Department of Education and Training, 2016). These findings align with the experience of UON's journalism educators and were particularly evident during our participation in UniPollWatch.

At UON, journalism is offered as a major in a generalist Bachelor of Communication programme. The Communication programme offers four majors: public relations, media production, media studies and journalism. All students in the programme complete eight core courses, eight directed courses in their chosen major and eight electives. Those electives can be from anywhere in the University allowing enrolment (many health courses do not allow enrolment of students outside of specific programmes) or from elsewhere within the Communication programme.

In 2018, the Communication programme had approximately 650 student enrolments and the journalism major had 179 students across the three-year programme. Core courses for all Communication students include introductory courses in communication, digital media, vision and sound as well as audience studies, law and ethics, and creativity in communication and media. The courses offered to journalism students include Introduction to Professional Writing, Introduction to Journalism, Feature Writing, Radio Journalism, International Media Studies, Television Journalism, Public Affairs and Communication, Journalism, and Communication Professional Placement. Students choose eight out of these nine courses and they are structured to direct the students through text, vision and sound across a variety of platforms throughout the programme. To complete their programme, students choose eight electives to enhance their skills from offerings including photography, media production courses such as film, television and documentary, sound, film and digital studies, but they can also choose electives from outside the programme: politics, history, marketing, cultural studies, business, performing arts, etc.

Academics who teach in UON's Communication programme have embraced innovative WIL experiences for students. The programme employs an educational approach that embeds work-based projects throughout the degree, from first year to final year. These projects form an integrated and assessed part of the academic programme. The journalism major offers authentic assessments throughout all of its courses (Fulton, Scott, James and Sandner, 2017) and work with local media to ensure students are getting real world experi-

ence. Journalism students experience embedded assessments where they produce work that is published and broadcast with media outlets including the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC), the *Newcastle Herald* news platforms and UON's radio station 2NURFM (ibid., 2017). These authentic assessments provide students with the opportunity to present their work to an audience beyond the academy. The journalism major includes assessments such as writing submissions to federal, state and local government inquiries on behalf of not-for-profit and non-government organisations, and producing an audio story for the ABC's Heywire competition for regional Australian youth.

The Heywire competition has been particularly successful as an authentic assessment. As part of the radio journalism course, students are required to produce a 2-4 minute radio story and submit it to the Heywire as part of a national competition. Heywire is 'young regional Australians telling it like it is and making a difference' (ABC Heywire, 2017) and those aged 16-24 living outside Australian metropolitan areas are invited to submit stories about themselves in either video, photo, audio or text. UON's radio journalism students submit an audio story as part of their assessable coursework. Up to this point, UON has produced five Heywire winners as well as several "Highly Commended" awards. This type of endorsement builds students' confidence and, according to student evaluations, 'there is an added incentive to produce their best work because it is not being done only for academic assessment, but will be seen and heard by their peers and uploaded to an ABC-hosted website' (Fulton, et al., 2017).

The Junction is another way for students to engage with industry and as an incentive for students to produce their "best work". Guiding this consideration is the belief – informed by both formal and informal student feedback – that work that is produced to go beyond the classroom is approached by students with a different attitude. Furthermore, such opportunity will enhance student learning by providing an opportunity to publish to a global audience. Under the supportive guidance of academics who are experienced journalists, student contribution to *The Junction* results in enhanced confidence and enriched professional practice, as well as exposing students to a national network of potential employers and possible future collaboration opportunities.

UniPollWatch and The Junction

In 2016, approximately 1000 students from 28 Australian universities took part in *UPW*, a national project where journalism students produced coverage of the 2016 Australian Federal election and published on an online platform. Under the guidance of journalism educators, students produced articles about policy areas, completed candidate and electorate profiles, and wrote stories about electoral results. A purpose-built website housed this work, which included written pieces, images, videos, vox pops, visuals, etc.

The *UPW* project developed in response to several challenges in journalism and journalism education: digital disruption of the industry; an increasing emphasis on work integrated learning (WIL) in Australian university programmes; and, the decrease in journalistic coverage due to the high level of redundancies in Australian mainstream media (Dodd, et al., 2018). It was initially set up in 2014 to cover the Victorian state election (Dodd, et al., 2015). Four Victorian universities collaborated to report on the election and provide students with the opportunity to engage in political journalism, but importantly the collaboration resulted in a template for 'large reporting projects, involving journalism programmes at many universities working together to cover topics for the public's benefit, while enabling students to gain real-world skills' (ibid., p.222). While the instigators of the 2014 Victorian state election project identified some key challenges, they found it did provide a model for the 2016 *UPW* project implemented throughout much of the nation.

UPW was mooted as a national project at the Journalism Education and Research Association of Australia (JERAA) annual conference in 2015 (Dodd, et al., 2018) with the 2016 Australian Federal election identified as an ideal opportunity for a logistically ambitious collaboration across Australia. Australian Federal parliaments are elected for a maximum of three years and a general election was due sometime in 2016. JERAA was nominated as the national publisher of *UPW* and a committee was elected to manage the project. The publishing model included an editor-in-chief, a deputy editor and an editorial committee with its members taking on state editor roles. At the local level, universities had campus editors. State editors acted as a liaison between the universities in their state and the editorial committee, provided support and had the final approval on stories to be published on the *UPW* site (ibid.). State editors were responsible for quality assurance and legal issues with the editor-in-chief providing a higher level of approval for questionable legal concerns such as defamation. JERAA took on the role of publisher and the responsibility of legal liability for the project, a decision that Dodd, et al. call 'significant' because, 'it signalled the organisation's

willingness to extend its remit as a publisher and to engage in real world, current and civic journalism as a means to serve a public good and enhance journalism pedagogy' (2018, p.41).

The editorial structure included a high level of collaboration and consensus amongst participants, including a newsletter and a Facebook page, but also included distinct levels of hierarchy, thus providing a level of autonomy for participants while ensuring a clear structure for decision-making. As noted by Dodd, et al. (2015), the first iteration of *UPW* was set up using a 'teaching hospital' model, where 'journalism schools can provide essential services to their communities' (Anderson et al., 2011, p.1). The second iteration was an example of Felin and Zenger's 'consensus-based hierarchy' (in Dodd, et al., 2018, p.39), where a horizontal structure enables peer-to-peer knowledge exchange and the ability to problem-solve quickly and effectively.

Different universities structured their involvement in different ways: 'Some offered it as a voluntary extra-curricular activity, while others embedded it in courses and made the work compulsory and assessed, some used it as a minor assessment and others dedicated whole units to it' (Davies, Dodd, Kremmer and Van Heekeren, 2017, p.219).¹ There was also a mixture of educational levels of participating students, from first year through to post-graduate, and universities employed a wide range of student activities: group/team work, student editors, students as sub-editors, story pitching, photo-editing, and multi-media work as well as producing articles (ibid.). UON offered the opportunity to students as a 'voluntary, extra-curricular activity', a method we found challenging for a range of reasons that will be discussed further in this paper.

Overall, *UPW* was deemed successful: 'The project provided active coverage of 125 of 150 House of Representatives seats, 346 lower house candidates, 26 prospective senators and nine key policy areas, much of which was under-reported in mainstream media' (Dodd, et al., 2018, p.47). This success led to the development of *The Junction*, an ongoing online publication to 'showcase the best work being produced by Australian university journalism programmes and explore new ways for students across the country to work together' (Media Release, *The Junction*, 24.10.18). *The Junction* launched in October 2018 after the idea was floated at the JERAA conference in 2017. After *UPW*, there was a momentum towards this national collaboration and it was driven in a spirit of belief in opportunity for students and cooperation among academic staff nationally. All participating universities were requested to make a financial contribution for the hosting of the site and payment for a webtrainer. At the time of publication, 22 universities from Australia and New Zealand, including UON, are part of *The Junction*. Its aim is to encourage collaboration between universities but also to give students the opportunity to publish work on a national platform, thus forming part of a portfolio. Research on the *UPW* initiative demonstrated that it was a success as a WIL project for the majority of the participants (Dodd, et al., 2018) and WIL is a key framework for *The Junction* as well. *The Junction* is different from *UPW* in that its remit is to include a broader range of rounds such as entertainment, health, history, rural, science and technology, and sports as well as politics. However, it is still a platform where election reportage is encouraged as shown by the coverage of the 2018 Victorian state election, where, in a similar fashion to the original *UPW* in 2014, students from Victorian universities reported on electorates, candidates and issues of the day.

UON was one of the universities that took part in the national *UPW* initiative and, with financial support from the University, journalism educators and journalism students are participating in *The Junction*.

Work Integrated Learning

There have long been links between the teaching and learning of journalism - in Australian higher education and the Australian media - through students undertaking further learning in the workplace. Regardless of whether it is called an internship, placement, practicum, project, supervised professional experience, professional practice or work experience, most journalism programmes or journalism majors in Australian universities encourage students to undertake WIL opportunities, where successful completion of learning in the workplace will result in credit toward their programme of study. The desired outcome of WIL is to provide a meaningful connection or bridge between learning in the academy and doing in the workplace.

WIL is an 'umbrella term for a range of approaches and strategies that integrate theory with the practice of work within a purposefully designed curriculum' (Patrick, Peach and Pocknee, 2009, p.1) and aims to improve the employability of graduates through the provision of experiential learning which is related to the courses being studied at university. In WIL experiences, where transformative and meaningful student

1 For a detailed description of UniPollWatch, please see Davies, et al. (2017) and Dodds, et al. (2018).

learning is the outcome, workplaces and employers, universities and students are not independent agents but share relationships that can result in benefits for all parties.

For workplaces and employers, research has shown that businesses participating in WIL see its value in the graduates who enter the workplace (Engaging Employers in Work Integrated Learning: Current and Future Priorities - Report to the Department of Industry, 2014). Reasons for employer involvement vary and may include 'to "give back" to the industry or profession; aid future recruitment; access new thinking and ideas; establish links with universities, emerging research and practice; and to refresh the organisation' (Universities Australia, Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Australian Industry Group, the Business Council of Australia and the Australian Collaborative Education Network, 2015).

For students, WIL opportunities can contextualise their education and bridge the experience between preparing for work and operating in a work environment. The Australian national WIL strategy sees WIL as helping students 'ensure they are equipped to plan, instigate and navigate careers in an environment where conceptual, adaptive, personal, technical and vocational skills - their human capital - will be continually drawn on and challenged' (Universities Australia, Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Australian Industry Group, the Business Council of Australia and the Australian Collaborative Education Network, 2015).

For universities, many of which enjoy long-standing relationships with a range of employers, WIL provides opportunities such as formalised feedback loops on the relevance of the education being provided to students. WIL programmes can help universities maintain relevance to employability through a better understanding of how rapid changes in technology, redefined notions of work and evolving expectations of students pertinent to competitiveness in the labour market.

As stated earlier, journalism students at UON did not respond to an invite to undertake *UPW* as a WIL experience with supervision being provided by academic staff. This was somewhat surprising, as students certainly see the importance of WIL opportunities provided in a formal course at UON. There are high levels of non-prescribed engagement and optional enrolment by students into the Communication Professional Placement course, so students clearly recognise the benefits of workplace learning and industry engagement. We received some informal feedback that students generally regard engagement with workplaces and employers as being more beneficial for future aspirations because of the opportunity to grow industry contacts rather than engage further with academic staff via the production of journalism that is not for assessment, which is the model offered via the *UPW* and *The Junction* initiatives.

Authentic assessments as a strategy for broader engagement

Journalism education has long struggled with the provision of 'industry fodder' and providing an educative experience that ensures students can articulate why to do something as well as how to do it. John Dewey (1938), a pioneer in experiential learning, emphasised the importance of what he called 'pragmatic education' where 'knowing' and 'doing' are intimately linked. Australian journalism academic Jenna Price surmises a popular approach to the pedagogy underpinning a popular - if not the dominant - approach to journalism education in Australia when she emphasises doing journalism and the thinking about the processes and issues surrounding the production of journalism as being intimately entwined:

You know, the whole thing about journalism and journalism education is that you are not teaching them to be mindless little puppets, you're teaching them to think about what they're doing, so of course they can make the product, but they can also think about how they're making the product. (Price, 2012)

Parks (2015, p.137) provides a similar view by pointing to the equal importance of practice and scholarship: 'journalism educators rather should aspire to arm students both with experiences mirroring professional practice and with knowledge of how communication theory and research can make journalism better'. Both *UPW* and *The Junction* provide students with the opportunity to both do and think about journalism via authentic assessments. Radinsky, et al. (1998) described an authentic learning environment as a space where students engage with a target community by completing tasks and assessments as part of a profession, in this case the profession of journalism. An authentic assessment can be viewed as a focused task that develops and provides feedback on key skills and knowledge students will need for employment and carried out in a manner that reflects the kind of conditions and outputs that have relevance and similarity to some of the

work they may undertake in employment. Authentic assessments require students to demonstrate how they can use and what they can do with what they have learned, rather than merely demonstrate memory of facts. Authentic assessments also enable educators to evaluate if and how students use higher-level thinking and organisational skills. The combination of doing and thinking in authentic assessments promotes experiential learning and encourages academic staff to reflect upon the issues raised by Katula and Threnhauser (1999) to provoke thought around pedagogical approach and best practice. Such questions focus on key principles in authentic assessment including intention, planning, reflection, and evaluation, into a pedagogical approach.

Discussion

While UON participated in the *UPW* project, academic staff teaching journalism found the stimulation of student involvement to be challenging. Several factors influenced the difficulties we found: inflexible university systems; the election timing; and, the demographic makeup of the students at UON. *The Junction* will involve students differently at UON from the methods employed with the *UPW* project. Rather than using student volunteers, as with *UPW*, academic staff will embed publishing opportunity into journalism courses, using *The Junction* as an incentive for “best work”. Our initial engagement with *The Junction* had similar issues as *UPW* - the timing of its launch in October 2018 meant courses were well under way. The following discusses UON’s experience with *UPW* and the challenges we found, and how we used that experience to encourage and enhance students’ experience with *The Junction*. Finally, we discuss the future of the initiative and how this example of experiential learning can prepare students for an evolving workplace.

UniPollWatch – the Newcastle experience

The 2016 Australian Federal election was announced on 2 May and held on 2 July. *UPW* editors allocated six electorates to UON. In terms of logistics, three journalism academics each took on two of the electorates and assigned students to write articles and profiles, and to provide original images. The academics also took on the sub-editor role on the students’ work before it was uploaded onto the *UPW* site. Another academic took on the administrative role of keeping track of stories - the student or students allocated, where each was up to, ensuring images, and ensuring profiles and stories were uploaded. Student volunteers were recruited and offered the option of including the work as part of their programme either in a generic projects-based course or as part of the Communication Professional Placement (WIL) course. No students took up these options and, as a result, all participants were undertaking the work outside of their usual University commitments; the students took on the opportunity as a ‘voluntary, extra-curricular activity’ (Davies, et al., 2017, p.219). Over the course of the project, ten student volunteers took part and they were primarily final year students with one second year student becoming involved. Where possible, two students were allocated to each electorate but there were variable levels of engagement from these students. The overall *UPW* initiative generated 670 news stories (Davies, et al., 2017) on the 2016 Federal election and UON contributed 32 articles. It should be noted that we encountered three challenges around student involvement, engagement and ownership of the project. The challenges were interrelated to each other.

The timing of the Federal election led to the first challenge: we were unable to adapt the journalism courses due to inflexible university systems. The Communication programme is offered during UON’s semester teaching periods, which run from the end of February to the beginning of June (Semester 1) and the end of July to the beginning of November (Semester 2) and the University requires notice for changes to courses, including assessments, which must undergo review by committees before they can be implemented. The 2016 election campaign ran from May to July, thus changes to the curriculum and assessments could not be included in the journalism courses.

As noted earlier, students were recruited to the project on a volunteer basis. A challenge relating to the voluntary nature of student involvement was that UON journalism academics were required to manage *UPW* outside of their existing workload. Workload issues were reported by other universities involved in the project (Dodd, et al, 2018). It was one of the issues raised most frequently by all participants, although other academics managed this by embedding the work in journalism courses. Dodd et al. (2018, p.46) pointed out that with *UPW*, ‘two-thirds of the campus editors in the 2016 iterations effectively received workload recognition by embedding some or all of the work in units they were teaching’. Further, those authors recognised the danger in using student volunteers when they noted the issue of staff burn-out as a risk ‘if the journalism

work does not fit neatly within existing curricula, and if assessment tasks cannot be fashioned around the project's requirements' (ibid., p.47).

A further challenge related to the timing of the election. The July election date fell outside the semester leading to difficulties in maintaining student motivation and, as Davies, et al. noted, led to 'students losing focus after the end of semester, students being busy with other assignments and students losing access to university systems at the end of semester' (2017, p.226). Our experience suggests that UON students studying journalism often use the time between semesters to undertake paid work, to travel and to explore WIL opportunities that focus upon building relationships beyond the University. As a regional university with a wide recruiting area, including rural and remote communities, the semester break also provides an opportunity for students to return to their homes. While the commitment from some of our volunteers continued in the semester break, most found it difficult to maintain the necessary motivation, particularly as they were not receiving credit for their work.

Finally, and as noted earlier, UON includes a higher than sector average of low SES students - approximately 25 per cent compared to the national average of 17.1 per cent - with many of the volunteers finding it difficult to fit additional activities into their university/work life. These figures have an impact on the kind of time that students are able to make available to do work, i.e. assessments, that is not counted towards their degree. As academics coordinating UPW, we found stimulating and encouraging student involvement was challenging. Those challenges have helped inform how we have approached encouraging student contributions to *The Junction*.

The Junction – the Newcastle experience

As proponents of experiential learning and authentic assessment, the journalism academics at UON believe involvement with *The Junction* is beneficial to journalism students seeking to demonstrate journalistic skills. The University has funded our participation and one of the academics took on the role of UON editor. However, in a similar way to *UPW*, the timing was slightly off, with the initiative starting in October after semester two had already started. We managed this timing in several ways. Academics had already collated some of the excellent student work from semester one and offered invitations to the students who produced that work to consider submitting it for publication. We required their permission because the work was created before *The Junction* was officially launched. Not all students responded to the invitation to submit work but we received six articles from that invitation. That work has been published on *The Junction* site. Another approach was through the course management sites (Blackboard) of each journalism course as well as the Communication programme management site (Blackboard), where we asked for student contributions, pointing out the importance to students of developing published work, portfolios and networks. This request resulted in two pieces of work, one of which was unsuitable for publication.

Although we encourage students to publish over the course of their programme - announce opportunities in mainstream publications, send emails to invite students to publish their work online and provide prizes and other incentives from industry contacts seeking journalism content - we find it difficult to convince students to pursue the publishing of their work. A clearer strategy and more nuanced understanding of student resistance to publishing their work is required and at this point in time, we are struggling with how best to achieve higher levels of involvement. A study in 2015 on Australian journalism students and their attitude to journalism (Hanusch, et al. 2015; 2016) discovered that not all journalism students in Australian universities intend to seek work in journalism. UON's student answer to the inquiry about future aspiration demonstrated 69.7 per cent of respondents wanted to work in journalism, indicating around 30 per cent of respondents intend to seek other opportunities. Perhaps the relatively high percentage of students having no intention of working as a journalist may feed a disinclination to seek publication.

Encouraging, engaging and promoting student publication

We are considering several options. In future offerings of the courses in the journalism major, all journalism assessments will provide students with an option to have their work published in *The Junction*. Other options include a reinvention of the journalism major where all assessments are expected to be produced with an expectation of publication in *The Junction*. This option may be confined to final year students or a new course could be developed that focuses specifically on students producing work for *The Junction*. A

mixture of these approaches could provide the best outcome. Parks (2015, p.138) notes that ‘experience-based courses should not be the exclusive format for teaching journalism, but experiential learning is essential to a quality journalism education’. As advocates of approaches that embrace experiential learning, we see the inclusion of a project where students complete assessments that may be eligible to be published on a national platform as an enhancement of the learning experience. We think an important part of student growth is writing not just for assessment but, as part of our commitment toward authentic assessment, that students’ work will be published. We have had success with this approach in a radio journalism course where students know they are producing journalism to meet a brief for the ABC’s regional youth programme initiative, Heywire. To date, UON has produced five student winners and all have emerged with greater confidence about their ability to create stories.

Conclusion

Our experiences with working on these national journalism projects has been mixed. The *UPW* initiative, while challenging, provided information about how to manage future projects of this nature. As a regional university, with a higher than sector average of low SES students, our strategy of using volunteers for *UPW* meant students were not as motivated as they might have been had the work been included as coursework. Reliance on volunteers also saw an increase in unrecognised workload for the journalism educators. Our initial foray into *The Junction*, while not as challenging as *UPW* - in part because of its ongoing, rather than tightly defined timeframe - has presented its own issues, including how to motivate students to publish their work. However, an ongoing strategy for *The Junction* should ensure a satisfying and productive outcome for students in the form of a portfolio and working in a professional environment.

The Junction provides students with an opportunity to publish to a global audience. As one part of a suite of WIL and authentic assessment, *The Junction* is an opportunity for students to produce their “best work”. Publishing on a national scale, where others will read their work, provides an incentive for students to engage in professional practice with a level of engagement that is not as apparent when the work is produced just for academic assessment. Students will work with professionals (i.e. editors, sub-editors and journalists), thus consolidating and applying knowledge they have learnt at university in a professional context. The authors believe this will enhance students’ professional practice and provide material for a student portfolio that reflects both existing capability and future potential.

Our experiences with *UPW* and *The Junction* offer a rich opportunity for future research. In the first instance, and perhaps the most important area of research, the student experience is a key area to be explored. While formal student feedback at UON typically demonstrates that WIL assessments are appreciated by journalism students, and we as journalism educators believe this type of experience is valuable for students’ future prospects, that may not be the entire student experience and there is a need to more deeply investigate students’ engagement with embedded assessments. How does this type of learning fit into their educational aspirations, how does it affect their work and their attitude to that work, what is the experience of working for publication beyond the classroom? As noted by Parks (2015), not all students appreciate real-world experience. A further area for investigation is to attempt to discover why students are reluctant to publish their work to a broader audience and identify the specific factors that impede or facilitate student involvement. Is it a regional university experience, is it because of the student demographics, how can we encourage publishing and professional development?

Another area to explore is a continuation of the study after students graduate. The main idea behind both *UPW* and *The Junction* is to provide students with a portfolio and increase their employability. To discover if the initiatives are successful, it is imperative to ask students who have graduated if their experiences at university were helpful.

Finally, with a number of Australian and New Zealand universities participating in the initiative, cross-university research projects would provide data on how different universities and their students interact with and publish to *The Junction*. While the initiators of *UPW* and *The Junction* have researched and published (Davies, et al., 2017; Dodd, et al., 2018), their focus has been at the macro level of the project. At a micro level, comparative research could be done between similarly sized universities, between metro and regional universities, between larger and smaller universities, and cross-culturally, investigating the experiences of Australian universities and New Zealand universities and student enthusiasm or reluctance to publish their work.

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The boundaries of belonging: journalist interns' workplace learning experiences across communities of practice

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This article examines journalism students' learning experiences during internships by applying the idea of communities of practice developed by Etienne Wenger-Trayner and colleagues. The data consist of pre-structured reflective essays (N=146) written by second-year journalism students as part of their internship reports. The analysis focuses on the boundaries of communities of practice, which are identified to be university-, professional- and employment-related. These boundaries position interns in sometimes contradictory roles in relation to different communities of practice. It is found that encounters with these boundaries make ideas about journalism learned in the university relevant in fruitful ways but also typically contest students' role as learners. It, therefore, is suggested that making visible the learner's role at the intersection of different communities of practice should be a central objective in the preparation of university students as interns.

Keywords: internship; community of practice; landscape of practice; journalism; workplace learning; professional reflection

Introduction

Internships constitute a landmark in professionally oriented academic study programmes, such as the education of future nurses, social workers, teachers—and also journalists. Students often describe internships as one of the most fruitful elements of the curriculum as they demonstrate the value of theory and provide valuable, hands-on experiences and networks for students' future occupations.

Given the critical importance of internships in individual students' learning experiences and the connections between the academy and the industry established, internships constitute an important object of inquiry in studies on journalism education.

This study draws on the recent literature on journalism and communities of practice (CoP) to analyse internship reports produced within a journalism programme at a Finnish university. The theories applied in the analysis include Lave and Wenger's work on practice-based learning (Lave and Wenger 1991, Wenger 1998) and Wenger-Trayner and colleagues' (2015) later development of the concept. The concept of CoPs has been widely applied in diverse contexts, primarily studies on education, health care and organisational communication (e.g. Murillo 2011, Li et al. 2009, Sutherland et al. 2005). Only recently has the concept of CoP been introduced into studies on journalism (Meltzer and Martik 2017, Hutchins and Boyle 2016, García-Avilés 2014, Schmitz Weiss and Domingo 2010). Consequently, the interrelations of the various CoPs that unfold in landscapes of learning are a recent idea relatively un(con)tested in practice. Nevertheless, the conceptual framework of CoPs and their inherent boundaries put forward by Wenger-Trayner and colleagues (2015) can be applied as a useful tool to grasp the complexity of the 'learningscape' students face during their first contact with journalism work in media organisations.

By looking at the perceived boundaries of presumed CoPs, we may learn more about how the challenges of workplace learning are constituted for newcomers. This understanding is essential to build better structures for supervision and scaffold work tasks during times of change as study programmes are fundamentally redesigned (Zelizer 2013, Robinson 2013, Mensing and Ryfe 2013). Teaching the ability to recognise and acknowledge boundaries is becoming increasingly important to prepare students for work life with no clear, pre-made occupations, a situation already familiar in many areas of cultural work within the so-called creative industries (Ashton 2015; Robinson 2013), not the least in post-industrial journalism (Deuze and Witschge 2018).

The Community of practice paradigm

A CoP is a social body of knowledge sustained by a group of people or a shared structure of social relationships established and maintained through collective learning (Wenger 1998: 45, Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner 2015; see also Lave and Wenger 1991). The CoP refers to 'a social process of negotiating competence in a domain over time' (Farnsworth et al. 2016: 143) and cannot thus be applied to any group or community (e.g. a team). The CoP paradigm provides a productive way to establish a connection enabling the analysis of individuals and social structures. By asking what boundaries journalist interns recognise in the workplace and find relevant to their learning experiences, we may gain essential insights into how the social institution of the semi-profession of journalism can best be taught to newcomers and what relevance the identification of different CoPs might have in the education of these future (semi-)professionals.

Journalism interns have typically been studied with a macro-level focus on the relationship between the academy and the industry, reflected in questions about socialisation into the professional community and preservation of the dynamics of the journalism field (on the Nordic countries, see Willig 2017, Rimestad and Gravengaard 2016, Gravengaard and Rimestad 2014; for English-language studies beyond the Nordic countries, see, e.g., Bigi 2012, Franklin and Mensing 2011, de Burgh 2005). In journalism studies, where much of this research can be located, journalism interns have commonly been treated quite instrumentally, to capture developments and changes in the professional field of journalism rather than examining their learning as such (e.g. Gollmitzer 2014, Deuze and Yeshua 2001, Fry 1989). As Drotner and Erstad (2014) pointed out based on their examinations in the theoretical foundations of media literacy, negotiations between media or journalism studies and educational studies—which this article explores—are still relatively uncommon.

Questions related to workplace learning have only recently become relevant in journalism studies through

research motivated by transformations in the industry to address questions such as editorial practices and the supervision of newcomers (e.g. Willig 2017, Rimestad and Gravengaard 2016, McDonough et al. 2009). Still, the focus has remained the occupation of journalism and its structures rather than individual and collective learning experiences. As known, occupational learning has been richly discussed in studies in other areas of learning, such as teacher education (e.g. Bieda et al. 2014, Kyndt et al. 2014, McKinney et al. 2008; Akkerman and Bruining 2016), and clinical work in healthcare, such as nursing (e.g. Haghani et al. 2013, Paul et al. 2011, Wells et al. 2007). Educational, occupational and professional studies so far have focused on occupations more clearly defined as professions. In this context, journalism, as an open occupation and semi-profession (Zelizer 1993), may have appeared as a relatively peripheral object of inquiry.

More commonly than CoPs, journalism communities have been described using the alternative term ‘interpretive communities’ (Zelizer 1993, Berkowitz and TerKeurst 1999), which shares an emphasis on collectivity (cf. Meltzer and Martik 2017). As a CoP is both sustained organisational activity with shared routines and a location to which new participants are gradually introduced, internships mark a central entry point to CoPs. Identification of and association with a CoP makes a claim to competence as it ‘entails a process of alignment and realignment between competence and personal experience, which can go both ways’ (Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner 2015: 14).

The Relevance of boundary work

Boundaries, even if they are often porous and contingent, hold relevance in the study of CoPs (Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner 2015; Wenger 1998). First, boundaries are relevant because the sets of practices adopted and developed within a CoP are defended against outsiders who are located beyond the boundaries. Second, newcomers, such as journalist interns, enter CoPs through the boundaries, and from an individual’s perspective, boundary encounters often imply a selection of roles, concerning the choices of how to develop one’s competences in order to become more legitimized participants in a specific CoP.

In the sociology of journalism, boundary work is highly related to the social structures of power. Boundaries are typically examined from a macro-perspective as boundary work is seen to constitute the foundations for how professionalism works. Professional claims serve to set boundaries between those ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ the profession to prevent intrusions by external factors (Waisbord 2013). Professionalisation, understood as the gradual, dynamic structuration of a CoP, is a historical process aimed at increasing the specialisation and transferability of skills. This process includes the proliferation of objective standards of work and a theoretical body of knowledge, education and training alongside the establishment of professional rules and entry criteria to support autonomous expertise and a service ideal (Freidson 2001). Professionalisation is also related to the structures of power as professionals struggle to constantly negotiate and maintain their position and ultimately uphold their autonomy, which is a necessary precondition for functioning ‘journalistically’—in other words, in an independent manner (Waisbord 2013, Freidson 2001).

In an occupation with ‘incomplete’ or ‘open’ social closure, boundary work is essentially negotiated in social situations (Wenger-Trayner 2015). In particular, at a lower sociological level, boundary work is important to demarcate the fine line between what is regarded as professional journalism and what is regarded as other, less interest-free forms of communication, such as marketing and self-mass communication (Carlson 2015, Peters and Broersma 2013). Journalists seek the epistemic authority to create and present knowledge about the world through adherence to epistemological conventions (Zelizer 1993). Underlying this process is a constant negotiation of integrity and independence to create autonomy (Carlson 2015). Journalists become advocates of journalism values, and through their actions, they define what counts as journalism.

This social negotiability brings us closer to theories of learning. More specifically, learning experiences occur in what Wenger-Trayner and colleagues (2015) described with the metaphor of a ‘landscape of learning’, or in an interconnected entity of CoPs, through individual trajectories in which the central concepts include knowledgeability, multimembership and identity work (Wenger-Trayner et al. 2015). The journey through a landscape of learning implies constant movement in complex communities, described by Lave and Wenger (1991) as legitimate peripheral participation. Becoming a practitioner of journalism obviously requires only knowledge on many sectors of societal life, but the main mechanisms of the (semi-)profession are more related to the meta-competences of acquiring and presenting knowledge. Newcomers to the field need to recognise the areas of knowledge that stand for ‘professional journalism’ and position themselves in that landscape. According to Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner (2015: p. 20–21), identity work in

professional learning occurs through identification and dis-identification as three modes of identity modulation relate the learner to the boundaries of CoPs: engagement (‘doing things’, which gives the learner direct experience of the ‘regimes of competence’), imagination (‘using images to locate and orient oneself’) and alignment (‘a two-way process of coordinating enterprises ... and contexts so that action has the effects we expect’). A central question in the organisation of internships is how boundaries can be leveraged as learning assets. Wenger-Trayner and colleagues ask if universities ‘can help students use significant boundaries to deepen their understanding of the landscape and possibly become brokers across some of the boundaries’ (Fenton-O’Creevy et al. 2015b: 153).

We can think of an internship as a space where the intern stands at the intersection of different CoP boundaries. Focusing on boundaries ‘helps explain unusual events, connections that are and are not made, ... and unexpected interpretations of events, actions, statements, or documents’ (Wenger 1998: 254). By encountering and crossing boundaries, the learner becomes aware of the capabilities required in certain CoPs. The learner needs certain competences to enter some CoPs; in others, it is sufficient to be knowledgeable about practices without mastering them (Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner 2015). At the boundaries of CoPs, the intern is obliged to choose to which direction to develop his or her competence, or which CoP to choose to belong to.

Research questions

The study investigates journalist interns’ CoP boundary encounters, as reported in their internship reports. For the purposes of this empirical analysis, I use the operational concept of a ‘boundary encounter’. In boundary-related learning experiences, students become aware of social practices and structures with a recognisable order and patterns other than those they are familiar with. On the surface, these encounters can take various forms, but a common feature is that they are somehow felt to be *important* observations, worth mentioning in the retrospective report on the learning process. An encounter may be experienced, for example, as a surprise, a moment of astonishment, a conflict in one’s values or comprehension, or a story or curiosity that does not quite fit the image of the social structure one has learned. Boundary encounters thus are typically perceptions of *deviant* norms or structures. In this way, controversies, understood as conflicting processes involving people, objects, actions and networks, may expose the social structures of the CoPs at stake, how they are intermingled and thus how the boundaries work in practice.

In more particular, the study asks: 1) Which CoPs and related boundaries do the interns identify significant to their learning experiences? 2) What kind of reflections do the perceived CoP boundaries evoke regarding the roles the interns should take? The findings will have implications for journalism education that attempts to prepare the students for workplace learning.

Data and method

The data consisted of internship reports from 2011–2013 (N=146) produced by academic journalism students for an obligatory, 4-month internship in newsrooms in Finland, which has a more academic education system for journalists than other European systems (Fröhlich and Holtz-Bacha 2003, Jaakkola 2019). The students included bachelor’s students (N=128, 88%) and master’s students (N=18, 12 %), and the majority self-reported that they had no more than 3 months of previous journalism experience. The internship was connected to the 5-ECTS course *Internship in journalism work*. The central dimensions of the data are summarised in Table 1.

| | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | Total |
|--------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-------------|
| Number of reports | 50 (34 %) | 44 (30 %) | 52 (36 %) | 146 (100 %) |
| Authors | | | | |
| Average age | 25.0 | 24.7 | 24.1 | 24.61 |
| Females | 39 (78 %) | 34 (77 %) | 43 (83 %) | 116 (79 %) |
| Photojournalism students | 6 (12 %) | 6 (14 %) | 5 (10 %) | 17 (12 %) |
| Master’s students | 6 (12 %) | 6 (14 %) | 6 (12 %) | 18 (12 %) |

| Venues of internship | | | | |
|--------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Newspapers ² | 26 (52 %) | 27 (61 %) | 24 (46 %) | 77 (53 %) |
| Local newspapers | 9 (18 %) | 6 (14 %) | 7 (13 %) | 22 (15 %) |
| Magazines | 5 (10 %) | 8 (18 %) | 8 (15 %) | 21 (14 %) |
| Radio stations | 6 (12 %) | 1 (2 %) | 10 (19 %) | 17 (12 %) |
| Other media ³ | 4 (8 %) | 2 (5 %) | 3 (6 %) | 9 (6 %) |

1 Average; 2 National and regional; 3 E.g. news, photo and communication agencies

Table 1. Description of the data

The essays were written on a confidential basis, and it was promised that only the instructor responsible for the internship course would receive and read the reports. In the instructions, the students were informed about the reports' post-use as anonymised research materials and were offered the option to prohibit use of their reports for research purposes. It was emphasised that the employers would not receive any information about reported conflicts or problems in the workplace.

In the newsrooms, the students had employment contracts as interns and received monthly salaries of 1700-1800 euros, following the recommendations of the national professional Union of Journalists in Finland (2016). To ensure a minimum standard of working conditions and work of a journalistic nature (in contrast to marketing and communication) that met the learning requirements of the curriculum, the university pre-selected the media organisations hosting the internships. The internship venues included national, regional and local newspapers (N=99), magazines (N=21), radio stations (N=17) and news, photo and communication agencies and other media (N=9). The internship programme did not include television as there was a separate programme for television internships based on co-operation between the university and a national TV station. The journalism tasks the students carried out during their internships were focused on either writing and editing (journalism major, N=129) or photography and photojournalism tasks (photojournalism major, N=17).

The journalism programme curriculum placed the internships in the second year of study. According to the course syllabus, students who completed internships were expected to have 'become familiar with working as part of a journalism work community', 'adapted practices needed in journalism work and the working community', 'developed his or her journalism competences in support by the work community' and thus 'through his or her own experience developed an understanding about the performance and organisation of the journalism work'.¹ To ensure a broad discussion covering all relevant areas of workplace learning in the reports and to identify relevant areas of reflection for students, the internship reports were written following a prescribed structure. The text genre was a reflective essay, and the required length of was five pages. According to the instructions, the essay should 1) describe the individual work tasks during the internship; 2) describe the received supervision; 3) compare the observed equivalence between the requirements in academic studies and workplace learning; and 4) describe the student's own conception of journalism based on a selected piece of academic literature (a list of articles and book chapters included within the instructions).

The qualitative analysis was informed by a grounded-theory approach to the separation and organisation of data (Strauss and Corbin 1990) and focused on the descriptions of boundary encounters throughout the texts to form relevant categories exposing the intersections of CoPs. The initial coding included the identification of boundary encounters following Strauss and Corbin's (1990) description of concepts. The students' descriptions, in other words, were broken down into components presenting an event, situation or observation with a boundary experience (a boundary encounter). The reports were written in different styles and with everyday reasoning rather than the use of certain systematic vocabulary, so the boundary encounters appeared as different kinds of experiences in which the existence of two worlds, communities in general or fields became visible.

Through constant comparison of the concepts found in the data, the boundary encounters were more closely examined to achieve the objective to localise the context of the alleged boundaries. The boundary encounters identified were grouped into more general categories according to the CoPs they were situated between.

It has to be noticed that the analysis was dependent on what the students assessed as worth mentioning in their retrospective reports written within one month after completing their internships. Some incidents and experiences relevant to the analysis might have not been recorded, and the observations were anchored in

the subjective accounts of individuals. A study with another methodological design, such as participative observation or theme interviews encompassing more mutual interactions between the interviewer and interviewees (see e.g. Gravengaard and Rimestad 2014), could cast light on certain dimensions while also possibly leaving out others. As subjective accounts of self-reflection, however, the confidential internship reports delivered information on the learners’ perceptions and what they were willing to report. It was precisely the learners’ own insights that should be the focus in theory on boundary experiences. In the selected methodological frame, the idea of CoP works as a pragmatic concept to identify experiences ‘at the crossroads’, or between ‘two worlds’, which evoke in a learner the question of belonging to them.

Identifying boundaries

At a general level, the boundary encounters in the interns’ learning experiences could be related to journalism and journalism work, on one hand, and to workplace learning, on the other. The identified boundaries described by the interns’ reports could be further divided into three groups: university-, profession- and employment-related boundaries. I further distinguished boundaries I labelled *school–working life*, *academy–practitioners*, *professionals–non-professionals*, *autonomous–corrupted*, *apprentices–co-workers* and *young–old*. These critical boundaries are depicted in Table 2. All these categories divided communities between ‘me’ (or us students/interns) and ‘them’ and marked differences in cultures of ‘doing journalism’, as the interns described it. Next, I briefly describe how the journalist interns perceived these boundaries. The boundaries between the perceived CoPs were partially overlapping but cast different perspectives on the competence requirements derived from different CoPs.

| Boundary | Communities of practice involved |
|---------------------------------|--|
| School–working life | Student community–organizational staff |
| Academy–practitioners | Academic community–professional practitioners |
| Professionals–non-professionals | Journalists–lay persons |
| Autonomous–corrupted | Idealized journalists–instrumental journalists |
| Apprentices–co-workers | Newcomer–established employed |
| Young–old | Younger generations–older generations |

Table 2. Boundaries identified in the qualitative analysis.

School – working life

Although many students had previous work experience, typically in manufacturing, sanitation and other types of physical work and labour markets related to customer service, sales and service-oriented work, the internships presented their first contact with what they conceived to be the ‘real’ working life. The experiences were aligned with their expectations for their future careers and dreams of becoming journalists. The boundary between being a student and an employee was regarded as different from the times of not being a student because the experiences retrieved from journalism represented a field they had chosen to match their interests and strengths.

For some students, the internships nourished their imagination and fostered their two other forms of identification with the professional community: alignment and engagement. Other students, though, were discouraged in this modulation of identification. What many interns shared was exhaustion from learning experiences at the boundary between university and working life. The hectic schedule and high demands of continuous performance, magnified by the social pressures of the newsroom, came as a surprise to many students, undermining their feelings of self-trust and self-efficacy. Several interns described how their tasks occupied their minds, and they continued working on their projects after the workday and at night:

About half-way through, I started feeling exhausted. It felt that on ordinary working days, I did not have time for anything else than for going to work and doing cooking. I asked myself if this was how work life looked like. ... The previous academic year with its courses in journalism practice and the search for the internship

had, for sure, been wearing, and a dip into the world of real work did not help me recover. ... Because of this unexpected feeling of exhaustion, I started thinking about my personal expectations regarding the working life ahead me.

As a potential reason for work life being more laborious than student life, many interns remarked in their reports that the atmosphere in newsrooms had worsened due to budget cut-offs and crisis discourse. It was felt that the staff journalists lacked self-respect, which the interns had expected based on their education. The development worried many interns:

Before my internship, I had never felt worried about the future of journalism, but after the summer, this has occupied me a lot. The biggest problem for journalism is the lack of time, and no one knows what is going to happen in future.

Taking the step from 'school' to work life in this context appeared to be unsecure, certainly a common experience in many internships across disciplines. The school–working boundary life was fundamental to the other boundary encounters, underlining the change in the learning environment.

Academic – practitioner

Another boundary identified in the interns' narratives was a division between the academic and professional CoPs and their associated sets of competences. Similar to the boundary between university and working life, there was a division between two regimes of competence, but in this category, the boundary was inherent. The interns' concerns reflected this structural division identified in university studies of journalism. Journalism, like many academic fields of education, has an ambivalent relationship to industry. On one hand, journalism education needs to socialise young students into the reality of the media. On the other hand, journalism educators typically feel that they need to act as a corrective to the industry (Deuze 2006).

In the workplace, permanent staff members typically saw the trainees as representatives of the contemporary academy. The interns were expected to be informed about what answers to the industry's problems current research provided and thought to be knowledgeable about the most recent recommendations by the Finnish language planning authority. In contrast to these respectful views, some students described how practitioners downplayed their academic expertise as too theoretical, slow and distant from everyday reality. One student described the differences between academic and professional (or organisational) competences, saying that 'it felt as if I had gone parachuting with previous experience in bungee jumping'.

To be honest, the image I had got about the editorial work during my university studies did not much correspond to the reality. ... The biggest difference was that while in university courses, every single activity was analysed in the smallest detail, in real life, there was no time for that. The biggest surprise for me was that even without such extensive analysis, it was possible to produce good journalism.

Simultaneously, for the interns, the professional CoP appeared to be unambitious, set to day-to-day survival, instead of interested in professional development and reflection. They saw this environment in the lack of feedback and discussions, the culture based on individual work instead of teamwork, the hurry and hustle experienced by workers, the ambiguity or even lack of pre-defined, shared instructions (e.g. on story length and workflow), the lack of systematic ideation and the polarisation or dramatisation of arguments collected for stories.

In such an environment, the interns typically found that academic studies did not provide them with sufficient knowledge about the political processes of local decision-making or the structures of legislation. Academic knowledge was quickly regarded as expendable in favour of professional instrumental knowledge, such as editorial competence and awareness of who was who in politics. However, at the same time, many interns remarked that the competence they most needed was experience-based, empirical knowledge about society and the world.

Professional – non-professional

The boundary between the professional and non-professional marked the intersection of two CoPs where the students actively had to position themselves in relation to a professional community. As professionals-to-be, many interns indicated that they received much empathy and understanding from the staff as long as

they aligned with the newsroom routines and followed the guidelines set by the more experienced journalists. This sense of collegiality could be understood as a preliminary contract among the actors within the CoP according to which the interns were welcomed to the CoP, but their competences allowed them only a peripheral, limited position for participation.

However, interns sometimes deviated from the normal newsroom practices. In that case, when, for example, an intern disclosed personal political convictions in a column or wrote a text in a completely different style than was felt to be appropriate to the story format, the editorial manager elected to not publish the stories. Whereas more experienced practitioners were allowed more power to contest established practices, learners in peripheral positions could not as easily cross the boundary between professional and non-professional without being deemed unprofessional or ignorant of the rules. Many of the 'rule-breakers' described the disavowal they experienced in their efforts as perplexing as, according to a high number of reports, they were simultaneously encouraged to do things in a different and more creative way than the staff writers.

In addition to journalists, audience representatives, both sources and readers, tended to position the young, inexperienced journalists as non-professionals. Professionalism was bounded off by references to youth and gender, as in the following example:

This is what interviewees said to me: 'Especially as you are a woman, you have to remember that we don't want to find any surprise or naiveté in the article. No fabling. Make a fact-based article out of this'. 'I wonder where the princess is who just called me'!

However, the use of social media, a matter generally seen to challenge journalism professionalism (see e.g. Compton and Benedetti 2010), provided the interns with a possibility to demonstrate their expertise and thus move towards the centre of the professional CoP. Due to the age structure in many newsrooms, the young students were often more knowledgeable about the use of Facebook and Twitter, then the most-used platforms. The interns thus were in a position to educate older journalists and even take over management of social media channels.

Autonomous – corrupted

As the boundaries between different subfields of journalism have blurred (Kristensen and From 2012; Madison 2014), the boundary between journalism and business has also become more porous (Coddington 2015). Many interns criticised journalism education for promoting an overly romanticised idea of the occupation detached from its economic and commercial context, which was most emphasised in magazines and local newspapers:

In my work, I had to learn that you have to compromise with the sources. There is a limited number of persons who sell the magazine, and they continue to be important to the magazine. For the magazine, it is thus more than important to remain friends with these people.

In the [local] newspaper, the most important news value was not the issue being interesting to the readers. One criterion was, simply put, the fact that an organisation or association got angry if their activities were not noticed by the newspaper.

One trainee reported about a reality that a subeditor, with all seriousness, searched for a person online before deciding whether to interview her based on her looks. The students also reported being asked to change headlines make them more saleable and clickable, favour stories while overlooking facts and make friends with local politicians, all of which contradicted their ethical sense. These stories indicated that the students faced a 'low culture' of professionalism that compromised morality and tolerated ethical shortcomings to pursue better-selling stories. Even if in many cases the interns did not seem to approve of such activity, they often showed understanding and were forced to align themselves to it.

Despite the 'corrupted' idea of journalism, the students said they could more deeply understand the commercial logics underlying the production of journalism, which they regarded as valuable insights. Those who reflected more on this matter saw that the fact that journalism is adapted to commercial interests could not be entirely resisted, not alone ignored, but they could adopt personal tactics to contribute to more ethically produced journalism. Due to their peripheral role in the 'corrupted' communities, they regarded themselves as able to continue fighting for 'better journalism'.

Apprentices – co-workers

One pattern became especially clear in the reports' descriptions of work: the interns entered the newsroom as learners of their occupations, but after very brief introductions, they were regarded as co-workers by their chiefs, colleagues and 'summer reporters' (fixed-contract workers, often more advanced students, employed for the summer season). The newspapers typically did not indicate students' trainee position, telling readers that an author was an intern. Neither did the interns carry any labels signifying their position in the newsroom, a more common practice in service occupations.

The interns experienced this equal treatment with pleasure, although also partial astonishment. The disadvantage was that the equal treatment pushed their learner's role into the background. Many students reported that maintaining the learner's role would have required active engagement by the interns themselves. Constantly asking questions and emphasising their 'newcomer' role, however, was perceived as uncomfortable:

The employees did not generally have extra amount of time to analyse the stories. Besides, I felt uncomfortable raising my hand all the time to ask questions as I was first and foremost an employee for them.

The positioning of the interns as co-workers, however, was typically limited to the delivery of work tasks and responsibility for carrying out them. In the development of the work, the participation could be turned out to be 'fake engagement', as one student described it:

At a morning meeting, my fellow interns and I suggested a new series of articles as we had been encouraged to come up with new ideas. The reception of our idea was gloomy. ... After the summer, I was left pondering if the great utopia of summer reporters as a renewing power for the newsrooms is in fact limited to slightly uplifting the atmosphere in the office and entertaining at some in-house parties.

Many interns also reported difficulties pushing through their own ideas even if presentation of their own ideas was officially encouraged by their supervisors and editorial managers. The conflict between the learner's and the co-worker's role demonstrated that the differences between the CoPs of the 'apprenticing students' and the 'employed journalists' remained, despite the interns' individual efforts. The employers often used strategies of putting aside the learner's role to make the interns a more effective workforce, giving them tasks as demanding as carried out by the staff writers.

Young – old

Age was a significant factor in many encounters during the internships, as can be seen in the many internship reports describing generational differences, controversies and even conflicts in the newsroom. Interns, who were 24 years old on average (see Table 1), reported several incidents in the newsroom that involved age and generational differences with the employees. Indeed, in many local and regional newspapers, the average age of employees was relatively high, and the interns were the only persons found to represent young people.

These differences became especially visible in decisions concerning new technologies. As remarked, the interns were often more knowledgeable about digital technologies and cultures, and in journalism practice, this knowledge manifested as competences in conducting research in online environments:

I was doing an article on traditional open-air dance occasions, and the news manager recommended that I collect announcements from printed local newspapers to compile an exhaustive list of events in our area of circulation. I did not comply, but instead, I immediately plunged into the Internet.

I proposed a story idea dealing with filtering by search engines. ... The news manager asked what the relevance of my topic would be for the local community. I, of course, could not find any arguments for the local relevance for the topic ... because geographical proximity is not the primary definer for these kinds of topics.

Age differences were often coupled with gender differences. Although a majority of the journalism students was female, most editorial managers in regional and local newspapers were male. The patriarchal structures in decision-making and leadership, of which many interns showed high awareness, were observed to lead to biases in the choice of topics and their journalistic treatment. The interns took a role in sharing what young audiences would desire, but ultimately, according to one intern addressing the age and gender gaps, it was 'the straight, white, middle-class man' who typically constituted the 'imagined audience' of regional newspaper. Topics addressing youth and their interests were often turned down as having

too limited scope, whereas stories on the season's strawberry harvest and traditional open-air dance festivals were considered to have more societal relevance.

Discussion

As can be seen in the various encounters of boundaries described in the internship reports, boundary experiences seem to be crucial anchor points in the learners' perceptions and self-identification during the internships. The idea of journalism becomes a boundary object of learning, and the learning experiences derived from the juxtaposition of various CoPs make the students look at this object from different perspectives. At the intersection of different CoPs, journalism becomes suddenly contested, opposed and questioned. This relativisation of perspective seems to be an important part of the learning process that achieves the internships' learning objectives.

The boundary encounters found are connected to the power structures within the journalists' community, particularly the expectations and mechanisms of conservation and renewal (of the organisation or, more generally, the industry). The interns are only seen as peripheral actors expected to renew ideas and practices with no real influence. The results of their journalism work are made public, and they become legitimate actors in communication in the public sphere, providing them with authentic power and setting them in generally the same category as the more experienced journalists. Indeed, the public nature of their work is a trait that distinguishes journalism internships from many other internships in which interns' activities are less exposed to large audiences. This trait, which also entails increased responsibility, makes journalism internships an interesting case. The legitimate, peripheral actors perform actions that have real consequences, such as scooping a story that quickly transverses the whole media landscape and influences processes in society, moving between the centre and the periphery. However, this work also creates more ambiguity for the learning experiences. The journalist intern might have difficulty reverting to the role of an apprentice who remains in the background. This situation probably explains the supervisors' and editorial managers' focus on the professional or employee role.

Nevertheless, the interns' role is distinguished from that of the staff journalists as the interns are also supposed to make boundaries visible, in turn rendering their learner's position visible and initiating learning processes. What is important for a successful learning experience, therefore, is the ability to assert the learner's status, claiming a legitimate peripheral role that allows for space to learn (Fenton-O'Creevy et al. 2015a). Indeed, a re-occurring pattern in the boundary encounters seems to be that the interns need to explicitly position themselves in front of the community to receive support reflecting on the contradictions aroused by the boundary encounters.

Even though sufficient support and structures for professional reflection are sometimes available, many students were overwhelmed by the reality of the professionals' approach to delivering their workloads: the pressure, monotony and seeming triviality of what journalists were doing against which journalism education had taught to them. The question penetrating all these learning experiences at boundaries was the meta-question of *good journalism*. When different CoPs simultaneously projected contradictory expectations, a central question for reflection and identity work along all the scales of identity modulation arose: how trainees could succeed in establishing an individual relationship to journalism and negotiating a role between the CoPs that aids in learning the practices, routines and values of the organisational community. A boundary encounter typically—especially in the case of 'democratic' or 'commercial' journalism—implied a moral undertaking in which the interns had to negotiate their understandings of good journalism with the reality they faced.

This said, it might be said that the academic journalism education seems to fail to mediate the reality of journalistic work to students, providing the students with overidealized notions of journalism and journalistic work. This, for its part, seems to reinforce the divide between theoretical-academic and practical-professional orientation which the traditional journalism education has been richly criticized for (see e.g. de Burgh 2005, Fröhlich and Holtz-Bacha 2003). However—even if this can certainly be taken seriously to consider how to prepare students better for the challenges of working life—it might be the case that the central learning outcome of the internship is precisely the relativisation of what has been learned at school. This finding, again, underscores the fundamental importance of internships as part of studies of journalism in higher education.

Conclusion

The identification of boundary encounters or perceived boundaries between CoPs in the journalist interns' reports highlights that workplace learners are exposed to varied and sometimes even contradictory role expectations derived from the norms of different CoPs. Encounters between these CoPs, whether imagined or real, raise for learners the question of to which community they should or want to belong to, and whose principles are worth following.

The risk in the boundary encounters described in this analysis is that the learner's role will be overshadowed by the social pressure to 'go native' in the work organisation. Supporting management of the learner's role and making workplace supervisors aware of its importance, therefore, should be central objectives in the university's preparation of interns. This preparation should enable newcomers to stand up for their positions as learners, which might entail deviant notions of journalism and its relationships to other societal actors. The making visible of the learner's role is, then, likely to catalyse more reflection that, in turn, might lead to new learning opportunities.

Note

¹ [Link to the course syllabus in English, to be added later.]

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Representation of British footballers in the press: private versus public performance

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Abstract

The rapid expansion of sports coverage in the British press, particularly the national sport of football, has created celebrities of footballers who have been elevated to the position of role models and heroes, symbolising the talents of the nation. This status has left them vulnerable to press scrutiny and their private lives are often viewed as fair game in reporting circles. The substantial lack of empirical data on the representation of British footballers is addressed in this study via the analysis of four national newspapers over a 28 day period to examine how much the press report on their private and public lives. The data reveals tabloid newspapers' coverage is much more abundant than broadsheet newspapers' and tabloids contain more stories about the private lives of footballers, which are often more negative in sentiment. However the research concludes that despite expectations to the contrary, the British press represent footballers as sportsmen first and foremost, reporting

infrequently on their private lives. Nevertheless there remains evidence of the celebrity status of footballers, particularly national team players past and present, and the existence of hero worshipping in the broadsheet press and role model scrutiny in tabloid newspapers.

Keywords: footballers, press, celebrity, representation, private lives

The emergence of sports journalism

Readers today expect to see reams of sports news when they turn over their British newspaper to the back page but this has not always been the case.

Although the original printed newspaper in Britain dates back to the early seventeenth century (Cranfield, 1962) the first forms of sports journalism did not emerge until the 1820s in *Pierce Egan's Life in London* and *Sporting Guide* and its competitor *Bell's Life in London* (Nugent 1929). And mainstream newspapers did not begin to seriously devote space to covering sport, and more specifically football, until the turn of the twentieth century (Kelly 1998) with the emergence of tabloid newspapers (Conboy 2011) and the launch of *The Daily Mirror* in 1903 (Boyle 2006). This growth in sports coverage steadily increased over the last century in response to reader demand from around two to twenty-eight pages (Andrews 2014). Sport now plays an important role in the multimedia news ecosystem and in terms of audiences it is able to regularly deliver "large, often extremely loyal cohorts of readers, listeners and viewers" (Rowe 2004: 31). Growing on the populism developed in the 1900s the twenty-first century has continued to witness a huge growth in the amount and significance of sports coverage across broadcast, print and online media (Farrington 2012). In the British press sports reporting has often been seen as soft journalism which has more in common with the sensationalist, entertainment approach taken by tabloid newspapers. Sports coverage has become an important element of "brand identity" in major tabloid newspapers in recent years (Boyle 2006: 49) with titles such as the *Daily Mail* dedicating a minimum of 10% of its space to sport since its first ever issue (Mason 1988). Despite its strong history and correlation with the infotainment style of tabloid newspapers, sports content today also has considerable reach within British quality broadsheet newspapers where it holds an important place in the field alongside other forms of journalism often considered as more serious or harder news (English 2016). Boyle et al. (2002: 166) claim that "almost all the broadsheets have increased the resources they allocate to their sports pages as they attempt to attract new and younger readers." For example *The Times* sports coverage increased from 11% to 21% from 1974 to 2004 whilst *The Guardian's* increased from 11% to 17% within the same period (Farrington 2012).

Heroes and celebrities

In Britain football is viewed as the national sport and as such takes up a significant amount of newspaper sports coverage (Cashmore et al. 2016). Rather than focus on the results of football matches the media now has to satisfy the public demand for discussion and interpretation of these results (Bernstein and Blain 2003). In addition, Boyle (2006) asserts that the press have allowed football to amplify its relevance within society and helped the sport to create its heroes. This can be seen in the increasingly extensive media coverage of footballers like David Beckham or Michael Owen (Boyle et al., 2002). Furthermore, Cashmore (2000) establishes that Britain started feting football stars like George Best in a way that only great artists were represented. Wenner takes this a step further by arguing that "the sports press is like the entertainment and business press, in that they all are far more disposed to being cheerleaders for their sectors and stars," (2013: 9). By highlighting and emphasising the achievements of individual football players the press are symbolising the talents of a nation (Leven 1984) and representing patriotism. Footballers have therefore become society's role models (Cashmore and Parker 2003; Whannel 2001, 2002) who are held to account in the same regard as politicians becoming "central figures in the social construction of contemporary ideals of public morality, gender and celebrity" Horne (2006: 60). This doubled edged sword means that high profile footballers are subject to scrutiny in their private lives as well as for their performance on the pitch (Pape and Featherstone 2005). This moves footballers into the realm of celebrity news, a form of journalism

with a cultural emphasis on “scandal, controversy and sensationalism” (Schultz 2002: 40). Furthermore stories on the private lives of sportspeople, particularly footballers, are now found within the news section of newspapers, meaning sports news has escaped the confines of the newspaper back pages (Farrington 2012; Pape and Featherstone, 2005). Since celebrity continues to be a commonplace news values (Harcup and O’Neil 2001) which has gained even more currency in the digital era (Harcup and O’Neil 2017) sportsmen, in particular British footballers inadvertently entrenched in symbolic patriotism, are highly newsworthy particularly when their celebrity status meets with other news values such as entertainment, bad news and exclusivity.

Understanding the representation of footballers

Despite the significance of sports journalism in the news arena, the discipline is seen by some critics as “sloppy” or an easy way of doing journalism (Boyle, 2006) and as such is often overlooked in research. When it is a topic of study researchers separate it from news when analysing content claiming that it is different from other types of news such as finance or politics which are more factual and objective (Reinardy and Wanta 2008). Yet there is evidence of a growing phenomenon of both celebrity news (Evans and Hesmondhalgh 2005) and sports coverage in tabloid and broadsheet newspapers (Boyd 2006; Farrington 2012) and yet this field of enquiry is largely understudied. There is limited empirical data on the representation of footballers in the British press beyond studies on minority groups. As Farrington observes, there has been several practical guides to sports journalism (Andrews 2014; Steen 2008), but these do not focus on the content of newspapers specifically, instead, they offer guidance and practical advice for journalists. Conversely, there has been research on racism, women in sports or violence in football, or other sports (Poulton 2005; Rainey 2000; Schmidt 2016) however the content of the coverage on British footballers and how they are represented in the press appears to have received minimal attention. To date there is no scholarly understanding of the representation of male footballers and whether their standing as national heroes of celebrity status is an accurate reflection of the content of newspapers which are increasing their sport related content. Does British football coverage largely contain content on match reports, sporting achievements or players’ private lives and what can it tell us about the national press? And how do tabloid and broadsheet newspapers differ in their approach to covering football related stories? Do tabloids prefer to cover news stories about the private lives of footballers whilst broadsheets include harder news such as corruption scandals? In the national press are footballers largely represented as celebrities via stories focusing on their personal lives or do they maintain their role as sportspeople first and foremost? This research aims to address these questions by using empirical data to build a picture of the representation of footballers in the British press in 2018.

Methods

Berelson (1971) puts forward that content analysis is “a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication” (1971: 18) which academics advise using for the examination of the content of news (Holsti 1969; Krippendorff 1980; Weber, 1990). Moreover, content analysis has been successfully utilised to research the coverage of sportspeople within the media (Hurdley and Billings 2010; Zion, Spaaij and Nicholson, 2010). As such content analysis has been identified as an appropriate research method for this particular study which analyses the content within football related newspaper content.

For this study four British newspapers were selected in order to gather a range of perspectives from media with different agendas and news values. The selected newspapers were: The Sun, the Daily Mail, The Daily Telegraph and The Guardian. The Sunday edition of each publication was also analysed so the sample included The Sun on Sunday, The Mail on Sunday, The Sunday Telegraph and The Observer. As discussed in the review of the literature, content can vary depending on whether the newspaper is a tabloid or a broadsheet (Baker, 2011; Karlsson and Clerwall, 2012) therefore this sample includes two ‘populist’ tabloids (The Sun and the Daily Mail) and two ‘quality’ broadsheet newspapers (The Daily Telegraph and The Guardian) from a range of partisan perspectives.

Content analysis is a very time consuming research method (Davies and Mosdell 2006: 106) and due to time restrictions, four weeks - including weekends - was deemed to be an appropriate length of time to

provide enough data for this study. The samples were selected every day between February 12 2018 and March 11 2018.

Additionally, Davies and Mosdell (2006) observe that it is important to specify how articles will be analysed in newspapers. “For example, you may consider only the headline and the first leader paragraph to be of interest, or you may break the article down into separate paragraphs,” (Davies and Mosdell 2006: 102). For this research, every story which presented a male British footballer as the main focus point was selected for analysis. The footballer had to be identified by the research as of British heritage and had to play for a British or overseas football club. In order to identify whether the footballer was the focal point of the story their name or nickname had to appear either in the headline or introduction of the article.

Once the articles were selected there were placed into the pertinent category of three formulated questions.

The first question: “What section of the newspaper does the story appear in?” with the selection of: front page, news section or sports section. This was important in order to determine whether sport is treated as general news or if the stories were only published in the sports section. The second question: “What is the story about?”, with the selection of: personal life, sporting life or other. As identified from the literature, sportspeople are often treated as celebrities by the media, and so by defining what each of the stories are about, a conclusion can be reached on whether the personal lives of these sportsmen appear more significant than their sporting achievements. Finally, the third sentient question: “How is the story portrayed?”, with the selection of: positively, negatively or neutrally. In order to determine this, the language used in the news story was analysed to identify if footballers are more commonly praised, or criticised.

It is crucial to take into consideration the existence of objectivity in the research. Weber (1990: 12) notes that for content analysis to be valid “different people should code the same text in the same way”. This means that if only one individual classifies the articles during the analysis, the conclusions developed can be seen as subjective, and therefore the research can be unreliable. Therefore in this study there were two sets of coders who compared coding results and recorded a 90% consistency rating.

| | Section of the newspaper | | | Type of story | | | Representation of story | | | Total stories |
|----------------|--------------------------|--------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|-------|-------------------------|----------|---------|---------------|
| | Front Page | News Section | Sports Section | Personal life | Sporting Life | Other | Positive | Negative | Neutral | |
| The Guardian | 0 | 1 | 40 | 3 | 27 | 11 | 17 | 4 | 20 | 41 |
| % | 0% | 2% | 98% | 7% | 66% | 27% | 41% | 10% | 49% | 100% |
| The Telegraph | 0 | 0 | 61 | 2 | 44 | 15 | 16 | 9 | 36 | 61 |
| % | 0% | 0% | 100% | 2% | 72% | 25% | 26% | 15% | 59% | 100% |
| The Sun | 2 | 16 | 161 | 17 | 129 | 33 | 56 | 32 | 91 | 179 |
| % | 1% | 9% | 90% | 10% | 72% | 18% | 31% | 18% | 51% | 100% |
| The Daily Mail | 0 | 4 | 68 | 10 | 47 | 15 | 17 | 16 | 39 | 72 |
| % | 0% | 6% | 94% | 14% | 65% | 21% | 24% | 22% | 54% | 100% |
| Total stories | 2 | 21 | 330 | 32 | 247 | 74 | 106 | 61 | 186 | 353 |

Figure 1: All statistics pertaining to the coding sheet – with raw data converted into percentages underneath

Results

The number of stories analysed in The Guardian (41), The Daily Telegraph (61), the Daily Mail (72) and The Sun (179) provide an overall data set of 353 published items. Due to the variation of amount of coverage offered by each publication, all the figures have been converted into percentages to make it possible to compare the reporting tendency of each newspaper.

It can be observed that The Sun offers considerably more sports related coverage in general than the other three newspapers, with 179 identified stories about British footballers. To illustrate the margin of difference, the Daily Mail produces the second highest number of stories – 72. It can be noted that as the type of newspaper moves from tabloid to broadsheet, or indeed informal to formal, the number of stories about British footballers decreases. Figures 2, 3 and 4 below, provide an analysis for each part of Figure 1. In the graphs the predominance of football stories in The Sun in comparison to the other publications is striking.

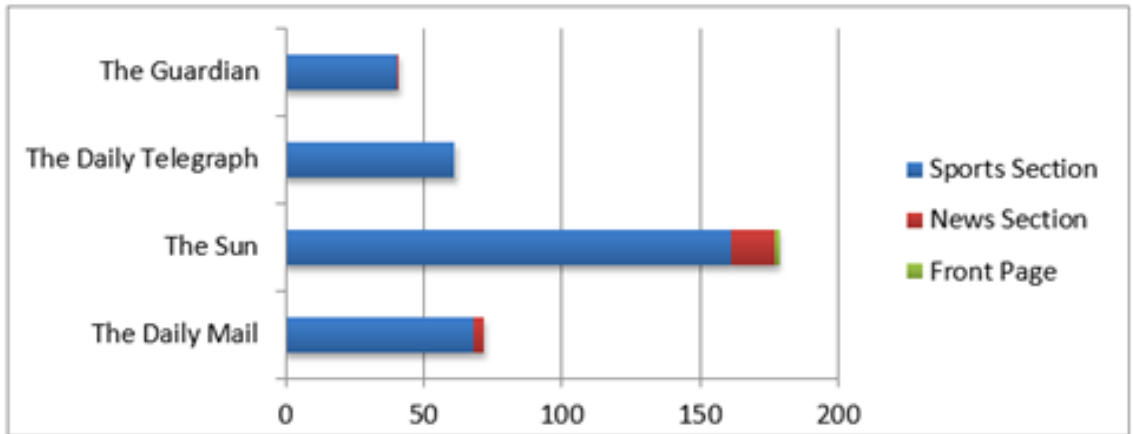


Figure 2: Number of news stories and what section of the newspaper they were located in.

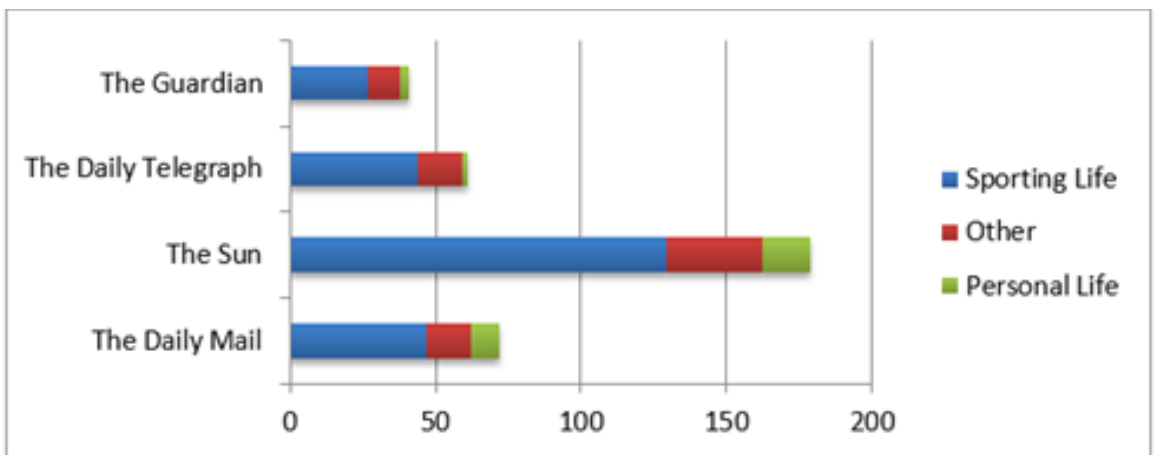


Figure 3: Number of stories and content type.

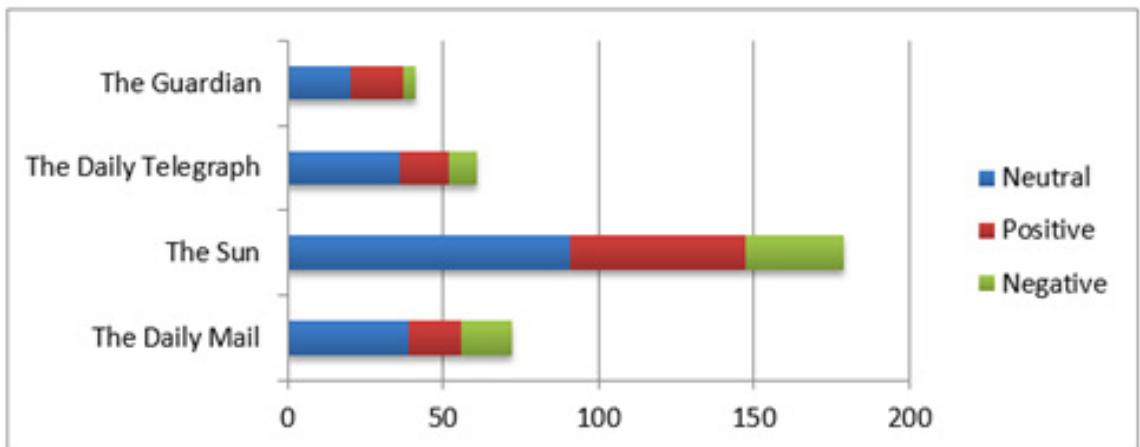


Figure 4: Number of stories and sentiment.

The reporting on British footballers in general, from these results, can be seen to be given higher priority in tabloid newspapers. This impression can be taken from the number of stories which appear on the front page of each newspaper, with two appearing on the front page of The Sun and none in any of the other newspapers. Also, in terms of stories appearing in the news section of the publications, 16 are observed in The Sun, four in the Daily Mail, one in The Guardian and none in The Daily Telegraph.

As previously mentioned, it is also useful to represent these figures in percentages, in order to determine the inclination of each newspaper.

[Insert Figures 5, 6 and 7 here]

In regards to the content of the stories about British footballers, The Sun and The Daily Telegraph share the highest percentage of those concerning the sporting life of the subjects (72%). In contrast, The Daily Mail and The Sun produce the highest percentages of stories about the personal lives of footballers (14% and 10% respectively).

The sentiment of the stories varies with The Guardian appearing to have the greatest number of positive articles (41%), and the Daily Mail the least (24%). The opposite matches this tendency, with The Guardian having the lowest percentage of negative stories (10%) and the Daily Mail having the highest proportion of negative ones (22%). After this, all newspapers included similar percentages of neutral stories of around 50%, but The Daily Telegraph had the most (59%).

Despite all newspapers having a sports section, not all include the football news in the same location - The Guardian, the Daily Mail and The Sun, place their football news at the end of the sports section, whereas The Daily Telegraph is placed at the beginning. It is also important to note that The Sun and the Daily Mail include an additional supplement within the newspaper, which includes more football news enabling them to offer more stories of British footballers than both broadsheets.

Discussion

The results give clear empirical evidence, as expected, that tabloid newspapers prioritise football, to a greater extent than their broadsheet counterparts. The Sun, Britain's best-selling newspaper, has four times as much football coverage as leading quality newspaper The Guardian. Although English (2016: 1014) reports that "the inclusion of sports stories in broadsheet newspapers is considerable", it appears that the proportion still remains much smaller than tabloid newspapers. Furthermore, it is visible that tabloids and broadsheets use different sections to include footballer-related stories, with tabloids including a greater amount as news stories or front page articles, giving them greater significance as they are elevated beyond the sports pages. There is some evidence therefore of the continued celebrity status of British footballers, who are represented as role models (Cashmore and Parker 2003; Whannel 2001, 2002) meaning their private lives are subject to greater scrutiny (Pape and Featherstone 2005).

Tabloid newspapers in particular, show a greater affinity for reporting stories about footballers' private lives with the Daily Mail publishing more than three times as many of those stories than The Daily Telegraph. As Hanusch (2013: 508) observes "tabloids are more sensationalist than broadsheets in their coverage." However the number of private stories still remained relatively low across the four newspapers (between 4% to 14% of coverage) and the differences between tabloid and broadsheet were relatively small particularly when comparing The Guardian and The Sun (just 3% between them). However the type of personal story did vary between the newspaper types with tabloids tending to focus on footballer's personal relationships and broadsheets tending to publish articles that linked footballers to current affairs or community stories. The tabloids therefore did have more of a disposition towards sensationalist issues (for example girlfriends and sex scandals) whilst broadsheets' coverage on private lives could be considered more serious (for example footballers engaging with city improvements) and leaned towards hero worshipping rather than exposing or scrutinising role models.

Bernstein and Blain (2003) maintain that football is no longer about results only, and this trend continues more than a decade later as the data in this paper confirms that apart from match reports and results, there is a considerable amount of coverage about transfer rumours, player's injuries and also private life issues. Farrington (2012: 2) also reasons that "with the rise of celebrity culture, sports stars are no longer confined to the back pages. Increasingly, they find themselves open to public and media scrutiny of their private and social lives." This emphasis on scandal, private lives and the treatment of British footballers as celebrities continues as most stories included in the news pages in this research sample treated footballers as celebrities, whereas the majority of stories in the sports section referred to them as sportsmen and reported on their sporting achievement alone. For example, articles included in the news section were: David Beckham's aftershave being sold in Poundland - covered by The Sun and Wayne Rooney having his fourth son - covered in both The Sun and the Daily Mail. British footballers also act as a conduit for addressing hard news

stories, particularly in the quality press, as the celebrity status of these national heroes is a lens through which to explore topics such as sexual abuse, such as the story of Kieron Dyer covered by The Guardian in several editions.

A key secondary finding worth further analysis is the treatment and coverage of retired British footballers, specifically those who played for England during their career, who continue to be treated as newsworthy celebrities, often for the duration of their lifetime. Stories about the private lives of these former England players, often quite inane in content, continue in the tabloid press. Examples of this are: Frank Lampard being unable to load a dishwasher or Jamie Redknapp being sacked as a model - both covered by The Sun.

In terms of the sentiment of the news stories involving British footballers, all publications offered a similar percentage of neutrality - The Guardian (49%), The Daily Telegraph (49%), the Daily Mail (54%) and The Sun (51%). However broadsheets tended to be more positive with their coverage, whereas tabloid newspapers were more negative. This supports the claim made by Schultz (2002), who argues that tabloids emphasise controversy and scandal, which in turn leads to negative representation. Conversely, Wenner (2013: 9) claims that "the sports press is like the entertainment and business press, in that they all are far more disposed to being cheerleaders for their sectors and stars." For instance, Harry Kane's performance against Juventus FC is reported positively in each of the newspapers, and The Sun also includes a news story about Gareth Bale helping his sister-in-law financially. These are examples of the press treating British footballers as heroes and idols for ordinary people, as stated by Boyle (2006).

All publications included positive stories about lower level footballers, including: Will Grigg's performance against Manchester City - published in all newspapers - two youth footballers, potentially becoming the future of England's football team - covered by The Daily Telegraph - and Ollie Palmer's last minute winner goal to give Lincoln FC a victory - covered by The Sun. Whereas it is true that if a footballer has a good performance on the pitch or performs a positive act in their private lives, newspapers will report it, it is also evident through this analysis, that the press have a larger expectation for higher level players than those who are developing or are in lower divisions. None of these players play in the Premier League - the highest level league in the UK, and no negative stories about lower level footballers were published in this time frame. However, there are numerous negative stories about British footballers who play in Premier League or national teams. It appears that expectations towards higher level footballers are more than those in lower leagues and the level of hero worship is greater. This in turn raises the value of their celebrity status and the likelihood of a greater amount of press scrutiny over their private lives as their role model status is also elevated.

Conclusion

This paper illustrates how the British press offers regular and varied content about male, British footballers, which supports previous research that notes the increase of sports coverage in the press (Andrews 2014). From the results, it can be observed that most of the stories focus on the sporting life of footballers, within the confines of sports sections of newspapers. There is however, a noticeable difference between the coverage of tabloid newspapers and broadsheet newspapers, with the former providing more news stories, more sensationalist in nature, as has been observed by other academics (Pape and Featherstone 2005; Schultz 2002). However, although stories about footballers have migrated from the back pages to the news pages and front pages of newspapers, the volume of these kinds of stories is less intensive than expected. For the most part British footballers are represented as sportsmen in newspapers, rather than as celebrities. This may in part be due to a number of social, legal and regulatory changes in the post Levenson era. Newspapers are more cautious when it comes to exposing private matters of public figures due to the threat of super injunctions, civil law suits and public distrust following the phone hacking scandal. There is also perhaps less of a public appetite for kiss and tell stories rife in the nineties and noughties, particularly in light of the #MeToo movement.

Nevertheless, there still remains an element of reporting in the press which elevates British footballers beyond sportsmen. The celebrity status of Premier League, England players and more strikingly former England players, is intrinsically linked with hero worship - particularly in the quality press - and the sensationalist scrutiny of their position as role models - within the tabloid press.

This study lays the groundwork for future empirical research which can help scholars to understand the role that sports representation plays in the press, a much understudied area of examination. Future research

could extend the sample frame work to evaluate the peaks and troughs of sports and news coverage over the full football season and compare it with historical coverage. There is also more work to be done on the representation of non-British players, who dominate the Premier League, and whether their treatment, news worthiness and role model status is comparable with British players.

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Conference proceedings

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Doing it for real: a study of experiential and situated learning approaches in teaching journalism practice

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Abstract:

In recent years there has been a huge growth in apprenticeship and internship style learning in the UK but does this provide students with a safe place to make mistakes or are they simply mirroring the mistakes of others? This paper will examine the application of the Experiential

Learning Cycle of Kolb (Kolb, 1984) in journalism education alongside the Situated Learning and Communities of Practice approach as advocated by Lave and Wenger (Lave and Wenger, 1991). It will examine the ethical challenges faced using both models in relation to creating a safe place to make mistakes in an era of intense pressure to engage in the public domain. The author will do this by looking at two case studies of universities in the UK teaching journalism through practice and adopting different approaches to students engaging with industry and placing their work in the public domain and the ethical and pedagogical challenges this produces.

Introduction:

Scholars have argued for years about which is the most effective way to teach journalism and have called for new ways to reinvent journalism education (Dennis, 1984; Medsker, 1996; Reese, 1999; Reese and Cohen, 2000; Adam, 2001; MacDonald, 2006; Deuze, 2006; Mensing, 2010 & 2011).

Much has been written about how journalism courses have tended to focus on providing training for students to get jobs in the media industry (Dickson, 2000; Becker, 2003) and how often the curriculum is shaped by the requirements of industry and professional accreditation standards (Zelizer, 2004) but ignores more critical, conceptual and contextual thinking (Greenberg 2007).

Meanwhile the traditional news organisations that helped shape this training-based journalism education and feed into the accreditation bodies' requirements, are struggling with falling sales whilst audiences engage with news through a plethora of alternative platforms and sources. (Mensing, 2010 & 2011). Mensing argued that teaching students the practices that reinforce the status quo is of little use to them and can prevent them from adopting new responses and innovations. She said this devolves degree programmes into little more than training courses (Mensing 2010, 2011). She called for a realignment of journalism education from an industry-centred model to a community-focused approach as one way to re-engage it in a more productive and vital role in the future of journalism. She argues a 'community-centered focus could provide a way to conceptualise a reconstitution of journalism education to match that taking place in journalism beyond the university.' (Mensing, 2010.p 511).

Journalism education in the UK is now predominantly delivered in Higher Education (HE) at both undergraduate and postgraduate degree level. (Baines, 2017).

The first undergraduate programmes in journalism were launched in the 1990s but previously training was expected from employers as a fit and proper way for them to invest in staff and maintain standards. (Greenberg, 2007)

Over recent years there has been a drive in the UK towards ensuring journalism programmes are accredited by a recognised industry body. In 2015 over a third of the UK's 300 undergraduate and postgraduate journalism courses were accredited by at least one of the main accreditation bodies (NCTJ, BJTC, PPA). Canter (2015) said this demonstrated the marketing value universities place on such schemes in an increasingly competitive marketplace and asked questions about the ongoing value of belonging to these bodies in an increasingly digital age. However, The Broadcast Journalism Training Council (BJTC), the biggest of

these organisations, still accredits 56 courses in the UK (figures correct May 2019).

The BJTC stipulates a list of practice-orientated skills that it requires students to be accomplished in as part of their degree course. According to the requirements, achieving these ensures the 'highest professional standards in journalism training.' (BJTC, 2017.p2) and when students graduate, they are 'capable of working in the production of online, multimedia and broadcast in the world of news, current affairs, features and documentaries.' (BJTC, 2017. p2). Meanwhile universities are increasingly marketing their courses as being aligned with industry providing work ready graduates. In order to achieve accreditation courses are shaped by professional bodies along the lines of training, much like Zelizer (2004) suggested.

The main focus of the BJTC courses is news days, a simulation of a working newsroom where students cover real stories and create TV and radio programmes and websites under tight deadlines. They then reflect upon the process, apply relevant theory to their findings and go out and do it all again the following week. It is a model that aligns closely with the principles of experiential learning and in particular the Experiential Learning Cycle (ELC) of David Kolb (Kolb, 1984).

Experiential Learning:

Experiential learning theories build on social and constructivist theories of learning whereby the emphasis is on the individual construction of the world and knowledge being created by the student building their own mental models based on their own experience. The idea can be seen to have its origins in the work of Jean Piaget, John Dewey and Kurt Lewin which challenged the view of biological determinism that was prevalent at the time.

Experiential learning theorists situate experience at the core of the learning process and aim to understand the manners in which experiences, whether first or second hand, motivate learners and promote their learning.

They are based on the theory that ideas are not fixed but are formed and reformed through reflection. All start with the premise that experience is essential to the learning process and that it is possible to integrate theory and practice through reflection.

The most prominent modern day developer of experiential learning theory is Kolb. Kolb defines learning as '...the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience.' (Kolb, 1984, p38). Kolb's (ELC) (Kolb, 1984) draws upon four main bases that the learner must engage with: concrete experience; reflective observation; abstract conceptualisation, active experimentation and then the cycle returns to concrete experience. (See Figure 1).

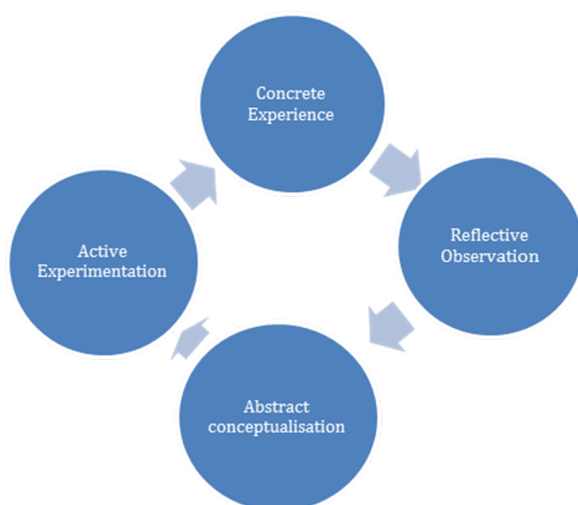


Figure 1: Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle

The model builds on the premise that practice will be adjusted based upon the reflection and the theory building. The learner can engage with the cycle at any stage.

Kolb based his model on what he calls the Lewinian Experiential Learning Model. He stressed that in order for experiential learning to be successful there needed to be two aspects: concrete and immediate experience valuable of creating meaning in learning and feedback/reflection. The model is based upon action research and laboratory teaching which are characterised by feedback. Kolb said that the information provided by feedback is the starting point of a continuous process consisting of goal-directed action and evaluation of the consequences of this action. While Dewey talked about the integration of action and thinking (Dewey, 1916) Kolb distinguishes between different learning styles needed for action and thinking allowing students to engage with the cycle at various different stages. He referred to a 'dialectical tension' between the experiential and conceptual stages but resolves the tension by placing them as separate stages in his model.

Similarly, Schön, like Kolb, approaches learning from an organisational discipline. His work (Schön, 1983) can be seen to compliment Kolb's in that he argues that engaging with practice, underpinned by intellectual theory, helps to maintain knowledge. He uses the phrase 'reflective practicum' to refer to this.

Beard and Wilson (2006) attempt to integrate the social, historical and cultural aspects of learning which Kolb did not include. Others have taken a different definition of experiential learning. Rogers (1969) theory of experiential learning comes from a humanistic approach to psychology. He distinguished two types of learning: cognitive, from academic knowledge, which he said was meaningless and experiential which, relates to applied knowledge, which he describes as significant. The distinction was that experiential learning addresses the needs and wants of the learner. He argued that learning occurs when the student participates completely in the learning process and has control over it. There are some similarities between Rogers approach and that of Kolb in that they both require students to learn from reflecting on their own experiences, however they differ in the fact that Rogers approach negates the need for academic involvement and the reflection to be done in the classroom and therefore it can be argued that this is closer to the situated learning theory and communities of practice approaches.

Situated Learning:

Situated learning theory is a socio-cultural approach and focuses on students' changing participation in a community of practice. According to this perspective there is no learning which is not situated, emphasising

the relational and negotiated character of knowledge and learning as well as the engaged nature of learning activity for the individuals involved. According to the theory, it is within communities that learning occurs most effectively. Interactions taking place within a community of practice (E.g. cooperation, problem solving, building trust, understanding and relations) have the potential to foster community social capital that enhances the community members' wellbeing.

Lave and Wenger (1991) coined the term Communities of Practice (COP) for groups of people who share a concern or passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly. According to Lave and Wenger, a COP is constituted by a domain of knowledge, which defines a set of issues; a community of people who care about this domain, and the shared practice that they are developing to be effective in that domain. They develop this

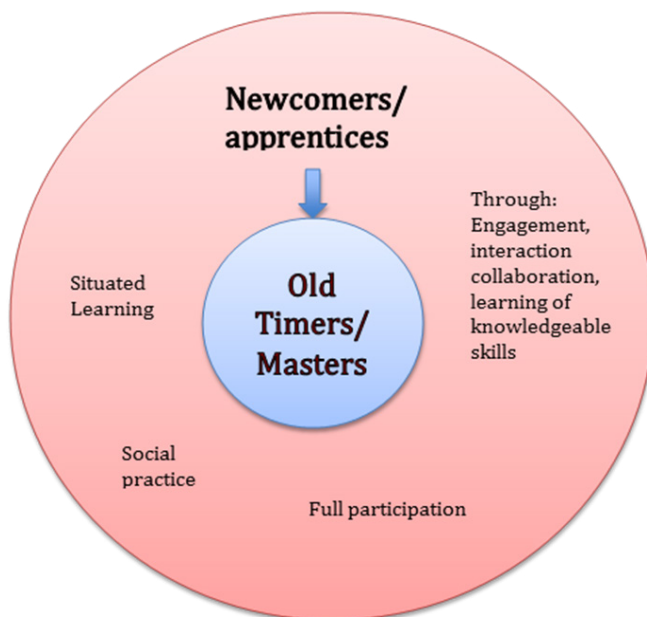


Figure 2: Lave and Wenger's Legitimate Peripheral Participation Model

notion of a community of practice through their idea of Legitimate Peripheral Participation (LPP). They look at five studies of apprenticeship and seek to understand how newcomers or apprentices could become masters through engagement, interaction, collaboration and learning knowledgeable skills. Newcomers are

peripheral to masters of whatever practice but participate in a legitimate and useful way through social practice and situated learning. (see Figure 2).

Wenger (1998) extended the concept and applied it to other areas, such as organisations. The increase in online communities has seen this applied further afield in recent years (Stoker, 2015) and, it can be argued that the resurgence in apprenticeships can be seen as more closely aligned with this approach (Fuller, 2005).

For Lave and Wenger the key distinguishing factor of COPs was not just experiencing the practice but fully participating in the community in which it took place.

In our view, learning is not merely situated in practice as if it were some independently reifiable process that just happened to be located somewhere; learning is an integral part of generative social practice in the lived-in world. (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p.35).

For experiential learning theory, however, the learning occurs not in the participation but in the reflection. Scholars have argued that for experiential learning to truly happen that reflection needs to be formal, facilitating the students' understandings of what has been learned. (Usher & Solomon, 1999, Moon 2004).

Applying the models to journalism education

What does this mean for journalism and how can these theoretical perspectives be applied to the issues that have arisen in teaching it? The author has already hinted at a theory/practice divide that has arisen in journalism education as journalism practitioners enter the academic world keen on providing training for jobs whilst academics wish to preserve the critical engagement skills. (Dickson, 2000; Becker, 2003; Greenberg, 2007, Mensing 2010 and 2011). This issue can be seen to be ever more present in recent years with increasing calls from industry leaders and journalism scholars for practical learning and real content production (Parks, 2015) resulting in many courses requiring practising journalists to teach on them and universities marketing their courses as providing real world experience and skills and strong links with industry.

Meanwhile academics have argued that these skills simply reinforce the status quo and devolve degree programmes into little more than training courses (Mensing, 2010 and 2011).

Greenberg (2007) looked at Kolb's ELC as a solution to this and concluded that journalism practitioners would gain value by engaging with theory to give the experiential learning cycle the chance to explore its fullest potential. She also argued that theory-based disciplines should look at alternative theoretical frameworks and examine their own response to feedback from practice (2007, p.302). Brandon (2002) said that experiential learning could open new areas of knowledge for journalism education as well as helping to improve courses for students. She wanted to discover whether courses addressed students' career aspirations, encouraged initiative, offered training that would lead to different job positions, allowed input, used mistakes as learning opportunities, provided frequent feedback on performance and encouraged the use of knowledge gained in other learning settings (Brandon 2002, p65).

Steel et al (2007) advocated the use of experiential learning following their study with postgraduate students working as real journalists on the 2005 UK General Election. This was a one-off experiment followed up by reflection and semi structured interviews. The authors raised questions about how educators manage the balance between 'throwing students in at the deep end to resolve problems' whilst 'still retaining sufficient control' (Steel, 2007, p333).

Other studies based on short-term experiential style learning exercises have advocated this theoretical perspective (Kartveit, 2009, Evans, 2016 and 2017, Parks 2015).

However, the definition of experiential learning and the application of it was slightly different in each of the studies. For some, there was an overlap with the pedagogical approaches used in communities of practice (Wenger, 1998). Steel et al (2007) referred to the ways in which students learn from and with each other through the development of communities of practice (Wenger, 1998) within journalism and said that this area was relatively under-researched (Steel et al 2007). This suggested that it is possible to have a community of practice within Higher Education, and it doesn't have to be exclusively linked to the traditional apprenticeship model. Students could learn from one another with a common domain of knowledge, goals and practices and would bond together by the common goal of producing the programme/website or newspaper. On news days, the experiential learning activity prescribed by the BJTC, students are not only expected to work as a team, but as a team with a clearly structured hierarchy, where peers stop being peers (Steel et al 2007). Whilst there is hierarchy in Lave and Wenger's COP model, Steel's work showed that

students taking part in this exercise were not always ready for that level of authority and, at times, it caused dissent amongst the group.

Parks (2015) case study examined experiential learning in enhancing skills in news writing where students in a classroom environment were able to publish their work. Whilst pointing out benefits of experiential learning in giving students hands-on experience, Parks argues that the trade-offs prompted by this approach could be that analytical instruction is sacrificed in the name of 'real-world' experience (Parks 2015, p136). He called for a variety of approaches for journalism education.

Experience-based courses should not be the exclusive format for teaching journalism, but experiential learning is essential to a quality journalism education. (Parks, 2015. p 36)

This understanding of experiential learning differs slightly from the Kolb model (Kolb, 1984) in that whilst Parks' exercise was useful in providing students with skills and experience, it gave less time to the instruction and reflection which are central to Kolb's model (Kolb, 1984).

The author's own work, (Evans, 2017) followed the Kolb model more closely in arguing for experiential learning to be successful in journalism education there needs to be a 'safe place to make mistakes' (Evans, 2017. p75) with opportunity for critique and reflection.

This concept of a "safe space" is referred to widely across disciplines.

In management education in arguing that in order for experiential learning to be beneficial a "safe space" needed to be created early if deeper learning is to be achieved, and this would enable critical thinking (Kisfalvi and Oliver 2016, p735). These approaches adhere to an education rather than training-based approach where the need for reflection alongside repetition is essential in the learning process.

Winnicott (1989) said the classroom becomes a transitional or in-between space that prepares students to move into the real world.

Schaffer (2004), however, argues that reflection can be done on the job in journalism as reflecting on one's practice is a skill internalised by the learner as they become part of a practice community.

He looks at the professions of architecture, mediation and journalism and draws upon Schön's idea of the 'reflective practicum' where learners have a capacity to combine reflection and action, on the spot, 'to examine understandings and appreciations while the train is running.' (Schön, 1985, p.27). Schaffer argues that Schön's reflective process is progressively internalised in journalism through norms, habits, expectations, abilities, and understandings of a community of practice and refers to Lave and Wenger's model in allowing individuals to reframe their identities.

For example, journalists share common ways of thinking and working, and individuals who work in the field of journalism incorporate these ways of thinking and working into their sense of self, coming to think of themselves, at least in part, as journalists (Schaffer, 2004. p1404).

There is some obvious overlap between the two theoretical perspectives of experiential and situated learning and it can be argued that what is needed to reinvent journalism education and prepare students for the changing world of the profession is a hybrid approach.

Tulloch and Mas Manchon (2018) looked at The Catalan News Agency Experiment (CNAE) at Pompeu Fabra University in Barcelona where third and fourth year students were tasked with providing professional-level English-language content for an official news agency. The CNAE saw students producing directly for consumption in the public domain. Students worked for the agency from January to June but were based in their classroom with tutors fine tuning the skills necessary to produce professional-level material for the agency whilst also providing academic critique and rigour. Authors argued that the project helped bridge the gap between theory and practice. The CNAE project can be seen to have some similarities with the second case study in this paper at University B.

Two UK Case Studies:

Both case studies are at post 92 Universities which offer BJTC accredited journalism courses but follow a different pedagogical approach to their teaching of practice.

University A follows a model closer to Kolb's ELC (Kolb, 1984) in that its days are focused around feedback and reflection.

News days start, like most busy news rooms, with a meeting to discuss the news agenda, students then go

out of the classroom and find real stories, film, record audio, write, edit and present a final broadcast product to a tight deadline. However, unlike a real newsroom, they end with a session of feedback and reflection. The process is then repeated the following day or week with students putting into practice what they have learned on the previous news day. News days here can therefore be seen to be the embodiment of Kolb's ELC (Kolb, 1984).

The days therefore are a hybrid of experiential and simulation-based learning. Whilst the students report on real stories in the world outside of the classroom, they are under the guidance of a tutor and there is opportunity for learning from their mistakes. (Evans, 2017; Kisfalvi and Oliver, 2016; Winnicott, 1965). The university operates a cautious and gradual approach to autonomy in that material produced on these days is kept in house at first and second year and only third year and masters work is placed in public domain once it has been checked by a lecturer. This is not the practice on all BJTC accredited universities though and it raises questions about professional identity and whether these experiences at University A are real enough to make the student feel like a journalist.

University B adopts a pedagogy closer to Lave and Wenger's situated learning or LPP model (Lave and Wenger, 1991). Students on this journalism course are offered an optional module working as an intern at a local television station. The module, runs alongside other traditional classroom-based modules that the students also take in their third year instead of news days and two theory-based modules. The students are not paid for the internship and work a week on/week off shift pattern with alternate weeks being spent back in the classroom environment in workshops and tutorials. They are fully integrated into the newsroom and are expected to operate as a professional journalist during their time on this module adhering to the workflow and practices of the newsroom rather than the classroom. Material they produce is broadcast in the public domain and is also used as part of a portfolio for assessment on the module. This raises questions as to whether these students have a safe place to make mistakes (Evans, 2017; Kisfalvi and Oliver, 2016; Winnicott, 1965). It also poses some ethical challenges for teaching journalism in terms of exposing students to real world work flows and practices in relation to reconciling apparent inequalities in the newsroom with the parity expected by students in HE.

Ethical challenges

In the author's earlier work Evans (2017) she argued that students valued the 'safe place to make mistakes' (Evans, 2017, p.75) on news days as this gave them confidence to experiment. However, this needed to be balanced by the need for exposure and reality (Evans, 2017, p.81). Madison argued that concerns about providing a safe place to make mistakes are mitigated by the perceived benefits of immersive "real world" experience and being able to 'participate in news-gathering alongside seasoned professionals.' (Madison, 2014, p.318). It must be noted that Madison mentioned that the students worked 'alongside seasoned professionals' (p.318) hence there was someone present to act as the master in the master/apprenticeship relationship (Lave and Wenger, 1991) scaffolding their learning and giving them someone to reflect with. Journalism education is rapidly evolving and further anecdotal evidence that the author has received from students since publishing her work suggests that students expect their news day work to be published/broadcast so it is timely to revisit this issue.

In relation to University A's model this poses questions as to whether it goes far enough to provide the real world experiences that university courses are increasingly encouraged to provide.

One lecturer teaching into the course at University A thought that when material was published at third year and masters' level it was transformative:

I think, it's a very transformative environment, I think, for the students, when they are publishing. There are a number of things I know they're highly motivated by. The first is that they have an online portfolio of live work, which showcases their skills, and it's one of the things I know that students are very, very keen on, because often they're going straight from their award or programme straight into the world of work, and so having a by-line, having something that's in the published environment. (Lecturer 1, University A)

That people can see? (Interviewer)

Yes, that people can see – is really, really important. (Lecturer 1, University A)

The lecturer also said that she had noticed that students developed more pride in their work as a result of it going into the public domain.

However, whilst this approach may boost the confidence of some, for others it can limit their creativity as they become fearful of making mistakes (Evans, 2017).

It also raises questions as to whether members of the public who students interview as part of their news days would want their contributions broadcast in the public domain.

Whilst on one hand it may give the student more kudos in securing interviews as the contributor would know that there was potential exposure for their content, on the other hand it may make securing sensitive interviews more difficult. It also poses challenges about the professional identity of the student; are they students of journalism or journalists who are students? If the students are working as journalists as part of their university course the university then the university is responsible for them and, if the content is broadcast the public domain, it is also responsible for that content.

At University B students are told from the moment they start the course that they are journalists first students second.

And that is kinda the ethos of (name of institution) we tell them don't think of yourselves as students think of yourselves as journalists who happen to be students. It is the kind of ethos we try to instil in all students whether they are on (name of internship module) or whether they are working as a newsgathering team on news days. (Lecturer 2, University B)

Lecturer 2 said that she felt students valued being treated as professionals and she had received predominantly positive feedback from students about their experiences in relation to the employability skills they perceived it gave them.

However, she had noticed that those who were on the optional internship module had started to develop a sense of superiority, presuming that because they were working for a real world media organisation and their work was being broadcast in the public domain they were better than the others. She said at times this caused tensions in the cohort which lecturers then had to reconcile. All students on the course are entitled to a parity of experience however, for some having this added exposure and kudos that working for a TV company gave them meant they felt elevated above others in the cohort. It also gave them more opportunities to produce TV material needed for their portfolios. This then led to some students doing better in their portfolio assessments than those who were on the traditional news day module. The module has since been redesigned to address this.

Reconciling the differences between classroom and newsroom pose an ethical challenge with the model. University B's model aligns well with the Lave and Wenger (1991) situated learning and LPP model in that students fully participate in a COP, learn what they need to know and do from journalists at the TV station and gradually become a part of the community. However, by adopting the workflow and practices of the newsroom rather than the classroom can cause tensions. Whilst in some areas the students gained additional skills, in other areas there were gaps.

Lecturer 2 said this meant that in recent years they have built in additional support for the weeks these students are back in the classroom. Additional support included inviting the internship students to join the traditional news days on their weeks off shift to ensure they got experience of radio news, required by the accreditation body but not provided by the TV station:

The main tension will be because we don't have editorial control or input it is a complete stand alone independent commercial organisation whose main goal is obviously output that we have no say over, so our students, we cut them loose to it and we have got all these measures to support that and mitigate for anything that might go wrong in that scenario so it's a balance that the week on week off enables. (Lecturer 2, University B)

This intervention can be seen as an additional safety net built in to bolster the experience on the internship and potentially compensate for any shortfalls that full participation can bring.

The Lave and Wenger model presumes that newcomers/apprentices will learn from old timer/masters which is an integral part of the internship set up. Students are also given feedback at the end of the day from editors at the TV station through a programme debrief. Whilst this may be good for developing their practical skills and ensuring that they replicate the practices of the newsroom, (Mensing, 2010, 2011), this is purely practical and professional. It does not foster the critical engagement skills that Greenberg (2007) said can be incorporated through the reflective observation and abstract conceptualisation elements of Kolb's ELC (Kolb, 1984). Instead these skills are developed in workshops and tutorials with academic teaching staff on the weeks the student is off shift.

The model also raises some questions about learning from old-timers/masters and whether students are also picking up bad habits alongside essential employability skills.

As the internship is an accredited university module, students undertaking it are not paid for their work as a journalist at the TV station. Whilst the students are aware of this from the outset, clearly value the employability skills it gives them and see themselves as journalists, it could be asked whether it is ethical to not pay people for working for up to 15 weeks a year. University B's ethos of journalists who happen to be students runs through the whole course, yet if these students are working as journalists it could be argued they should be paid as journalists. Further work is needed to find out how many of these students go onto paid work as a journalist after graduating and how many are subsequently taken on as paid staff by the TV company.

Conclusion:

This paper examined two models of teaching journalism practice through engagement with the public domain. One took a more cautious approach focusing on the process of reflection on the practice rather than the practice itself and had similarities to Kolb's ELC (Kolb, 1984) while the other adopted an approach closer to Lave and Wenger's situated learning and LPP model (Lave and Wenger, 1991). Both models pose many ethical challenges for teaching journalism. The author's earlier work advocated the need for a 'safe place to make mistakes' on news days (Evans, 2017). However, by examining two different pedagogical models at two university settings she concludes that the exposure that placing students and their material in the public domain can bring many benefits which can mitigate some of the ethical issues raised. With multimedia newsrooms and classrooms in universities claiming to echo industry's digital first mantra and the increasing normalisation of people's lives being recorded on social media, if students are still to feel they are doing it for real (Evans, 2016) then support needs to be built in to mitigate for what might go wrong. It may be time to look into a hybrid of the two models through a placement year or summer enabling students to return to the classroom for the final year of study where they can truly reflect upon their time in the COP. Whilst this may not completely address Mensing's concerns about journalism education (Mensing, 2010 & 2011) it may enable some form of synergy between the two theoretical perspectives of learning.

The author aims that further research through focus groups and semi-structured interviews will discover students' and former students' perceptions of these two ways of learning the practice of journalism, whether they feel they are able to safely make mistakes and when, if at all, they feel they have become journalists.

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Media literacy versus fake news: fact checking and verification in the era of fake news and post-truths

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ABSTRACT

This paper provides research findings to support the case for media literacy as an aid to journalists and journalism educators in a disruptive age through the fostering of resilient media engagement by young citizens. It posits that encouraging media literacy in news consuming publics facilitates a more critically engaged civic society. Focused on trust, it shares the outcomes of a project funded by the US Embassy in London, which brought together leading researchers from the United States and UK with a range of key stakeholders, including journalists. Their collective aim: to devise a practical strategy for harnessing media literacy to develop young people's understanding of and ability to withstand 'fake news'.

Introduction

'Truth was fake, fake was true. And that's when the problem suddenly snapped into focus' (Rusbridger, 2018, p.x).

The essence of the disruptive age is summarised by the former editor of *The Guardian* newspaper, Alan Rusbridger in the opening pages of his recent treatise on the broken state of news and news consumption.

Once again, journalists are presented as facing the challenge of restoring trust in themselves and their journalism. However, this time they are drinking in a different type of last-chance saloon - the problem is not self-inflicted but largely external: the media is 'the opposition', disinformation is rife, virtually everything is PR (Pomerantsev, 2015).

This paper will consider how media literacy can help journalists and journalism educators in tackling the age of disinformation through building resilience in young citizens. It posits that encouraging media literacy in news consuming publics, specifically young people, can facilitate a more engaged and critically aware civic society. It shares the findings of a project funded by the US Embassy in London, which brought together leading media literacy researchers from the United States and UK with educators, librarians, journalists, digital media producers and young people to devise a 'toolkit' for building resilience. In March 2019, these key stakeholders took part in a series of workshops in London in which they shared perspectives, working to a collective aim – a practical strategy for harnessing media literacy to develop young people's understanding of and ability to withstand 'fake news', with a focus on case studies from both the UK and the US. Working collaboratively in this way, bringing together academic research, news providers and the new generation of media users, the project set out to listen to the voices of young citizens to help us to help them in the age of disinformation and disruption.

The research team captured the raw material for a toolkit for media literacy resilience which will be available online (<http://mlfn.kemp.ac.uk>) as an open access resource for use by journalists, journalism educators, is now producers, teachers and academics, amongst others. The project team started out from our colleague Monica Bulger's research findings from her work in the US with the Data and Society Research Institute, arguing that media education needs to:

"develop a coherent understanding of the media environment, improve cross-disciplinary collaboration, leverage the current media crisis to consolidate stakeholders and develop curricula for addressing action in addition to interpretation" (Bulger and Davison, 2018, p.4).

Clearly this project emanates from the leverage described and is concerned with such dialogue between both disciplines and professions.

In the UK, media literacy academics working with the Media Education Association, the professional association in the field, have called for a more 'joined up' approach to media literacy in the context of disinformation, saying that:

Issues of bias, truth and falsehood in news are well-established topics for media education. However, fake news is largely a manifestation of much broader problems, which apply to 'real' news as well. We need a more systematic conceptual approach; and while media literacy may provide part of the solution, we should beware of oversimplifying the problem, and underestimating the difficulty of the task. (Buckingham, 2019).

In line with this, the project applied the key conceptual and pedagogical approaches of critical media literacy, through which we understand *all* media as representation¹, as well as involving other stakeholders in the media and in civil society. The project's objectives were tackled by:

1. using participative dialogic methods to develop new insights into the experiences of young UK citizens with regard to fake news and civic engagement with media, applying the existing research findings from the academic experts to the insights from the young people,
2. working with teachers, trainers, librarians and young people to pilot and evaluate a toolkit for critical media literacy and resilience to disinformation,

¹ See Buckingham, D., (2018) 'Teaching social media 3: representation. Retrieved from: <https://davidbuckingham.net/2018/03/26/teaching-social-media-3-representation/>

3. leaving behind open access resources which can continue to be re-purposed beyond the life of the project,
4. enabling the voices of young citizens to inform policy planning and development with regard to media literacy and civic media.

It is hoped that the online toolkit will make a small but important contribution to tackling this complex problem, by supporting the development of curricula to help build resilience.

The question of trust constituted one of the key themes of the project and provides a focus for this paper. Journalists like Alan Rusbridger are bemused as to why journalism is not *the* answer to fake news, since journalism is historically seen as an effective means to distinguish the true from the untrue. Yet, he argues, journalism was ill-prepared to cope because it is not itself trusted: 'If only people trusted journalism more, society would have a system in place for dealing with fake news' (Rusbridger, 2018, p.373). Atmospherics that have intensified since 2016 and the election of Donald Trump as US President and the Brexit debacle in the UK (even though there were many differences between the two events) have enabled fear narratives to hold sway: The outcome? A decline in trust and a rise in scepticism. This is not to say that a healthy dose of scepticism is a bad thing – indeed, critical evaluation of all information is crucial to robust discourse in a democratic society (Buckingham, 2019), but many observers now see truth (and reason) as an endangered species (Kakutani, 2018). In this 'post – truth' context, trust levels spiral, indifference and lack of awareness hold sway (Sopel, 2017).

Fake news

We have always experienced propaganda and politically-aligned bias, which purports to be news, but this activity has taken on new forms and has been hugely magnified by information technology and the ubiquity of social media. In this environment, people are able to accept and give credence to information that reinforces their views, no matter how distorted or inaccurate, while dismissing content with which they do not agree as 'fake news' (disinformation and 'Fake News' Final Report, House of Commons Digital, Culture Media and Sport Committee, 18 February 2019)

In its analysis of disinformation and the 'fake news' phenomenon, the UK government-commissioned report published in February 2019 concluded that the polarising effect of fake news was unlikely to recede and placed responsibility for moves towards greater transparency with the big tech companies. It emphasised the importance of a plurality of voices and human agency, concluding 'we must make sure that people stay in charge of the machines' (p.6). Questions of agency threaded through the workshop conversations for the Media Literacy vs Fake News project.

The status of 'fake news' is always discursively framed for the purposes of its articulation. These examples from 2018 provide further useful illustration:

1. The European Commission's assessment of news organisations' engagement with verification and trust-enhancing techniques published in a report from a high-level policy forum: "Print press organisations and broadcasters are in the process of intensifying their efforts to enforce certain trust enhancing practices". This involves working with academia, amongst others, to develop media literacy approaches and investing in verification tools to ensure ethical compliance and trustworthiness (European Commission, 2018, p. 41).
2. Insider narratives from journalists ruminating on the place of journalism in society that conclude "on both sides of an increasingly scratchy debate about media, politics, and democracy, there is a hesitancy about whether there is any longer a common idea of what journalism is and why it matters" (Rusbridger, 2018, p. 360).
3. A searing critique from the academy that places journalism itself and its elitist tendencies at the heart of the 'post truth' problem - a "journalism self-appointed with a false respectability, a 'liberal' journalism that claims to challenge corporate state power but, in reality, courts and protects it" (Edwards and Cromwell, 2018, p. xii).

'Fake news' is a problematic term, used often as a 'catch all' or as a disclaimer, but its distinction from 'real news' is characterised by the intention to mislead, for political reasons, to undermine stability or for economic purpose, for example as 'clickbait' for financial return from advertising or through the monetisation of data, most notoriously through Facebook. A challenge for media literacy's response is the confusion, at the level of legislation, over the status of search engines and social media platforms – are they providers

(of media content) or merely technology companies offering services for other parties to share media? For this reason, regulatory discussions impact on both the political / legal reaction – as attempted by the House of Commons committee – and the academy.

David Buckingham pinpoints these contextual risks for our project in his blog (2017), fashioning fake news as symptomatic of a broader trend: “People (and not just children) may be inclined to believe it for quite complex reasons. And we can’t stop them believing it just by encouraging them to check the facts or think rationally about the issues” (Buckingham, 2017). As he points out, this poses significant pedagogical questions – rather than working on the assumption that we are involved in a rational process it is vital, as educators to ask why people might believe ‘fake news’, since “by no means all media use is rational. Where we decide to place our trust is as much to do with fantasy, emotion and desire, as with rational calculation” (ibid, 2017).

According to Paul Bradshaw (2018), fake news must be considered in the context of ‘mobile-first’ publishing and he offers three key sites of conflict – commercial, political and cultural. Fake news has clearly disrupted the optimism for mobile media to increase diversity and plurality, but the mobile consumption of news has taken traditional news organisations into a commercial battle that is forcing them to ‘adapt to survive’. The political battle occurs around a growing consensus that alleged Russian activity relating to other nations’ elections constitutes a new form of international conflict in which, according to research findings from New Knowledge (RiResta et al, 2018), the giant technology corporations were slow in response, even complicit, with Russia’s influence spanning across platforms from YouTube, to Instagram and Twitter to Google and Facebook. This, according to Bradshaw (2018), makes verification the concern of everyone, not just journalists. The cultural battleground hosts the war for attention and professional journalism’s stake in news agendas in the era of ‘Post-Truth’. This is where media literacy (and journalism education) has a role to play. Following this thread, Fowler-Watt (2019) calls for a radical rethink to consider whether “re-imagining journalism education [could] provide a starting point for a re-imagined journalism practice that prioritises the human aspect of journalism as a craft?” (Fowler-Watt, 2019, p. 121).

In December 2018, a panel convened in Oxford by the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism debated a newly-published European Commission action plan on disinformation. The Institute’s Director, Rasmus Kleis Nielsen underlined the challenge of positioning ‘real’ journalism as the solution to the problems of political disinformation and ‘bottom up’ dissemination of false ‘facts’ when the industry itself is in crisis: “There’s nothing less than a war on journalism taking place across the world.” The panel agreed that “fighting back is mission central”, in the form of a robust re-booting of professional and ethical values and practices within the industry, putting its faith in media literacy education in schools to teach young people how to distinguish between fake news and false facts, to understand and to value the concept of ‘verifiable information in the public interest’.²

Wider contexts

Fake has become an omnipresent feature of both our daily lives and a globalized, ultra-connected culture: it is in the way we dwell and break free from spaces and ideas. (Excursions journal 9.1, call for articles, 2018).

Bolstered by the sense that ‘Media and Information Literacy’ (MIL) could assume an important role in damage limitation, whilst avoiding solutionism, the project team were acutely aware of wider contexts, of a sense of helplessness in the face of omnipresent fakery. Douglas Rushkoff (2018) laments the loss of “our ability to think constructively, connect meaningfully, or act purposefully. It feels as if civilization itself were on the brink, and that we lack the collective willpower and coordination necessary to address issues of vital importance to the very survival of our species” (Rushkoff, 2018, p. 3). To combat the sense of powerlessness McIntyre (2018) calls for a deep-rooted study of the conditions for ‘post-truth’ - “If our tools are being used as weapons, let’s take them back” (McIntyre, 2018, p.122). Reflecting on his experience of editing a print newspaper, as the digital age dawned, Rusbridger (2018) was also alarmed, not only by “information chaos” but by the realisation that “the chaos was enabled, shaped and distributed by a handful of gargantuan corporations, which – in that same blink of an eye – had become the most powerful organisations the world had ever seen” (Rusbridger, 2018, pp. xviii- xix).

The shattering impact of the economic crash in 2008 is a significant context, if not a direct cause of the

2 See also: Nielsen, R. and Graves, L. (2017) “News You Don’t Believe”: Audience Perspectives on Fake News. Oxford: Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism.

'fake news' phenomenon. The failed response of neoliberal politics to economic meltdown and the simultaneous dismantling of traditional notions of the 'public sphere' arguably provided ripe conditions for 'post truth' to grow and flourish. One important aspect of all this is that we no longer have a shared view, however contested it might have been, of the role of journalism, the concept of 'public interest', 'holding power to account', 'power and responsibility'. According to Bridle (2018), whether analysing Brexit or Trump "it is ultimately impossible to tell who is doing what, or what their motives and intentions are," this means that "it's futile to attempt to discern between what's algorithmically generated nonsense or carefully crafted fake news" (Bridle, 2018: ch. 9, para 51).

Media Literacy

International research has led to the development of a number of frameworks for media literacy, most notably provided by UNESCO and the European Union (see McDougall et al, 2018), with the following shared key competences:

- **Access:** the ability to find and use media skilfully and to share suitable and valuable information with others (including browsing, searching, filtering and managing data, information and digital content).
- **Analysis and evaluation:** the capacity to comprehend messages and use critical thinking and understanding to analyse their quality, veracity, credibility and point of view, while considering their potential effects or consequences.
- **Creation:** the capacity to create media content and confidently express oneself with an awareness of purpose, audience and composition techniques.
- **Reflection:** the capacity to apply social responsibility and ethical principles to one's own identity, communication and conduct, to develop an awareness of and to manage one's media life.
- **Action/agency:** the capacity to act and engage in citizenship through media, to become political agents in a democratic society.

In the US context, another of the project team, Paul Mihailidis (2018) observes a more optimistic 'state of the art' for an activist, participatory, civic form of media literacy, so that a project such as this should help to "....re-imagine media literacies as guided by a set of value constructs that support being in the world with others, and that advocates for social reform, change, and justice" (Mihailidis, 2018, p.xi).

Media literacy is not understood here merely as educational resilience building but instead, there is a competing, less visible and more agentive / dynamic use of media literacy (Potter and McDougall, 2017) by young people that can be potentially harnessed by education, or – if we are to re-imagine educational approaches - that education can learn from these forms of engagement.

Media Literacy vs Fake News:

The event:

The project team³ hosted 2 days of activities in London at the Olympic Park to bring together the various stakeholders in a public event (Day 1) with presentations and a panel comprised of the US and UK academics involved in the funded project and invite-only workshops with librarians, journalists, media educators and students (Day 2). The participants were invited through our networks, so represent a purposive sample, rotating through 3 workshops each of 45' duration in mixed groups: *Testing the Wheel* gathered views on online resources for media literacy that are already available, *Fake news and issues around disinformation* sought to assess why fake news matters and *A Question of Trust* asked, 'what is trust?' 'What is its function in society?' 'How can trust be developed and maintained?' The event concluded with reflections from each group of stakeholders. The theme of trust ran as a red thread through our conversations and due to the limited space available for a conference paper, only the findings from the workshop on trust are shared here.

It is important to note that trust is a key discursive marker in the societal challenge around media literacy – a loaded term that is fraught with assumptions (LSE, 2019; Buckingham, 2019b). On this topic, media

3 The project team members are: Julian McDougall (P-I), Karen Fowler-Watt, Paul Mihailidis, Monica Bulger, David Buckingham, Roman Gerodimos, Anna Feigenbaum.

educators, mainly, presented arguments for combining new resources for deconstructing media to locate its biases and / or its distorting properties, but also a cautious approach to both putting ‘trust’ at the centre of this debate. Their concern: that this constituted an opportunity for self-validation, placing media literacy in a solutionist discourse with its attendant neoliberal impulse to position citizens as responsible entirely for their own ‘uses of media literacy’. Journalists talk about trust in a different way and – in the workshops - shared clear definitions of terms, notions of building trust with audiences through transparency and verification. The tension around engaging with questions of trust was clearly articulated at the public event on day 1, so this mood music infused the workshop environment. As co-authors of this paper, one a media literacy specialist (Julian), the other a former journalist (Karen), we are situated at the intersection between media education and journalism practice, seeking to present a balanced assessment of the workshop outcomes as we take a deep dive into the question of trust.

Workshop: A Question of Trust

Trust refers to a relationship

Trust is an action (in a process)

Trust needs preconditions

Trust is limited (to a subject, specific matter)

(Blobaum, 2014)

Working with this definition of trust, the participants in each of the 3 rotations engaged with the following format:

Case study discussion: The Migrant Caravan <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/blogs-trending-45951102>

This example of the Migrant Caravan – and the BBC’s report deconstructing the various ways in which the story was framed in the winter of 2018 - was used to illustrate how media reporting can encourage us to be distrustful, how ‘fear narratives’ can be propagated and the dangers of stereotype and stigma. These atmospherics lead to a decline in trust and rising scepticism. The case study also provided an illustration of an ‘explainer’, created by a publicly funded news organisation to ‘debunk’ fakery and offered a point of reference to ground the discussion.

The workshop aims were threefold:

- to draw up a checklist of factors that contribute to building trust
- to devise an overarching statement on trust and news
- to make an innovative contribution to the toolkit as a group

The participants engaged with these aims through:

defining trust/distrust in relation to news sources – what is a trusted/distrusted source for news?

asking why we trust/distrust these sources?

questioning how we can trust/distrust them?

engaging in critical evaluation of news values in relation to trust in news e.g. impartiality

The workshop concluded with each group devising an overarching statement on trust to add to their checklist, for example: “in order to trust news media we need” OR “Trust in news means ...”. These would help the project team in designing the online ‘toolkit’.

Contributions:

There is an inherent tendency for people to believe things that aren't true, so can we change human nature?
(media educator)

As our field review had indicated, drawing up a checklist of factors that contribute to building trust was going to be challenging – even with an engaged group of key stakeholders, the climate of ‘ennui’ and helplessness permeated our discussions. ‘Where does that leave you?’ asked David Buckingham ‘It’s a really difficult question if you don’t trust anybody or anything.’ One student offered a counterpoint, that being young means being powerless so there is no choice but to listen and that is a good thing because it’s good to consume diverse opinions on social media. Trust in the media required validation – whether from media itself or from a personal approach (echo chamber).

Sources of news and trustworthiness

The checklist shaped around sources that have no hidden agenda, where stories have documented sources, quotes. A range of sources inspired trust, because ‘You can piece together your own trust from different perspectives on Twitter’ (media educator); ‘you can piece together trust from different sources’ (student). One student saw social media as a trustworthy source, but another disagreed saying that ‘people only trust it more because they use it more’ and ‘social media sensationalises’ (media educator); ‘social media keeps everyone in their own echo chamber’ (media educator). There was more of a consensus around trust being based on personal relationships – the participants were inclined to trust a news source that was recommended by a close friend or relative: Likewise, journalists who they ‘knew’ were more likely to be trusted, even if their views differed: ‘when I know where that person is coming from, I can engage with it’ (media educator); ‘I think less about the organisation and more about who is doing the writing’, (media educator). They were also more likely to trust individuals who were ‘verifiable as a primary source’ (student). However, one student sought to avoid reading the tabloids, that his parents read, ‘because I know they are trying to influence my belief’. A librarian said I don’t think I trust anything’. She would form her own opinion from looking at all angles, but ‘I would only do that for something I was interested in’ and felt that she was more sceptical now than ever before. Another librarian reads ‘extreme views from both sides and the truth is somewhere in the middle’. Confirmation - bias was generally acknowledged: One student goes with his own instincts and beliefs, a media educator noted that ‘I normally read things that align with my opinions’ and, consequently, avoids TV news. Another media educator agreed, noting that he tries to ‘maintain a critical faculty. Something that I need to do perhaps more than 10 years’ ago’. The journalists in the groups, the producers of news underlined the importance of trust between journalist and source(s), a freelance journalist emphasised the imperative of going to the primary source, as ‘people will re-write other people’s reports and not correctly source. So, find the original and cross-verify’. One journalist highlighted the importance of transparency and acknowledging mistakes to build a relationship of trust between news producers and news consumers. But that can lead to ‘over validation and over-emphasising – like a pushy teacher at the beginning of class!’ (student). Another journalist felt that ‘I want to know how they [the news organisation] got to that point’.

Trust in media is highly personal, this may be partially because verification – or ‘finding the kernel of truth’ as one librarian described the fact-checking process - is hard work. This sense was clearly evident in all 3 iterations of the trust workshop, and – as a result - individuals are generally inclined to engage in careful source and fact-checking on an ad hoc basis, since ‘no one really has the time to check multiple sources’ (media educator). Ultimately even cross-checking leads to an assessment based on personal opinion ‘and whether you believe it yourself’ (media educator).

Media literacy education

Media education was critiqued by some participants for failing to prepare students adequately for the disruptive age, ‘for the realities that [they] are going to face’ (librarian). There was general agreement on this point and some of the students felt that teaching was constrained by the curriculum, with the scope for critical debate being limited as a result: ‘No, we aren’t discussing that, it’s not for the exam’ (student). This was seen as an obstacle to building a wider understanding of news sources in relation to trustworthiness and a constraint on developing critical thinking. One media educator felt that the quality of her own teaching was constrained by questions around the veracity of news sources stemming from an abundance of poor journalism ‘I cannot stand up in front of my class and say, ‘it’s quality journalism’.

Does impartiality help or hinder building trust?

A brief critical evaluation of news values, notably impartiality and whether these can bolster trustworthy journalism elicited mixed views. Journalists largely took an organisational view: understanding ownership helps us understand news values (e.g. RT, Fox). Impartiality means different things to different people: ‘Every news source I go to has a bias or agenda. Cross-referencing is crucial to get different viewpoints’ (media educator); ‘They can have their own biases as long as what they have reported is factual’ (student); ‘if we have a concern with objectivity, then I choose a balanced mix of views rather than, just [for example] The Guardian’ (librarian).

Building a checklist:

A drive to engage with a multiplicity of sources in order to trust news, transparency and accountability from news organisations and journalists, individual, personalised approaches to verification and a frustration with the current provision and focus of media education that fails to prioritise critical thinking characterised the checklist that shaped the final over-arching statements produced by each group:

‘In order to trust news media, we need...’

Education that looks for the fuller picture as a creator as well as an observer. You need to first trust yourself and equip yourself to get as close to the truth as possible (i.e. develop critical awareness). (Rotation 3)

Access to multiple sources. Transparency so that we know where the information is coming from and who owns it. To be our own verifiers, we need critical thinking and self-reflexivity to be informed by a wider range of sources. (Rotation 1)

Transparency and critical education in tandem. It is a matter of balance and a dual responsibility’ (Rotation 2)

Reflections:

Finally, each stakeholder group convened to discuss ‘take – aways’. For the purposes of this paper, we have focused on the journalists’ reflections on the workshops. They noticed that there was little agreement between media professionals and media educators pointing to the tension that was apparent at the outset. The journalists felt that they can define and decipher fake news. The closest other group were library professionals, described more in terms of information literacy as checking sources. Students and teachers were generally either more sceptical about the term ‘fake news’ or less inclined to see a distinction between fake and real.

When asked what educators need to do in order to train media makers of the future with the requisite tools, the journalists responded:

To equip them with skills such as critical thinking and build on that foundation This basis appears to be missing.

Appreciate good journalism: Make students understand good journalism is expensive and valuing it leads to more being done. Don't just criticize. The knowledge surrounding journalism architecture and values are missing.

Conclusions

Trust in media is seen as the lifeblood of journalism's role in and contribution to people's sense making. Most of us cannot be everywhere, account for ourselves or understand the complexities of society (Brants, 2013, p.17).

Trust is problematic. Brants’ (2013) ‘top down’ view of journalism as soothsayer is no longer viable: Journalism cannot provide the solution to the fake news crisis because it has lost trust and is in crisis itself (Rusbridger, 2018); media literacy education is not providing the critical thinking skills that we need to verify, and fact check for ourselves. Yet both journalism and education are crucial to sense making in the crowded, noisy digital world, where everyone has a voice, but nobody is listening and/or feels overwhelmed by the ‘information chaos’ discerned by Rusbridger (2018). The resilience toolkit devised as an output from our Media Literacy vs Fake News project does not seek to offer solutions but mines a path through the – albeit often healthy – scepticism to provide resources that can be drawn on to develop critical thinking through engagement and so build resilience. Its design was informed by an emerging new manifesto for media literacy education (McDougall, 2019):

- Rather than producing competence frameworks for media literacy, as though it is a neutral set of skills for citizens, media education needs to enable students to apply the critical legacies of ...media literacy education on the contemporary media ecosystem.

- Educators need to adopt a dynamic approach to media literacy and increase the experiential, reflexive aspects of media practice in the curriculum. Resilience to representation is enhanced by expertise in representing.
- The critical exploration of social media, algorithms and big data form crucial aspects of the curriculum, accompanied by applied practical learning in the uses of them for social justice, as opposed to training the next generation in the use of these for even further commercial and political exploitation of one another.

At the outset, we stated that we hope the online toolkit will make a small but important contribution to tackling the complex problem of ‘fake news’, by supporting the development of curricula to help build resilience. This should, in turn equip the next generation of journalists and media consumers to engage in a dynamic way with the challenges of fake news, whilst helping those journalists (and journalism educators) currently immersed in the quest to re-imagine journalism practice and actively re-engage news consumers.

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Mapping the HE news literacy landscape in the UK

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Abstract

‘News literacy’ is a relatively well-established term in some parts of the world, notably the USA. It has risen to prominence in the UK more recently with debates at government level around a need for digital literacy education as a response to concerns around online mis- and dis-information. One voice largely absent from this debate is that of journalism educators. With this in mind, the authors set out to map news literacy teaching within HE journalism courses in the UK. Primary research was conducted between September 2018 and May 2019 using questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. This paper will include details of our findings and reflections on the development of an educators’ network and/ or suite of resources.

Introduction

News literacy, despite being a contested term, has made the UK headlines in recent months.

Last year’s report into disinformation and ‘fake news’ from the Department for Digital, Culture Media and Sport Committee called for digital literacy to be the fourth pillar of education, alongside reading, writing and maths, while the Cairncross Report of February 2019 called on the government to develop a media literacy strategy.

In this context, and amid a febrile atmosphere generated by fallout from the 2016 US election and Brexit referendum, a range of organisations - news industry players, charities and educational bodies - have established news literacy initiatives of differing scale and with divergent priorities.

Attempts are being made to cohere and map what is a fragmented news literacy landscape.

A number of these organisations, including the Guardian Foundation, BBC, Economist, National Literacy Trust and Association of Citizenship Teachers, formed the News Literacy Network in the Summer of 2018 and Ofcom, the national broadcast regulator, has identified a need to map educational initiatives as part of its remit to promote digital literacy.

This activity is focused almost exclusively on school-age children. However, it is in this context that university journalism departments are charged with educating the UK's next generation of journalists.

These are young people with the same basic need as all young (and indeed older) media consumers for education in the basics of digital and news literacy. They are young people of a generation that sees the internet as its chief source of news (Ofcom, 2019, p. 15) yet lack the ability to critically evaluate online information (Stanford History Group, 2016, p. 4) that watches on average only two minutes of television news a day (Ofcom, 2019, p. 25) and that downloads news apps but then largely ignores them in favour of social media (Flamingo for Reuters Institute, 2019, p. 28). Yet these particular young people, as student journalists, also have a specialist imperative to understand concepts such as fact-checking; verification; mis- and disinformation; sourcing; bias and filter bubbles and the industrial socio-economic context in which such practices of news production occur.

In the USA, where the debate - and the academic literature - around news literacy is more developed than in the UK, the teaching of news literacy at HE level has been the focus of significant study.

Journalism educators on that side of the Atlantic have the advantage of open-access resources that are more suitable for university-level news literacy teaching than almost anything that is currently on offer in the UK. American resources include the Stony Brook Center for News Literacy's digital resource center, and The Sift, a weekly email from the News Literacy Project, as well as the support of subject-specific membership organisations such as the National Association of Media Literacy Educators (NAMLE).

The authors, who both teach news literacy at their respective UK universities, set out in this study to establish who is doing likewise in this country. By surveying the relevant heads of department, course convenors and interested researchers at a wide range of higher education institutions, we have attempted to map the range of news literacy education the UK's journalism students are getting. This work is intended to complement ongoing work by the authors and others to interrogate news literacy initiatives at schools level. Our second research objective was to assess the viability of a network of HE news literacy educators in the UK, echoing the DCMS committee's suggestion that there is pedagogical advantage to be drawn from working together in this area. Our findings suggest that there is appetite among journalism academics for some form of resource to support news literacy teaching.

News Literacy – literature review

The term news literacy has origins in the academy and in journalism itself.

The standalone body of literature on news literacy is relatively young and it has sprung both from the more established theoretical traditions of media literacy as well as from the less academically-minded priorities and initiatives driven by the news industry and journalists themselves.

Before examining its development as an academic discipline, its parallel growth as a method of teaching – often led by journalism educators or news providers – will be scrutinised.

This approach advocates or delivers what might be described as a pragmatic or skills-based approach to news literacy, with a focus on evaluating news outputs and differentiating 'legitimate' journalism from other forms of information.

It was pioneered by Howard Schneider, the executive director of the Center for News Literacy at Stony Brook University in the US and Alan Miller, the founder and CEO of the philanthropically funded News Literacy Project in the US.

The Stony Brook Center for News Literacy was founded in 2006 with multi-million dollar funding from the Knight Foundation and set out to deliver a 14-week news literacy programme to thousands of students majoring in journalism and a range of other subjects.

Its stated aim is 'to help students understand how journalism works and why information is such a powerful force for good and ill in modern societies', and the Center has built a network of US and overseas partner institutions that deliver part or all of its course (centerfornewsliteracy.org, accessed 15 May 2019).

The News Literacy Project, founded in 2008 by Miller, a former Los Angeles Times investigative reporter, has a similar aim. It is funded by a growing array of philanthropists and tech platforms including Apple, Facebook and the Knight Foundation, and in its mission statement declares that The News Literacy Project ‘empowers educators to teach children the skills they need to become smart, active consumers of news and information and engaged, informed participants in our democracy’ (newlit.org, accessed 15 May 2019). Part of their outreach work includes a weekly email to educators entitled ‘The Sift’, which suggests ways in which that week’s news agenda could be deployed in the teaching of news literacy concepts.

Initiatives such as the NLP and Stony Brook have an emphasis on distinguishing what they perceive as legitimate, established news norms from all else, and use practising journalists in their resources.

The UK’s newly-formed News Literacy Network, whose members are primarily educators and representatives of the news media, has adopted the definition used by Stony Brook University, that news literacy is: ‘The ability to use critical thinking to judge the reliability and credibility of information, whether it comes via print, television or the internet’ (centerfornewsliteracy.org, accessed 15 May 2019)

This, arguably, could encompass material far beyond the boundaries of what could be categorised as news. Indeed globally, the news literacy movement is primarily concerned with enabling citizens to distinguish news online from other content such as mis- and dis-information and propaganda alongside initiatives to rebuild public trust in news. Kenya’s fact-checking platform Pesacheck and Cuny’s News Integrity Initiative are prominent examples of such projects.

Given that news literacy as a method of teaching is relatively new, it is perhaps unsurprising that its research and theoretical underpinnings are also in their infancy. Indeed, as Fleming notes, the ‘literature on news literacy specifically is limited given the label news literacy is relatively new’ (Fleming, 2014 p.148). However, news literacy as an academic discipline is best understood as a subset of media literacy – though as Potter (2010, p. 675) explains, it is a term that itself ‘means many different things to different people’

Inevitably, skills-based news literacy teaching programmes such as those described above have attracted interest from within the academy.

Maksl, Ashley and Craft (2015, p.29) explicitly link the motivations behind the news literacy movement with the financial crisis facing the news industry: ‘For professional journalism, improving news literacy is partly a matter of economic survival, a way of sustaining demand for the type of content professional journalists provide, but also of fulfilling its role to help citizens be adequately informed to participate in democratic life.’

Meanwhile, the media literacy scholar Renee Hobbs (2010, p5) wrote of the ‘problematic practice’ of teaching about news ‘exclusively from a journalist’s point of view... telling war stories about the good ol’ days does not inherently work to develop critical thinking and communication skills among students’.

She also warned that to ‘focus on the ideals of journalism is mere propaganda if it is blind to the realities of contemporary journalism, where partisan politics and smear-fests are the surest way to build audiences’. Some programmes, Hobbs argues, should be termed news appreciation rather than news literacy, with their narrow and focused aim: to increase people’s positive regard and appreciation for journalism (Hobbs, 2010, p.5).

Prominent critical media literacy scholars such as Douglas Kellner and Jeff Share argue that any readings of the news should incorporate theories of political economy of the media and cultural theories around audiences (2007, p.19).

This interest, sometimes critical, in practical news literacy programmes offered by Stony Brook, the NLP and others gained more currency when, as Nielsen and Graves (2017, p.1) noted, ‘the flow of misinformation around the 2016 US presidential election put the problem of “fake news” on the agenda all over the world’.

Bulger and Davison (2018 p.1) outline how, in the US over the following year, the media literacy movement quickly became ‘a center of gravity for countering “fake news”’. They describe a ‘steady stream of announcements about media literacy’ as educators, legislators, philanthropists and technologists raced to push resources towards media literacy programmes (Bulger and Davison, 2018, p.5).

In the UK context, both news literacy education and the literature surrounding it are significantly less well developed than in the US. However, there are signs that a similar debate around the funding and priorities of news literacy are beginning to develop.

As David Buckingham highlighted in a March 2019 blog post: ‘In the wake of growing concerns over ‘fake news’ and disinformation, many media organisations [in the UK] are getting involved in teaching what

they call “news literacy”.’

There are a growing number of voices in academic (Livingstone, 2018) and policy (DCMS) circles that argue that the current, piecemeal offer is inadequate and that digital literacy must be somehow embedded in the schools curriculum.

In the current absence of this, however, university journalism departments are welcoming students who for the most part have had little or no explicit news literacy education.

These teenagers are exposed to the same ‘extraordinary landscape of information abundance’ and enormous ‘literacy burden’ as other citizens, as noted by McDougall and Pereira in their UK country report for the European Literacy Network (2017, p. 14).

As long ago as 1999, Reese called - in a US context - for journalism departments to create not just trainee journalists but a press-literate public (1999, p. 70). Fleming (2012, p. 18) writes in her PhD thesis on Stonybrook’s programme that Schneider’s central idea in establishing the Center for News Literacy was that by teaching these skills, journalism departments could go from being the providers of professional journalism training, peripheral to their wider institutions, to having an essential role in equipping the wider student body to deal with communications revolution. This was and is an enormous ambition, and there are those at the other end of the spectrum who believe that news literacy has no place on a journalism degree. This study hopes to fill a gap in the literature by shining some light on the views of journalism academics in the UK.

Study and Method

The purpose of the survey was to gain the widest possible picture of the current state of news literacy teaching on journalism courses at UK universities. This was a qualitative research project involving an online survey followed by a series of semi-structured interviews with a sample of those who completed that survey. The aim of the interviews, which are ongoing at the time of writing, is to enrich the survey data with in-depth questioning of selected academics about their news literacy teaching. Our key research questions were:

- 1) To what extent is news literacy being taught on undergraduate journalism programmes in the UK?
- 2) How much appetite is there within the journalism academy to increase the amount of news literacy that is taught and, to the extent that there is appetite, what resources would be helpful in making this happen?

Context

The researchers created an online survey, administered using the Qualtrics programme and distributed to prospective respondents via personalised links sent to their institutional email addresses via this programme.

The inclusion criteria for the survey sample were heads of journalism departments and journalism course convenors at recognised HE institutions that were included in the 2018 (most recent) Guardian league table for undergraduate degrees in journalism, or similar programmes including a strong element of journalism, in the UK.

Participants

Publicly available email addresses were found using university websites. Respondents were invited to complete the survey, but also given the option of forwarding their personalised link to another member of their journalism department who might have more appropriate knowledge of the news literacy taught at that institution.

The Qualtrics software enabled the researchers to ensure that no more than one response was obtained from any one institution.

The original email containing a link to the survey was sent to 55 BA journalism programme convenors on

A subsequent four reminder emails were sent, the last on April 17 2019.

The survey was kept intentionally brief, in order to maximise response rate, and was pilot tested on a small convenience sample of colleagues before being circulated. It asked for basic factual details such as whether news literacy is taught on the journalism course and at what level, as well as for the respondent’s own definition of news literacy and a breakdown of the concepts they teach that could be considered news literacy (for example, mis- and dis-information). The survey also asked respondents to indicate whether they would be interested in introducing more news literacy teaching, which resources if any would support that teaching (e.g. a website featuring open-access resources, or an e-newsletter), and what they already knew about pre-existing news literacy resources.

A total of 32 academic members of staff participated, although three who started the survey did not complete it.

Data collection

There were 29 valid responses from a sample size of 55, giving a response rate of 53 per cent.

Three surveys were started and not finished, hence for all surveys started, there was a 91 per cent completion rate. Those that started the survey but did not complete it answered only question one (Have you heard of the term news literacy before?).

The data from the survey is presented here in anonymised form. It should be noted that the researchers’ own institutions, where in both cases news literacy is taught at Level 4 (first year undergraduate) as a standalone subject (although in differing levels of detail), do not feature in the survey data.

Survey respondents were asked to submit their email address if they would be willing to be contacted by the researchers in relation to the second phase of the project. Of the 29 survey respondents, 16 submitted email addresses. The interviewing of these respondents is ongoing and forms the next stage of our research.

Findings

Participants demonstrated a strong awareness of the term news literacy. Of the 32 respondents to question one (Have you heard of the term news literacy?) only one responded in the negative. (see figure 1).

News literacy survey
May 17, 2019 4:51 AM MDT

Q5 - Have you heard of the term news literacy before?

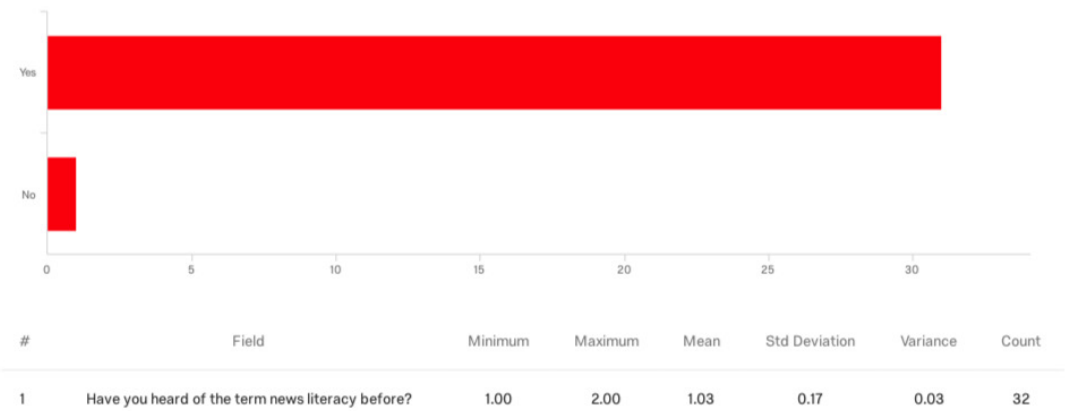


Figure 1: Q5 - have you heard of news literacy?

Participants who answered the above question in the positive were then asked to define, using a free text box, what they understood by ‘news literacy’. There were 23 responses to this question.

The responses demonstrated a broad understanding of the term, with answers ranging from ‘the ability to read and consume news in a critically effective way’ to ‘understanding the language of news’ or simply ‘understanding news’.

Others saw news literacy as teaching how to ‘sift fact from fiction’, ‘spot fake news’ and the ability to ‘distinguish news that is based on reliable fact from propaganda and fake news’.

The next question asked whether participants taught news literacy as a stand-alone subject on the programmes they convened or work on.

Of the 28 eligible to respond to this question, two answered yes while 26 said no.

The participants were then presented with a list of concepts that the researchers believe fall under the subject ‘news literacy’ and asked to indicate which, if any, they teach on their courses. The table below (figure 2) shows the concepts offered and the response rates. Responses indicated that all the listed concepts are widely taught with the most popular, fake news and mis-information, selected by 27 respondents.

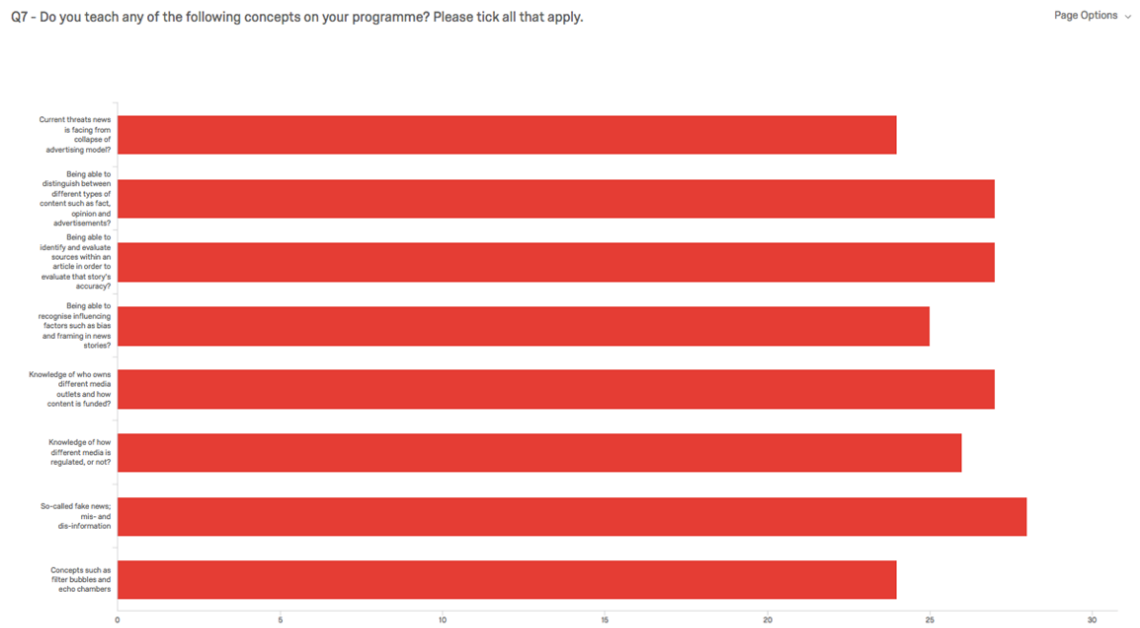


Figure 2: Do you teach any of these concepts?

The next question sought to establish any appetite among participants for introducing stand-alone news literacy workshops, or modules, on to their programmes.

This elicited a strong response, with 19 responding in the affirmative (nine answered definitely yes, four answered probably yes and six answered might or might not). Three participants replied ‘probably not’ and five said they were already doing so.

For those who responded in the negative to the above question, a follow-up question asked why. Responses were again varied but a theme that emerged is summed up by this answer: ‘We already do – but not as a stand-alone subject. It underpins a good deal of our teaching.’

Participants were asked whether they were aware of, or working with, any external organisations offering news literacy training or teaching and of the 21 respondents five replied yes while 16 said no.

Of these, when prompted to list these organisations, one respondent cited the Media Diversity Institute, another listed Google News Labs and the BBC.

One participant listed several: KMTV, BBC News, Sky News, Society of Editors, National Council for the Training of Journalists, KM Media Group, Front Line Club, Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism.

While all of these organisations undoubtedly offer journalism training of some form, we would argue that not all of them run what could be described as news literacy initiatives - a point which is discussed later in this paper.

Finally, participants were asked what kind of resources for news literacy teaching they would be interested in and were able to tick anywhere between none and all four of the options provided, and/or specify others using a free text box. Of the four, a public website featuring downloadable resources for news literacy teaching was the most popular with 17 of the respondents selecting it as an option.

Discussion/ conclusion

This study explored the term news literacy and how it is understood by academics working on, and in most cases leading, over half the undergraduate journalism courses taught at widely recognised higher education institutions in the UK. It asked what the appetite might be for any shared resources and sought to survey awareness of the broader news literacy movement in the UK.

The key finding from this sample is that a standalone subject explicitly defined as ‘news literacy’ features [almost] nowhere outside of the researchers’ own institutions, Liverpool John Moores and Goldsmiths, which do not feature in the survey statistics. At LJMU, news literacy is taught as a series of 10 one-hour workshops within a Level 4, semester one module called Studying as Journalists. At Goldsmiths, news literacy workshops are embedded in the term one Level 4 module Introduction to Multimedia Journalism.

However, as outlined above, a large majority of respondents stated that they teach most or all of the concepts that the researchers highlighted as potential constituents of a news literacy syllabus. In short, there is a good deal of what might reasonably be considered ‘news literacy’ teaching going on within the UK’s undergraduate journalism programmes, but rarely is it thought of - or described to students - in those terms.

One reason for this might be that a notable feature of the nascent news literacy movement in the UK, which has seen multiple actors from the media industry and third sector establish educational initiatives of varying scale and focus, is that news literacy is itself a contested term with different definitions that reflect the priorities and perspectives of those different actors.

As previously discussed, the UK News Literacy Network, established in August 2018 as a forum for educators, news platforms and literacy advocates, adopted the Stony Brook definition that news literacy is the ‘ability to use critical thinking skills to judge the reliability and credibility of news reports, whether they come via print, television, the internet or social media’.

However, what this means in practice differs significantly even between member organisations of the NLN.

Our survey indicates that this divergence is present within the journalism academy.

As noted above, when asked to define news literacy, the survey participants offered a range of answers, some more closely aligned to the Stony Brook definition than others.

Of the 23 recorded responses to this question, five replied broadly that news literacy was about how to sift or identify news as distinct from other content (be it opinion, propaganda or advertising). One respondent replied: ‘The ability to sift fact from fiction in contemporary communication’.

Of the 18 other responses, the majority were concerned with news literacy as a close reading of the news, best encapsulated by this response: ‘News literacy is the ability to critically read and interpret the news.’

This divergence in responses speaks to the broader arguments outlined above as to what news literacy is or should be in the pre-university setting.

Bulger and Davison (2018, p.5) note that media literacy in the US has become the centre of gravity for countering fake news.

This is also the case in the UK, where the news industry is often offered as part of the solution to countering the problems of ‘fake news’.

For example the DCMS’ interim report on fake news (DCMS, 2018, p.62) states, in a section discussing news literacy initiatives in the UK, how ‘The Times and The Sunday Times have recently launched a media literacy scheme in schools, to help pupils how to spot “fake news”. The scheme will be available for pupils in secondary schools, colleges and sixth form. The programme is in partnership with News UK’s News Academy’.

Further, Dame Frances Cairncross in her February 2019 review into the future of journalism calls for the government ‘to develop a media literacy strategy working with Ofcom, the online platforms and news publishers and broadcaster’ (Cairncross, 2019 p.10).

The authors do not reject the potential for the news media industry to play a useful role in the development of news literacy education. However, the findings of this survey indicate that HE journalism educators would argue that any comprehensive news literacy initiative must include scrutiny of our news platforms and providers themselves. For citizens - and particularly trainee journalism students - to be truly news literate, a spotlight must be shone over mainstream news production process as well as over the purveyors of mis- and dis-information known to be acting both in the UK and globally.

As one respondent said: 'News literacy is being able to understand the processes and attitudes which lead to an event becoming a news report, including bias, ownerships, propaganda, the limitations of newsgathering, reporting techniques and traditions.'

As noted above, some 70 per cent of participants when asked whether they would be interested in introducing this to their own journalism courses as a standalone subject said that they would definitely or might be interested.

Of this group, all had stated they already teach at least six of the [eight] news literacy concepts that might be expected to feature within a so-defined news literacy syllabus.

It is worth noting that the concept most respondents said they taught was that of so-called fake news, or mis- and dis-information. This is perhaps not surprising given the UK context as set out above, but the answer does not allow at this stage for further unpicking of how it is taught and in what context.

This indicates that there is some level of interest within the journalism academy in the idea of introducing news literacy as a discrete subject. It should be noted, however, that early interview data for the next phase of research indicates resistance from some quarters to the idea of ring-fencing news literacy as a separate and finite portion of a journalism course. One survey respondent who said he 'probably would' be interested in introducing a standalone news literacy element commented during interview that on reflection he had decided against the idea because, in effect, his entire degree programme is in some senses news literacy, and that journalism educators should not be teaching those skills in isolation from their wider courses.

This echoes a sentiment shared by other interviewees; a journalism course inherently teaches news literacy and therefore there is little need to explicitly teach it.

The researchers do not reject this. However, we have both seen encouraging results in terms of student performance and feedback since introducing news literacy teaching, explicitly defined as such, to our undergraduate degree courses.

We argue therefore that there is merit in colleagues considering the pedagogic value of drawing together the various concepts and practical, critical skills that constitute basic news literacy into a dedicated module, or part of a module. This does not preclude such concepts also being embedded across the course as a whole.

We define basic news literacy as the ability to analyse critically both content and crucially, the context in which it has been created.

While news literacy education within society at large must necessarily be tailored to suit different demographic groups and levels of education, we believe that wherever possible, and certainly for journalism students, news literacy teaching must include issues of ownership, and how financial, political and logistical realities shape the news that people read.

If these concepts outlined above are under the umbrella of one module, or part of a module, all the better. Where this is not appropriate or possible, and such concepts are more diffused throughout the course, we would argue that students might benefit from lecturers making explicit the importance of critical analysis and understanding of the news and its political and economic context, rather than assuming that this is evident to them.

We question whether the majority of incoming students possess the meta-cognitive skills necessary to understand that what they are learning are news and digital literacy skills unless that point is made explicit.

These beliefs are backed up by a growing body of information, referenced above in our introduction, that reveals how ill-equipped most young people are to navigate information in an online context, and understand the provenance of what they are reading.

We argue that there is potential value in students being aware that they are learning these skills, and in having their importance explained rather than left implicit.

This argument is backed up from several of our academic interviewees from stage two of this project (currently unpublished). One respondent said: 'It is interesting to think about teaching it as opposed to "they'll pick it up by osmosis"' while another said: 'We do need to point out to them that this is news literacy. I'm sold on that idea.' Another respondent said: 'I think labels do help - I think if you explain 'this is now what

we are doing' that can be really helpful for students.'

We furthermore argue that students should be encouraged to develop and use their news literacy skills in their function as news consumers and citizens, as well as in their capacity as students and content creators. Finally, we suggest that one reason for the journalism academy's absence from the wider policy and industry discussion around news literacy is that we are not explicit about our engagement with and expertise around teaching these kinds of concepts even though, as our survey suggests, they are being widely taught within undergraduate courses.

We as journalism academics do not connect our work with the growing public conversation because many of us don't talk - or perhaps even think - about it in the same terms.

There was an interest from participants in the creation of some shared teaching resources around news literacy, with a website hosting exercises being the most popular choice (as noted above). However, during interviews for the second phase of this project several respondents expressed doubt they would have the time to engage properly with the content and indicated they were more comfortable using their own examples.

There were only five positive answers (out of 21) to the question: 'Are you aware of, or working with, any external organisation(s) who offer news literacy training or teaching?'

Of those mentioned (outlined above in the findings section) institutions such as the Frontline Club and the NCTJ are not, to our knowledge, carrying out explicit news literacy initiatives though are working in closely related fields such as fact checking and verification – once again pointing to the diverging definitions of news literacy that abound.

Further, given the multiplicity of news literacy initiatives that have launched in the UK over the past two years, and the attention given to the subject in reports by Dame Francis Cairncross (2019) and the DCMS Committee, (2018,9) it is interesting that journalism academics do not appear to have registered in detail the various projects that have launched. This might reflect the fact that most of the activity is directed at schools level.

It might too reflect that the majority of journalism educators surveyed for this article are more concerned with teaching students how to perform critical readings of the news in order for them to become news literate. As discussed, many of the news literacy initiatives mentioned above are more concerned with setting 'quality news' apart from other forms of online information.

The researchers believe therefore that these findings indicate a gulf between policy makers, industry and journalism academics that could usefully be bridged in the interests of developing the coherent and unified approach to news/ critical digital literacy called for by parliamentarians.

An approach which, rather than leaving the work of news literacy to the news providers, scrutinises their output too.

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Private Eye Polly Fillers – assisting students who seek to write personal stories

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When we think of untold stories, we often focus on those from ethnic minorities, socially and economically disadvantaged groups, people with less common sexual orientations or gender definitions and so forth, as explored by such as Hall, Bourdieu, Chomsky, Hoggart, Kristeva, Butler et al.

London Metropolitan University claims to be the HEI with the largest proportion of students from ethnic minorities and social disadvantaged groups. Many of our students are burning to tell their stories. How far is it our duty to assist them?

This paper is by way of a cautionary note. I will explore four case studies from our own student body to highlight some ethical dilemmas in teaching students how to mine their own difficulties for good copy.

Whilst some hacks enjoy acting as Private Eye Polly Fillers or Sarah Vains, this may be a perilous path for young people who have scarcely managed their way out of difficult situations which may offer important insights into how society works, but also throw the spotlight on them.

The four case studies concern the areas of crime, child protection, health and sexuality. Legal considerations aside, focusing on the duty of care which educators owe to their students, even those who are legally adults, is one useful guideline. There is also the question of modelling ethical journalistic practice.

If a writer is also involved in an article which reveals personal details, how far should they afford themselves the consideration which we are teaching them to extend to vulnerable subjects?

Health

My first case study is about **health**. One of our students, let's call her A, was keen to explore her contention that eczema, from which she suffered, tips with the use of steroid creams from becoming an auto-immune disorder to becoming one of addiction to medication, resulting in "red skin syndrome" or Red Lobster. This would be the subject of her final year projection – a 6,000 word piece of journalism backed up by essay and literature review. She had previously written frankly on social media about her sexual proclivities – and had had some trolling as a result. She shrugged this off, but we were concerned that she might incur much more unwarranted attention if she used her own experience as the lynch pin for her final-year project.

We worked with her to shift the focus of her project from a personal piece to a survey of this condition, using experts, other sufferers, databases and so on. We pushed her towards a writing style which could incorporate her own sassiness and personality, but not reveal too much of a difficult personal struggle. Especially as we encourage our granduands to publish their stories on blogs and social media.

Here is what changed

The first draft of the project plan:

Skin. Everyone has it. Including you. Now imagine your skin has been replaced. Substituted for a red sleeve rapidly spreading its way across your whole body. You're constantly in pain but there's nothing you can do but let it surpass. It's not really you but you can't hide it. I know what it is like and I want to tell you how to

.....

The beginning of the final project:

Eczema is one of the most common skin conditions in the world, affecting up to 20% of children and 1-3% of

adults worldwide. Itchy, red, dry and cracked skin, eczema, also known as dermatitis, can be a pretty shitty ride for a lot of individuals. But what happens when the eczema becomes more than just an itch? What if it ends up taking over your life?

A billion-pound business, the steroid industry is an incredibly trendy one to say the least. Have a small patch of eczema on your leg? Rub in some steroid cream and see your skin heal within a matter of days. But just how beneficial is this quick-fix? And who's to say the eczema won't return... for the worse?

But we weren't able to impose our boring old middle-aged ideas of journalistic impartiality on her entirely.....as her ending shows

SO WHAT NEXT?

Despite Aron's comments, us at COSMO are whole heartedly convinced Topical Steroid Addiction exists. However, proving this to an entire generation is physically impossible without your help. You've read the stories, you've seen the pictures and you've seen the improvement – without withdrawing these girls would still be suffering.

Without spreading the word, those will continue to suffer and will continue to be prescribed more corticosteroids by dermatologists unknowing to the dangers they potentially cause.

If you believe you or a loved one is suffering from Topical Steroid Addiction, please visit ITSAN for more advice.

Love from a TSW survivor xo

You can perhaps see why our marker commented:

For the future, try leaving out "I" and "me" - the narrative reads better if the narrator is invisible.

Learning point: Help students transform personal accounts into general ones

Child protection/safeguarding

Some students give you a funny feeling. My experience over the last couple of years is that one should heed those feelings. We'll call this student B. I have changed quite a few details of this case.

B was a lively, pretty girl who every early in her first year had a great many stories to tell about herself – that she had turned down a scholarship to a dance college, that she lived with her grandmother, that she had travelled widely. The details available to me showed that she had only just turned 18 – and therefore her fees were paid for as a further education student. At class in week 6, she turned up in tears, saying she had been assaulted by an intruder in her flat and had spent the night walking the streets. The other students rallied around her, and she decided to remain in class. She had meetings with Victim Support.

Quite soon after this, we had a class discussion about family and she volunteered that "you can't always trust your mother" – an assertion which horrified the others in class.

Later we had a writing exercise about the account about a Yazidi girl who had been abducted in Iraq, her family murdered. She had managed to escape rape and had fled with the help of cousins. B objected to this material, saying that one couldn't ask people who had been raped to report on rape. Stupidly, I treated this as an academic objection and pointed out that journalists have to cover all manner of awful things. She complied with the task, but with hindsight, I think I lost her trust at this point. Fast-forward to a couple of months later, when her attendance had become erratic and I suddenly get an email

I'm just messaging to you let you know that I was

assaulted on Friday by a student at London metropolitan university on my way home.

I'm horrified. I've spent most of my weekend in hospital. I've been in so much pain. I have reported him to the police but in regards to safety at the university I just don't know.

I have spoken to Neil from the care leavers team, I have made him aware and he's contacted student services to see how this can proceed. I did also make Wendy aware. I don't want him anywhere near me.

I would like to come to the event, I'm trying to get a friend to escort me there. I'm so shaken up! Just horrified!

Obviously, I was also horrified. This was the first notification I had that B had been in care. I tried to find out what had happened. In brief, B accused a fellow student of having assaulted her on the tube. The matter was left with the transport police, who were very assiduous in urging us to exclude the other student. Yet, because I knew the other student, a slight young man who was also gay, I was doubtful from the first. In private, a colleague and I asked him what had happened and his account was completely at variance to hers, as was that of a third student who had been on a very crowded train. He showed us texts they had exchanged, which were friendly over the time that she said she had been in hospital.

Matters came to a head when B turned up to class and demanded that he be excluded as he made her feel unsafe (they were sitting at opposite ends of the room). I had to explain that nothing had been proved against him and that we could not be judge and jury and privilege her account over his. She demanded to see the team in private in the break and aggressively demanded "would you treat your own daughter like this?" I pointed out that he had not even looked at her during class, much less said or done anything to make her unsafe. She got campus security to come in and remove her stuff.

Anyone like to guess what had happened and how we found out? In brief, there is closed circuit TV on all tube trains. The footage bore out his version, not hers. She had not been in hospital that weekend. However, I found out that there were various legal order in force on this young women, relating to her safety, gang members and trafficking..

Had we simply acted on B's story, the young man could have been lost his student status and been deported.

I took three learning points from this.

- 1) Be more careful about students' objections to material. Never mind if "in the real world" journalists cover such material willy-nilly. As educators, we have a duty of care which overrides this.**
- 2) Be neutral with any allegations which involve outside agencies. You have to protect the accused as well as the accuser.**
- 3) Be aware that you never know your students' back story. It may be extreme.**

Sexuality

"Slut or no slut, I don't deserve to be raped" proclaimed student C's project plan. Sadly, this is not an uncommon experience for our young female students. In her case, we worked hard to uphold her anger and protect her vulnerability. Her final project was entitled "The word that hurts us all" and drew on a variety of interviews, from victims, to lawyers to police and spokespeople for charities. She has got a good job in the media and has written to thank us for helping her develop professional skills.

Last term, however, I was approached by student D. D is from Africa and is living far from the university with family members who are very censorious of her actions. She was raped by a man whom she trusted, who dragged her into the bushes in daylight. She came to me because she had been missing classes, was late to classes and behind with her work, having missed deadlines. I had emailed her a few times asking to know what was going on. She couldn't concentrate. Her story emerged haltingly, with many tears. She had, of course, washed immediately, so had not had physical evidence; she had taken a week to approach a Sexual Health Clinic; she had taken a month to approach student counselling and at the time of the meeting, had not yet told her relatives with whom she lived. Ridiculously, what I was able to do for her was help her fill in a mitigating circumstances form. Of course, I was also telling her that she was not, as she felt, dirty and sullied, that her family must support her (I am not so sure about this, by the way, judging from a couple of other similar stories) and that she must go however belatedly to the police. She didn't do this. She is, however, still working on her assessments at the time of writing.

Learning point: Always try and find the real reason for student absence

Crime

I've had two student tackle knife crime in successful media projects. Both had had terrible experiences. One – let's call her student E – had lost a brother to it. The other – let's call him F – had seen his best friend

stabbed to death. He ran away from his chaotic home and lived hand to mouth for years before coming to university.

Both were consumed by the desire to transform their own horror into something positive. F sat with me for many hours, talking about who to interview and how to create a podcast that would hit home. His final piece, which linked politicians, community leaders, street youth, an ex-policeman and a support group which connected the mothers of victims with the mothers of murderers, made me cry.

E is a single mother who strung her amazing footage of police brutality, of drill music and talking heads, of statistics and analysis, on the thread of what could she tell her nine-year old son. She has also spent time weeping in my office.

In both these cases, I can say that creating a journalistic product was able to help students frame and gain control of their adverse experiences. There is no cure for these awful events, but individuals can gain some purchase on their reactions. That can be helped by simply saying: “It might work better if you had an expert here”; or “If you cut down the crying, you might let the audience cry.”

E had a job at the BBC, F went on to do a Master’s in documentary film.

Learning point: Trust students to know what they need to say: protect them by giving them professional skills.

Challenging Neoliberalism: standing up for the 'academic' in the study of journalism

Margaret Hughes, University of the West of Scotland; Deirdre O'Neill, independent researcher

In this era of 'post-truth' and neoliberal ideology, it is more important than ever that those involved in journalism and journalism education keep returning to the fundamental questions of 'what is journalism for?' and 'what is its role in society?' (Zelizer, 2018).

We live in an age where journalism is being co-opted to disseminate ideology, propaganda, distortions, disinformation and outright lies. While it can be argued that it was ever thus, we need to recognise that the rules of engagement have changed and that there is a battle for ideas and truth where journalism can play either an honourable or dishonourable role. While recognising that journalism education will not be able to address all aspects of a disrupted public sphere, where trust in politicians and the news media has led to fractured publics and a lack of confidence in the news media's ability to inform and educate audiences on the important issues in society (Edelman, 2018), the de-legitimisation of liberal democracies and mainstream media along with the rise of the alt-right (Bennett and Livingstone, 2018), it still has a useful and necessary role.

Education must provide a forum for highlighting and debating the widest societal issues, and for considering methods of 'resetting' journalism (Zelizer, 2018), challenging the normative practices of Western journalism that have failed to deal with iconoclasts like Trump and Putin, who do not play by the 'journalistic rules'. As Gregorian (2008) rightly asserts, journalism is indeed a 'vital profession', which requires its practitioners to possess the knowledge and skills required to hold to account the powerful in society and, as such, requires an educational framework that facilitates this. Furthermore, it challenges us as journalism educators to understand the wider role of the discipline, as Berger and Foote (2013, p.9) state: 'The ultimate goal of journalism education...is to empower not only the student but journalism itself...the quality of journalism education is supposed to have an impact on the quality of citizenship and society. Journalism education educates not only practitioners but the public as well.'

This paper asks if journalism education is being enabled to do that successfully.

Not only is this recognized within the academy but more widely; indeed according to UNESCO (2007, p.9)

Newsrooms that are staffed by well-trained and critically minded journalists are likely to positively influence the processes of democracy and development in their societies ... A quality journalism education is a guarantor not only of democracy and development, but also of press freedom itself.

Today journalism degrees are offered at more than 60 UK HE institutions (UCAS, 2019) and this illustrates the changed shape of how journalism training and education is happening within the UK, driven by both a political culture, which has espoused higher education for all, and by a news media whose business models have changed in response to technological advances that have impacted on news creation, delivery and consumption.

We can now say journalism education's place in the academy has been assured for several decades in the UK, far longer in the US and other countries, and quite rightly so. As Gregorian states: 'Journalism, the quintessential knowledge profession, deserves the best-educated and trained practitioners' (2008, p.4).

To help achieve this, the journalism education curriculum needs to ensure spaces for teaching students about the landscape and structures of news media, their technological, economic and ideological drivers, and the media's relationship with power and elites. This requires any study of journalism within the academy, with its concomitant skills of critical thinking and analysis, to be central to higher education journalism programmes. Furthermore, an underpinning principle in the design of journalism education is the need

to design degrees that teach practice-based skills but which, as Gregorian (cited in Connell) suggests, 'are [places] where students would acquire not only skills but the intellectual depth and curiosity and the commitment to honesty and high ethical standards they will need to uphold the core values of this vital profession' (2008, p.2).

It is this 'academic' component of the curriculum that we believe should be protected, even prioritised, despite other demands on the curriculum. With ever-increasing technical and specialist skills required in the news and communications industry it can be all too easy to squeeze out critical study and analysis of the news media in an already crowded timetable. While the question of 'what journalism is for?' remains pertinent, those delivering journalism education within higher education must further ask 'what needs to be included in the journalism curriculum?' and 'what is journalism education at university level for?' It is evident that there needs to be a greater shared discourse between the academy and the news media in respect of both issues. But this remains challenging terrain, not least because of the rather hostile environment in which journalism and media courses are provided, and viewed by the industry. As Skinner *et al* state: 'Media owners and managers do not generally welcome critical perspectives on media practices, especially if they are contrary to commercial considerations' (2001, p.35).

Disinvestment in training by news organisations over the last few decades has coincided with the rise in what can be loosely called 'vocational degrees', with a rapid expansion in journalism degree programmes as part of the marketisation of universities, but also as a means for the news media to find its new entrants.

The reduction in training programmes within news organisations over the last 20 years also coincided, in the UK, with the introduction of tuition fees for students, meaning students are now effectively paying a high price for their own training and education in a field where jobs are becoming more precarious. The increasingly competitive market in which universities operate also means programmes can fall prey to what is popular with stakeholders rather than what is required (Poerksen, 2010; Deuze, 2006), a prime example of the free market encroaching on the field of education, long held as a treasured public service and civic responsibility in the UK.

For many UK students university involves massive debt, therefore public debates about 'value for money' and the 'employability' of graduates are prominent. Furthermore, government bodies and league tables exert pressure by assessing institutions' performance by criteria that include employability rates for academic programmes.

It is important to point out that the 'academisation' of journalism – now largely delivered in the UK and other countries as a degree subject (Deuze, 2006) - has presented both opportunities and challenges for universities across the world (Zelizer, 2013). On the positive side, it provides room for those in the academy with the opportunity to analyse and critically think about journalism, its role and influence, issues of standards, quality and ethics. However, for the most part many academic programmes have been driven to meet the needs of an industry transformed, and at times overwhelmed, by the technological changes imposed upon it. That is not to say that these changes have not brought positive change and development, they certainly have, but they have also emphasised the turbulent, and still evolutionary, journey that journalism is on in the 21st century.

While the UK news media was happy to shift the burden of the cost of training to individuals paying for their degrees, many in the industry continue to be vocal about what they believe should be in the curriculum, despite disinvesting in training costs. Academic knowledge was not always welcomed by everyone in the industry or accommodated by industry accreditation bodies. There was – and still is – a lack of recognition of the way universities work, what they are for, and what studying for a journalism degree entails.

Some universities aimed for industry accreditation in order to stand out in a crowded 'market', even though the emphasis here was on narrow skills training. Thus, some parts of the industry and their representatives in accreditation bodies continue to dictate and, at times, disparage what universities teach and research, with the emphasis falling inevitably on practical skills' development rather than on critical and analytical thinking. It could be argued that accreditation further embeds the notion of neoliberalism into the fabric of journalism education with a focus solely on collapsing education and training into each other with a view to how commercially successful both students and programmes will be - it thus reduces the basis of education to the commercial transactions that sit at the heart of neoliberalism.

This drive to satisfy industry expectation, or perhaps more broadly stakeholder expectation, is well exemplified by this drive for professional/industry accreditation. This appears to be a key objective of many universities, particularly those categorised as the post-92 universities, in part because it is believed that this illustrates the importance of having the programme content scrutinised by industry professionals (despite the fact this industry consultation customarily takes place as part of any validation of any new degree

programme) and that it offers assurance to the markets, and the programme stakeholders, that the course content is meeting the standards and expectations of the industry. However, independent research into the value of professional accreditation and its impact on recruitment and employment for students has rarely been undertaken (Canter, 2015) which makes it challenging to prove or disprove its worth. Given that most accreditation bodies largely focus on the practice-based elements of programmes, with most critique around non-practice being restricted to areas such as law, politics and ethics, it does raise issues around the necessity for accreditation beyond a hallmark that is driven by market demands and the desire of recruitment and marketing departments to have this tick of approval.

In our experience, accrediting bodies serving the industry are far more interested in universities teaching technical skills, not producing thoughtful employees who may question 'why things are done in the way they are done'. It could be argued that slavish adherence to meeting the needs of commercial accreditation bodies is at worst anti-intellectual and at best unimaginative in terms of how we perceive, understand and create journalism education within the academy.

This is set against a broader debate among UK politicians and the news media that fuels criticisms of educational institutions and educational professionals (from schools to universities) in a number of ways that are seemingly contradictory: those leaving education are not sufficiently equipped with the skills that a modern workforce need - sometimes these are said to be hard skills, especially in journalism education, and sometimes, ironically, the lack of soft skills, or intellectual skills such as critical thinking and analysis. In other words, employers frequently contradict what they say they want from graduates. With regards to media studies, Laughey (2010, in Bennett and Kidd, 2017, p.164) also found that criticisms are frequently contradictory, with the media describing the subject as both too theoretical and too vocational, as well as anti-intellectual and politically too left-leaning.

By far the dominant narrative – expounded in the UK media - is that any programmes designed to study the media (including journalism) are 'Mickey Mouse' courses. In the first instance, we are going to be talking about what is termed 'Media Studies' here, because critics often use this term in an all-encompassing way to sneer at the study of all aspects of the media, including news media. As Professor James Curran pointed out in a keynote speech to the MeCCSA (Media, Communication and Cultural Studies Association) conference of 2013 defending the study of the media, one British newspaper declared a degree in media studies to be 'little more than a state-funded, three-year equivalent of pub chat', while a well-known BBC journalist, John Humphreys, stated, 'The idea of three years at university doing journalism is utterly barmy' (Curran, 2013).

A detailed empirical study about the reporting of media studies demonstrates that this goes well beyond some isolated quotes from the press: Bennett and Kidd (2017) carried out a study about the representation of media studies in the British press over a five year period (2010 to 2015). Over half the items mentioning media studies (61%) framed it as a 'soft' or 'Mickey Mouse' subject and that the right-wing press in particular was responsible for promoting it negatively, stressing it was a subject with little educational value that provided poor employability prospects.

This reveals ignorance – or wilful ideological misinformation - about studying the media and journalism. It also reveals the very real tensions that exist between the academy and the news media. Nor is this peculiar to the UK; Deuze (2006, p.21) provides a body of evidence demonstrating this antagonism is keenly felt in many countries offering degrees in Journalism, with 'Dennis calling the debate between profession and education "a dialogue of the deaf"' (1988, p.4, in Deuze, 2006, p.21).

These tensions can become even more acute when academics publish research on the news media, particularly if it is critical of the industry. Much of the early research into the news media was very much of a qualitative nature (Tuchman (2008), often focused on media effects, but generally carried out by social scientists very much examining the media from the 'outside'. But, as Harcup (2010) has noted, teaching and research posts in journalism education have since been gradually occupied by former journalists. The personal experience of former journalists provided an opportunity to be more reflective of the profession. Gormally and Coburn (2013) assert that this acknowledgement of having practice-based expertise alongside a theoretical understanding of a field enables academics to have 'a position of strength from which to undertake research'. (p.1) Basically knowing about and understanding the field can lead to meaningful research within and about the world of news and journalism.

But research involves risks. There are colleagues whose research challenges the work of powerful media interests and derision has rained down on them. Josephi (2009) also points to the problem of students exploring and critiquing the field. She stated, 'the relevance of the inquiry into the nature and rituals of journalism has been questioned, in particular by future employers' (p.49).

Students are faced with the challenge of risking future employment by contesting current practices/behaviour/mindsets.

Several academic commentators note the surprise of working journalists that the academy should be so interested in its practices, noting a level of distrust/fear/scepticism between the academy and the media. Firth and Meech (2007, p.141, cited in Harcup, 2010) go as far as to say journalism appears to be the only field 'in which practitioners believe that the study of what they do is irrelevant to the practice'.

Whatever the industry believes, it is incumbent on all of us as journalism educators to reach back into what might be termed as 'hostile territory' to advance our own field of study and how it informs journalism education programmes and our students about the issues they may face working in the news media, as well as equipping them with a knowledge set that adds to their employability.

In terms of employability, much of the criticism of media courses is unfounded. Figures from the Office for National Statistics (July – Sept 2017) show that degrees in the field of media had an 89% employment rate (one of the higher rates, and higher than 11 other fields of study, including Law, Biological Sciences, Technology, Education, Languages, Social Sciences and Humanities). Transferable communication skills are – unsurprisingly in this digital communication age - in demand by many employers, despite the negative press.

In addition, studying media theorists such as Bourdieu and Barthes demonstrates that this is no subject for the intellectual slouch. On most programmes, students learn research skills and carry out their own research projects in the final year - no easy task. They are required to consider philosophical and ethical issues, and to question our normalised assumptions about mediated messages and agendas, as discussed earlier. Furthermore, in this technological and mediated world, the subject is highly relevant and students must be capable of embracing aspects of other disciplines. As Byrne writes in the *Times Higher Education* (2017),

Today, more than at any time since the invention of the first truly mass communication technology in the early 20th century, media are having a profound effect on our social, political and economic lives. As a result, media studies frequently takes an interdisciplinary approach to its enquiry, embracing politics, economics and psychology, as well as law and ethics. While some may see this as a flaw, in our frantically interconnected world, perhaps it should be acknowledged as another strength. The very fact that many other disciplines now embrace media in their own enquiry attests to their growing significance.

Social media, where employees may have no theoretical/intellectual/moral basis to reflect on working practices beyond limited notions of 'free speech' and 'consumer demand', have demonstrated that this can end with the circulation of child pornography and the live streaming of mass killings in mosques. A more academic understanding and critique of journalistic power and influence and the questioning of current practice – Journalism 101- could 'reset' journalism (Zelizer, 2018) by providing a framework to address how 'censorship' needs to be applied in a liberal democracy, but this will need an interdisciplinary approach to ensure that we produce graduates who are equipped with the knowledge to challenge existing power structures and elites, to 'speak truth to power' in informed and confident ways. Indeed, this cross-discipline aspect of journalism education was recognised by UNESCO in 2007 when it produced a significant piece of research, aimed in large part at journalism educators in the developing world and emerging democracies, providing a model curriculum for journalism education. Within its curriculum outline, UNESCO (2007, p.6) stated:

[Journalism education] should teach [students] how to cover political and social issues of particular importance to their own society through courses developed in co-operation with other departments in the college or university.

Not surprisingly UNESCO's work highlighted that journalism education 'should nest comfortably within the intellectual and academic culture of the university and be invigorated by it' (p.10). This reinforces the sense that as journalists we need to understand the complexities of the world and as such our journalism programmes need to provide students with knowledge that will enable them to understand complex societal issues and to have been supported in their learning by experts in these fields from across the breadth of the university. As Gregorian (2008) states: 'It is also important to see whether the program is drawing on the talents of the entire university faculty and not just "parked in the outskirts of the university."'

Journalism education needs to reach beyond the borders of its own field to ensure that it can further embed itself into the academy and benefit from the breadth and depth of knowledge within it. This could then have the result of changing the negative perceptions that do exist around studying the media:

The academy, too, has traditionally found it hard to see beyond the idea of an impostor subject with a limited theoretical base and an obsession with the popular. Media studies is indeed often concerned with

the popular, but that is one of its strengths. It is firmly grounded in society, in the communication, cultural understandings, concerns and sometimes even manipulation, of the mass of ordinary people. (Byrne, 2017)

One reason for these antagonisms may be linked to the expansion of higher education and a snobbish and elitist reaction to new universities, new curricula and fields of study, and widening participation. Andrew Crisell, emeritus professor at Sunderland University who taught on one of the first communications degrees, believes the key to media studies' image problem lies in the association with leisure: "Traditionally media have been associated with recreation, and there is a general assumption that watching films or television involves less intellectual effort than reading a book." (in Rustin, 2016).

Fraser and Wardle suggest that part of the problem is that studying the media looks like fun, disrupting the 'common view of education ... that it does not do us any good unless it hurts'. (2013, p.4). Thus, we have a situation where 'journalism educators and scholars face similar struggles all over the world, having to defend their curriculum, methods and theories against industry-wide shared notions that the academy is not the place to teach students how to get a job in the media, and that journalism is not the place to thoroughly reflect on the roles and functions of news media in society' (Deuze, 2006, p.22).

For Martin, this is not accidental or neutral, but ideological: 'There is an excess in these attacks which reveals a depth to the antagonism far outrunning any worries about the usefulness or not of media studies' (Martin, 2001, p.209 in Bennett and Kidd, 2017, pp.165-166).

These sustained media attacks on the field make us ask why does the media – the UK press in particular – protest so loudly at a time when digital convergence, with its rapid and frequently unforeseen changes, alongside disruptions to political certainties, badly need informed debates, research and policy decisions about the media in general and news media in particular? As previously discussed, here we have an industry that 'cannot comprehend why it should be studied, let alone scrutinised' (Rustin, 2016), while, it should not be forgotten, continues to scrutinise and depict the rest of society.

It is rare for journalists to be critical of their own field (Nick Davies' 2009 book *Flat Earth News* is a notable exception, and more recently Jon Snow of Channel 4 News said he felt 'on the wrong side of the divide' when reporting on the Grenfell Tower disaster in his 2017 MacTaggart address) so there is an onus on the academy to help our students and the public understand the wider forces, unseen agendas and power structures that operate in the news media. It is worth re-stating what is obvious to academics in this field, namely that most of the information and messages we receive about ourselves, society and the world are in some way mediated and this endows the media, and news media in particular, with huge influence and places them in a position of power.

As such it is legitimate to question how well news media institutions are serving the public. In the UK we have a largely right-wing press – those newspapers that are most vociferous in their attacks on studying the media (Bennett and Kidd, 2017) – that have also continually attacked the Labour Party and the Labour leader (see LSE study 'Journalistic Representations of Jeremy Corbyn in the British Press: From Watchdog to Attackdog', Cammaerts *et al*, 2016, and Loughborough University's 'Media coverage of the 2017 General Election campaign', 2017 as summarised by Pearson-Jones, 2017, in *The Independent*) once there appeared to be a threat to austerity measures; that promoted lies (on both sides) during the Brexit debate without any real interrogation of what was being claimed by vested interests; a media that failed to investigate the decline of health and safety standards in our country, including blogs from Grenfell Tower residents highlighting concerns about fire risk; a media that for many years ignored the rise of poverty and inequality in our society, instead happy to go along with the 'we are all in it together' hypocrisy of Cameron and the 'need' for austerity. In his 2017 MacTaggart Memorial Lecture at the Edinburgh International Television Festival, Jon Snow warns that the media lack diversity and are far removed from ordinary people.

Grenfell speaks to us all about our own lack of diversity, and capacity to reach into the swaths of western society with whom we have no connection.....We have to widen both our contact with, and awareness of, those who live outside and beyond our elite. Our elite is narrow and deep, but the throng of those who have borne the brunt of austerity and not shared in the lives we have experienced is wide and even deeper.

This elite was also highlighted by journalist Peter Osborne (2007) who warned about the rise of what he terms the 'political class' who have co-opted powerful media. He argues that journalists present themselves to the public as independent while, in fact, owing their loyalty to factions within the political class. These client journalists share the assumptions and prejudices of the political class. Indeed, there is a blurring of boundaries between the media and politics, with journalists becoming politicians (for example, former Labour minister Peter Mandelson and former Prime Minister Gordon Brown both had backgrounds in TV; our current Environment Minister and Conservative Party leadership contender, Michael Gove, is a former journalist, and also married to a journalist, Sarah Vine, who champions him and his allies in her *Daily Mail*

column; and journalist and politician Boris Johnson, with a weekly column in the *Daily Telegraph* is now standing for the position of Prime Minister, or politicians becoming journalists (for example, the former Conservative Chancellor of the Exchequer, George Osborne being handed the editorship of the *London Evening Standard*, despite a lack of experience.) According to Osborne, politicians and journalists have each abandoned their proper function. Politicians have ceased to regard government or opposition as their primary activity. At the same time, journalists no longer report political events in a detached and fastidious way. Both pursuits have a common objective: the careful construction of narratives that maintain power.

Franklin (2004) discusses the huge business behind the presentation of politics and politicians and this blurring of lines between the worlds of politics and journalism. He referred to it as 'packaging politics' and says it 'impoverishes political debate' because it simplifies and over-trivialises issues.

However, this does raise serious questions about democracy. Franklin (ibid.) asserts that rather than the news media hijacking politics, the notion that the politicians have attempted to hijack the media is closer to the truth: 'The relationship between government and media can become unduly conclusive, with the media acting as little more than conduits for government policy messages, drafted by press officers and special advisers but mistaken by readers and viewers as the work of independent journalists'. (Franklin, 2004, p.19)

It is these narratives and power structures that the academic study of journalism frequently lay bare: by examining media ownership and vested interests; by unpicking the constructs of news; by considering underlying agendas; and by looking at technological and economic developments in order to question what this means for the quality of information the public receives.

Few would disagree that the UK press is politically partisan and propagandistic; Tom Mills (2017) goes as far as stating that papers like *The Sun* and the *Daily Mail* use 'fake news' as a business model. But he argues that so-called liberal media institutions like the BBC are also losing the trust of the public, pointing to the dissonance between people's lived experiences and material conditions that are rarely reflected in broadcasts. Elitist recruitment practices at the BBC mean that correspondents are often socially removed from the majority of the population, focussing on action at the top that rarely translates into reflecting what this means for those at the bottom. For Mills' the BBC is simply not providing a fair and balanced account of the world or speaking to the conditions that people find themselves in. The BBC tends to reflect a narrow sector of political opinion, deferring to the state institutions and official politics in how it constructs stories. Mills argues that the actions of the media is helping to drive polarisation, with media institutions being part and parcel of what has caused public discontent and disaffection with the direction of society (2017). In other words, lack of trust with most of the mainstream media has a basis in reality.

The near consensus among reporters on Jeremy Corbyn's supposed unelectability, which turned out to be untrue, only feeds powerfully that belief. The sense of conspiracy should not be played down – the feeling of communities like those in Grenfell Tower being ignored, and of Corbyn having been deliberately maligned, are blended now in a thick soup of salty disillusionment, doled out on WhatsApp. (Hirsch, 2017)

The BBC's flagship agenda-setting news and current affairs radio programme, *Today*, lost over 800,000 listeners in 2017-2018. Mills (2018) points to disaffection over Brexit coverage and disaffection by Labour supporters.

There is scholarly research that supports the allegations made by the "Remoaners" and the "Corbynites", albeit indirectly. First, a number of recent analyses (Wahl-Jorgensen et al, 2016; Cushion and Lewis, 2017; Lewis and Cushion, 2019) have found that broadcast news tends to balance competing claims, rather than scrutinising their veracity. This leads, if not to "fake news", then at least to inaccurate or misleading claims – overwhelmingly from the right – appearing unchallenged, or even driving the news agenda.

Too often the BBC is wedded to old-fashioned notions of due impartiality which results in what it sees as 'controversial' issues being reported in a format that gives equal weight to both sides, even when one side's opinions are ludicrous, or simply false. This has been particularly true of coverage of climate change, with undue weight being given for years to climate change deniers.

Misleading reporting is reinforced by the tendency of government ministers to avoid appearing on programmes where their opinions and actions can be properly interrogated. Most no longer submit themselves to being interviewed about their policies and responsibilities unless it is an issue they want to promote. Thus, when the BBC does attempt to cover issues like the underfunding of education, or the latest report demonstrating steep rises in child poverty, presenters inevitably announce that 'no minister was available to be interviewed but they did issue us with a statement' - a statement invariably declaring that the government is spending more money than ever, or is looking into the issue - that is subsequently uncritically read out to the audience, blocking any further journalistic questioning of the veracity of the statement. But despite

this tactic by politicians, it is surely reasonable to expect BBC journalists to do more, for example, by interviewing the political opposition or experts in the field about their response to what government ministers or departments have stated, but this rarely happens.

Experience teaches us that tyranny thrives in spaces where it is unchallenged, therefore the news media rightfully retains its clichéd ‘speaking truth to power’ role in society, but this requires an ethical, political and social literacy among those who work within it. This goes beyond mere fact checking – either by people or by algorithms – it requires the deep knowledge developed as a student and enhanced by experience. It also requires an acknowledgement that poor reporting is often due to being mis-informed, producing work which is poorly researched and lacks the required rigour because deadlines press and commercial pressures dominate. It could be said this is another example of neoliberalism writ large in the news media, whereby the commercial transaction is at the heart of decision making in newsrooms. It is an uncomfortable truth.

Mills (2017) also points to research that the editorial culture of the BBC – which always tended to lean towards government and establishment perspectives anyway – has shifted further to the right over the past decade (Lewis and Cushion, 2017). Anxiety about appearing out-of-touch led to a conscious effort to engage ‘extreme opinion’ while the ‘left is still not being treated as a legitimate political force, despite electoral gains’ (Mills, *ibid*).

Guardian journalist George Monbiot (2019) has seen a similar trend, which he ascribes to an effort by broadcasters to grab attention and ratings. ‘The more disgracefully you behave, the bigger the platform the media will give you....On both sides of the Atlantic, the unscrupulous, duplicitous and preposterous are brought to the fore as programme-makers seek to generate noise.’

More insidious still, because it is invisible, is the lack of coverage or ‘news blackouts’ of issues that does not fit this right-leaning agenda. Hence, relatively small demonstrations against policies or rulers in countries our government does not agree with are elevated to news headlines, while hundreds of thousands marching against austerity in our domestic arena are given next to no coverage. What is it we are missing in everyday coverage that we do not know we are missing? And how do we as journalism educators imbue our students with the knowledge that something is missing and that they have a responsibility to address this?

Meanwhile, with the rise of digital media, we increasingly see power shift towards distribution platforms, which are even harder to regulate. Data from the 2018 Digital News Report from the Reuters Institute at Oxford University revealed that 72% of people across a sample of 21 EU countries did not know that algorithms select most of what we see on the Facebook news feed, concluding that increased media literacy around social media is required.

With the rise of Trump in the USA and debates around Brexit in the UK, Zelizer (2018, p.141) believes that the rules of engagement have changed in journalism and that the Anglo-American model of journalism contains ‘mindsets of the past [that] undo contemporary journalism’s ability to cover events of the present’. If we do not question how journalism is done, where does this leave the next generation of journalists facing the rapidly changing challenges for journalism?

Thus, critiquing journalism in an academic setting takes on the role of a ‘critical friend’, helping to reshape and inform new practice for journalists. For Deuze (2006, p.22) antagonisms between practitioners and the academy ‘can be resolved by dissolving the perceived dichotomy between theory and practice’ in the curriculum. There is nothing to fear from an academic curriculum or academic research that explores the reshaping of journalistic practice – indeed it is likely to help provide solutions to the disaffection and distrust surrounding the media.

For lecturers, it can provide ideas as to where there are gaps in the literature and where further research can be carried out; it helps produce not merely technologically skilled graduates, but critical thinkers with highly developed powers of analysis, sophisticated understanding of a complex world and clear communications expertise – transferable skills that should be welcomed in any workplace since all companies and institutions now need media and communications experts. Furthermore, it can contribute to wider media literacy in these disruptive and uncertain times. Overall, there is a strong case for academic study of the news media – we should be vociferous and vigilant in promoting and protecting that study against vested interests. As educators we must argue that while the business model proliferates in our education system, it needs also to embrace the role of journalism as a civic and social responsibility which gives agency to many within society to challenge prevailing cultures that would seek to define our role in it as solely a commercial one. We understand there are no easy answers here but in posing difficult questions we can begin to view our roles as educators in different and meaningful ways.

To conclude, in the neoliberal landscape we find ourselves in, we recommend that those working as jour-

nalism educators and researchers in the academy:

- promote the idea that the academic study of journalism and the media fulfils the welcome role of a 'critical friend' that can reshape practice and build greater trust and understanding of the wider role of journalism
- promote interdisciplinary teaching and research to the enrichment of the field
- dissolve outdated distinctions between theory and practice in the curriculum (Deuze, 2006)
- continue to promote widening participation in journalism courses to provide the diversity of talent that journalism and related professions clearly need
- campaign for paid internships so that less privileged students can gain experience and entry into the profession
- carry out further research into the benefits or disadvantages of industry accreditation
- carry out further research into the effectiveness of journalism education - that goes beyond the merely descriptive - to meet the challenges of the present and future within a framework that seeks to establish a re-set Journalism 101.

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Reviews

The reviews pages are edited by Tor Clark. If you have a book you would like to review or have come across a new book we should know about please get in touch. Also if you have recently had a book published and would like to see it reviewed, please contact Tor on tor.clark@leicester.ac.uk

Welcome back to the Journalism Education reviews section, which this time takes a detailed look at the craft of our top journalists as well as developments in two key areas of journalism – ethics and social media.

By the consent of most, we have never lived through such unprecedented political times. In the UK the knife-edge Brexit vote outcome is still not resolved, continues to claim political casualties and destabilise the entire political system. Across the Atlantic, the world's most powerful nation has its most unprepared and unpredictable president. Whatever we think of current politics, what is clear is we need good journalists to chronicle them for us.

In the UK Tim Shipman, political editor of the Sunday Times, has emerged as a leading voice, not just in breaking big political stories in his paper every week, but then very soon after the events, publishing books full of first hand accounts of how those events unfolded. *All Out War: The Full Story of Brexit* is reviewed here because of the insight it offers us on the depth and quality of his political journalism. It's a book about recent politics which can be read as a thriller but which also contains much useful material for journalism students and scholars, not least the way coverage of Brexit challenged long-held broadcasting conventions.

Over the pond, the most venerated US journalist tackles the most controversial president in *Fear: Trump in the White House*. Forty-five years after the biggest journalism investigation of all time brought down the most powerful man in the world, Washington Post Watergate reporter Bob Woodward investigates the current White House incumbent, and what he shares with us reviewer John Mair finds deeply troubling. But again, if we can read past our own fear, Woodward also gives us a masterclass in how to painstakingly gather evidence to shed journalistic light on what otherwise would seem a complicated picture.

Professor Richard Keeble of the University of Lincoln has been a leading light in the investigation and study of the role of ethics in journalism. In an increasingly technological profession, ethical issues have multiplied and a new collection of articles, *Ethical Reporting of Sensitive Topics*, edited by Ann Luce of Bournemouth University, has shone a light on many of these areas. Professor Keeble urges us to consider much of the wisdom on covering difficult topics within this new volume.

Finally, in preparing recent books on the demise of print journalism and on Brexit and Trump, editors John Mair, Tor Clark, Neil Fowler, Raymond Snoddy and Richard Tait, were struck by how important social media was becoming in the operation of both journalism and politics. It prompted them to put together their third collection of academic and journalistic articles *Anti-Social Media? The Impact on Journalism and Society*.

Paul Lashmar of City University of London has a long and distinguished career in journalism and academia and finds this new collection to be a timely and useful addition to the available literature, 'capturing the zeitgeist of puzzlement and despair over what is happening to social media'.

So, a small but hopefully useful and relevant mix of texts, which all offer value to students and scholars

Journalism Education would like to offer more reviews in every edition but for that we need more reviewers to volunteer and more books to be recommended for review, as all of the above were. So if you have recently read a useful journalistic text or contributed to one, please contact JE reviews editor Tor Clark at tor.clark@leicester.ac.uk

All Out War: The Full Story by Tim Shipman

Review by Tor Clark, University of Leicester

By all accounts, we live in unprecedented and unsettling political times. Whilst it does not offer a solution to the UK's troubles, at least having a thorough chronicler can help us understand what's happening, and over the past couple of years, Sunday Times political editor Tim Shipman through fantastic contacts and what must have been round-the-clock hard work, has become the chronicler of choice of these political times.

Shipman's first book was *All Out War*, which covers the 2016 Referendum on EU membership in the UK and subsequent trials of the Labour and Conservative parties. He followed it up with *Fall Out*, which took the story on through Theresa May's first government and the 2017 General Election. The third part of this unputdownable trilogy, taking us through the Brexit endgame, is currently being assembled.

Shipman's achievement in covering this complex topic is huge – and it is for what we can learn about 21st century politics and political journalism in particular that his first volume, *All Out War: The Full Story of Brexit*, earns its place in this reviews section.

All Out War is a great example of journalism as the first draft of history, the original hardback version being published very soon after the events it describes in 2016. Shipman actually begins his account in what seems like much simpler times, when Prime Minister David Cameron's instructions to his fellow Tories to 'stop banging on about Europe' seemed to have at least temporarily been heeded and he could set about being the first Conservative PM in 13 years having detoxified the Conservative brand.

So it is that Shipman begins his story with the October 2011 rebellion by 81 Conservative MPs on a motion demanding an EU membership referendum, which effectively ended Cameron's period of grace on Europe as the issue which has so dramatically divided his party for so long. That rebellion, he says, was: 'The moment a referendum became inevitable.'

He guides us expertly through the build-up from this point until the referendum was announced in February 2016 with enthralling descriptions of the context and the main players around the issues and political parties. At this point the book can be read at bedtime almost as a convoluted yet compelling political thriller – except of course no-one would believe it if it was attempted to be passed off as fiction.

Shipman describes the campaign proper from February to June 2016 in thematic chapters, attempting to draw out the small victories and defeats which may have influenced 600,000 people to vote Leave instead of Remain and thus throw the result to those who wished to leave the EU.

There then follows expert description of the fall-out from the referendum result, especially on the leadership of the Conservative Party, but also on its impact on Labour, demonstrating controversial leader Jeremy Corbyn's iron resolve to remain leader even when the vast majority of his MPs were happy to state they had no confidence in his leadership.

And a masterly concluding chapter goes back through all the evidence presented and picks out the reasons Remain lost and Leave won in compelling detail. His conclusion, having taken all this evidence into account, if an easy conclusion to these complicated events is possible, is simply that the winning side wanted their victory more and were prepared to do more, with more passion than the Remainers, to get it. This is a theme common in other early studies of this seismic political decision.

For scholars and students of journalism, worth the cover price on its own is chapter 17 *Auntie Beeb*, about how the BBC's political rules, set up to govern the coverage of multi-party politics-as-usual were tested to breaking point by the binary EU referendum. Issues around impartiality, balance and how far journalists should challenge politicians' assertions are central to the conduct of democracy and in this chapter they get a full airing, complete with many relevant examples. This chapter should be on every political journalism course's reading list.

In the opening acknowledgements, Shipman notes the huge numbers of important players who spoke to him with their accounts of sometimes contested events. Many more top political operators spoke to him anonymously. What is clear here is everyone who was anyone in this process confided in this journalist because they knew they needed their particular point of view to be represented. It seems Shipman's success here is to make talking to him vital for any player.

In this way Shipman takes us into very small gatherings of the people at the centre of events, offering verbatim quotes on the reactions of the principal players, originally heard by only a handful of participants. He takes a novelist's delight in offering small but intimate details of what people said, did and their physical surroundings to demonstrate his access and the authority of his sources.

And it is for this access, these sources, those details, that this book earns its place as a work of journalism and can be learned from by would-be journalists. Shipman describes the scenarios we all knew about from the news at the time, but then takes us behind the scenes to what was said and how decisions were made. We are with David Cameron and George Osborne as the results come in the early hours of June 24, 2016. We are in a taxi with Tory MPs Boris Johnson and Nick Boles as Johnson tries to form his declaration speech for Tory leader in July 2016, while Boles starts to worry that his companion isn't fit to PM and his erstwhile ally Michael Gove should run against him, just hours before all that happened.

We can only wonder about the hundreds of conversations Shipman has had in a vast array of locations with huge numbers of political operators, the notes he made and then the organisation of those notes into this coherent narrative. But what we do know is he has established that trust, built those contacts and assembled all the information he needed to write this definite account through his own journalistic skills and professional reputation, and what it has given us is an account which explains the nuances at the very top of this most dramatic and complex period of UK political history.

Of course, unlike academic texts, it is a descriptive piece of journalism rather than a detailed critical analysis, so he gleefully describes the events as they unfold without commenting upon them or applying much criticality until the concluding chapter. But that in a sense is what this book is there for. The detailed analysis would come later. For now, Shipman has put us in the room as these events unfolded at the highest level and in so doing, been a real advocate for and exemplar of his craft.

All Out War: The Full Story of Brexit, published by William Collins, 2016. Republished and updated in paperback 2017. ISBN 978-0-00-821517-0. Pp 637. RRP £9.99.

Anti-Social Media? The Impact on Journalism and Society Edited by John Mair, Tor Clark, Neil Fowler, Raymond Snoddy and Richard Tait

Review by Paul Lashmar, City University of London.

The one country which has so far successfully – and I use the word advisedly – regulated social media is China, as Peter Bazalgette, the former ITV chairman, notes in his chapter in *Anti-Social Media? The impact on Journalism and Society*.

China has created its own hermetic internet and the state has created its own copies of social media including variants on the Twitter and Facebook concepts. Apparently, this has prevented much of the uglier activity social media activity by trolls, far right propagandists and buccaneering capitalists common elsewhere.

The Chinese are big social media users but are cautious, as they full-well know, the authoritarian state has 'moderators' on an industrial scale monitoring for untoward activity. The downside of this orderly environment is that users know if you say anything the Communist Party will not like you will be in trouble. Among the taboos is mention of Tiananmen Square circa 1989, the repression of the Uighurs and the Tibetans. Ergo, China does not provide a regulation model for the democratic world. So who does?

Whether to regulate and if so, how, is an unresolved theme running through *Anti-Social Media*? One thing that is agreed is Mark Zuckerberg does not have the answer, even with Facebook's recently recruited global

Anti-Social Media? is the 26th book in John Mair's (and friends') series of 'hackademic' books, a format which emphasises the primacy of expertise and speed of delivery of contributors' chapters over their length and academic depth. And this volume is one of the most timely, reinforcing the value of the speed dating format, capturing the zeitgeist of puzzlement and despair over what is happening to social media.

Anti-Social Media? examines the impact of the internet on journalism, a question still painfully festering. If the techno giants have sucked up most of the advertising revenue, they have also unleashed a series of plagues on the world including a plague of trolls, a plague of uber-consumer capitalists and a plague of political manipulators among them. But, the backlight of this collection is how the techno-optimism of the early days of social media has turned to a state of widespread alarm on what it is doing not only to the media but the nation at large.

The 40, mostly well informed, well referenced, if pithy takes on the conundrums of social media are invaluable to students and academics alike as a quick immersion for any essay on this vexed subject. The focus is Anglo-American and the chapters have a fair bit of overlap, which would be a narrative disaster in a one-author book but gives this edited collection thematic coherence.

As Ivor Gaber notes many early adopters saw social media as the utopian realisation of Habermas's concept of the public sphere, where citizens would be informed and debate the important democratic questions. How did these, 'starry eyed dreamers' as Gaber encapsulates them, not foresee the dark side of social media?

Richard Sambrook starts his chapter with a droll Alcoholics Anonymous style confession to having been a social media evangelist. 'Yes, I know, shameful and hard to believe', he laments. Neil Fowler asks whether journalism should stay off social media, portrayed as the internet's hard stuff. Christian Fuchs observes that social media data harvesting and analytics have proven enablers to unfettered consumerism creating a late capitalist culture of alienation. Fuchs also manages to link the Cambridge Analytica/Facebook scandal with Marx's bicentenary. Gaber posits that Twitter's character limit 'gives Twitter its essential characteristic of simplicity, impulsivity and uncivility, the characteristics which have come to form a toxic combination which, in the political sphere has, almost inevitably, led to the establishing of the primacy of emotion over reason.'

The shock which reverberates through these pages is that a worrying percentage of our fellow citizens are prepared to say appalling things to other people online, often using a pseudonym, that one would hope would they would not dream of saying if they were sitting in the same room as their victims. Civilisation, it seems, is a thin veneer.

In John Naughton's excellent and informative chapter on the profit-motivated Zuckerberg and his Frankenstein monster Facebook, he points out that algorithms: 'In a metaphorical sense, therefore, users of social media are unwitting rats in Skinnerian mazes created for their delectation.'

Naughton's chapter is worth the price of the book alone as he also confronts an ontological crisis. 'On the demand side, human psychology and sociality play important roles in keeping the machine humming. Humans are famously subject to a wide range of cognitive biases, which social media exploit.' He notes the prevalence of the evils of confirmation bias, hyperbolic discounting and homophily. In the 21st century, even among an increasingly well-educated public, many users would rather have their biases reinforced than engage in constructive discussion. This online Sodom and Gomorrah is a moral failure of the species that may yet prove terminal, and nowhere more could degradation be more naked than in the Trump and Brexit debacles.

Speaking of Brexit, the Cambridge Analytica scandal is mentioned, in passing, as signal moment in many chapters and if I have one criticism of the collection, it is that there is no in-depth look at the Brexit referendum in terms of the role of social media and the national media. In years to come, when we understand the power of social media manipulation better, there will be a much-needed referendum inquiry and it will likely conclude that referendum vote was not sound. By which time it will be too late.

So where is journalism in all of this? Leading contributors including Alan Rusbridger and Mark Thompson emphasise the need for high quality journalism where the need for content that is regulated, truthful, accurate, balanced and verified has never been greater. The question hangs whether the public will realise this early enough to retain a professional ethical media or will prefer to just have their biases stroked.

***Anti-Social Media? The Impact on Journalism and Society*, Edited by John Mair, Tor Clark, Neil Fowler, Raymond Snoddy and Richard Tait, published by Abramis, 2018, RRP £19.99.**

Ethical Reporting of Sensitive Topics, edited by Ann Luce

Review by Professor Richard Lance Keeble, University of Lincoln

When, during the late 1990s, I was writing the first edition of my book on journalism ethics, journo friends and colleagues would joke: ‘Oh, that’s not going to be a very long book, then.’ Or ‘Not much to say about that is there?’

Matters have changed somewhat since then (though the myth of the rowdy hack pack, merciless in pursuit of its prey, still survives in Hollywood blockbusters and the seemingly endless TV detective series). And this text provides clear proof that many journalists are now committed to confronting the ethical challenges that come with the reporting of sensitive subjects.

Edited by Ann Luce, of Bournemouth University, it draws together the work of 12 distinguished international journalists-turned academics, tackles an impressive array of topics and blends theoretical background, practical tips and cases studies (sometimes drawn from personal experience) to highlight good and bad practice.

Mathew Charles, for instance, looks at the reporting of urban violence and gangs. He suggests, in much of the mainstream reporting: ‘The complexity of the structures that underpin urban violence is ignored in favour of simple narratives which can glorify gang culture, exploit victims and exacerbate social inequalities. In worst cases, journalism propagates the position of the state which can scapegoat gangs and communities in order to conceal its own failures or political motivations’ (p121).

Ethical coverage, he writes, would rather be critical of the established discourse on violence, question the role of the state, report and analyse all sides of the argument, treat all parties as equals, would not rely only on official press releases – and seek out contacts in the ‘criminal’ world. Charles then presents three case studies: in the first, he explores, critically, the ethical challenges he faced in filming the fragile and controversial 2012 truce brokered between El Salvador’s two largest gangs, MS-13 and 18 Street. How to deal with horrific images (such as that of a naked 16-year-old boy dumped on a concrete slab). How to avoid sensationalising the topic. How to challenge the perpetrators of the violence most appropriately. (pp123-126).

Next, in reflecting on his reporting on Colombia’s biggest criminal network, he debates the issues surrounding the naming of names. He writes: ‘If they were omitted, it could be clear to the rest of the gang who had been speaking to me. I decided to leave this decision to each contributor. I explained what the consequences might be and left it to them to decide if they wanted to be included or omitted’ (p128). In the third case study, about a senior Colombian paramilitary, questions relating to managing risks are considered. Charles concludes by encouraging journalists to establish an independent narrative ‘to ensure fair and balanced reporting, which does not scapegoat gangs and communities affected by violence’ (p130).

John Lister, in his chapter on health reporting, spends some time highlighting the failures of mainstream journalists. His case studies examine the ‘ill-judged panic’ in 2017 after the media linked heart failure to the use of the drug ibuprofen, misleading claims over ‘clinically proven’ ear plugs, and the inadequate coverage of the setting up of accountable care organisations. As models for good journalism, Lister recommends the British website *Behind the Headlines* (www.nhs.uk/news) and the American website *healthnewsreview.org* for its archive of articles (pp137-155).

Elsewhere, Chris Frost stresses the importance of maintaining high standards: ‘Getting the story does not mean behaving unethically, but it may mean working a little harder’ (p24). Lyn Barnes advises journalists covering emotional and traumatic stories on a regular basis to take self-care seriously: ‘Simple steps include deep breathing exercises, which have shown to be important for the brain, and recognising any signs of stress you are feeling: for example, a twitchy eye or broken sleep.’

Amanda Gearing’s chapter offers many useful insights on the reporting of child sexual abuse. Ann Luce tackles the complex ethical issues involved in reporting suicide. Glynn Greensmith, in his piece on mass shootings, is able to conclude on a positive note: ‘Increasingly, news outlets, law enforcement officers and public officials have refused to name the shooter... and this suggests a new appetite for understanding the ramifications of the dominant narrative of coverage of these crimes’ (p112).

And Kim Walsh-Childers highlights the problems in covering health research and interventions – carefully listing ten major related questions. For instance, does the story use independent sources and identify conflicts of interest? Does the story compare the new approach with existing alternatives? Does the story

establish the true novelty of the approach? (pp156-176).

Shelley Thompson and Hilary Stepien cover the reporting of emerging and controversial science (pp179-198). Robert Wyss tackles climate change reporting (pp 199-213). Amanda Gearing, in her second chapter – on reporting disasters in the digital age – argues journalists who prepare for this assignment by experimenting with social media platforms to gather and hold exclusive information ‘will lay a firm foundation for trust between them and their news contacts’ (p230).

In a final, important section on reporting cultural, ethnic and geographical difference, Alexandra Wake tackles covering ‘other’ cultures (pp235-25) and Jeremiaiah M Opiniano, of the University of Santo Tomas in Manila, Philippines, draws on the work of the Ethical Journalism Network in his recommendations for the better reporting of international migration (pp251-273).

Overall, this is an outstanding collection of essays. But I’m surprised issues relating to undercover reporting are little considered. While teaching at the University of Lincoln, I launched a BA in Investigative Journalism and students would regularly go undercover (all in accordance with the university’s research ethical guidelines). How can investigative reporting, particularly on sensitive topics, be conducted otherwise?

And in the discussions on source confidentiality, there is no mention of the implications for journalists of Edward Snowden’s 2013 revelations about the massive surveillance of electronic communications by the US and UK governments – nor any mention of the evidence of police snooping on reporters covering sensitive topics. Should not all journalism students be trained in encryption techniques? But then, given the abilities now of intelligence services to break through encrypted data, what are the solutions for journalists in maintaining the confidentiality and trust of their sources?

And in the list of groups young journalists need to be aware of – in addition to colleagues, sources and audience (p12) – should not owners and trade unions be included? Indeed, is it not important for students to be aware of the political economy of the media and of the crucial role of the alternative/non-corporate media – all the more so since these often carry the best coverage of sensitive subjects?

Ethical Reporting of Sensitive Topics, edited by Ann Luce, published by Routledge in 2018, pp294 ISBN 978-0-8153-4866-5 (pbk)

Fear – Trump in the White House

by Bob Woodward

Review by John Mair, editor of the ‘Hackademic’ series of books on contemporary journalism

This, quite simply, is a brilliant book. Every Journalism 101 course should have it right at the top of its reading list. Every wannabe, got-there and has-been hack should read it.

Woodward is a legend in our craft after Watergate and defenestrating President Richard Nixon with his fellow *Washington Post* reporter Carl Bernstein in 1974. He was even played by Robert Redford in Alan J Pakluea’s Hollywood film of the Watergate investigation *All The President’s Men* (1976). Reading this book, you understand why he is feted. It is deep, thorough, thoughtful and accurate first person reporting. Woodward does what journalists do best, talking to people, on or off the record, deep background or however, getting their stories, putting them into shape and telling them as a superb narrative.

Journalism this way is quite simple. People, some of them once important in the Trump White House, talking. Michael Wolff got there first in his *Fire and Fury* published in 2018. Wolff said he sat on a sofa in the White House West Wing and took in the ambience and the gossip. He took notes but his book still ended up as the gospel according to Steve Bannon. Woodward’s book is fish and fowl to Wolff’s. Woodward did 160 (yes, 160) interviews for his tome. But the views of at least three staff and ex-staffers still shine through. Gary Cohn, the former economic adviser to Trump, John Dowd his former lead counsel and John Kelly, his Chief of Staff, are there on most pages. Kelly called his boss ‘an idiot. We are in Crazytown’. Mild for those around DJT.

I never used to believe re-constructed conversations especially when historic. Do you really remember

what you said last week? Now I am a convert. Woodward has carefully and perfectly reconstructed conversations based on the deep testimony of those 160 interviews with those closest to the 45th President of the USA. They are gob-smacking and make for riveting reading. Can the Trump White House really be this chaotic and subject to the whims of a sociopath who happens to have convinced the gullible American public to put him there (just)? Is he really a foul-mouthed tyrant who alternately belittles and shouts at his advisers? Do they have to devise strategies to stop him falling off mental and political cliffs, like removing Executive Orders from his desk to stop him signing them? The answer, sadly, according to Woodward, is a firm yes.

No writer of fiction, like Aaron Sorkin who created TV's *The West Wing*, could make up the happenings in Trumpland DC. There is simply no rhyme, reason or rationale to explain how The Donald governs or behaves every day. This book suggests he makes it up as he goes along. It is terrifying.

His cast of advisers is rotated by design. Absolute monarchs rule that way. Some supplicants at the court burn out, some are summarily fired but too many of them are left with a loathing and a strong feeling that DJT is a 'professional liar' as one put it in his testimony in *Fear*.

Trump is the spoilt rich kid from NYC. The business and reality success story is in the real world a bankrupt and one who has consistently mixed with a bad business crowd. His anti-biographer David Cay Johnston demonstrates that in his masterly tome *The Making of Donald Trump*. Cay Johnston has tracked Trump for a quarter of a century. In my Oxford garden last summer he revealed untold tales which made the little hair I have left stand on end.

Trump has been given all the toys, some of them nuclear, by the American electorate. He throws them out of the pram regularly with much noise. He cannot read an A4 page brief to the bottom and gets his news and world views from *Fox News*. He is a semi-intelligent rich redneck. If it is not on *Sean Hannity* on *Fox* then it is not on his radar.

If you want to experience *Fear* just read the chapter on how he wanted to rip up all the US deals with South Korea, including withdrawing US troops, because he simply could not see the point. His people persuaded him out of that and later he said he was 'in love' with Kim Jong Un, the North Korean dictator, and vice versa, after their Singapore summit.

Woodward is a professional digger. Some worried he had lost his edge in recent years. Those fears were unfounded. *Fear* is a masterpiece of journalism. This time round he has struck another seam of gold in the madness of King Donald. On reading this book one can almost see the blood in the water from the great lumps he has taken out of the 'RealDonald' whale. Time will tell if Trump joins Nixon in the graveyard of Woodward presidential victims.

Reading books like this restores your faith in the power of journalism.

Fear - Trump in the White House by Bob Woodward, published 2018 by Simon and Schuster. RRP £20.

New and forthcoming books

Look out for the latest books from these AJE members. If you have written a book due for publication shortly, be sure to let other AJE members know about by contacting the editor on ajejournal@gmail.com giving the book title, author, publisher and date of publication.

Two new books due to be published this autumn are :

Fake News vs Media Studies: Travels in a False Binary by Julian McDougall is published by Palgrave MacMillan on December 18, 2019.

Privacy and the News Media is the latest book from Chris Frost and this is due for publication by Routledge on November 18, 2019, just in time for Christmas.

New Journalisms: Rethinking Practice, Theory and Pedagogy is a new book from Karen Fowler-Watt and Stephen Jukes in Bournemouth published by Routledge in July 2019.

Apology and correction

Apologies to Professor Richard Keeble. A recent paper published in Journalism Education: 'Exploring the transition from journalism practitioner to journalism educator' by Catherine Russell and Sue Eccles and wrongly quoted Richard Keeble to the effect that he supported the view that journalism was 'best learned on the job'. Rather, Keeble said that this was the dominant view in the industry until quite recently. But he disagrees with it strongly.

Style guide

Please provide a title and an abstract and author details together with a 50-70 word biography for each author on a separate sheet to allow for anonymization. This sheet will be separated from the article before being sent to referees so please put the title only at the start of the article.

- Sub-heads should be in bold
- Second order sub-heads should be in bold italic
- Please use single quotation marks (double quotation marks for a quote within a quote)
- Indent long quotes of two lines or more.
- Please do not use the enter button to insert space between paragraphs or headings.
- All illustrations, tables and figures should be sent separately either at the end of the MS Word file or as attached JPGs. Clearly label approximately where they should be placed with fig 1, table 1 etc.

Citations and bibliographic references should be in Harvard style.

Part I: Citations

Place references in your work in the following order: Name, Date: page number(s)

For example,

1. Directly quoting an author

It is sometimes forgotten that 'English is one of the most flexible and expressive languages in the world' (Hicks, 1993, p.1)

He goes on to say, 'In brief, the reigning media consensus has been characterised either as overly liberal or leftist or as conservative, depending on the view of the critic' (McQuail, 1992, pp.255-6).

2. Indirectly quoting an author (where you sum up what is being stated in your own words). This must be grammatically correct, as well as accurate.

E.g.: Hargreaves (2003, p.47) believes that Henry Hetherington's populist journalistic techniques, employed by him in the 1830s, were the basis of tabloid journalism.

3. Referring broadly to ideas you have read in a publication (not to a specific point/quote). You don't need to cite page number in this case. E.g.: Franklin (1997) has highlighted the effects and reasons for so-called dumbing down in the media.

4. If the same person is referred to immediately after a previous citation, you can use *ibid*.

5. If there are more than two authors, you can use *et al*.

Part II: Bibliographic References

A list of Bibliographic References is required at the end. Please provide the FULL name of the author (including first name) and provide references in alphabetical order of surname. With an author who has written a number of books and articles that have been cited, list them all separately, with the most recent first (see Manning).

Examples of how to present Bibliographic references for Journalism Education are given below

Bibliographic references

Franklin, Bob (2003) 'A Good Day to Bury Bad News?': Journalists, Sources and the Packaging of Politics in Simon Cottle (Ed.), *News, Public Relations Power*, London: Sage pp. 45-61

Hall, Stuart, Critcher, Chas, Jefferson Tony, Clarke John, and Roberts, Brian (1978) *Policing the Crisis. Mugging, the State and Law and Order*. London: Macmillan

Harcup, Tony (2004) in Susan Pape and Sue Featherstone (2006) *Feature Writing*, London: Sage.

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A three-way intersection to *The Junction*: publishing opportunity, aspiration and reticence of journalism students at an Australian regional university *Janet Fulton, Paul Scott, Felicity Biggins and Christina Koutsoukos, University of Newcastle, Australia,*

The boundaries of belonging: journalist interns' workplace learning experiences across communities of practice *Maarit Jaakkola, Tampere University, Finland*

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Challenging Neoliberalism: standing up for the 'academic' in the study of journalism *Margaret Hughes, University of West Scotland, Deirdre O'Neill, independent researcher*

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