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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.

He or she: reporting court cases of trans-identified defendants in the UK

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Abstract

Reporting of court cases with trans-identified defendants has become both more common and more difficult due to changing guidance to court officials, and limited regulatory guidance to media organisations. This has resulted in confusing articles and abuse of journalists. This research examined 138 media reports of 39 UK court cases concerning defendants who claimed to be transgender. The results showed great variation in journalistic practice regarding pronouns, use of names and terminology. Journalists were asked for the reasoning behind editorial decisions. Stakeholders were also invited to give their opinions on current and ideal reporting practice. Current legal and regulatory guidelines in the UK were reviewed. Guidance is given to enable journalists to report these cases safely and accurately and to assist those teaching student journalists.

Keywords:

Transgender, court, journalism, journalist, trans, report, defendant

Introduction

Journalists are struggling to comply with the law requiring accurate court reporting in the face of increasing confusion and political arguments about how gender identity is or should be treated by the police and courts.

This reflects a more general confusion and concern about 'misgendering' and 'deadnaming' (referring to someone by their pre-transition name). It also reflects the lack of an agreed definition of transgender (Centre for HIV and Sexual Health and TransBareAll, n.d.) (Hakeem, 2021).

Court reporting brings new, specific, legal and ethical challenges to journalists, which are not covered in current regulatory guidance by the UK's Independent Press Standards Organisation on trans (Independent Press Standards Organisation, 2016). The IPSO guidance assumes good faith on the part of the person who says they are transgender. The Gender Recognition Act also assumes good faith – that a person would not seek to transition without a sincere commitment to live in the chosen gender. Journalists have therefore also been asked to take such transitions on trust, without requiring proof or evidence, and have generally done so (Mediatique, 2020).

However, this question of good faith comes into sharp focus in a court room, where it is self-evident that defendants may lie. In some cases, male offenders claim to be transgender following arrest, possibly as a cynical attempt to generate sympathy, reduced sentences, or to serve a sentence in a women's prison; or possibly out of sadistic or attention seeking desires, or to create a new identity (Barrett, 2015).

Journalists are legally obliged to report court cases accurately (UK Government, 1996) and ethically obliged to report accurately to serve the public's right to know (Independent Press Standards Organisation, 2021). But this needs to be balanced with privacy rights of defendants whose gender identity is unrelated to their offending.

Journalists have to make decisions quickly in order to comply with legal requirements for contemporaneous reporting (Hanna, et al., 2020). This gives rise to anomalous reports and frequently expose journalists to abuse on social media (see research question results 1a and 1b below).

This research aims to establish the current picture, summarise current law and policy, highlight best practice and create guidelines for journalists for reporting on court cases with trans-identified defendants, relating to identity and use of pronouns.

Research Questions:

1a. How are court cases with transgender defendants reported by the UK media, in terms of pronouns, birth and trans names, and terminology?

1b. What is the editorial decision-making process behind media reports?

1c. Concerning terminology, how is 'trans' defined? What is understood by transgender or transwoman by a general readership? Is it accurate to call a defendant trans?

2. What are the legal, regulatory and ethical requirements of court reporting in the UK? How should they be interpreted in the case of a transgender defendant where biological sex may be an issue, or in the case of a defendant who claims to be transgender after arrest?

3. What are stakeholders' views on current and ideal practice in media reporting of these court cases?

Methodology

Media reports of 39 UK court cases involving trans-identified defendants were coded as described below in order to answer RQ1a. In total 138 reports from established media organisations were used, from 2020, 2021 and the first two months of 2022.

Cases were only included where males claimed to identify as the opposite gender or had taken a female name. Cases where men cross-dressed but did not claim to identify as women were not included. All cases relate to sexual or violent offences. This may reflect the behaviour of males likely to identify as transwomen in court, or to reflect news values, or both. We did not seek to exclude transmen (females identifying as men), but found no reports of court cases relating to them. In most cases, the defendant pleaded guilty or was found guilty. In a few cases, the reports referred to an early stage of proceedings which were unresolved at the end of the study. However, the verdicts did not have a bearing on the study, which relates to media representation.

Each report was coded as giving the defendant's birth name, chosen name, or both; and for pronouns used. The headline was coded for the words woman, transwoman or transgender woman. The body copy was coded for woman, transwoman, transgender woman or identifies as a woman. The phrase 'identifies as a woman' was not used in headlines, probably because it is too cumbersome. A notes section was included for unusual features. The spreadsheet is available on the *redacted* Data repository.

In addition, journalists reporting on 14 of these cases were invited to discuss the editorial decisions made when choosing how to refer to defendants in order to answer RQ1b. These were chosen as having been most likely to have actually attended the cases in question, as opposed to adding their own byline to stories provided by an agency service, and according to the availability of contact details. They were provided with a participant information sheet (available on *redacted* depository). Transcriptions are also on the depository. Only two journalists consented to be interviewed.

A range of stakeholder groups were invited to take part by submitting written comments and provided with an information sheet to answer RQ3. We sought a diverse range of opinions to provide full and competing perspectives on the issue. Trans rights groups were invited to comment as this is directly related to trans people, and in particular to provide a perspective on the impact on public perception of attributing of crimes to transpeople without caveat, compared to the impact of not accepting transgender status at face value. Women's rights groups were invited to comment as they have expressed concerns about male crimes being attributed to women, and the impact on victims of male criminals being referred to as women (Fair Play for Women, 2020). Free speech groups were invited to comment due to concerns about "compelled speech", in which people are obliged to refer to people by their chosen pronouns or descriptions, against their own beliefs (Stock, 2022). Invitations were sent to:

Trans rights groups: Stonewall, Gendered Intelligence, Trans Legal Project, Trans Media Watch, Press for Change, All About Trans, Trans Actual.

Lesbian, gay and women's rights groups: Lesbian and Gay Alliance, Gay Men's Network, Transgender Trend, Fair Play for Women, Fair Cop, Women's Rights Network, For Women Scotland, Legal Feminist, Sex Matters.

Free speech and journalism groups: Ethical Journalism Network, Index on Censorship, Free Speech Champions, Free Speech Union.

Research questions 1c and 2 were answered through a literature review.

Only three stakeholder groups provided responses: For Women Scotland, Women's Rights Network, Fair Play for Women. Their full responses are on the university depository. The trans groups all refused to contribute or did not respond. This is a significant limitation of the research, as trans perspectives have only been included via literature review, using trans rights sites such as Stonewall. Though these provide general guidance for journalists, they lack specific comments on this issue. The concept of 'no debate' has been a feature of trans rights activism, and this refusal to engage is consistent with that approach (Sullivan & Suissa, 2021) (Hanvey, 2022).

The free speech groups also refused to comment, which again means these issues can only be addressed via literature review. Only two journalists agreed to interview. Although these were useful, the varied nature of the court cases means more interviews would have provided more specific details about the different challenges journalists face.

Results

Research Question 1a: Media Report Analysis

Chaos was the defining feature of the media reports, when considered as a body. The same defendant could be referred to as male or female in different reports of the same court case (Brock, 2022) (PA News Agency, 2022), or even change pronouns half way through a report (Christodoulou, 2022). Defendants could be referred to as male by some people involved in a case and female by others (Connell, 2021). In one case, a defendant was referred to as a man in an early stage of a court case (Murphy, 2021a) and as a woman three months later by the same reporter in the same publication (Murphy, 2021b). In another case, a reporter referring to an earlier hearing, prior to the defendant transitioning, 'corrected' a witness's quotes in order to make the pronouns agree with the latest hearing (Novak, 2022).

Of the 138 reports, the birth name was given in 65 reports and the trans name in 117 reports. Both birth and trans names were given in 58 reports. Of 39 defendants, in only two cases were the trans name not given in any report. In 15 cases, the birth name was not given at all.

In headlines, woman was used 22 times, transwoman six times and transgender or similar 23 times. In most cases, the issue was avoided by using gender-neutral terms such as paedophile, sex offender, former teacher etc.

In body copy, transwoman was used in eight reports, transgender woman or similar in 40 and 'identifies as' in 25. This leaves 65 reports in which the person's trans status was not clearly stated. Woman was used in 30 reports. In two reports (both relating to Harry Styles' stalker) the person was entirely referred to as male and their new trans identity was not mentioned. In about 40 reports, there was no mention of the person's birth sex, or it was obfuscated. These numbers do not add up to 138 because many reports were difficult to classify. For example, some journalists presented male defendants as unambiguously female (Elvin, 2021), but some did so while simultaneously providing a careful reader with 'clues', such as that a defendant was being held in a male prison (Huntley, 2021). Some journalists mentioned a male middle name (Currie, 2021) or alias without comment, or mentioned "male anatomy" or similar.

All the above implies that further cases involving trans identifying defendants may have been missed from searches because media reports are incomplete.

Ratios cannot be provided due to the difficulties in classifying some stories, as mentioned above. However, overall, Scottish media organisations appeared more likely to obfuscate defendants' sex than other UK organisations. Although geography was not coded for in the methodology, this may relate to the differences in the way the Scottish government has treated transgender policies generally, for example, by moving towards self-identification in law, against UK government policy (House of Commons Library, 2022). There was little consistency even within a organisation. For example, the BBC covered six of the 39 cases, as follows:

> Zoe/Kyle Watts, multiple weapons offences, presented in report entirely as female. (BBC News, 2021)
>
> Julie/John Marshall, possession of 80,000 child abuse images, presented in report entirely as female. (BBC News, 2020)
>
> Paris Bregazzi, many violent offences over many years, described as transgender woman, female pronouns used. (BBC News, 2018)
>
> Jessica/Allan Brennan, multiple child sex offences, both birth and trans names given, female pronouns used. (BBC News, 2021)
>
> Jessica Smith, attempted child abuse, described as transwoman, female pronouns used. (BBC News, 2021)
>
> Laura/Patrick McCann, multiple child rape, presented in report entirely as male. Trans name not given and quotes heavily redacted to remove female pronouns. Male pronouns used throughout. (BBC News, 2021)

A few notable cases are given below. These are not highlighted to embarrass the journalists or publications involved. They are examples of the current confusion.

John/Claire Goodier

The first report describes the defendant as a man, John, who pleaded guilty at magistrates court to drugs offences and having sex with a dog. The report said Goodier 'now goes by the name of Claire' but the journalist used male pronouns (Murphy, Northwich man admits sex with a dog, 2021). Three months later, at sentencing, the same journalist used female pronouns and only the name Claire, who was described as a woman in the headline. The same picture was used in both stories (Murphy, Northwich woman jailed for cocaine-fuelled sex with a dog, 2021).

Susan Cuthbert

The court report was extremely confusing, but appears to describe sexual relationships between two transwomen and one man. In a jealous, drunken fight, Cuthbert stabbed both the others. Cuthbert is not described as a transwoman but is mentioned as being 'held in a male prison', while the lover is described as 'a person who goes by the name of "Gemma'"(Huntley, 2021).

Janiel Verainer

Verainer, who has a history of sex offences against children, identifies as a five-year-old girl. Verainer arrived in court dressed as an elf and carrying a doll. The judge said this was unacceptable and insisted the doll be removed. Verainer's claim to be five was clearly not believed by the judicial system, as shown by the case being tried in an adult court and the judge's remarks about the childlike behaviour. However the judge did use female pronouns, implying that the claim to be transgender was accepted. *The Kent Messenger* avoided pronouns and did not describe Verainer as trans, but stated that Verainer was referred to with female pronouns during the hearing (Hooper, 2021). However, *the Daily Mail* used female pronouns and described Verainer as transgender (Phillips, 2021).

Pablo/Diana Tarazaga-Orero

Tarazaga-Orero has a history of stalking Harry Styles, with a first court appearance in 2019. In February 2022, the defendant was again in court charged with breaking into the singer's home and assaulting a woman. In court, Tarazaga-Orero was referred to as 'identifying as a woman' for the first time.

The Sun and *Daily Mail* referred to Tarazaga-Orero as a 'transgender woman' and used female pronouns. Both used the name Diana in body copy but Pablo in picture captions (Christodoulou, 2022) (Dean, 2022). *The Independent* didn't mention the defendant's change of gender, used the name Pablo and male pronouns (Vaughan, 2022).

The Metro described the defendant as a woman, used female pronouns and only the name Diana. The report quoted Harry Styles from a previous court case (when Pablo/Diana had not claimed to be transgender) and "corrected" those earlier quotes:

> *Styles told Hendon Magistrates' Court from behind a screen: 'I thought it was sad .... I felt sorry for [her]. That evening I pulled up in my car next to the bus stop and I offered [her] some money so that [she] could get a hotel or some food.' (Novak, 2022)*

Chloe Thompson

Thompson had 17 convictions for sex offences under the name Andrew McNab and was on the sex offenders register. McNab changed name by deed poll to Chloe Thompson and set up a new social media account under the new name, without informing police, in breach of the terms of a notification order (Hetherington, 2021). A few months later, Thompson was arrested for multiple indecent exposures. In court, Thompson was referred to by female pronouns by officials but by male pronouns by witnesses. Reports made confusing references to 'her penis'. A tweet by *the Daily Record* linked to the case was deleted after many complaints, mocking the reporter and publication and saying that McNab should be called a man and that the term 'her penis' was ridiculous (Corrigan, 2022).

RQ1a: How are court cases with transgender defendants reported by the UK media, in terms of pronouns, birth and trans names, and terminology?

Conclusion: There is no consistency regarding the use of pronouns, terms and names used in reports of trans-identified defendants. Editorial decisions vary wildly from case to case, journalist to journalist and publication to publication. Some journalists appear to be finding ways of providing accurate information through convoluted means. Due to the confusing nature of the reports concerned, accurate data cannot be provided. Reports of trans-identified defendants are not rare, as this data shows. Trans identified people within the judicial system also appear to be becoming more common (Gair, 2021) (Gilligan, 2017), though this is hard to establish due to historical variation in data collection methods (Metropolitan Police, 2022) (West Yorkshire Police, 2021). It is likely the issue is more widespread than appears here, as cases will not appear in searches due to obfuscation of defendants' sex, and its replacement with gender.

RQ1b: Editorial Decision Process

Only two journalists agreed to be interviewed: Reporter A, at *The Bolton News*, who reported on a case in January 2021, with headline 'Woman paedophile distributed indecent images of children'; and Reproter B, *Northwich Guardian*, who wrote the two conflicting reports about John/Claire Goodier mentioned above.

Reporter A's report referred to the defendant throughout as a woman and used female pronouns. Reporter A said this reflected how the defendant was referred to in court. The reporter said no mention was made of the defendant being transgender, though the judge said he had read a report from The Tavistock Centre, which runs a service to help people with their gender identity, and the defendant did not look 'all that feminine'.

Reporter A said: 'I discussed it with a number of colleagues, but we took the decision that the court had referred to her in the feminine, she referred to herself in the feminine and we are there to not make judgements so we decided we would report it straight as we would do any other case...

'There were some repercussions as there were some people in the community who knew she was transgender, and we did get a lot of flak for doing it.

'We are there as the eyes and ears of the public, what the public would see or hear is what we report, and it is not our place to make judgements about it. The court wasn't going to, so we are not going to either. If there are people out in society who are prejudiced then that is up to them, we are not going to join in that.'

Reporter B said the initial report, which referred to Goodier as male throughout, was written from a magistrates' court register which gave the name as John Goodier aka Claire – no journalist was in court. Reporter B then attended the crown court for the sentencing.

Reporter B said: 'That is when it completely changed and there was no mention of John Goodier at all at Crown Court, so it was a bit confusing.'

The reporter explained that he had hoped that some reference would have been made in the court by either barrister, but it was not mentioned. He then discussed it with his editor.

The reporter said:

> *"We felt we had no alternative but to play it safe and straight because ultimately, we don't really know what the transitional stage of Claire Goodier is, we just didn't know. And, actually, is it relevant to the story and it probably isn't."*

The article also received a lot of complaints.

He said:

> *"We got absolutely slaughtered, we got so many complaints about the fact that we referred to Claire.*
> *"If you have a mugshot with a story, especially the mugshot we had for this one, it created such kind of extreme viewpoints, and we got so many complaints about it.*
> *"The only thing in hindsight we maybe could have done is within the story refer to the fact she used to be known as John but at the time, it wasn't kind of something we deliberately left out."*

He added that they also received complaints about the first story as well.

He said:

> *"I think we got at least one or two complaints by people saying we should be respecting how people want to be referred to, but we got that from a register, so we weren't in court to have any more substantial info. These kinds of stories are always going to generate complaints, regardless of how you report on them."*

He felt it would be useful for courts to offer guidance on cases.

He said:

> *"They are difficult cases, but it probably would be nice if the court could maybe explain a bit more, especially the ones that are going to generate a lot of complaints and personal abuse directed at journalists for simply reporting on how something has been done.*
> *"We haven't done it deliberately to offend people or wind people up, we are just reporting on the facts as they were presented in court. So, it might be nice to get a bit of direction from either a judge or a barrister on these types of cases."*

RQ1c: What is the editorial decision-making process behind this?

Conclusion: Due to the limitation of the sample size, conclusions can only be drawn cautiously, though the reluctance of journalists to talk may in itself imply unease. However, the journalists spoken to made clear decisions are not made lightly. Journalists know they may receive strong criticism or abuse. They appear reluctant to use male pronouns or refer to someone as male when they have been referred to as solely female in court, even when court records have stated their sex previously. Their reports reflect the remarks made in court.

RQ1d: Terminology, definitions and public understanding of 'transgender'

A major reason for confusion is the lack of a clear legal definition of the terms 'trans' or 'transgender'; or a generally agreed public understanding of the term. A selection are summarised below but they are contradictory. This problem was noted in the Equality and Human Rights Commission response to the debate on conversion therapy:

'The consultation document contains no clear definition of … the meaning of "transgender" – a term which has no clear legal meaning, is potentially wider than the concept of gender reassignment in current UK law, and is understood by different people in different ways.' (Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2022).

Part of the problem stems from the move away from the term transsexual to the term transgender, as described by consultant psychiatrist and gender specialist Dr Az Hakeem:

> *"While the term transsexual has a specific definition and had previously been used for diagnostic purposes, the term transgender is less defined and more encompassing. The term is perhaps more useful than transsexual in that it at least includes reference to gender which is at the core of the condition and the person's relationship to it.*
>
> *"Both these terms contain the prefix trans, which implies a switching between two binary poles… While this has been mainly the case with transsexualism, it is increasingly common for persons identifying as transgender to have gender identities outside of the binary repertoire of male/female. (Hence the term non-binary).*
>
> *"Transgender persons may adhere to stereotyped male/female roles or they may subvert these …. Such individuals may identify as non-gendered, inter-gendered, or as transgender without attempting to assimilate (or pass) as either conventionally male or female." (Hakeem, 2021)*

In other words, to be transgender does not require a person to look different to their biological sex, or have hormone treatment or surgery. It is about the way a person feels.

Official bodies have attempted to define it more objectively. The three legal requirements of a Gender Recognition Certificate (GRC) are a medical diagnosis of gender dysphoria; and that the person has 'lived in' their chosen gender for a minimum of two years; and have made a sincere commitment to live permanently in that gender. It does not require the applicant to have had hormonal treatment or surgery (Government Equalities Office, 2018). No definition of 'lived in' is given, but accepted proof includes bank statements or payslips, implying a name change. About 6,000 GRCs have been issued to 2022 since 2008 (Ministry of Justice, 2021) – far fewer than the estimated 200,000 to 500,000 trans people in Britain (Government Equalities Office, 2018).

In contrast, the World Athletics organisation, whose definitions are followed by some sporting bodies, makes no mention of a permanent commitment. However, it does require a transgender male-to-female competitor to have had hormonal treatment resulting in a measurable alteration to testosterone levels for at least a year (World Athletics, 2019)

NHS bodies define 'trans' much more widely, as an umbrella term which may include a temporary transition, or 'living part-time with a different gender identity', or even just 'occasionally wearing clothes usually associated with the 'opposite' gender' (Centre for HIV and Sexual Health and TransBareAll, n.d.).

Stonewall also describes 'trans' as an umbrella term covering many possible gender identities, but defines 'transgender woman' more specifically as 'someone who is assigned male at birth but identifies and lives as a woman' (Stonewall, 2017). Again, no definition of 'lives as a woman' is provided.

In contrast, the public understanding of the term transgender is much more restrictive than any of the above definitions. A revealing 2020 YouGov poll on transgender rights showed that a majority of the UK public agreed that 'a transgender woman is a woman' and 'a transgender man is a man', and that transgender people should be allowed to use the toilets and changing rooms of their chosen gender. However, when it was specified that the transgender person had NOT had gender reassignment surgery, this majority reversed, with most people stating they should not be allowed to use the facilities of their chosen gender. From this we can infer that most of the British public assume that 'transgender' refers to people who have had surgery (Smith, 2020).

This is significant, as very few trans people choose to have genital surgery. It is impossible to obtain accurate numbers, partly due to the very broad definitions above, but a 2015 GIRES report suggested 1 per cent of the UK population was nonconforming to some degree. Of these, three per cent (0.03 per cent of the total population) had already had any medical treatment, which may include hormonal or surgical treatment, with a further 0.4 per cent expecting to receive medical treatment during the next year (0.004 per cent of the entire population). This means 96 per cent had not had medical treatment nor had any immediate plans to seek it. Half of one per cent had a GRC (0.005 per cent of the entire population) (Gender Identity Research and Education Society, 2015). For the overwhelming majority of transgender people, 'transitioning' appears to involve social and cosmetic change, or personal understanding of the self. However, perspectives on trans identity are extremely varied (Stonewall, 2019) (Stonewall, n.d.).

The NHS guidance quoted above (Centre for HIV and Sexual Health and TransBareAll, n.d.) acknowledges the public's lack of understanding, stating: 'Many people assume that [trans] means someone who has either had or who is currently in the process of physically (and probably surgically) "changing" from a man to a woman or from a woman to a man…but it's not that simple.'

For a journalist writing for a general audience, this is crucial. Reports of sexual offences will be incomprehensible to a large chunk of the audience if clarity is not given to the defendant's biological reality, including their pre- or post-operative status. This is because sex crimes are likely to involve the defendant's genitals. Stock has described how, while this may seem gratuitous, this becomes necessary in some situation as the ordinary, polite words (X is a man) are no longer considered acceptable (Stock, 2022). Such descriptions would be unnecessary and demeaning in reporting of most news stories ('lottery winner celebrates jackpot' obviously requires no description of the winner's body) but becomes necessary in the specific instances of court stories involving sexual offences.

Trans-identified defendants: is it accurate to call them transgender?

The lack of a clear definition of 'trans' means it is possible for anyone to identify as transgender. Advocates of self-ID (a policy that would give this legal status) would state that people are the gender they identify as. But in court, identifying as trans carries incentives which make the situation less clear. There are long-standing concerns amongst psychiatrists and others working in the criminal justice system that criminals cynically and falsely claim to be trans (Barrett, 2015) (Richards, 2015) (KPSS, 2022).

In written evidence to the Government's Transgender Equality Inquiry, the President of the British Association of Gender Specialists outlined some of the reasons why a prisoner might pretend to be transgender (Barrett, 2015), reasons which also apply to a defendant:

> *"The…. ever-increasing tide of referrals of patients in prison serving long or indeterminate sentences for serious sexual offences…. vastly outnumber the number of prisoners incarcerated for more ordinary, non-sexual, offences. It has been rather naïvely suggested that nobody would seek to pretend transsexual status in prison if this were not actually the case. There are, to those of us who actually interview the prisoners, in fact very many reasons why people might pretend this.*
>
> *"These vary from the opportunity to have trips out of prison through to a desire for a transfer to the female estate … through to the idea that a parole board will perceive somebody who is female as being less dangerous through to a [false] belief that hormone treatment will actually render one less dangerous through to wanting a special or protected status within the prison system and even (in one very well evidenced case that a highly concerned Prison Governor brought particularly to my attention) a plethora of prison intelligence information suggesting that the driving force was a desire to make subsequent sexual offending very much easier, females being generally perceived as low risk in this regard."*

Written evidence from the British Psychological Society outlined similar concerns, adding further incentives for seeking a trans identity: 'As a means of explaining their sex offending aside from sexual gratification (e.g. wanting to 'examine' young females); or as a means of separating their sex offending self (male) from their future self (female).' (Richards, 2015)

A further incentive for defendants is the possibility of escaping prison altogether on the grounds of being transgender, as has happened in a number of cases (Fahey, 2010) (Simpson, 2022) (Brazell, 2020) (ITV News, 2018) (Karim, 2020).

There is evidence from Ministry of Justice and Scottish Prison Service reports that defendants and prisoners are falsely claiming to be trans in the rising numbers of trans-identified prisoners since the introduction of the care and management of transsexual prisoners policy of 2011, which has been perceived by some as giving special privileges such as private washing and laundry facilities (Leake, 2014) (Gilligan, 2017) (Gair, 2021). There are also reports of male prisoners transitioning to join women's prisons and detransitioning following release (Mega & Boothman, 2022) (Maycock, 2021). More recently, there has been a significant increase in police forces recording rape, a crime specifically committed with a penis under UK law, as being committed by females or people without a gender (KPSS, 2022).

If a journalist uncritically states a person is transgender, without giving any details about when they transitioned, or whether they have taken serious steps such as medical treatment (where these are mentioned within court proceedings), then the public may again be left with a false impression.

RQ 1d. Concerning terminology, how is 'trans' defined? What is understood by transgender or transwoman by a general readership? Is it accurate to call a defendant trans?

Conclusion: The term trans has no exact definition and is understood by different people in different ways. There is little research regarding general public understanding of the term, but what exists implies the public incorrectly assumes most trans people have had genital surgery. Expert evidence to government committees states that defendants are incentivised by the justice system to claim to be trans (Richards, 2015) (Barrett, 2015), and may do so without any intention of permanently changing gender (Mega & Boothman, 2022).

If defendants are falsely claiming to be trans in order to take advantage of such incentives, then public perception of trans people will be affected. Cumulatively, the reports may be incorrectly suggesting to the public that transgender people are unusually likely to commit crime, particularly violent or sexual crime as these are the crimes most likely to result in media reports.

Research Question 2: Legal and ethical duties of journalists in court reporting

Courts serve the purposes of justice. The publication of court hearings forms part of the process of justice. The principle of open justice is widely recognised by both the public and the judiciary. In *R v Felixstowe Justices, ex p Leigh [1987],* Lord Justice Watkins said: "No-one nowadays surely can doubt that [the journalist's] presence in court for the purpose of reporting proceedings conducted therein is indispensable. Without him, how is the public to be informed of how justice is being administered in our courts?" (Hanna, Dodd, & McNae, 2020, p. 184)

The societal benefits of open justice include promoting public confidence and respect for the administration of justice, allowing the public to scrutinise the process, and putting pressure on witnesses to tell the truth. More importantly in cases where identity is an issue, fair and accurate reporting of court proceedings can result in evidence becoming available and act as a deterrent to the public which could be hindered if proceedings aren't reported, or identities are concealed (Hanna, Dodd, & McNae, 2020).

This principle of open justice is the reason behind both the legal responsibilities placed upon the court reporter and the legal freedoms given to the court reporter: the principle of privilege. Court proceedings are in themselves, defamatory. To report that someone has been accused, convicted or sentenced for a crime will cause their reputation serious harm. However, reporters rely on the protection of the absolute privilege defence, set out in the Defamation Act 2013. But to maintain this defence, a report must be fair, accurate and published contemporaneously. The defence does not require the journalists to report the 'truth' or to make enquiries outside the courtroom, but to accurately report what was said in it. They must report only on court proceedings, which may include more than simply the words that are spoken by court officials, witnesses and defendants. For example, journalists may report on defendants' and witnesses' appearance and demeanour.

Journalists also have an ethical responsibility to the public to report accurately. This means more than just reporting quotes accurately. It also means not mis-representing the facts by partial reporting, or by failing to mention something that is relevant to an event. Accuracy is the basis of Clause One of the Editor's Code of Practice: 'The press must take care not to publish inaccurate, misleading or distorted information or images, including headlines not supported by the text.' (Editors' Code of Practice Committee, 2021)

There is no public interest defence to Clause One. A journalist cannot claim that they reported inaccurately for a good reason, for example, an attempt to combat transphobia. Accuracy is at the heart of journalistic ethics. This ethical responsibility also means using language in a way that will be commonly understood by their readers. Facts should be clearly represented using words that are familiar to the vast majority of the audience.

In court, judges and magistrates are required to behave according to the guidelines in the Bench Handbook, which specifies that transgender people should be addressed by their chosen name and pronouns (Judicial College, 2021). Journalists reporting a judge's remarks should quote them accurately.

However, journalists, witnesses, lawyers and members of the public are not under any legal obligation to use a transgender person's chosen pronouns, although they may choose to do so. The Bench Handbook says: 'There may be situations where the rights of a witness to refer to a trans person by pronouns matching their gender assigned at birth, or to otherwise reveal a person's trans status, clash with the trans person's right to privacy. It is important to identify such potential difficulties in advance, preferably at a case management stage.' (Judicial College, 2021)

In fact, if using a person's chosen pronouns may misrepresent the facts of a case, or confuse the audience, the journalist runs the risk of breaking both their legal responsibility of accuracy in court reporting and their ethical responsibilities of accuracy and clarity. For example, confusion could be caused where the alleged crime was committed by an offender who the victim perceived to be male, or which refers to a trans-identifying woman having male genitals.

In most reporting involving transgender people, their gender may be irrelevant to the story and chosen pronouns or names can be used without further explanation. Stories such as 'Business wins award' or 'Three injured in car crash' are covered by the Editor's Code, Clause 12, Discrimination: 'Details of an individual's race, colour, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, physical or mental illness or disability must be avoided unless genuinely relevant to the story' (Editors' Code of Practice Committee, 2021).

But in court cases, particularly those with high news value, biological sex is often an issue; or deception or fraudulent identity is 'genuinely relevant to the story'. Giving further details here is not in conflict with the Editors' Code guidance. If the person requests to be referred to in court by their chosen gender, as they are entitled to do (Judicial College, 2021), then their gender identity becomes relevant as it is at odds with the biological sex which is also relevant to the case. Misrepresenting the biological sex of the person concerned, even if well-intentioned, may risk the journalists' failing in their legal and ethical duties.

It is rare for a defendant to have a Gender Recognition Certificate. However, even if defendants do have a GRC, the situation for court proceedings, and thus court reporting, does not necessarily change. It is an offence to disclose protected information, such as someone's previous identity, once they have a GRC, unless the disclosure is for the purposes of the proceedings of a court or tribunal (section 22 of the Gender Recognition Act, paragraph 4e), or for the purpose of preventing or investigating crime (paragraph 4f) (UK Government, 2004). Court reports, which serve the principle of open justice, could be said to be part of this process, as described above, although this has not yet been tested in law.

RQ3. What are the legal, regulatory and ethical requirements of court reporting in the UK? How should they be interpreted in the case of a transgender defendant where biological sex may be an issue, or in the case of a defendant who claims to be transgender after arrest?

Conclusion: Court officials are likely to use a defendant's chosen pronouns in line with the Equal Treatment Bench Handbook. Witnesses may or may not do so. Journalists should report all quotes accurately. However, journalists are not legally required to use chosen pronouns in body copy or headlines. They have further legal and ethical duties to accuracy which may require clarity of the defendant's biological sex. The existence of a GRC is not necessarily a barrier to full court reporting, including both sex and gender and any previous names, due to section 22 of the GRA (UK Government, 2004), although this has not been tested through precedent.

Research Question 3: Stakeholders' Views

The researchers regret that no trans representative groups or free speech groups contributed comments. We would still be happy to hear from trans or free speech groups regarding their views.

All three women's rights groups stated strongly that biological sex was relevant in the case of court reporting, particularly of violent and sexual crime, and should be reported accurately regardless of the defendant's gender identity or the language used in court.

Susan Smith, co-director of For Women Scotland, said:

> *"The obfuscation of the sex of an offender in crime reporting leads to confusion for the public, the potential to skew analysis and cause distress for victims."*

Ms Smith said current guidelines had resulted in absurdities, some dangerous, and allowed the ideological stance of reporters and publishers to determine how much information was conveyed, and how, leaving it to the ingenuity of readers to track down accurate information.

She said:

> *"When women's names are given to those charged with crimes of a violent and sexual nature, there is increasing scepticism that they are genuinely female. In seeking to understand these crimes, no one, whether crime reporters, members of the public or researchers, should have to second-guess or distrust the narrative presented."*

She said this confusion could lead to:

> *"fundamental misunderstandings of the dichotomy between the sexes with regard to certain*

crimes and the rise of "women do it too" arguments which are often employed to remove safeguards."

Ms Smith was particularly concerned that the situation may be exacerbated in Scotland by the SNP's determination to make acquisition of GRCs easier. She said:

"As more perpetrators seek to acquire GRCs, the possibility of more confusion or restrictions and censorship needs to be countered by a commitment from IPSO to put truth and justice first."

Fair Play for Women has taken an active role in challenging reporting of crime by trans-identified defendants. They said that over 18 months, they had made ten complaints to IPSO about the use of 'woman' or 'female' to describe such defendants as a breach of Clause 1 of the Editors' Code (Accuracy). All were initially rejected and FPFW escalated them all to the IPSO Complaints Committee for final review, where they were again rejected without investigation. Rulings are normally published on IPSO's website but because these were rejected without investigation, none of the context or investigation made the public domain. FPFW has now published the correspondence on their own website (Fair Play for Women, 2022).

Claims were rejected for at least one of two reasons: that the report was not inaccurate if a newspaper accurately reported what was said; and that in the case of a third party complaint, Ipso could not decide what was accurate without the consent of the individual involved.

FPFW said the first reason, that a report was not inaccurate if it accurately reported what was said, overlooked the false assumptions newspapers were making about an individual's sex when they are described in court or by police using feminine pronouns and name. Newspapers were conflating sex and gender identity, resulting in misleading and inaccurate headlines, such as 'Teesside **woman** accused of using sex toy and masturbating in public'. In their response, Fair Play for Women said:

"And what a great headline it is too – a woman caught masturbating in public – this is no run of the mill, everyday story of male sexual offending. This is unusual and shocking – the perfect click-bait headline to drive interest in the story….

"What's happening here is clearly wrong, but inevitable, unless the Editor gives clear direction to staff that pronouns and names must never be used to guess at someone's sex. If someone's sex is relevant to the story – which it must be if it ends up in the headline – staff must take extra care to make sure it's right and clearly distinguish between sex and gender identity when necessary.

"By failing to even accept our complaints, IPSO is not presenting these examples to newspaper editors. Editors continue to remain oblivious to the obvious flaws, or can simply ignore it knowing there will never be a case to answer to the regulator."

FPFW said that the second reason, that investigating a person's biological sex would be highly intrusive, without the consent of the person involved, even extended to when that person's sex was obvious and indisputable from court records. FPFW said:

"This approach of requiring input and consent of the first party normally makes sense…. However, this approach falls down when the individual desires the inaccuracy and/or conflation [of sex with gender] and wouldn't want it corrected. In this instance, the first party consent rule is not fit for purpose and ensures that individual privacy will always override public interest to know the truth."

FPFW also stated they had many meetings with IPSO and submitted written evidence to the Editors' Code Committee (Fair Play for Women, 2020), without result. FPFW said that the Trans Guidance, written in 2016, was focussed exclusively on the needs of the trans person, and written to stop trans people being unnecessarily 'outed' or mocked, but IPSO's own recent research (Mediatique, 2020) showed this was no longer an issue.

FPFW felt that IPSO was failing to act fairly, by consulting with transgender advocacy groups but refusing to consider issues raised by other stakeholders. FPFW said:

"Transgender advocacy groups do not wish gender identity, sex or transgender status to be reported where it is not relevant to a story. Likewise, women's sex-based advocacy groups, such as ours, do not wish the male sex to be misreported or misinterpreted as if it were the female sex, where sex is relevant to the story.

"he needs of both stakeholder groups should be considered and fairly balanced by IPSO and this is not currently happening and needs to change.

> *"By not even accepting our complaints, IPSO has avoided having to consider where the fair balance lies. What matters more? The privacy of a sex offender to hide his sex or the wellbeing of the victim to read her truth? Should the privacy of an individual always trump the public interest not to be misled? Or are there occasions when sex matters and readers must not be misled?*
> *"Getting this balance right matters. Public support for female-only spaces depends on the public's understanding of which sex commits most sexual and violent crimes. Misleading articles about "female" sex offenders distorts public perception, and along with it societal debate and public policy-making.*
> *"Ipso has a responsibility to help the press get this right."*

The Women's Rights Network held similar views, and in addition was concerned about the presenting of opinion as fact. Referring to the Claire/John Goodier case described above, WRN said that the various media outlets, all registered with IPSO, described Goodier variously as a woman, transwoman and "transgender paedophile who identifies as a woman". WRN stated:

> *"While it is true that some trans activists assert that 'trans women are women' this is an opinion, not a fact. It is also a highly contentious opinion.*
> *"The eminent biologist and scientist Lord Robert Winston has stated, 'I will say this categorically — that you cannot change your sex…' Yet, as the Goodier coverage shows, some members of IPSO are ignoring the facts of biological sex in favour of an ill-defined opinion on gender identity."*

The Women's Rights Network said that the current inconsistent reporting around offenders exposed court reporters to abuse and harassment, but the solution lay within the current Code of Practice, which states that references to gender identity should be avoided unless genuinely relevant to the story. WRN said:

> *"If gender identity is not relevant to the crime or criminal proceedings, it should not be mentioned. Instead, reports should accurately record the defendant's legal sex."*

The WRN said that they were also concerned that the conflation of sex and gender, and the gradual creep of policies and practices which allow men to say they are women raises important wider issues. These included the practice of police recording crimes by gender not sex and the loss of single sex spaces in hospitals, prisons and even rape crisis centres. WRN said:

> *"We welcome the opportunity to comment on these issues and sincerely hope that IPSO offers clear guidance to journalists and editors which reflects its own Code and Codebook. Accuracy is the bedrock of all journalism. Anything which ignores or distorts the facts is comment or conjecture."*

RQ3: What are stakeholders' views on current and ideal practice in media reporting of these court cases?

Conclusion: Trans rights groups and freedom of speech groups chose not to contribute to this research, which inevitably limits the findings. Women's rights groups felt that their views were being ignored by regulators, who were failing to balance conflicting needs. They were concerned about the misrepresenting of violent and sexual crimes by males as being by females and the distress this caused to victims. They were also concerned about the wider implications for women resulting from the conflation of sex with gender; and the tacit acceptance by journalists of opinions regarding gender as fact. In addition, as gender is manifested, understood and defined in widely different ways between both individuals and groups, such opinions vary widely (Hakeem, 2021) (Centre for HIV and Sexual Health and TransBareAll, n.d.).

Discussion and guidance

Reporting on trans issues has become one of the most contentious parts of journalists' work. Many have suffered major abuse on social media, complaints to their editors and even threats. These issues show no sign of going away. Jo Adetunji, editor at *The Conversation*, wrote:

> *"Many editors and journalists admit to wanting to steer clear… Attacks have damaged the mental health of young journalists and left them treading on eggshells. Reporters and editors often feel they can't defend themselves properly – they are there to report others' views, not their own, and can fear making the situation worse …. or fear making missteps at the myriad*

obstacles of changing language and meaning." (Adetunji, 2021)

Nonetheless, Adetunji is definite that journalists and publishers must not avoid an important and complex group of issues. Recently, IPSO has attempted to provide further assistance for journalists through an updated set of guidance. However, although this acknowledges that court reporting is a contentious issue, it only lists factors for journalists to consider, and stops short of suggesting to journalists what they should actually do once they have considered these various factors. It acknowledges the complexity and variation of the situations journalists may face, but gives no assistance in helping journalists find an appropriate balance. The purpose of this research was to review journalists' legal and ethical duties, the current situation and the views of stakeholders in order to provide robust guidance, which we offer here.

Proposed guidelines for journalists

This guidance is offered as suggestions for publishers, based on the journalist's duty to communicate facts as clearly as possible to the audience. This guidance is provided to allow journalists to report neutrally and accurately without making any judgements but providing enough information to allow readers to understand the court case and make up their own minds. These guidelines are based on a principle that a minor increase in word count is better than a major inaccuracy.

On rare occasions where the journalist has no way of knowing or suspecting that the defendant is trans, for example, when reporting only from court documents which conceal the defendant's birth sex, then obviously these guidelines cannot apply.

As noted above, this is a new area of law which has created tensions between privacy of defendants, victims' rights, and the requirements for accurate reporting. It is an area that has not been tested through precedent. As all cases are different, where publishers are unsure, they should seek their own legal advice.

1. Avoid using definitive words without caveat especially in headlines and introductions.

Headlines which use the word 'woman' to describe a transwoman implies that the writer, and publication, agrees with the proposition 'Transwomen are women'. This is an opinion, not a fact, and so should not be used in the headline of a news report. Similarly, describing a person as a 'transwoman' implies to the general reader that the person has made a sincere, permanent commitment to a gender change, probably with medical treatment. This may not be the case.

In headlines, the words woman or transwoman are better avoided. In body copy, phrases can be used such as 'The prosecuting lawyer said Smith now identifies as a woman' or 'Smith claimed to be transgender and asked court officials to use female pronouns'.

2. Report all quotes accurately even if this results in different pronouns being used by different speakers.

In court reporting, as elsewhere, quotes should never be changed. If necessary, a brief explanation is best: 'Although Smith was referred to as a woman by court officials, the witness referred to Smith as a man'. This is covered by absolute privilege (UK Government, 1996).

3. Seek to provide your reader with the most accurate information, where possible, regarding the person's status such as an official name change, medical treatment, time of transition or GRC, insofar as it is provided as part of court proceedings or in court documents, or as part of an official police statement.

Public understanding of trans terms is low, and even official definitions are so vague and all-encompassing as to be almost meaningless. As opinions and manifestations of gender vary so widely, it is impossible to journalists to communicate with a broad readership without using more specific terms. In the majority of news reports, details of a person's transition will be irrelevant, but is relevant where biological sex is a factor if the reader is to understand the facts, particularly where a defendant has claimed to transition after arrest.

However, journalists should remember that only information which is part of court proceedings is covered by absolute privilege (UK Government, 1996). Information provided by police press release or official statement is covered by qualified privilege (UK Government, 1996 b).

4. Refrain from using pronouns, except in quotes, even if this results in awkward sentence construction or repetition of a name (see case precis on pages six and seven, which are written without pronouns).

To refer to a biological male with female pronouns is to tacitly agree with their claim that they are a woman or transwoman. Owing to the incentives of the justice system, this may not be the case. Using their chosen pronouns is to collude in their possible deception.

5. Make clear the biological sex of the defendant high up in the story.

Types of crime strongly correlate with biological sex (Ministry of Justice, 2020). These differences remain even after transition (Dhejn, et al., 2011). Public understanding of crime, particularly violent and sexual offences, will be corroded if a defendant's sex is cloaked in euphemisms, or buried in a final paragraph, or if gender is conflated with sex.

6. Use both birth and trans names where available, particularly for sex offences.

Journalists have a duty to the public, as well as obligations to the subjects of stories. This can create a conflict when a person has changed their name. Many trans people greatly dislike being referred to by their original name, known as 'deadnaming', and in most news stories there is no need. However, there is a public interest case for reporting a defendant's original name as well as their new name. Reports of sex offences are one of the most valuable methods of encouraging victims of earlier crimes to come forward. Complying with an offender's demands to only use their new name in public reports may allow them to escape justice for other crimes. The existence of a GRC does not prohibit the publication of a previous name when used to investigate or prevent crime, as described in the societal benefits of court reporting above.

Conclusion

Courts do not exist to serve as stages on which the players perform an affirmation of a person's chosen identity. Court reports are not a public record of such a performance, or a form of validation.

Court reports serve the public's right to know (Independent Press Standards Organisation, 2021). They also uphold the purposes of justice, both by serving the principle of open justice and by providing information that may lead to further prosecutions (Hanna, et al., 2020). For all these reasons, accuracy is of overwhelming importance.

The courtroom is, by design, a place of confrontation and opposing interests. The rights of the public (as represented by officials), defendants, witnesses and victims are in tension. These tensions and conflicts are inevitably transferred to the journalist attempting to make a fair and accurate report.

Some male offenders, motivated by recent incentives within the judicial system, appear to be falsely claiming to be transgender (Leake, 2014) (Mega & Boothman, 2022). There is no way for a journalist to establish whether someone making that claim is genuinely transgender or not. This is partly due to varying definitions of transgender, and partly due to the practicalities of establishing the reality behind the claim. In most circumstances, journalists may choose to take such a statement on trust, but in a court room, the other conflicting interests mean it is important the journalist makes clear this is a claim, not an established fact.

Representing defendants claiming to be transgender as biological women, or as transwomen without any caveat, is to give an inaccurate report of both an individual crime and a more general picture of offending patterns. This may have long-term effects on safeguarding and women's rights. It may distress victims. Lack of clarity about the identity of defendants may enable them to commit further crimes in the future and prevent further witnesses to past crimes coming forward. It erodes trust in the media generally and exposes journalists to abuse and ridicule.

Journalists and editors have been left to struggle with these issues due to a lack of clear guidance. We would strongly recommend that IPSO, and other regulatory bodies, work with women's and trans groups on an updated version of guidance regarding transgender reporting to include trans-identified defendants.

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NOTE: The guidance offered here is the authors and its publication is designed to initiate discussion of this complex issue with students and should not be taken as AJE policy.

For those seeking to debate these matters further, the NUJ's Ethics Council is planning to discuss the reporting of the trans-gendered as one of its forthcoming series of webinars on Journalism Ethics. These will start early in the new year and details can be found on www.nuj.org.uk..

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The impact of community on the learning of journalism ethics in work-based settings

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Abstract

Early career journalists in the UK working within a local community learn ethical journalism from their interactions with that community. This learning is non-formal, and not explicitly acknowledged as learning, yet is evident through the development of occupational behaviours. Their learning presents an alternative interpretation of Lave and Wenger's social learning construct Communities of Practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 2008), which conceptualises learning as a process along a trajectory towards membership of a work-based community. Fieldwork conducted in the UK press indicated that while journalists learned occupational ethics through interactions with others within their organisation, the intended audience for their journalistic output presented a second community which impacted on their occupational behaviours and understanding of what ethical journalism might be. This second community influenced their learning through their desire to belong to that community and be perceived as trusted and valued in their occupational role, operating as a parallel and complimentary community of practice alongside that found in the workplace.

Introduction

Early career learning of occupational practice in journalism in the UK is an area which is under-explored (Porcu, 2020; Koivula et al, 2023), particularly the learning of journalism ethics in the legacy press.

Journalism education in the UK follows two broad pathways: in the university sector, practical and academic approaches to understanding journalism are offered, and for those entering the occupation via established news organisations, industry bodies control training programmes which focus on skill development and essential knowledge associated with the role. Those seeking employment as journalists in established titles in the legacy press may hold a journalism degree, though this is not a requirement, but will be expected to have undertaken, or be willing to undertake, industry mandated training supplemented by structured work-based learning (Deuze, 2006; Franklin & Mensing, 2011; Frost, 2012a; Keeble, 2001; Stoker, 2020; Thomas, 1998). The norms of journalistic learning through work-based interactions, that is how to investigate, interview and write well, are generally well understood. (Franklin & Mensing, 2011; Mabweazara & Taylor, 2012; Steel et al., 2007; Valencia-Forrester, 2020). What is less clear is how journalists develop as ethical practitioners, where they learn what occupational ethics means and how this relates to their work. This is an area of importance where, following the Leveson Inquiry (Leveson, 2012) which was critical of ethical practice in the industry, trust in journalism remains low and practitioners strive to be viewed as ethical (Fletcher, 2020; Newman et al., 2021; Schifferes, 2012; Waisbord, 2019; White, 2015).

The term journalism ethics is itself difficult to define, and as Frost (2000) and Sanders (2008) note, can be informed by classical philosophers such as Aristotle, Kant, Bentham, and Mill, or through discussion of ethics as values which inform an occupational ideology, as framed by Aldridge (1998) and Deuze (2005) for example. Ward (2019) defines journalism ethics as the 'responsible use of the freedom to publish…the study and application of the norms that should guide responsible public journalism' (p.1) but acknowledges challenges in defining 'responsible'. Woods (2006) suggested that journalism ethics was 'the pursuit of right when wrong is a strong possibility', though the determination of 'right' is also challenging. White (2019) identifies five key values associated with ethical journalism: accuracy, independent, impartiality, humanity and accountability. It is not the intention of this paper to take the definition of journalism ethics further other than to acknowledge it is complex. It considers how early career journalists arrive at an understanding of what 'doing the right thing' looks like for them, how they develop their understanding of occupational ethics in the workplace, with a consideration of key influences and influencers in shaping their identification and operation of ethical journalism practice. It draws on fieldwork undertaken in 2017-2018 drawing on qualitative analysis of interviews with early career journalists, drawn from three major newspaper groups in the UK.

The study found that early career journalists working in the legacy press in the UK are exposed to a range of formal learning opportunities, through journalism-focused higher education programmes at undergraduate or post-graduate level, and via training developed by journalism industry organisations. They are also exposed to non-formal learning opportunities as early career practitioners in the workplace, through interactions with their colleagues, their community of practice (CoP), and also with those they write for, their community of interest (CoI).

Understanding the structures for the formal learning of journalism ethics is problematic as routes into journalism in the UK are varied and there is a dependency on industry-derived training which focuses on the development of journalism skills rather than attitudes and approaches. It is not the intention of this paper to discuss in any detail formal learning systems other than to highlight some of its limitations. An analysis of the fieldwork pointed towards non-formal learning, rooted in social learning constructs, as a powerful driver in understanding and practicing ethical journalism beyond the limitations of formal learning structures. This paper explores the learning of journalism ethics through the lens of social learning constructs, drawing on Eraut's typography of work based learning and non-formal learning in professional work, and Wenger and Lave's social learning construct Communities of Practice (Eraut, 2000, 2007, 2011; Wenger, 1998, 2000). It argues that the non-formal social learning presents a rich learning experience for early career journalists who are trying to make sense of ethical debates and dilemma.

Formal learning

According to UK government data, in the 2021/22 higher education cycle, there were 301 journalism courses offered via 71 institutions in the UK, with more than 8,000 student enrolments (HESA, 2023). While it is difficult to identify the proportion of these students who will move into journalism as an occupation, a study by the Reuters' Institute in 2015 indicated that 64% of those entering employment in journalism (in both the broadcast and legacy press sector) had completed undergraduate or post-graduate university education in journalism or a related field (Thurman et al., 2016 p.35). An interrogation of course descriptions on UCAS Course Finder (UCAS, 2023), the UK information base for students applying for university study, the undergraduate curriculum for journalism programmes is highly varied, often informed by the research area of the teaching team, the industry focus of the programme (whether it is rooted in broadcast, multi-media, written word for the legacy press) and whether it is directed at a particular genre such as sport. The nature and extent to which journalism ethics features in these programmes is varied and their impact on industry practice is little understood - Thurman et al. (2016 p.36) noted caution is needed in interpreting the increase in journalism graduates as being an indicator that they are able to inform behaviours in newsrooms. There is also a degree of cynicism in the legacy press about formal learning of journalism in the higher education sector. In 2018, Paul Dacre, then editor of one of Britain's major national newspapers The Daily Mail, described journalism degrees as "ludicrous" while speaking at a conference of the Society of Editors (Linford, 2018). While his stance would doubtlessly be hotly contested by those working in higher education, it does reveal some scepticism on the part of those in industry on what journalism degrees can offer.

The varied nature of journalism higher education programmes, and apparent lingering scepticism of the value of them in preparing early career journalists for work in the legacy press, might explain the requirement for those new to employment in traditional newsrooms to undertake industry mandated training, irrespective of any prior learning. They are directed towards industry-sponsored and controlled training, operated predominantly through the National Council for Training Journalists (NCTJ), or via in-house training offers such as the Reach Certificate of Journalism (Frost, 2012b; Gow, 2018; NCTJ, 2019c). This aligns with findings from fieldwork, which signalled that research participants, early career entrants to the legacy press sector in the UK, had all been exposed to formal NCTJ training irrespective of prior study at university (Stoker, 2020 p.153). NCTJ routes into the occupation are attractive to editors in newsrooms across the country, as new entrants follow a common industry curriculum which is familiar to experienced and senior staff, via a training programme which is designed to respond to industry need, with uniformity and conformity (NCTJ, 2019a, 2019b).

Early career journalists typically engage with the training in two stages, firstly basic training as preparation to enter the occupation, and secondly work-based study during their first two years of employment to gain senior status through successful completion of formal assessment processes. Learning in the workplace is predicated on early career journalists learning from those they work alongside as part of a community of practitioners. The curriculum is designed around developing the journalist as an investigator and writer who has a good understanding of the legal framework within which they operate. Journalism ethics is discussed within this curriculum in terms of knowledge and understanding of regulation and application of The Editors' Code of Practice, a code written and maintained by The Editors' Code of Practice Committee and used by the Independent Press Standards Organisation (Ipso) to adjudicate complaints against its membership (NCTJ, 2019d).

This is a narrow interpretation of what ethical journalism might mean, with an emphasis on understanding press regulation, and while this is important, it is arguably inward looking and restrictive in its scope. In fieldwork for this study, early career journalists aligned ethics with observance of The Editors' Code of Practice, in line with their learning through the NCTJ, citing the code as the determinant of ethical journalism. However, analysis of their responses to questions about their daily work routine and their learning, they also demonstrated an unconscious recognition of the importance of ethical issues outside the Code, evidence of them having learned a wider interpretation of ethical journalism. To understand where this learning is located it is necessary to look at non-formal learning.

Non-formal learning

Eraut (2000, p.115) explores the affordances of the workplace as a space for learning and developed a typology to describe the different forms learning can take. Formal learning he defines as that which is organised and teacher-led, resulting in some form of award, as typified by industry training programmes. Non-formal learning is complex and broad in its scope, with deliberative learning through review of activity or planning individual learning goals at one end of the scale, and implicit learning, where memory makes links with previous experience at the other (Eraut, 2007, p.404). He developed a typology of learning opportunities around whether the activity early career practitioners were involved in had as its main objective learning or working, while recognising that some activities had elements of learning and working embedded within them (see Figure 1) - journalistic activity readily maps across to the different elements of his typology.

Work Processes with learning as a by-product	Learning Activities located within work or learning processes	Learning Processes at or near the workplace
Participation on group processes Working alongside others Consultation Tackling challenging tasks and roles Problem solving Trying things out Consolidating, extending and refining skills Working with clients	Asking questions Getting information Locating resource people Listening and observing Reflecting Learning from mistakes Giving and receiving feedback Use of mediated artefacts	Being supervised Being coached Being mentored Shadowing Visiting other sites Conferences Short courses Working for a qualification Independent study

Figure 1 – A typology of early career learning (Eraut, 2007, p.409)

Support for the completion of the second stage of industry sponsored training such as the NCTJ programme with which journalists engage on entering the occupation is a learning process in the workplace, and is underpinned to some extent by formal learning through facilitated workshops; the day to day work of the early career journalist, finding, researching and writing stories for publication is where learning is a by-product of journalistic work processes, this learning might be tacit, unrecognised as such. In seeking the hypothetical opportunities for learning occupational ethics, it might be argued that they reside within elements of Eraut's typology such as problem solving, reflecting, learning from mistakes and engaging in challenging situations.

Elliott (2013, p.23) in looking at ethical learning proposed that making good ethical decisions is based in cognitive learning and is a developmental process which takes practice and is heavily influenced by those who early career practitioners work alongside. She points towards the importance of experienced staff in determining the nature of knowledge shared through encounters in the workplace, which aligns with Eraut's typology, and which Wenger and Lave discuss through their pedagogic construct Communities of Practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger-Trayner & Wenger-Trayner, 2023; Wenger, 2008)

Lave and Wenger[1] refer to learning through a CoP via 'legitimate peripheral participation', where an incomer – in this context the newly arrived early career journalist – learns via their journey from the periphery of the community to full integration within that community, through engagement in work activity alongside other members of that community. (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p.29). Wenger (2008) develops his thinking into a framework where he defines a community of practice as having three key dimensions: there has to be mutual engagement in actions to which the community is committed (a community), engagement in a joint enterprise which has meaning to that community (the practice) , and there is a shared repertoire of understanding and language connected to that community (the domain) (pp.72-73). Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner (2023) have continued to develop this definition:

> *Communities of practice are sustained learning partnerships among people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly. (Wenger-Trayner & Wenger-Trayner, 2023)*

When mapped across to the journalistic context, this might translate as learning within a newsroom through regular interaction with other journalists. Wenger (2008) also identifies four components to learning which explain how learning happens within the community of practice, and these also map to journalistic practice: learning as doing (through the practice of journalism), learning as experience (gaining meaning from that practice), learning as becoming (gaining occupational identity as a journalist – I am a journalist) and learning as belonging (identifying with the community - I am a journalist and I work for this title). In his later work he cites examples of the types of activity through which communities develop their practice, including seeking information, building an argument and documenting, activities which bring members of the community together in deliberative activity to arrive at a consciously determined output identified by Eraut as non-formal learning opportunities and which sit at the core of journalistic work.

In applying the social learning construct of CoP to journalism then, early career journalists might move from the periphery of the newsroom, through engagement in journalistic practice, towards full membership

1 Etienne Wenger is known as Etienne Wenger-Trayner in later work.

of that community of practitioners by gaining meaning from what they are doing via interactions with others in that community. As they learn how to research, interview and construct news stories for publication they develop their occupational identity through cognitive development. However, they are drawing on the collective knowledge and understanding which pre-exists within that community, and in the UK this is determined by a dominant training organisation (the NCTJ) which has had a significant role to play in the training of journalists since its formation in 1952. It could be argued that weaknesses in any exploration of ethical journalism which are apparent in the training curriculum become baked-in to the community of occupational practice simply because practitioners have experienced a common training route. Bandura (2002) discusses 'situational inducements' (p 102) which can steer the learner towards poor behaviour because their 'situation', the environment within which they find themselves, and the dominant influences within that environment, 'induce' them to act in such a way. This raises questions about whether learners have sufficient autonomy to bring into focus their own understanding of right and wrong and in the context of learning journalism ethics, whether early career journalists are able to exert self-influence and behave in line with their own moral compass. During the Leveson Inquiry (2012) evidence taken from a number of journalists working in the national populist titles pointed towards situational inducement to explain poor practice, perhaps best described as 'the editor made me do it' mitigation.

Analysis of data gathered in fieldwork in 2017 and 2018 pointed towards a second community of practice which was highly impactful in helping practitioners arrive at an understanding of ethical journalism, one which was not directly influenced by any proscribed training curriculum, and which moderated the potential for 'situational inducement' located in the workplace. This was the community which the early career journalist was writing for, the community of the imagined reader, and there was evidence that it influenced the development of their occupational identity and the early career journalists' understanding of what ethical journalism might be. Early career journalists were travelling from the periphery of this parallel community (for linguistic ease I will refer to this as the Community of Interest (CoI), as it is comprised of people with an interest in the journalistic output) to full membership, engaging in deliberative activity with members of this community to develop stories about it, documenting community life. Carey (2007 p.4) notes that journalism and the CoI it serves are linked as 'the principle task and consequence of journalism is to form and sustain particular communities' where journalists play an active role in the development of community. Metykova (2009 p.136) observes that this relationship has strengthened with the emergence of communication technologies in the 21st century and the increased power of readers to influence news content. Wenzel (2020) discusses the relationship as 'community-centred journalism' and recognises the role journalism plays in the development of community cohesion. If we accept that there is a relationship between the journalist and the CoI, then it is possible to explore whether this relationship presents non-formal learning opportunities as defined by Eraut, within a construct which aligns with Wenger et al's Community of Practice, which impacts on the learning of ethical journalism, as this paper now goes on to discuss.

Methodology

A qualitative inquiry methodology was used, based on semi-structured interviews with 14 early career journalists conducted in 2017 and 2018 in the participants' places of work. Participants were drawn from 11 different provincial publications across England, including three daily regional titles and eight local weekly titles, covering three of the major legacy press groups in the UK. The criteria for the selection of the early career participants were that they were working as journalists in the regional legacy press industry and were within the first three years of employment. Eraut (2007, pp.415-419) in his study of workplace learning noted that it is within the first three years of employment that formative core occupational learning happens. The participants were located within different types of legacy newspapers, from small weekly titles where there was a maximum of three staff, to larger regional daily titles with more than 20 journalistic staff, producing copy for print and online distribution. Participants were not located on national titles as journalists in this space could not be defined as early career. The study also did not consider broadcast journalism as this operates to a different context and regulatory framework in the UK. While the fieldwork itself was conducted in 2017-18, the environment of newsrooms in Britain has changed little since then in terms of processes and structures to support learning, and the data gathered continues to be valid, though it is acknowledged that further fieldwork would add to what is an under-developed research area.

A common question set was used in the interviews to elicit narrative responses from participants, and questions were designed to find out what the participants understood by the term 'journalism ethics', and who the key workplace influencers were in helping them develop this understanding. Their responses were transcribed, and a constructivist approach was taken to their analysis, informed by Grounded Theory methodology (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Each transcript underwent multiple readings, and an open coding approach was taken which allowed for the emergence of new concepts (Gobo, 2008, p.227; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, pp.163-164; Urquhart, 2013, p.38).

Although the number of participants in this study was small (n=14), they were homogenous and representative of early career journalists working in regional news production in the legacy press in the UK. Responses were sufficiently similar in key areas to be able to argue that the data was reliable (Baker & Edwards, 2012)

In the following discussion, participants' names are changed for the purposes of anonymity.

Learning from community

Singer makes the case that historical journalistic norms set the boundary between the 'us and them', the journalist and the reader, with the concomitant reification of both sides of this boundary (Singer in Carlson & Lewis, 2015 p.22). She argues that technology is leading to erosion of this boundary where citizen journalism through social platforms, and entrepreneurial journalism via online journalistic start-ups are gaining legitimacy and blurring the lines between the 'us and them'. One of the ways in which journalists try to protect their occupational turf is through their implication that the 'us' has a good understanding of and adherence to ethical standards, whereas this is less so among the 'them'.

This aligns with concerns articulated by participants in this study, a relationship where awareness of the ethical expectations of the 'them', the CoI, influenced the approach to occupational ethics as developed by the early career journalists. The boundary between the CoP (the newsroom), and the CoI - Singer's 'us and them' - had become blurred at the level of which community was influencing learning. The importance of a good relationship with her CoI was expressed particularly clearly by Alina, who worked for a small weekly newspaper group. She was asked what she felt was important when deciding how to cover a big news event which might happen in her town, and she said she was mindful of how her local community would receive it.

> *"Because we are a local paper, we are writing about people in our local community and you want to stay on the side of your local community and that is how we have always seen it, for us to champion it and not to unnecessarily vilify people because it makes a better story, because these are people you know. I think the local approach is so different to the approach that a national paper would have. They are going to do that story and never go back to it again from a national paper's point of view, but we are reporting to that community again and again, so there is a big difference." (Alina)*

Firstly, there is reference to the 'us' and 'them', the newspaper and the reader, but she also perceives herself as part of the CoI when she says 'writing for' rather than writing about – there is a sense of connectedness expressed. She articulates the relationship between the CoP and CoI as one where the CoP is protective of the CoI, journalists champion the CoI because 'these are people you know' – signalling some form of ethical dimension in the reporting of the community. She gave an example of the desire to protect the CoI played out through careful choice of pictures and interviews following a local air crash where the national newspapers used graphic pictures of plane wreckage but 'most people knew someone who was involved and who really don't want to see pictures of the horrible death and destruction'. She is also aware of the need to remain on good terms with her CoI and protect the newspaper's reputation. Not wanting to 'upset' a community suggests that the community directly impacts on news choice. She talked about how she learned from her CoP in arriving at decisions about what they felt was acceptable for their title:

> *"I sit on a table with other reporters, and we are always talking about how we approach stories and looking at national examples, say if a national paper covers a story we have, looking at the difference in how they have covered it. That is things we talk about all the time, and that for me is the most useful thing, you know asking my colleagues." (Alina)*

Of note is the perceived difference in approach by national journalists, and this was a theme which emerged in interview with other participants. They discussed national journalists as being less careful in their relationship with local communities because they did not belong. As one of the components of learning in Lave and Wenger's construct is belonging, this might suggest that to the early career journalist, the notion of belonging is about more than belonging to the newsroom and that sense of connectedness with the geographic community within which they are located is powerful in influencing their behaviours, both as an individual journalist and in the newsroom collective where discussions on interactions with their local community play out.

Ian, who worked for a small weekly title, talked about the connectedness of journalists and the communities local newspapers serve in general:

> *"The stance we take is we live in the communities we are reporting on, and these are not just distant people, these are our neighbours, people who we speak to on a regular basis, and we are not in the business of upsetting them, we would always want to do right by our readers."*

Metykova (2009, p.138) noted that a Spanish interviewee in her European study expressed a similar sentiment: 'We play safe…we take few risks in our job…because we may offend the reader's sensitivity.'

Concern about protecting the reputation of the newspaper, not upsetting readers and also reflecting the CoI in a positive light were common themes which emerged in a number of interviews with early career journalists in this study, and the perception of how the CoI might receive stories influenced how journalists went about their work which could be categorised into three broad areas.

1. Self-censorship – journalists chose what to include and exclude from stories to take account of how they would be received by the CoI

2. News framing – where a story about the CoI had negative connotations, a positive tone was actively sought

3. Relationship building – Each early career journalist spoke of the need to build trust with their CoI

In each case, there is an ethical dimension which speaks to the representation of people the newspaper is intending to serve, of developing a better community and a greater connectedness, which early career journalists learn how to negotiate through their interactions with their community of interest. In looking at how early career journalists learn ethics then, the impact of the CoI on what is learned through an analysis of their handling of ethical dilemma is illuminating.

Self-censorship

Early career journalists described censoring their writing in a number of ways in the interests of their community. They spoke about responding to requests from individuals to leave information out of a story because of harm it might cause to individuals or for the public good.

Penny attended an inquest of a man who had died in local woodland. The coroner had reported that there were some photographs found on the man's camera which he had with him when he died, and they were of a sexual nature but bore no relation to the death. The man's family had asked her to leave information about the sexual images out of their report. She said in interview that she knew she had the legal right to use this information because it had been set out in open court, and it would have made an interesting angle and an attention-grabbing headline to any newspaper story, but she was mindful of the impact this would have on the family who were already struggling to come to terms with the man's death. She said:

> *"…the point for me was this was about the public interest versus the personal distress of the family …" (Penny)*

Part of the process in reaching the decision on how to treat the story was a discussion with her editor where they considered how much their CoI needed to know about the man's death against the request of his family to exclude mention of photographs which the Coroner had deemed not relevant. They chose to self-censor and withhold the information about the photographs out of respect for the family, judging that while the information was interesting to the public it was not of sufficient public interest to warrant its use. In terms of the CoI impact on learning here, Penny was forced to think about the application of the *Editors' Code of Practice* and its section on intruding into grief, against her learning on law which sets out journalists' rights of access to, and publication of proceedings of, an Inquest. She works in a small newsroom with two other colleagues, and the request to withhold information steered her into a discussion within her CoP about the best course of action, which was decided as a group. It was clear that the decision to self-censor was not taken lightly, and the discussion added to her understanding of journalism ethics, her learning of ethics influenced by her CoP and also her CoI.

> *"When I think about where I would like to see my career in 50 years' time, I don't want to look back on it and think I made someone's life a misery without solid reason. Obviously if something was in*

> *the public interest to expose a certain kind of wrongdoing that is different …what we can publish isn't always what we should publish I think, you have to take into consideration what affect it will have on individuals as well [as the public]." (Penny)*

Eddie, who worked for a large weekly newspaper group, when covering the immediate aftermath of the bombing of Manchester Arena in May 2017 also exhibited self-censorship in the timing of the publication of the identity of some of the victims. The bomb attack killed 23 people, many of whom were children and young people who had gone to the Arena to see the teen pop-star Ariana Grande. The victims were predominantly from the north of England and regional and local newspapers found themselves negotiating a big international news story that had importance and relevance at local level. Eddie said that because of their local contacts and networks, his newsroom had very quickly been able to establish the identity of victims in their area, and less than 12 hours after the bombing, he had rung the secondary school on his patch where one of the teenagers who had died had been a pupil, asking for a tribute from the head teacher. The intention was to run the tribute early on the paper's website as well as in their print edition, and he knew that once he had published the information it would have been picked up by the national news media and would feature prominently across all platforms within minutes. The school head teacher asked them to wait and delay publishing any mention of the teenage victim for a few hours.

> *"This was front page news in probably every paper in the country that morning, but we didn't publish anything at that point to say she [a teenage victim] was missing. There was a lot going on. The school had only found out that morning and they were arranging an assembly to tell people what had happened. There were her classmates [to think about] and they were 12 and 13 years old, and we obviously knew that she had died….but we made a choice, it was unanimous, to embargo the statement until about three hours later when we knew that all the schoolchildren and all the family knew [about her death] and we were not breaking that news [to them]." (Eddie)*

He said 'everyone in the newsroom agreed' this was the correct course of action, local people were turning to the newspaper's website for information that morning on who had been affected by the bombing, and the place of the paper as part of that community influenced the decision to wait in publishing the teenager's identity and tributes, the decision was one of acting in the public good. He added:

> *"We weren't thinking 'if we publish this, we might get a complaint'. It was 'what is the correct way of doing this, and what do people expect of us, and what is the proper way to go about it'." (Eddie)*

His description of how the story unfolded suggested that there was no time to consult group management policy on this decision, it was taken at local level with the community interest foregrounded, in this case the interests of the victim's school friends. There was clearly an ethical dimension to the decision over the timing of publishing the information which is not coded for specifically in the Editors' Code, but the decision reached to delay publication was influenced by the perception of what the CoI expected of their local newspaper, and his desire, as an ambassador for his paper, to do the right thing.

News Framing

Journalists in presenting the news can choose how to position it in terms of its content, context, relevance, importance and tone, and there has been much written about how media influences public opinion through concepts such as agenda setting, media effects, news values and news framing (Entman, 1993, p.53; Franklin, 2005, p.12; Harcup & O'Neill, 2001; Temple, 2008, p.121).

Masahiro Yamamoto (2011 p.27) investigated the impact the local newspaper had on community cohesion and found an empirical link – where there is a good relationship between the community and its journalists there is a greater sense of pride within a community. Hatcher and Haavik (2017, pp.151-153), in a study of local journalism in Norway noted the potential for journalists to impact on a sense of community pride, and similarly Wenzel (2020, p.56) discusses the power of positive news within difficult to reach communities in the US. There is an awareness of this expressed in the fieldwork in this study, where journalists articulated the importance they placed on being 'on the side of' the community, not working against it, and framing stories about the CoI using a positive tone wherever appropriate.

Lesley, who worked for a large weekly title, explained how his relationship with a senior reporter helped him to understand how to represent his town, and to be mindful that the local paper was itself an important part of a community using his CoP to develop his relationship with his CoI. He said that he drew heavily on his senior colleague who he viewed as his unofficial mentor in his first year, asking questions, and observing him in action, which shaped his understanding of his own behaviour as a journalist, closely aligning with Eraut's schema of non-formal learning. Instead of referring to events in the town through the lens of a distant observer, he was encouraged to treat news as happening to 'us' not 'them'.

He cited an example about a local training company which had its licence to operate withdrawn following a failed government inspection. The organisation had been well established in the local community and was well regarded but had hit a 'rough patch' which it was by then moving out of. Lesley recounted a number of meetings with his senior colleague and his editor about how to cover the story of the failed inspection in a way which set out what had happened but that was fair to the company and the town. The story was eventually framed as a call to action with a headline Urgent plea to help save apprentice training firm facing closure, setting out how the local community could help, which he felt was ethically right. He said a negative story about the company, which was making positive changes, would have been damaging for a large number of apprentices and local employers, and that as the newspaper saw itself as part of this community, such an approach would have been inappropriate. The learning here is complex. Lesley is exposed to non-formal learning informed by his CoP through meetings with senior colleagues, but the collective membership of the CoP is mindful of their responsibility to their CoI as an established part of that community, the CoI influencing the behaviour of the newsroom community. Lesley's learning of ethical behaviours then comes from both the CoP and CoI, the latter both directly through his desire to been seen as a local journalist working for his local community, and indirectly through his paper's collective perception of its place within the local community, which is shared with him through engagement with his peers.

Relationship building

All early career journalists spoke of the desire for the local paper to be seen as a reliable source of local information.

> *"Trust is really important. People saying, 'oh yes, it was in the local paper', it is important to have that trust and maintain it." (Charles, working for a small-town weekly title)*

And

> *"You want them to feel that they can trust what you say." (Penny)*

Each participant was aware of the Leveson Inquiry into press conduct and many were concerned that it had damaged the reputation of the local press. While they discussed having a relationship built on trust with the reader, it was through the lens of their identity as ethical journalists.

Steven, who worked for a small weekly title, said that he felt journalists were easy targets for criticism because of the image which had been painted of them nationally, and that it was important that local people understood that local journalists could be trusted to cover local news responsibly and in the interests of their community.

> *"I think a lot of people think of journalists as scumbags, because of Leveson and the phone hacking scandal, and all that stuff, but a lot of people who work in journalism aren't like that at all. A lot of people do things in the right way which is what I think ethics is about." (Steven)*

One of the dangers of aligning with a CoI is the potential to avoid stories which hold people to account for fear of driving readers away, something which a number of participants alluded to. Eddie said that for him, being seen as trusted came from responsibly reporting and being sensitive to the community he served but added:

> *"It's a daunting task, being the sole reporter in a town, to be able to keep that relationship up with everyone, keep everyone happy, but also make sure you are doing your job and not just puffing up people's feathers.*

Bo, who worked for a large weekly newspaper group, talked about pressure he had come under from a small sector of his community to withhold information from an inquest. The case involved a drink driver who was heavily over the limit when he died after crashing his car, but his community asked for information about his drinking to be with-held. Bo said that his drinking was an important factor in the inquest and he felt it highlighted risks of drink driving. Despite personal threats and threats to the newspaper, he was backed by his editor in pursuing the story which they felt was important in bringing to light a challenging issue. He talked about balancing the importance of raising the issue of drink driving in a hard-to-reach community against the family request to censor the information, and he said the discussions within his CoP helped him arrive at what he felt was the right ethical approach.

Conclusion

What emerged in analysis of participant interviews was that the CoI within which early career journalists were located was having an impact on how they arrived at decisions which had an ethical dimension, about whether to publish information and how that information should be presented. The CoI was impacting on the development of their learning of ethical behaviours, and the learning aligned with Wenger and Lave's Communities of Practice social learning construct and its learning dimensions and components. The early career journalists spoke about a desire to be perceived as part of their local community, there was legitimate peripheral participation in the CoI by the fact of the local newspaper being accepted as part of the CoI infrastructure, and the new journalist moved from the periphery towards the centre of the CoI as evidenced by the importance placed on the gaining of trust within the CoI based on their interactions and behaviours. Here the CoI is a different but complementary community of practice to that of the newsroom and while journalists travel from the periphery to full membership of the CoP, they are also making a journey towards CoI membership.

This resonates somewhat with observations made by Sally Lehrman (a researcher on the US Trust Project) cited in a Reuter's Institute study into audience perceptions of news:

"Trust is a relationship. It's more than just that I believe what you're talking about but that we share values." (Toff et al., 2020, s.2.1)

This concept is not without its challenges as in seeking trust the journalist has to make decisions about the value of their work, avoiding bias or promoting corruption, which one participant in this study referred to as avoiding 'puffing up' people for their own benefit. It is also noteworthy that none of the participants in this study referred to their interactions with their community as learning, they did not recognise the informal and incidental learning opportunities as identified by Eraut as such, which is problematic. Their learning as evidenced by their remembrance of events and actions taken which informed their occupational behaviours was clear. However, the lack of consciously identifying and labelling their experiences as learning ethical journalism is problematic; if they are unable to identify where and how they learn ethical practice there is a lack of security in this learning. Where they are unable to label and own their learning, they are not able to use it as a tool to reflect upon their developing occupational identity or use it effectively to rebut criticism levelled at their sector of poor ethical practice. The value of informal and incidental learning of journalism ethics is something the wider sector needs to explicitly recognise and acknowledge if it is to build secure foundations in learning, and drive cultural change within the industry, and perhaps avoid further governmental scrutiny into its practices.

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AI in the newsroom: implications for educators from an experiment with trainee journalists

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Abstract

The adoption of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology in the newsroom has raised pointed questions about its effects on journalism quality, professional practice and industry incentives. Risks include legal and ethical challenges, as well as the potential for AI to introduce inaccuracies, bias or misinformation. Less attention, however, has been paid to how journalism educators will need to respond. Using an experiment designed to capture the thinking of so-called digital natives when working with an AI tool, we identify emerging issues educators will need to address from human-machine collaboration. We suggest three areas of concern: the extent to which younger journalists will be sceptical about AI outputs, the agency journalists using AI will have, and risks associated with the lack of transparency inherent in AI tools. We offer initial recommendations for educators.

Introduction

Since the emergence of auto-writing tools for journalism in the 2000s (Chopra, 2022), researchers have explored questions about bias, information quality, industry dynamics and various issues related to artificial intelligence (AI) in the newsroom.

Given advances in natural language generation (NLG) and related technologies, the critical questions have become more acute (c.f. Sundar & Liao, 2023). It's a simple proposition: As the tools become more powerful, the potential for radical or far-reaching effects on the industry and society increases. Researchers have expressed concerns that legacy media companies could end up ceding control over information selection and access to some news sources, eroding their watchdog function, as dependence on generative AI expands (Simon, 2022).

Following the November 2022 release of OpenAI's ChatGPT, discussion about the impact of auto-writing tools has spilled out to the wider public. Suddenly, a powerful, useful and, at times, amusing text-generating tool has become available to millions of people around the world. The notion that human journalists could be replaced by code – if not entirely, then at least in large numbers – looks more plausible than before.

Commercial incentives for news providers may reinforce such concerns. Machine-generated content is cheaper and faster to produce than human journalism (Miroshnichenko, 2018), and numerous media groups have deployed or experimented with text-generating tools (Simon, 2022). Initially, the AI was primitive, using templates and data feeds to produce sports reports, election results, financial news and weather updates; tools were later developed that could generate short reports or precis from longer texts (Danzon-Chambaud, 2021). In recent years, news organisations have experimented with more sophisticated technology to create complex texts without human intervention apart from the AI's initial training (Floridi & Chiriatti, 2020).

Yet, despite the abundance of research on AI and journalism aimed at understanding these developments, there has been less devoted to how we will prepare journalists for an AI-saturated workplace. It is clear from the literature that the technology presents both risks and opportunities for journalists and their employers. Researchers and journalists have noted the lack of specific higher education courses in some countries addressing these issues (Pinto-Martinho et al., 2022). Educators, according to Pavlik, 'should be considering how to develop courses or programs that train human students in the effective use of generative AI, as well as the threats it poses, including matters of ethics and potential bias' (2023, p.92).

Academic discussion about AI and journalism has often focused on human-machine collaboration, as opposed to the idea of machines replacing humans. Indeed, no one has figured out a way to send ChatGPT into the field to cover a disaster or conduct a live interview. We are also focused on collaboration rather than replacement. In fact, the expectation that we will even need journalism educators in the future rests on the premise that journalists will work with machines rather than be replaced by them.

What has been rare in the journalism education research related to AI produced to date, is experimental research that could provide evidence-based findings on the emerging risks that journalism educators need to consider. Just as the advent of the internet and social media has required a re-evaluation of how journalism law and ethics are taught, we expect AI will require new thinking for teaching many aspects of journalism practice. In this paper, we explore risks associated with AI-assisted journalism, looking specifically at the possibility of a new generation embracing AI in ways that potentially create legal and ethical issues, or which could compromise journalistic standards and norms.

We first review literature on the legal and ethical risks journalism faces when utilising AI. This provides context for two research questions concerning the metacognition of trainee journalists and the potential legal and ethical risks arising from the use of AI in a practical setting. We then describe an experiment we developed to identify those risks based on the reactions of aspiring journalists, in which they are tasked with writing two articles, one with an AI tool and one without. In section three, we present the results and analysis of that experiment. Finally, we discuss the implications of AI-related risks and make recommendations for how journalism educators can address them.

Ethical and legal risks

AI tools raise pointed ethical and legal threats in journalistic production as the outputs can be inaccurate and biased. AI systems are often described as 'black boxes', with little information provided on data sources or decision-making. It is notoriously difficult to understand the complexity of algorithms and the data used to train some advanced tools (Bathaee, 2017). Among the issues for journalism and society, beyond transparency, are: bias and objectivity; accuracy; privacy (in both an ethical and legal sense); libel; copyright; and contempt of court (Kothari & Hickerson, 2020). There are also power relations to consider when users interact with AI. The moral agency and relative autonomy of individual journalists may be diminished whenever media organisations and platform providers govern the tools' usage (Dörr & Hollnbuchner, 2017; Simon, 2022).

Ethical risks: Bias, objectivity, accuracy and transparency

In terms of bias and objectivity, there is a divide. Researchers have shown some news producers themselves believe AI can reduce bias, while others have questioned this assumption (Montal & Reich, 2017; Thurman et al., 2017). Though we are focused on production rather than consumption, it is worth noting that news audiences may trust algorithms' objectivity, accepting 'practical and symbolic assurances that their evaluations are fair and accurate, free from subjectivity, error, or attempted influence' (Gillespie 2014, p.179, quoted in Montal and Reich, 2017, p.830). However, researchers suggest algorithms can change according to business decisions by corporate providers (Montal & Reich, 2017). These could embed unintended biases — where the unconscious preconceptions of a predominately white, male and elite workforce become immersed within the code, or where bottom-line factors eclipse concerns for fairness or equality (Black, 2023). Investigators have already highlighted how gender and race inequalities have been replicated by algorithms (Kothari & Hickerson, 2020; Mayson, 2019; Noble, 2018). Biases also might be intentional, based on marketing or other interests. Montal & Reich (2018, p.830) envision the 'algorithmic potential to affect the visibility of political and social actors while maintaining a predetermined agenda'.

Fused with this in the literature is the question of AI introducing inaccuracies, blurring fact and fiction, or conversely helping to make news more accurate. AI has been found to help in fact-checking and verification. Some journalists told researchers they believed, mostly, that, as a software manager put it, the 'data doesn't lie' (Montal & Reich, 2017). Analysts, nonetheless, have suggested AI has been less effective in stifling misinformation. Instead, it may be more capable of disseminating disinformation than stemming its flow (Aïmeur et al., 2023). Where poor coding or data sources are propagated: 'Bad data can lead to bad results and automation can amplify the speed and scale of their dissemination' (Kothari & Hickerson, 2020, p.213).

A key issue for us is transparency. It speaks to questions about journalistic practice and the imperative to understand where information comes from. Transparency can be an issue on its own, or a factor in other ethical and legal challenges. For instance, not being able to understand how an AI system produced a text can create or exacerbate the risk of libel, privacy, contempt of court or copyright offences. Many AI developers may have reason to keep their algorithms hidden, but this acts against clarity in the news process. Transparency acts as an ethical principle for journalists, and publishers often promote it throughout the newsgathering process. For AI-assisted journalism, this issue is complicated by the degree of algorithmic transparency — the methodology, construction and limitations of an algorithm. Potentially opaque issues include information quality; benchmarks for accuracy; uncertainty; timeliness; completeness; data collection assumptions; sources and training data; alongside human influence (Diakopoulos & Koliska, 2017).

Legal risks: Libel and privacy

Turning to legal considerations, news organisations that source AI will not be able to rely on the same libel defences tech organisations have traditionally utilised when deploying algorithms to produce content. A cruel truth that journalism students are taught is that every defamatory statement reporters may unwittingly publish is a fresh libel (Hanna & Dodd, 2020). The risk is exacerbated by pressure on news providers to cut costs and speed up production, as advertising revenue has fallen, leading to more limited sub-editing (Juntunen, 2010). Libellous material sourced from AI, when not spotted before reaching the page, can be costly to bottom lines and reputations (Ombelet et al., 2016). A less clear and present danger arises if AI scrapes data that are prejudicial to a present or future trial; the publisher could be liable for contempt of court in some parts of the world (e.g. Hanna & Dodd, 2020; Kothari & Hickerson, 2020).

Another issue is privacy. AI does not 'know' whether people's personal data that it supplies were acquired for another purpose, i.e. advertising or via profiling. This could be an issue under General Data Protection Regulation (Ombelet et al., 2016). There also may be copyright issues in some jurisdictions. AI might source protected material that could be reprinted as original for commercial gain (Hanna & Dodd, 2020).

Looking to the future: 'Digital natives' and AI

Why centre the research on students, aside from having an educational focus? Scholars have interviewed journalists to determine their views on AI impacts, including the effect on employment, concerns such as transparency, accuracy and bias (Thurman et al., 2017) and professional values (Komatsu et al., 2020). They have sought to find out what skills are required by industry and argued that universities are uniquely placed to provide them (Bucknell, 2020). They have learnt from educators how journalism students might be taught to train in these skills and work with the new technology (Gómez-Diago, 2022; Kothari & Hickerson, 2020). This has suggested the importance of educating students in creating automated IT content, alongside media literacy, source validity and fact-checking methods (Gómez-Diago, 2022). Nevertheless, we were interested in a particular premise, based on the question of whether so-called digital natives (Prensky, 2001) might be imbued with particular skills, such that they can search and navigate digital media more effectively than older counterparts. While a generalised version of this notion is widely influential in journalism education (Bethell, 2010; Matsiola et al., 2019), other investigators have found less support for this idea (Nygren & Guath, 2019, 2022; Wineburg & McGrew, 2017). In any event, there is evidence young people hold this belief, considering themselves as skilled fact-checkers when they are not (Nygren & Guath, 2019). Indeed, there is a debate as to whether youngsters who believe their aptitude to be greater experience an overconfidence akin to the 'Dunning-Kruger effect'. As David Dunning describes the phenomenon, 'their incomplete and misguided knowledge lead[s] them to make mistakes but those exact same deficits also prevent them from recognizing when they are making mistakes and other people [are] choosing more wisely' (Dunning, 2011, p.248; Nygren & Guath, 2019, 2022).

Researchers have identified particular blind-spots. Younger people in one study failed to differentiate advertising from editorial, or discern what experienced journalists might describe as advertorial, i.e. messages with commercial intent masked as impartial news or statements (Nygren & Guath, 2019). Other investigators discovered youngsters had difficulty unmasking covert ideological intentions. They compared the results of professional fact checkers with those of young people and found the scepticism and methodical techniques displayed by professionals proved better in discerning misinformation (Wineburg & McGrew, 2017). In terminology made famous by Donald Rumsfeld, we suggest fact checkers were more wary of the possibility of 'known unknowns' and even 'unknown unknowns' (Kirk, 2016, p.110).

There is a suggestion that all age groups use mental shortcuts, or heuristics, to make sense of AI information. In one study (Sundar & Liao, 2023), when readers were told a report was generated by an algorithm, this encouraged a positive machine heuristic. That is, they viewed it as typically more objective than human-created content, even when it contained arguments that countered their own beliefs. Researchers have found AI reporting could also trigger a negative machine heuristic, where readers view the tool as too rigid for nuanced judgements, particularly when producing content other than 'hard news'.

There is also research that suggests some users have considered computers as a psychologically salient source, treating their interactions as if they were with humans. The natural-language response of an AI tool means that it could be viewed as such a source, including by journalists – providing the raw material for stories. Yet, its learning process means it is assembling pre-existing content (albeit in unpredictable ways), rather than offering original material. It is, as notoriously described, a 'stochastic parrot' (Sundar & Liao, 2023, quoting Bender et al, 2021).

Research questions

When we considered 1) the array of legal and ethical challenges, 2) the question of attitudes among digital natives, and 3) the notion of machine heuristics, a broad question emerged regarding the metacognition of younger journalists when using an AI tool. That is going beyond considering students' assessment of the status of source information and knowledge claims towards identifying their self-knowledge about the operation of this reasoning (c.f. Lee, 2022). We felt that, by exploring their thinking, we could identify risks associated with AI in a more granular and evidence-based way than had been discussed to date. We arrived at two research questions:

RQ1 – What ways of thinking are displayed by trainee journalists when using an AI tool to produce journalistic work?

RQ2 – What kinds of risks can be seen from these thought processes in terms of legal and ethical hazards or challenges to journalistic standards and norms?

In the next section, we discuss how we sought to answer those questions.

Experiment design

Our experiment was divided into three parts and lasted approximately two hours for each participant. Two parts involved role play and a third was devoted to semi-structured interviews, aimed at producing qualitative findings. In part one, individual participants were brought to a mock newsroom and asked to write a breaking news article using traditional methods. In the second part, they were to use an AI tool for a Q&A-style 'explainer' feature, of the kind often produced for controversial or running stories. Both tasks were time-controlled. In part three, they were interviewed about their experiences and views.

We ran each session individually, for two reasons. We were concerned that a group environment might create a competitive atmosphere and discourage introspection during the interview phase. Also, as this was a complex experiment with numerous steps, we wanted to ensure we could provide support for each participant. After piloting the experiment with one person, we recruited 15 current and recent journalism students, ranging from 20 to 30 years old. All of them were either in the final year of their degree or had graduated within the past two years; 11 were female and four male, with a range of ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds. This purposive sampling was a strategic decision (Hansen & Machin, 2019), based on the earlier discussion outlined on digital natives. There is no claim here for demographic representativeness, so, for instance, we do not consider the number of participants sharing a view as particularly significant. Those invited had to have demonstrated competency by passing modules addressing ethics on journalism programmes; beyond that, there were no prerequisites for participation. Participants were told they would be treated anonymously and were given a stipend to compensate for the time and cost of travel.

We chose Generative Pre-trained Transformer 3 (GPT-3) as our AI tool due to its ability to produce text resembling that written by humans and its capacity for learning (Wei et al., 2022). GPT-3 is similar to ChatGPT, however the latter was rejected for our purposes as its availability was unpredictable.

Our pilot prompted us to focus on digital natives' metacognition. This underscored the importance of selecting a news topic that could involve under-contextualised, misleading or incorrect information. We chose fracking. The topic can be considered hard news (it concerns economic policy, energy, the environment, national regulation and local government) or soft news (it receives attention from celebrities, including those popular with digital natives) (McCarthy, 2016).

The GPT-3 database was not up-to-date, so we set the role play in the past (Hughes, 2023). A 2019 government announcement and several campaign group statements were used for the breaking news task. This part of the experiment performed two functions; it allowed the participants to familiarise themselves with the subject matter; and it gave them a means of later comparing the experience of writing with and without an AI tool. In part two, participants were told it was several months later and their employer was testing an AI tool. They were asked to write an explainer about fracking. They were instructed in how to use GPT-3 and their 'editor' (played by a researcher) supplied initial questions to ask it, including questions about some of the actors, such as trade unions, where some views were out-of-date. Participants were told they could ask follow-up or different questions, and that they could use the internet.

Part three involved semi-structured interviews focused on decision-making, expectations of the tool's impacts and any concerns participants had. We sought to elicit views about whether their position as digital natives affected decision-making or views about the technology (RQ1).

There has been debate as to whether interview texts 'truly' represent events, beliefs and actions. Here there is a heightened concern with power dynamics. There is the danger of interviewees being self-aggrandising when interrogated by former or current tutors; participants could want to appear knowledgeable or be defensive. What is more, the questions were based on complex ideas and posed moments after interviewees had been writing on deadline. To counter this, we stressed that the participants' performance would have no academic bearing and we sought to create a neutral, non-judgemental and relaxed mood (Minkin, 1997). We did not review the articles they produced as this was not relevant for our research questions. We attempted to solicit information that considered metacognition through indirect questioning, with each member of the research team posing questions from a list of pre-agreed queries.

The interviews were analysed using qualitative content analysis in order to both read and code them (Mayring, 2014). We used NVivo software to capture indications of metacognition concerning a range of issues including trust, content quality (from multiple perspectives), productivity, risks, source claims and implications for the practice of journalism (RQ1 and RQ2). Further qualitative analysis was conducted to illuminate the data. This involved identifying salient textual illustrations, analogous to the 'anchor examples' in Philipp Mayring's explanation of what he describes as 'narrow qualitative content analysis'. Mayring defines these as 'prototypical text passages' within texts. They are relevant extracts, identified so as to describe or explain, exemplify or help itemise the thematic categories (Mayring, 2014, pp.88–94, 95, 97). We have labelled each of the interviewees as P1 etc in order to identify their individual ideas and comments.

Results and analysis

Two major themes emerged from the interviews: thinking about source claims and consideration on human-machine collaboration (RQ1). We then identified three areas of risk in terms of journalistic behaviour (RQ2).

What participants thought

First, we assessed how participants reflected on their assessment of the information coming from the AI tool (RQ1). This evaluated what were their 'known knowns', and whether participants considered these needed confirmation through fact-checking. But there was also an assessment of whether they considered information that they were aware of not knowing and that needed to be deduced through checking facts, let alone the more elusive 'unknown unknowns' (Kirk, 2016, p.110). We assessed how much they contemplated trust in AI information. We did this by initially asking indirect questions concerning their journalistic procedure and thought processes, providing an opportunity for them to comment unbidden on elements of trust, but aiming not to directly prompt them or point them in one direction or another.

We entertained the possibility of an effect akin to that of Dunning-Kruger here and a generational variant (Nygren & Guath, 2019, 2022). In other words, we considered whether the less that individual participants contemplated fact-checking, the more confident they would be that they, and their generation, would be capable in understanding the limits and fallibility of the AI tool. This was not a representative sample and therefore what can be deduced regarding larger patterns generally is bounded collectively. Nevertheless, we considered that assessing this illuminated individual metacognition.

Some respondents – in particular P12 and P15 - suggested blind trust of the internet was indeed a problem but not so much for them; they felt that that applied more to the generation just behind them, who were more fully immersed in using the internet. Nevertheless, a number of respondents (P9, P13 and P15) expressed confidence in their ability to understand the operation of the AI. P9 and P13 also compared the AI's text with what they believed they knew about fracking, not considering discrepancies when it came to unions. They felt they did not need to confirm knowns and did not contemplate unknowns. P13 said of the AI source material: 'I could believe it because I already knew. I don't have to go and check every single thing it says necessarily if I already have the answer because I've done it before.'

As for reflections on the Dunning-Kruger notion and this generational variant, we found some of those displaying confidence as digital natives (P8, P10 and P13) were indeed among those who trusted the material implicitly, accepting the information without querying it. Participants reported picking 'out the key pieces of information' (P10) or 'just taking what is relevant' (P8).

We identified a divide, nevertheless, among those with this confidence in perceiving there to be generational differences. One confirmed that the tool was convincing and would be for those of any age (P15). Another was among the most emphatic at points that digital natives had special knowledge and linked the two thoughts. Thus, P10 said: '[A]s someone who has grown up with that sort of technology, I felt not only comfortable, but also safe in the fact that the information I was getting or the process that I was a part of. There are no issues from that perspective.'

However, others who exhibited confidence were more wary. P14 contemplated what we identified as a conception of known-unknowns and fact-checked concerns including about trade unions. Meanwhile, P2 considered what we saw as the possibility of known-unknowns, but did not have time to query the information. This participant considered limited fact-checking would suffice. 'I think if I Googled and everything it said was right, I would feel comfortable using it in the future.' Meanwhile, P15, who expressed confidence in understanding the AI, was also 'very wary' of the material, again identifying a lack of transparency – 'purely because it doesn't cite its sources'. This subject described a fact-checking process that queried whether the union material was reliable. Thus, to answer our first question, the interviews indicated, overall, that this experiment did not afford any simple illustration of the Dunning-Kruger effect (Nygren & Guath, 2022).

Second, we assessed how participants considered their relations with the AI to see how they navigated risk (RQ2) and we considered this in relation to machine heuristics. The interviews revealed a tension between concerns about AI negatively impacting on journalists and journalism, and enthusiasm for what they perceived as greater productivity and qualitative benefits.

Participants voiced concern about jobs being lost. 'I think my worry is definitely you're getting rid of journalists,' P15 said. 'It frightens me a bit how capable it is.' The interviewee envisioned the technology being able to generate work akin to what they had just written, without human involvement. At the same time, respondents could picture themselves using the technology. A number touted various benefits, despite perceiving shortcomings in terms of content quality (P5, P7, P8, P9, P13 and P14). Some welcomed the prospect of AI systems generating angles and ideas, or providing background or detail for articles (P1, P2, P5, P7, P8 and P10). They reported amazement at the speed of GPT-3. In fact, some of those who worried about job losses generally and their prospects personally were among the most impressed by the productivity of the writing (P8, P9 and P14). It was clear that 'because of the speed, I cannot compete with it,' P14 concluded.

Interviewees also reported on what we have interpreted as the authoritativeness of the AI. Its language projected a convincing and coherent conviction. So, P13 told us: 'I was surprised by how academic and convincing some of the responses were.' P14 even joked: 'I felt like it was much smarter than I was.' We noted that some subjects shared a belief that the tool's logic-based nature and ability to tap into large databases meant it could provide balance, perspective and heightened objectivity. The productivity gains that participants perceived only underlined this point. 'It can give you ideas,' P11 said. Another, P13, added: 'That's one of the biggest advantages, it saves time.' P15, while maintaining some distrust, was partly won over during the experiment. 'I think I didn't feel as wary as I thought I would…. I felt like I was writing faster, and I was able to bring a lot more context in. And I don't think I would've felt as comfortable or qualified with writing an explainer about fracking without that type of tool.' P3, P11, P12 and P14 remained less convinced, reflecting the division researchers previously noted among more experienced journalists (Montal & Reich, 2017; Thurman et al., 2017). P3 and P11 cited a lack of transparency in the tool and that they could not be certain of the validity of the unnamed sources, paralleling concerns in the literature (i.e. Diakopoulos & Koliska, 2017). This had ethical and legal implications for a number (P5, P10, P11 and P12), as previous writers have suggested (Ombelet et al., 2016). There was the possibility that people could be libelled 'because I don't have reliable sources. I'm just putting names and blaming them based on an AI tool. If that was found to be incorrect and I'm putting that in, that could be a dangerous game.' (P11).

We perceived that some seemed to understand their relationship with the generative AI as one-way. It provided information which they used in the limited time they had (P5, P6, P8, P9, P13). Others appeared to ascribe more agency to themselves (P10, P11, P12, P14, P15). They conceived of their relationship as being more like an interview with a source. 'Some of the other questions that I asked were a follow-up of what the response gave me. I tried to investigate more from that perspective,' P10 explained. However, this was not necessarily an indicator of trust in the AI, with those engaged in a dialogue detailing different positions on this factor. Based on this, we considered agency an important factor in assessing the risks of AI-assisted journalism.

We assessed how participants understood their expectations of interacting with the AI by considering whether the exercise had consciously or unconsciously triggered machine heuristics (Sundar & Liao, 2023). One reported treating GPT-3 as a sentient provider. Yet, perhaps given the experiment's process, there was a consideration of not being 'fooled' by it. 'If I didn't know that it was artificial intelligence, I wouldn't have known that it wasn't a real person who was writing it,' P14 said. Our analysis of more interviews unearthed the degree of personification participants consciously or otherwise identified, borrowing from research on assistive technology (Purington et al., 2017). One gendered the AI (Abercrombie et al., 2021) as 'he' (P7), others consciously ascribed human qualities (P8 and P14), while more described how 'they' (P1, P3, P10 and P12) or 'the AI' (P12 and P13) or 'GPT-3' (P10 and P11) 'gave' or 'provided' information or answers to questions.

We considered the question of whether participants treated the tool as sentient was involved in any tendency to overlook or make allowances for AI limitations, in the same way that people will make allowances for other people's idiosyncrasies or unwelcome character traits. We found, for instance, some identifying a degree of personification expressed a wariness due to the style of the text, its occasional lack of relevance, or its vagueness (P8, 11 and 12). We found the readiness of participants to use AI for providing context, background, or factual detail did not appear to consider those limitations. None, for instance, explicitly addressed the possibility that an AI tool's selection of facts could be the result of hidden bias in the algorithms underpinning the system.

Rather, P5 and P10 extolled the logic of the tool and saw it complementing human journalism, with no apparent appreciation for how the 'balance' or 'context' had been generated. Limitations were most clearly seen when participants envisioned the tool working not in collaboration but on its own. That triggered negative machine heuristics in some (P1, P2, P11, P13, P14 and P15) (Sundar & Liao, 2023). Concerns about journalistic quality in terms of the writing were often limited to the robotic, predictable tone and a perceived lack of nuance in the texts (P1, P2, P11, P13 and P15). Thus, P2 concluded there would be 'a loss of something' if it attempted to construct features on its own. Another, P13, identified the something lost as 'a human touch'. This interviewee concluded that the 'AI will never understand a human being' or subjectivity's role, as it 'relies on logic, not emotions'. However, for some this triggered an explicitly positive machine heuristic. This rigidity was seen as beneficial, as it facilitated objective journalism, making the algorithm 'good' at delivering hard news output (P13 and P14).

We concluded that the possibility of users anthropomorphising an AI tool – when coupled with perceived benefits in terms of content, idea-generation and productivity – could heighten the legal and ethical risks from AI. Borrowing from a technique used in literature, which has been applied to other fields including journalism (Nünning, 2015), we likened the user experience to that of someone listening to an unreliable narrator; the power of such fiction is based on the reader's temporary belief in the facts presented, a belief formed without essential knowledge about the narrator's own limitations. In the case of AI and the notion of positive machine heuristics, this unreliable narrator concept is ironic given that the attractions of such a tool stem in part from the perception it may be more reliable than humans. The implications of these positive heuristics will be discussed in the next section, where we consider the risks for journalism practice.

Risks to journalism practice

Having identified some of the self-described thinking during the experiment, we considered the risks such cognition might engender in terms of journalism practice (RQ2). We suggest there are at least three significant and inter-related areas of risk in interacting with this unreliable narrator (RQ2). We present them here as hypothetical scenarios. It was tempting to base these scenarios on which views came up most frequently. As before, however, we were mindful of our sample not necessarily being representative, making any discussion about the volume of comments potentially misleading. Instead, we focused on the types of issues and concepts expressed by participants. Three risk scenarios stood out.

Risk: Young users of AI tools may devalue scepticism and deprioritise fact-checking

At least three cognitive factors contribute here. One is the possibility of overconfidence among users who may believe digital natives have a special aptitude for spotting inaccuracies, bias or misinformation. A second is the trust placed in authoritative language produced by auto-writing tools. A third is the possibility that users prove to be more focused on benefits in terms of speed and idea generation than on the possibility of machine-generated errors marring their output. These factors may work individually or in combination.

Risk: Users' agency may be reduced due to over-reliance on machine-generated text

This is akin to the phenomenon of atrophy in muscles not used. Journalists are taught to constantly ask questions – of their sources and of themselves – as they seek to make sense of sometimes conflicting facts and perspectives. The evidence of positive machine heuristics seen in participants' responses suggests a risk that young journalists could become over-reliant on AI-generated text, to the detriment of their own potential to synthesise and stress-test information from multiple sources. This was shown to be a particular risk for newswriting, and the context and background that is included in features.

Risk: The journalistic imperative of transparency may be compromised

As journalists use and come to rely on auto-writing tools, there is a risk that the lack of transparency in such systems comes to be seen as acceptable. Among other issues, there is a danger that any biases in the system remain hidden. Clearly, some participants had qualms about not knowing where information emerged from; but when some of those same users made checks and verified information, their confidence in the AI tool grew. Such feedback loops could lead users to normalise the idea of not knowing where information comes from.

Researchers have already begun to grapple with some of these risks. The Institute of Media and English at Birmingham City has laid out six principles for responsible journalistic use of ChatGPT in terms of diversity and inclusion (Birmingham City University, 2023). These included a call to recognise the importance of source material and a separate plea to be transparent where possible. Both principles were reflected in the thinking of some participants. But the six principles also call for users to be aware of built-in bias in the system and to build diversity into prompts, both issues that did not appear to occur to those who took part. Lastly, the principles called for a generally sceptical approach to AI-generated material, and it was striking how much credence appeared to be given to AI-generated content in our experiment.

Sundar and Liao (2023) have expressed concern about weaknesses in AI-based writing tools and the loss of human agency. Their unease was motivated in part by the prospect of positive machine heuristics, despite evidence from a self-experiment that showed the kind of false information that can be generated by ChatGPT. Their postulation, based on past research, was that different tasks would be more likely to trigger either a positive or negative machine heuristic, influencing how users trust AI in different circumstances. Our research indicated that, also, participants facing the same task could interpret aspects of the task differently, with varying heuristics triggered.

The Birmingham researchers stressed the need for guidelines, a point made by participants in our experiment. Developing guidelines, however, is not straightforward. The speed of technological change, industry competition, and the possibility of unintended consequences from rules or norms all complicate such endeavours. Moreover, there are limits to journalist agency here (Dörr & Hollnbuchner, 2017; Simon, 2022), which extend to challenging bias. Reporters can vary their questions to the AI, but the opportunity to discern bias from a black box remains limited. Nevertheless, we see a role for journalism educators to play here too. Such a role begins with consideration of the thinking displayed by those who will use those tools and the behavioural risks that are posed as a result.

Implications for journalism educators

An immediate implication for educators from this research is similar to what tends to be advocated in response to just about every digital advance. That is, the basics still matter. For instance, students need to be taught a range of interview techniques. They should be encouraged to not simply succumb to the allure of public relations in any shape or guise. Educators need to insist on the importance of fact-checking. No journalism course worth its name ignores the importance of teaching media law. Clearly, the advent of auto-writing only reinforces these ideas.

But there are other possibilities that are suggested by our research that speak to the risks we have identified. One is that students should be taught how, at least at a basic level, generative AI works – AI literacy. Rather than focusing on IT skills, however, what is involved, as with previous technological shifts, is to transmit an understanding of the impact of the changing journalistic process (Hannaford, 2015), with an emphasis on understanding the issues of AI. This has relevance in terms of both transparency and agency. An understanding of some of the pitfalls of AI systems can teach the importance of developing sharper antennae that will detect when a lack of transparency can create legal or ethical problems. We are not suggesting here that journalism instructors develop skills in coding and computer science; but they should become conversant with the underlying concepts involved in NLG-based tools and how they generate outputs. In terms of agency, having a rudimentary understanding of how a system works can clarify for journalists the need to actively engage with, interrogate and evaluate it.

Another implication is that educators need to ensure that students understand AI in the context of industry dynamics. Our experiment suggests students need to be alerted to the attraction of AI for their future employers, operating in high-pressure environments.

Finally, we think educators can consider expanding the teaching of editing and link this with real-time interaction with AI, as so much of the participants' interplay with the AI here was referred to as editing the material produced by the tool. Educators could replicate workplace scenarios as we have done and use such activities to prompt guided discussion of issues thrown up by AI. Such teaching methods may well need to be interspersed with the delicate task of ethical and legal teaching to encourage resilience in students to know when it might be appropriate to stand up to editors demanding instant copy, when diverse and expanded interviewing is required.

Conclusion

To summarise, the experiment unearthed diverse thinking among digital natives, displaying divergent machine heuristics. From this, we identified three significant risks from young, less-experienced journalists being called on to use auto-writing technology or deciding on their own to use it. Those risks concern the value journalists attach to scepticism, the agency they feel they have or need, and the degree to which they are willing to accept the lack of transparency that, so far, has been notable in AI systems. To be clear, this is hardly an exhaustive list of risks.

From these risks, we have identified four important implications. One is that the basics in terms of journalism ethics and law training still matter. A second is that educators, if they wish to address these risks, will want to develop and impart a rudimentary understanding of how AI systems work. A third is that educators should consider AI implications in the context of commercial factors and the environment entry-level journalists will be entering. And a fourth is that students will benefit from practical instruction, with workshops that replicate or are similar to the experiment we carried out. Such exercises can encourage journalists of the future to think carefully about the AI systems we assume publishers will expect them to use.

Artificial intelligence may usher in transformative changes in journalism practice. But the challenges to educators, while significant, need not be too daunting. They require a readiness to engage with new technology and an appreciation for the thought processes of those who will be using it.

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Conference proceedings

All papers in the conference proceedings section were presented at the Association for Journalism Education Conference in June 2023. They sparked debate and are published here to widen that discussion.

Generative AI in journalism education: mapping the state of an emerging space of concerns, opportunities, and strategies

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Abstract

ChatGPT and other forms of generative AI have sent educators scrambling to counter potential dishonest practices and to reconfigure curricula. Among this rush to respond to a rapidly emerging and potentially revolutionary technology, journalism educators have begun to take note of the value and limitations of automated forms of content creation (Pavlik, 2023; Gómez-Diago, 2022). In this paper we explore the range of perspectives on generative AI in education, and specifically in the realm of journalism education. Our goal is to identify core concerns surrounding generative AI in journalism education, as well as identifying opportunities and strategies for ethically incorporating generative AI into journalism pedagogy in the United Kingdom. Findings suggest that despite common fears for misuse by students to “cheat” by generating their work through generative AI, this technology is seen as a potentially powerful tool for reducing teacher workloads (Rudolph,Tan and Tan 2023); developing data analysis and factual verification skills (Gómez-Diago, 2022); and personalising student learning (Rospigliosi, 2023). More research is needed to contextualise generative AI within specifically U.K. journalistic pedagogy. Longstanding pedagogical theories also could prove helpful for incorporating AI into course and programme development.

Introduction

Artificial intelligence (AI) has become a topic of heated discussion in education circles, particularly since the public release of “generative AI” in the form of ChatGPT in November 2022 (Heaven, 2023).

Though AI and journalism have been studied in relation to each other for many years (Anderson, 2012; Carlson, 2015; Coddington, 2015), the arrival of generative AI has greatly intensified debates over how to integrate its potential for the creation of content into education and professional practice.

Today AI is creating a flurry of questions for educators and professional journalists, who are grappling with its legal, ethical, and practical dimensions. In this article, we examine the present state of these debates and dilemmas by reviewing academic and popular articles that examine AI from educational and practical perspectives. This literature is rapidly growing, but our snapshot as of mid-2023 shows that researchers and industry professionals are commonly thinking in terms of concerns, opportunities, and strategies for implementing AI into the teaching and practice of journalism. Though it is impossible to predict what the relationship between journalism, AI, and education will look like in the future, we argue that curriculum development can benefit from bringing pedagogical theories to bear on the question of how to implement AI into coursework in ways that align with ethical, regulatory, and professional considerations.

Literature Review

Journalism and its technologies are an enduring focus of research. Studies at this nexus have established a well-known historical throughline of key innovations, such as Gutenberg’s printing press in the 15th century, the advent of radio and television broadcasting in the 20th century, and the rise of digital publishing and social media in our present century (Anderson, Bell, and Shirky, 2014; Boczowski, 2004; Boyer, 2013; Hermida, 2010; Pettegree, 2014; Starr, 2004). Boczkowski (2004: 3-4) points out in his study of the transition from print to online journalism that often the conceptualisation of journalism and technology is in terms of the supposedly “revolutionary effects” of these innovations rather than on the ways that people put them to use and how these uses develop out of and extend longer histories of media practices and cultures. In its most extreme version, this oversight of the human actors in the journalism–technology nexus represents a form of "technological determinism," a generally rejected view of technologies as having unilateral impacts on people, as if cultures, politics, economics, organisations, and other social processes don't matter (Smith and Marx, 1994).

In the 2010s and concomitant with the rise of data sets featuring large amounts of digitized information, scholarly attention increasingly turned toward the incorporation of new forms of computation into journalistic practice. Petre (2013) has called this journalism's "quantitative turn," specifically with reference to the use of website traffic metrics in editorial decisions. Coddington (2015) historically situated the quantitative turn as the emergence of overlapping concepts, all referring to the use of data and computational processing in journalism: computer-assisted reporting, data journalism, and computational journalism. Where "computer-assisted reporting" (CAR) emerged in the 1980s as a signifier for the use of social science-related methods and statistical analysis in journalism, particularly in investigative journalism, the terms "data journalism" or "data-driven journalism" (Borges-Rey, 2016; Lewis and Westlund, 2015) overtook CAR as a preferred concept, referring to the rise of massive data sets and data visualisations to tell stories.

Coddington (2015: 335-336) noted that "computational journalism" (Anderson, 2012) is often "conflated" with both CAR and data journalism, but he has portrayed it in epistemological terms as "a strand of technologically oriented journalism centered on the application of computing and computational thinking" to information, including information gathering and presentation in journalism. Coddington associates computational journalism with algorithms and automation, as they represent the process of abstracting from data, particularly in the form of protocols or instructions that transform an input into a different output. As such, algorithms and the automations they facilitate represent prime examples of "computational thinking" – a certain epistemology or way of thinking about data, rather than a specific tool.

References to "artificial intelligence" (AI), the idea that computers can replicate mental processes, including learning (Boden, 1996), were not commonly found in analyses of computational forms of journalism until the mid-2010s. By this point, the convergence of big data and algorithms were much more obviously raising the potential for automating journalistic production, and in particular the automated writing of news stories, or what some have termed "robot" or "robotic" journalism (Carlson, 2015; Frost, 2018). This form of automated journalism is well-established in certain news coverage areas, with examples ranging from the Los Angeles Times' "Quakebot," which automatically generates stories when earthquakes are detected, to sports reporting like the Washington Post's "Heliograph," which reported on the 2016 summer Olympic Games (Salgado, 2022).

Most recently, "generative AI" has been making headlines around the world as people in all fields, including journalism and journalism education, have gained access to publicly available platforms such as ChatGPT, where GPT stands for "generative pre-trained transformer" (Cotton, Cotton, and Shipway, 2023). ChatGPT, which OpenAI released for public use on 30th November 2022, and similar language models are based on algorithms that process billions of texts and train these models to generate increasingly human-like responses to queries and prompts. Whereas algorithms have previously been used for decision-making and classification, such as the classification and deletion of "spam" emails, generative AI can create content "based on patterns in large amounts of existing content" (Aspen Institute, 2023). As generative AI can be used to translate, summarise, and create text, image, video, and other content, it holds the potential to assist journalists in their reporting and perhaps supplant human reporting.[1]

Generative AI thus not only intensifies concerns for the role of automated journalism in the profession but also intensifies concerns pre-dating generative AI for how journalism educators should incorporate automated journalism in their curricula (Kothari and Hickerson, 2020). From the perspective of journalism scholarship and education, there is a tension between approaching new tools as an object of study and critical thought, and foregrounding the ways they can help industry achieve profitable efficiencies (Anderson, 2012). Generative AI's potential for creating stories and academic assessments without human intervention compounds this tension for educators, who have found themselves walking a fine line between teaching the use of generative AI in ways that align with how it is will be used by frontline journalists and teaching students how to avoid forms of academic malpractice (Gotfredsen, 2023).

Despite a professional culture that has traditionally placed a strong emphasis on apprenticeships and on-the-job training, journalism education in the U.K. has, especially since the 1990s, developed into its own discipline (Barrera and Harnischmacher, 2020; Greenberg, 2007; Josephi, 2009). Barrera and Harnischmacher (2020) note that the rise of journalism education at the university level paralleled the reduction of apprenticeship schemes as news organisations cut costs through the 2000s. They also note a degree of fragmentation in the field, with a wide variety of full and part-time courses, as well as many specialisations

1 For example, on 21 June, 2023, German tabloid Bild announced it would replace hundreds of editors with AI (Hille, 2023).

at different levels, from college to university undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

Greenberg (2007) has underscored the widespread debate in academia – no less represented among U.K. journalism educators – between meeting the needs of industries for practical skills and instilling softer, though no less important skill sets, such as "thinking skills" and awareness of social, economic, and political contexts and theories that promote critical thinking. Indeed, Josephi (2009: 49) has suggested that U.S. and U.K. journalism took divergent paths representing "the boundaries within which the discussion about the state of the art in journalism education moves," with the former more focussed on vocational training and the latter placing higher value on a "broader program of study". Additionally, U.K. journalists confront in their work substantial media regulations and, for some, broadcast standards that largely are not encountered by their U.S. colleagues (Frost, 2016), and U.K. journalism education will tend to reflect these considerations in its curricula.

Journalism education programmes in the U.K. nonetheless tend to feature a great deal of practical work, such as the production of news stories, and at times, U.K. journalism educators, many of whom are former professional journalists, express doubts about the relevance of theory (Greenberg, 2007). These different perspectives are especially important from the standpoint of pedagogical theories, which stress concepts such as active learning, deep learning, and constructive alignment (Biggs and Tang, 2011). These concepts stress the importance of taking into account different modes and styles of learning, as well as the need to "constructively align" coursework, including lectures, materials, and assessments, with intended learning outcomes (ILOs) and with work of students, who are seen as active participants in a process "brokered" by teachers (Biggs and Tang, 2011: 100). As different perspectives on how to teach journalism imply variations in coursework, ILOs, and the relationship between teachers and students, these pedagogical theories are important frameworks for conceptualising how to incorporate tools and processes, such as generative AI, into teaching.

AI has begun to feature in journalism and media education in the U.K. A search of the University and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) site[2] on 21 June 2023, found eight undergraduate courses in the U.K. on "journalism and AI" and 45 courses on "media and AI." Scholarship on journalism education also has begun to note the ways that educators are approaching AI from the lens of professional practice and ethics (Goméz-Diago, 2022; Salgado, 2022).

Based on this review of the available literature on journalism and AI, including generative AI, we ask the following questions.

RQ1: What are the most prominent concerns identified by the available literature – academic and popular press – that are relevant to the integration of generative AI into journalism education?

RQ2: What are the most prominent opportunities and strategies identified by the available literature – academic and popular press – that are relevant to the role of generative AI in journalism education?

RQ3: How do these concerns, opportunities, and strategies apply to and potentially enhance U.K. journalism education?

Data and Methods

To answer these questions, we conduct a type of "scoping review" (Munn et al. 2018), similar to Gomez-Diago's (2022) review of the extant literature on the role of AI in journalism education, which he also associates with what has been called a meta-narrative or integrated literature review. A scoping review sets out to understand the present state of knowledge about a given topic, and it typically involves developing search strings for various academic databases that will surface relevant articles and books. The results of the searches are compared, duplicates and irrelevant items are removed, and the remaining items are read and analysed to understand what is known about the topic and areas in need of further research.

As discussions around generative AI are developing fast and at an ever-increasing rate, our study updates Gomez-Diago's research by scoping publications appearing through mid-2023. We also build on and broaden Gomez-Diago's research by synthesising into our research a range of recent publications beyond academia, as generative AI has quickly grabbed the popular imagination. At the same time, we relate our

2 https://www.ucas.com/

findings to a specifically U.K. context, as this context includes a set of media regulations and practices that vary from other national contexts.

We developed a search string of terms that we eventually used to search Scopus, Web of Science, and Google (both Google Scholar and the general Google search engine). This search string, based on testing and comparing results, is: "artificial intelligence" AND "journalism" AND ("pedagogy" OR "school*" OR "education" OR "universit*" OR "curricul*" OR "program*"). This search string is designed to surface articles providing an overview of how journalism, AI, and education are or could potentially be thought together, inclusive of the more recent arrival of generative AI.

We used this string of terms to conduct searches on 25 May and 2 August, 2023. Our search of the general Google search engine, using an "incognito" window in Chrome to remove the influence of pre-existing user information stored by the browser, found seven articles specific to our core topic of AI and journalism education on the first 10 pages of results. A Google Scholar search surfaced an additional five core topic articles. Our Scopus search returned 63 articles, of which only six were specific to our core topic. Our Web of Science Core Collection search returned 38 articles, of which only three were specific to our core topic. Removing overlapping, inaccessible, and non-English articles, these searches resulted in N = 15 articles specific to the relationship between journalism, AI, and education.

Additionally, we found 41 articles in our Google search that were focussed on AI and journalism in general. We include these in our analysis to reflect prominent thinking about how AI impacts the profession of journalism and how pedagogy may be constructively aligned with real-world practice.

Findings

	Profession of journalism	**Journalism education**
Concerns	1. **Ethics** 2. **Trust** 3. **Cost** 4. **Quality** 5. **Accuracy**	1. **Ethics** 2. **Lack of skills** 3. **Cheating** 4. **Accuracy** 5. **Deflation of students**
Opportunities	1. **Support news teams** 2. **Produce greater range of content** 3. **Time saving - free-up journalists** 4. **Produce content** 5. **Speed**	1. **Develop new skills** 2. **Generate ideas** 3. **Efficiency** 4. **Incorporating big data** 5. **Improve writing**
Strategies	1. **Train journalists and staff** 2. **Invest in technology and teams** 3. **Strategy**	1. **Train students** 2. **Develop AI courses** 3. **Embed AI across programmes and modules** 4. **Teach about AI implications and ethics**

Table 1: AI concerns, opportunities and strategies in scoped articles

The results of this scoping exercise broadly fall into two groups, papers and articles which have looked at concerns, opportunities, and strategies presented by AI for the profession of journalism, (Ali & Hassoun, 2019; Beckett, 2019; Dierickx, 2021); and those which seek to explain the effects AI may have on journalism teaching and course construction within universities, (Ark, 2023; Batt and Granger, 2019; Li and Zhang, 2022).

Profession of journalism

Research led by Beckett (2019) provides a snapshot of how journalists view and use AI. The report highlights concerns about the costs involved in developing and integrating bespoke AI systems into newsrooms and the issue of ethics. Both issues crop up time and again in papers and articles. This major survey of the industry also saw positives, including freeing-up journalists' time to pursue other stories and to deepen investigations, as well as the potential that AI could help overcome concerns of both journalists and their audiences about fake news and the credibility of news sources. This was research carried out before the pandemic and widespread uptake of ChatGPT.

Those investigating the effect of AI on today's journalism seek to reassure journalists that their jobs are not under threat. They point to the benefits which can come from the introduction of more AI into newsrooms. For example, Diakopoulos (2019), while acknowledging the issues around quality of output and accuracy of AI reporting, sees positives, including the ability of news producers to deliver a deeper, more personalised news service and again the freeing-up of journalists from mundane reporting tasks. This potential opportunity is echoed by others, including Young (2020), Peretti (2022), Noain-Sánchez (2022), Badgamia (2023) and Irwin (2023).

Noain-Sánchez (2022), who interviewed working journalists, academics and media professionals in four countries, including Spain, the U.S. and U.K., concluded that interviewees saw the benefits of AI and the new opportunities, including more content creation on a wider range of subjects for a broader audience. However, respondents raised concerns about journalists lacking the skills to make the most of AI and the effects AI may have on journalistic ethics. Half of the papers and articles we surveyed mentioned concerns around ethics, bias and accuracy.

Worries over bias revolve around the initial sample from which these large language models draw their data. For example, as Bender et al. (2021) observe, links from the social media site Reddit were used for the creation of the ChatGPT datasets, which imported biases of all kinds, including gender, ethnicity, sexuality, political and economic biases. Suspicions about bias and the sources of initial data are concerns for many discussing the impact of AI on journalism and wider society, including Beckett (2019) and Bell (2023). In her Guardian article, journalist Emily Bell discusses the ethics around low paid workers being employed in Kenya to sift through harmful online images and the prospect of a deluge of generated content that "overwhelms the truth or at least drowns out more balanced perspectives." In a recent article written by the Turkish Anadolu Agency (2023), Jonathan Soma, who runs the data journalism programme at Columbia University, said, "Large language models tend to 'hallucinate,' and give answers to questions that are incorrect but sound accurate." For him and others it is clear that checks by humans are still required before publishing automatically generated material.

Taking the human out of the equation is one of a number of ethical issues AI raises. Galily (2018), who looked at the use of artificial intelligence within sport journalism, asks whether journalists should tell their audiences that stories have been written by non-humans. The same point is taken up by Brown (2023) who examines how pictures or images created by AI should be credited or labelled. The Los Angeles Times has already found a way to address this issue with its AI generated Quakebot content which automatically produces short items about earthquakes. Each story is accompanied by a sentence explaining to the reader how the pieces were written.

Journalism education

The second selection of papers and articles examined cover education and journalism teaching at university level and the effect AI might have on curricula. As was the case of papers dealing with current journalism practice, concerns are divided between those which look at the possible effect AI may have on work students produce and those papers looking more broadly at the impact AI may have on courses and teaching.

Of the 15 papers which looked specifically at AI, education and journalism, there were three main concerns: ethics (Ark, 2023; Ifan, 2023), cheating (Morrone, 2023; Rudolph et al., 2023), and a lack of skills both among students and the academics capable of teaching (Ufarte-Ruiz et al., 2020a, 2020b). These concerns are similar to those found in papers looking at AI and education more generally (see, for example, Cotton et al., 2023; Luttrell et al., 2020).

In our survey, 73 per cent of the papers that looked at the effect of AI on education and journalism either called for AI to be a specialist module within teaching or embedded across the entire syllabus (Arzuaga, 2022; Calvo-Rubio and Ufarte-Ruiz, 2019; Irfan, 2023; Kothari and Hickerson, 2020; Ufarte-Ruiz et al., 2020a, 2020b).

For example, Li and Zhang (2022), who looked at the current state of journalism education , including adoption of AI, within China's huge undergraduate programme, (more than 1,200 courses), were underwhelmed by the level of integration of computer skills within journalism courses. They call for an "Internet+" approach which would see traditional journalism skills, of writing and reporting, combined with an integrated understanding of technological and management skills, to satisfy the demand of the media industry for better prepared staff.

Arzuaga (2022), who analysed journalism courses at universities to see how they were using AI, found that there had been little previous research on the subject. She found several universities were running journalism courses with AI, including: "Topics in Journalism & Society: AI, Automation & Journalism" at Northern Illinois University; Stanford's course in "Computational Journalism"; "AI in Media and Society" at the University of Florida. However, access to actual course content was limited, and Arzuaga calls for a deeper analysis of specific module content to see what is actually being taught in classes.

Gotfredsen (2023) interviewed several academics about how AI could be used in their classes. There was a feeling that although AI would find its way into courses, and in some cases already had, that it could not replace the creativity required for certain journalistic projects, and educators were wary of how to balance the need for accuracy and the new technology. One solution Gotfredsen (2023: 7) suggests is for institutions to train AI on "...on approved documentation that's in line with the educational departments' ethical standards". She also points out that some people within the publishing industry are taking a cautious approach to the introduction of AI, citing the editor-in-chief of Wired who says generative AI will not be allowed to write or edit pieces for fear of creating dull, biased, and plagiarized content.

Other papers call for better awareness among students and staff around AI and the effects it may have (Cotton et al., 2023; Gomez-Diago, 2022; Pavlik, 2023). Critical thinking and writing skills were emphasised by several articles. Kothari and Hickerson (2020: 217) point out that "Journalism programs face a difficult challenge of finding a curricular balance between courses that develop critical thinking skills while preparing students for industry jobs, which might be replaced by automation in the future". Irfan (2023: 82) found positive benefits for students who were introduced to AI: "Quantitative analysis of the data revealed a statistically significant improvement in students' critical thinking," defined as the ability "to analyze, interpret and evaluate information". This study also found improvements in journalism writing skills following the use of ChatGPT-3, and students noted that generative AI was helpful for generating new ideas and increasing productivity. Similar claims are made by Morrone (2023), who looked at the impact that the Pressto writing platform had on children using it in the U.S.. It's used by teachers to plan lessons and results with students show it improves their writing capabilities by leading them with prompts.

The call to provide training for journalism students at university level is echoed amongst the media industry and those articles and papers we have looked at (Amer, 2020; Diakopoulos, 2019; Fashawe, 2023). Clearly, the industry wants AI ready graduates just as it expects students to be familiar with shooting video and editing. An understanding of and an ability to work with AI within newsrooms is seen as a core skill.

Discussion

Papers and articles looking at both journalism as a profession and as a university course reach similar conclusions about the benefits and downsides of generative AI. Its growing adoption and embedded reality within many facets of life mean it is a development which needs to be addressed by the academy and industry. For industry there is a financial cost in introducing generative AI along with the various ethical, social and legal considerations mentioned above. But papers investigating the adoption of the new technology are in general agreement that news teams need to be trained with new skills, (Ali and Hassoun 2019; Amer, 2020; Beckett, 2019; Ciesielski, 2022). Peretti (2022) has argued that in order to make the most of their new investment in AI teams, media companies should decide on a strategy. But he also issues a word of caution:

"Do not get into the AI space for FOMO, for fear of missing out," and urges businesses to think through what they want to achieve by using AI in order to form a strategy. "It's on us to decide if we want to sit back and wait for AI to impact our journalism in ways we don't understand, or if we want to own it and use AI to make a positive impact in our societies".

Researchers similarly note that having a strategic aim – knowing what you want from AI – is vital for developing its adoption within the pedagogical experience. Ufarte-Ruiz et al. (2020a, 2020b) and many others encourage the teaching of AI on journalism courses (Kothari and Hickerson, 2020; Gomez-Diago, 2022; Li and Zhang, 2022; Gotfredsen, 2023).

Ethical concerns are common across the professional and educational spaces. The concern for bias in AI models surfaced in journalism studies long before the rise of generative AI, though the rise of this new form of content creation, now in virtually everyone's hands, heightens the need for what Diakopolous (2014) has called "algorithmic accountability reporting." Journalism students should be taught how to research and ask questions about the use of AI across all patches, as it is likely to become an integral but easily overlooked part of so many facets of life (e.g., crime/court processes, arts and entertainment, policymaking, elections, science, etc.). The obvious risk of AI biases negatively impacting human rights, especially the rights of the accused, has been noted by institutions such as the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice, which has issued a "European Ethical Charter on the Use of Artificial Intelligence in Judicial Systems and their Environment" (Council of Europe, 2018). However, we should expect that AI will increasingly be integrated into processes affecting virtually all aspects of civic life, and therefore it is increasingly important that student journalists get training on how to report on AI.

The ethical concerns surrounding AI extend into the very heart of journalism education, especially as many have raised copyright concerns around generative AI (Appel, Neelbauer and Schweidel, 2023). Educators should consider how this may factor into their pedagogy. For example, is it ethically/pedagogically wrong to use a tool that has been created by consuming vast amounts of texts and images produced and often copyrighted by other people?

Additionally, the U.K. context, particularly due to its substantial regulations regarding privacy and anonymity, brings its own set of concerns, which generally are not represented in the literature we review. For example, what happens if generative AI, which essentially finds patterns in massive data sets, can be used to identify sexual abuse victims or predict potential crimes? What happens when generative AI "hallucinates" misinformation with regard to citizens? Here, generative AI's specifically creative functions present a host of questions that have yet to be fully grappled with.

Finally, one of the biggest gaps in present research on generative AI in the context of journalism pedagogy, and arguably pedagogy itself, regards holistic approaches to thoughtfully integrating this new "tool" into how universities prepare students for their professional careers. We found few articles that attempted to conceptualise AI in terms of an entire curriculum at both the module and programme level. To remedy this, we argue that educators should think about AI in relation to pedagogical theories, such as constructive alignment (Biggs and Tang, 2011).

How does one align AI with Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) and use it to produce active learning? There's been some talk of revising assessments to focus on process, rather than the final product. For example, people are discussing the need to have students handwrite portions of essays during class (summative assessments) in order to avoid submission of AI-generated final assessments. What happens if we think about this less as a cheating-avoidance strategy and more as active learning/constructive alignment?

We believe that rather than thinking first and foremost in terms of the "tool" – in this case AI – journalism educators should be thinking about what they want students to do and how these activities align with ILOs. Accordingly, and particularly from a constructive alignment perspective, one of the most important considerations is the verb used to connect students with ILOs. As constructive alignment privileges active learning – already an implicit part of journalism pedagogy – it prompts us to ask what we want students to do with the materials that teachers provide. Do we want them to "create," "evaluate," "reflect," "apply," or something else? Each verb serves as a prompt that orients students' active learning in a different way.

AI is likely to become so pervasive that it will stress our ability to think about it in terms of a singular tool or process. Rather than racing to adopt each new application of AI as it comes along, and thus remaining one or more steps behind, teachers would do well to consider the epistemology of AI. As we have noted, Coddington (2015) has associated this epistemology with "computational thinking." We argue that journalism teachers should consider how this thinking is done, critically at times, when working on implementing AI into their courses.

Conclusion

Although concerns, opportunities, and strategies are commonly found in the articles and papers included in our scoping review, there is a natural divide between papers focused on industry and those on education.

In response to RQ1, regarding prominent concerns related to journalism education, we find that not surprisingly issues around cheating and the call for greater AI literacy and embedding of AI into teaching, mainly come from those articles and papers looking at journalism and education together.

In response to RQ2, regarding identified opportunities and strategies relevant to journalism education, we find that both the educational and professional literature emphasise the benefits of AI in producing a broader range of stories, more personalized news, and greater content production.

Answering RQ3, which asks how addressing these concerns and developing opportunities, and strategies might enhance journalism education, leads to a more open-ended response. At present there are few recent papers or articles specifically looking at journalism education and the place of generative AI in that context. Those studies which have original research deal with the state of journalism education in Spain, Tajikistan, China and the U.S. Although the U.K. is a source for some responses, there is a need for more specific and detailed analysis of journalism pedagogy in the U.K. when it comes to AI. More research is required to connect the affordances and potential pitfalls of AI to concerns around U.K. regulatory and ethical issues, such as contempt of court, libel/defamation, and reasonable expectation of privacy.

In sum, research to date has not connected AI to pedagogical theories, such as constructive alignment. Such research could inform effective strategies for helping journalism educators and their students think about AI and how it does or does not align with core learning goals at the course and programme levels. By starting with a dual-strand approach that thinks educational and professional goals together, journalism educators can ready students to work and to think critically about that work in a rapidly changing professional environment.

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Teaching public affairs to student journalists using Bourdieu's field theory

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Abstract

The paper addresses Public Affairs as a subject taught to student journalists. To do so, it describes the current context of journalism, and the role of public relations. It shows how the public relations in its most recent iterations – notably populism – are challenging journalistic norms, and how training in public affairs for student journalists is failing to prepare them. It cites a small case study of an environmental protest and its coverage in regional press, to show how public relations practice can impact upon coverage. The study proposes Bourdieu's Field Theory as a pedagogical tool in helping student journalists understand the complexities of public affairs and its reporting.

Introduction

This paper argues that the teaching of public affairs needs to be overhauled in the face of developments in the communications environment. Public affairs teaching needs to address the radical challenges created by changes in public relations practice, notably those formed by the rise of populism and its associated media-relations techniques.

The paper will argue that an appreciation of Power in public affairs must be added to the relevant syllabuses. It will argue further that Bourdieu's field theory may be an appropriate analytical model to achieve this goal. The vital role played by journalists in their 'watchdog function' is a much-vaunted aspect of the so-called fourth estate. Public Affairs, as a central part of understanding of 'Government' with both a large and small 'G', can be reasonably seen as a key part of this role. This is reflected globally as a discussion of how public affairs is taught to both those entering public service as civil servants, and to student journalists entering the news-media sector. Nevertheless, concern has been expressed that the teaching of public affairs to student journalists in the UK is too dry, failing to capture their interest (Jones and Clark, 2019), and, more importantly perhaps, is failing to prepare them for both working on news-desks, and fully comprehending the complexities of public administration and affairs.

Public affairs – failures in normative reporting practices

This concern has been similarly voiced by a number of sector commentators, notably British journalist Emily Maitlis who in a recent Mactaggart Lecture expressed concerns that the journalistic rituals of objectivity were stopping journalists from performing their watchdog role adequately (Maitless, 2022). Specifically, she pointed to the rise of disinformation actors flooding the information sector with false narratives that led to a misrepresentation of real-world public affairs. Maitlis cited examples from her time with the BBC's flagship Newsnight programme where rituals of objectivity, in which both sides of the argument must be given, what she called "both-sideism", skewed the representation of minority views by giving them an equal voice to those of the majority.

For example, right-wing polemicist and former Breitbart owner Steve Bannon told Bloomberg's Michael Lewis "The Democrats don't matter. The real opposition is the media. And the way to deal with this is to flood the zone with shit." (CNN, 2020). Hand-in-hand with this is the 'populism' of recent politics which labelled journalists 'the media' not 'reporters' – the 'media' is "as a code word for critical journalism—derives from the populist logic, which contrasts "the real people" with 'the enemies of the people'" (Panievsky, 2021:2137). The impact of this populism on journalistic practice has been extensive, with journalists at best distrusted and at worst under physical threat. Importantly, this latest iteration of public relations practice, is not taught as public affairs in traditional journalist training courses. This constitutes a critical flaw in our understanding of public affairs. The largely doxic decision to ignore power as an 'elephant in the room' is salient to those working in the sector, only when challenged, and then it seems painfully obvious. The role of public relations is key to the functioning of modern society. It is central to the practice of power in our mediatised society. As Bernays, the so-called father of modern public relations, famously stated, "Those who manipulate this unseen mechanism of society constitute an invisible government which is the true ruling power of our country...we are governed, our minds are molded, our tastes formed, our ideas suggested, largely by men we have never heard of." (Bernays, 2005: 9). This position has been more latterly reiterated and ramified by a very large number of authors (Brooke, 2011; Davies, 2008; Davis, 2019; Dinan and Miller, 2007; Fern, 2019b, 2023; Lewis et al., 2008; Miller, 2008; Miller and Dinan, 2000; Petley, 2011; Short et al., 2015; Spinwatch, 2017), and as such, its absence in public affairs teaching is a curious and problematic omission.

The understanding of Public Relations' central role in societal information flows is in contrast to classic understandings of journalistic normative practice which do little to address PR-influence. The role of journalist has many formulations, but expressed classically by David Randall in The Universal Journalist (2011):

> *"Discover and publish information that replaces rumour and speculation. Resist or evade government controls. Inform and so empower, voters subvert those whose authority relies on a lack of public information. Scrutinise the action and inaction of governments, elected representatives and public services. Scrutinise businesses' treatment of workers and customers, and the quality of their products. Comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable, providing a voice for those who can't normally be heard in public. Hold up a mirror to Society, reflecting its virtues and vices and also debunking its cherished myths. Ensure that justice is done, is seen to be done and investigations carried out where it is not so. Promote the free exchange of ideas, especially by providing a platform for those with philosophies alternative to the prevailing ones." (Randall, 2011: 3).*

This list, written to student journalists to have 'the hairs on the back of your neck beginning to stand up'(Ibid.), actually does little to address the challenges of a sh*t-filled-zone, or for that matter the journalistic field of practice so corrupted. In Randall's conception the government and business are the 'comfortable' to be afflicted by, those who cannot be heard to be 'comforted', but a populist position places itself as 'afflicted', and thus needing a 'a platform for those with philosophies alternative to the prevailing ones'(Ibid.). This provides us with one aspect or view of the problems faced by traditionally trained journalists. Populist actors are not addressed by traditionally taught public affairs, and their handling as a news-source is not prepared for. And, to reiterate, public relations and populism in its current iterations operate hand-in-glove (Banks, 2016; Marr et al., 2017; The Washington Post, 2018), and an understanding of this is key to understanding and reporting public affairs.

Thus, journalist educators in public affairs teaching should address two problems. The first is in teaching journalism students the values and techniques of classic journalism, the second is how this teaching and the concurrent values are practiced in the current socio-news-media landscape. If the landscape, the Zone, is indeed flooded with the detritus of fake news, misinformation, disinformation, Psyops and propaganda, how can journalists be taught to operate and undertake practical news reporting? This is necessarily a complex task, and, I argue here, not one that can be fulfilled by normative or classic journalistic practice, or its teaching as currently formatted in the UK.

Public affairs training – the NCTJ example

Take for instance, the National Council for the Training of Journalists curriculum, and the course text Essential Public Affairs for Journalism (Morrison, 2019). Its contents page reads: The British Constitution and Monarchy; Parliamentary Democracy in the UK; Prime Minister, Cabinet and government; Britain's electoral systems; Political parties party funding and lobbying; the National Health Service; the Treasury, Industry, and the Utility's; Social Security and Home Affairs, Britain and Europe, the Origins and Structure of Local Government; Financing Local Government; Local Government Decision-Making; Local Government Accountability and Elections; Education; Planning Policy and Environmental Protection; Housing; Children Services and Adult Social Care; Transport, Environment, Leisure and Culture; and, Freedom of Information. The book is an exhaustive and generally well-written core text for the public affairs syllabus.

However, this textbook approach is ill-suited to the current state of public affairs. For instance, 'prorogation of parliament' is mentioned once, as part of a list of the Prime Minister's powers, as point eight in a 14-bullet point list of Prime Ministerial powers to "… recommend prorogation of parliament for summer recess and other holidays." (Morrison, 2019: 14). It is given so little import, that it does not even appear in the book index. Yet this power was central to a government scandal in 2019 when Prime Minister Johnson side-lined parliament in order to force through Brexit legislation. An act subsequently ruled illegal by the Supreme Court (Bowcott et al., 2019). While subsequent editions may well spend more time on this power, the simplistic introduction to such legislation is a common theme throughout, that fails to see the potential for power as an artefact of public affairs.

In another example of the problem, a question on Prime Ministerial Powers appeared in the PA Examination on 23 June 2017. It reads:

"The Brexit referendum and EU negotiations have highlighted the importance of the role of the Prime Minister in UK politics. You work for a national radio station and have been asked to produce a package on the powers of the Prime Minister.

(a)	Prepare the material by outlining the powers of the Prime Minister and indicating what restraints there are on prime ministerial power.
(b)	You have organised an interview with your local MP. List FIVE questions that you would put to him in relation to the powers of the Prime Minister.

Section (a) is worth 15 marks."

It may seem unfair to cite this as an example, but the 'tick-box' nature of the exam is clear. Candidates are expected to learn lists, not meaning or its political or social implications. This formula is repeated throughout the examination. No wonder then that Tor Clark and Alistair Jones noted in a 2019 conference paper:

"Public Affairs: Even the name of the serious part of Journalism courses is problematic. For years this absolutely essential, but often maligned, part of so many university Journalism courses, has been taught by 'a guy from Politics' and hated, or at best endured, by its students." (Jones and Clark, 2019).

They record their own efforts to enliven their public affairs teaching in which they focussed on 'real-world stories' and journalistic practice. They record some real success with this approach – although their paper used pass rates in the existing exams as a measure of that success – in other words, they had greater success with pass rates in a flawed tick-box examination, not necessarily greater success in preparing students for real-world reporting. However, their overall approach to teaching public affairs, using real-world case-studies, will be adopted built upon in this paper with a more analytical structured approach.

The challenge for journalism educators is to teach students identify populist sources, name them effectively in news copy, and adequately describe their role in the news-landscape while maintaining objectivity in the service of readers' news-needs and editors' news-sense. All of this must be accomplished in the face of attacks, opposition, and accusations of bias from all sides of the socio-political divide. What is proposed here, is an amendment or addition to the teaching of public affairs to journalists, which begins to equip them with an analytical structure that enables them to defend themselves when their objectivity is slighted.

Bourdieu's field theory – an overview

Bourdieu's Field Theory attempts to close the gap between structural positions and liberal positions to create a model of social practice (Calhoun et al, 1993). The practice of Power, and how, through these forces it is enacted as competition, and sometimes cooperation, creates its own Field is central to his conception. In order to do this, he created a novel understanding of Capital, which includes economic power, but also includes symbolic and cultural capital – all of which is 'spent' in pursuit of actor's conflicting goals and objectives. He accepts the theoretical analyses of Power – to the point of being accused of being Althusserian (Benson and Neveu, 2005), but also describes how individual agency, and contingency can exert an influence on outcomes – contrary to elite consensus. In this way, field theory acknowledges the 'structuring-structures' of society in a way familiar to the Marxists as the Gramscian consensus of dominant elites, but also acknowledges the role of the cultural norms of those embedded in, that is working in, the field. In this case, those cultural norms would include the rituals of objectivity described by Tuchman (1972), and the values described by Randall (2011).

A Field is a conceptual or analytical space bounded by the practice of those involved such that it becomes semi-autonomous. In Journalism the reporting of the news as a practice undertaken by those working in the news media, forms its own field. But that practice is informed by, and informs, other fields of practice which effects the realized autonomy of the Fields. In this case, the journalistic field is highly heteronomic – that is, it is informed strongly by the main field of power, which is dominated by economic capital. From this we can see that a Field is a site of struggle, nested within (and around) other fields which all exert a force upon each other. Power comes from economic, social and cultural capital, with individual agents and actors attempting to use their capital to maximize their position. These three forms of capital are transferable between each other and between fields (Bourdieu, 1986), and as such become the basis of class structure. Fields such as the journalistic field, which are characterised by high levels of economic power are strongly influenced by society's dominant forces - in this case, those forces are embodied within a broad array of Public Relations practices which include media relations, lobbying, community relations, digital media and event management. While it is tempting to dwell solely on media relations within the context of a study focussing on the teaching of journalists, that would not be the whole story. For instance, in the Blackpool Gazette a key oil industry player sponsored awards run by the paper – and so exerted force upon the paper, which was in turn communicated to the protestors. This will be discussed more fully later. What is more apparent is that media coverage was informed by a number of elements that would reside outside of a purely media-content discussion of the case studies.

Bourdieu in fields of journalism and public relations

In On Television (1998 [1996]) Bourdieu addressed the journalistic field directly arguing the journalistic field was of central importance to societal nest of fields – i.e. it was part of the field of power, part of the 'dominated field of cultural production' (Benson, 2005: 5). It is highly heteronomous – the need to sell advertising and maintain circulation figures not only creates its own gravity within the field, dragging journalistic practice towards economic objectives, but also produces similar forces in adjacent fields (Bourdieu, 2005: 43). This is perhaps the most obvious iteration of economic power – after all, the PR profession is expensive to hire, and it is notable in this case study that business actors were indeed able to leverage or trade economic capital for cultural gain in the news-media. Indeed, a number of authors have placed Bourdieu did not directly reference public relations industry. However, Benson and Neveu's Bourdieu and the Journalistic Field (2005) shows how journalistic practice can be usefully analysed using field theory. Ihlen's work, notably The Power of Social Capital: Adapting Bourdieu to the Study of Public Relations (2005) Building on Bourdieu: a sociological grasp of public relations (2007) and On Bourdieu: Public Relations in Field Struggles (2009) all added to the discussion of Bourdieu and the field. Couldry (2003) also addressed Bourdieu in Media Meta-captial: extending the range of Bourdieu's field theory. Each of these identified Bourdieu's work as relevant in understanding role of public relations in societal power and showed how such an analysis is useful. Latterly, Akram et al. (2015: 259) usefully compared the work of Bourdieu to that of Foucault noting "… Different agents possess different mixes of resources and those more resources are likely to exercise power over those with less." Edwards (2006: 230) too reminds us of the need for a relational kind of thinking, "that public relations generates misrecognition of the interests underlying its employers claims to legitimacy, and disguises the arbitrary nature of those claims." These observations remind us that capital can be used in competition in, that is to say, in a kind of information warfare noted by MacKay et al. (2012) in their study of Exon Mobil and Greenpeace and the Brent Spar controversy. This, MacKay et al. note, is the result of a "pre-conscious' utilisation of habitus - citing Bourdieu (Bourdieu and Nice, 1977) as describing habitus as 'systems of durable transposable dispositions." In this light Roper (2005) sees even Grunig's symmetrical communication is an attempt at sustaining hegemony. Edwards (2009: 269) adds:

> *"By following the principle of homology between fields, then, it is a relatively straightforward process to connect individual practise with the social effects of public relations through the medium of the organisational field and because of the homology of that field with the economic field in the field of power."*

Edwards dwells at length on what I will refer to as nested fields, and of the necessity for 'competence' in the public relations practice as a means in itself, at a meso-level, to evidence legitimacy. One might wonder here whether, when seeking authoritative sources, journalists fall back upon this evidence of competence and legitimacy bestowed by public relations meta-capital.

So, Bourdieu has been discussed in relation to both journalism as a field and public relations as field, and those discussions have brought them close together in a field of news production. This is addressed in some university level courses, but not, it seems, as part of public affairs teaching. This study attempts to fill that gap.

Methodology

A case study was drawn from a wider study of regional print news media (Fern, 2019a), and its coverage of protests against 'Fracking' in England during the period 2014 to 2018. Fracking is a process in which oil is 'drilled for' using a controversial practice of hydraulic fracturing – and understanding of the exact process is not necessary in this paper, but it met with vociferous protest from people resident next to the sites, and from environmental protest groups. There were three main drilling sites during the study period: Balcombe Down in Sussex, Preston Road in Lancashire and Barton Moss near Manchester. These were policed by Sussex Police, Lancashire Police and Greater Manchester Police (GMP). The regional daily newspapers for this area are the Brighton Argus (Argus), the *Blackpool Gazette* (Gazette) and the *Manchester Evening News* (MEN). These papers were the only daily regional papers covering the areas concerned, and the only papers delivering regional coverage of the protests on a daily basis. A Lexis-Nexis search was conducted for each of these papers yielding 42 relevant articles in the *Blackpool Gazette*, 24 in the *Manchester Evening News* and 32 in the *Brighton Argus*.

In addition, semi-structured telephone interviews were conducted throughout 2018 with a representative of each newspaper and each police press office, as well as a media-activist from each site. They have been anonymised in this study.

Interview coding was drawn from the literature, and an additional coding was discovered during the interviews relating to the presence of news-actors active at each site.

The content analysis in the wider study coded for a number of indices, in this paper, a comparative word count for each PR actor/agency was generated by NVIVO software and downloaded to Excel. This methodology yielded a qualitative sample as a indices of 'share of voice', a term used in professional marketing in measuring the presence or dominance of news-copy (inter alia). In other words, it shows who was used as a news-source, and what prominence in the news-copy was given to each of these actors/agencies.

The combination of qualitative interviews, and quantitative content analysis, allowed a methodological triangulation which described the case study, enabling a thorough analysis.

This approach to case studies is consistent with best practice as recommended by Krippendorf (2013), Yin (2014), Thomas (2011), and Stake (2005). While the low N values can be seen as problematic, it is consistent with other case study approaches (see Halloran's 1970 Demonstrations and communication: a case study). Gerring argues that case studies can facilitate triangulation, while Yin (2014) argues that case studies give a 'real-world perspective' to 'complex social phenomena'.

As such this combined methodology provides a useful and robust approach to the case study, yeilding valid insights in to the issue of public relations practice, and newspaper coverage, of contentious, heavily mediatised public affairs. It is used here to inform a discussion of how journalists can be trained to choose and work with such issues in a way that remains objective, but also identifies public relations activity accurately in contested areas of public affairs; in this case local government planning, and local and national government policy-formulation.

Findings - Share of Voice for sources coverage (SoV)

As part of a wider study semi-structured interviews were conducted with the primary news actors detailed in the methodology. A high-ranking media relations actor in at Greater Manchester Police and, a press officer at Sussex Police, also reported strong lines of internal communication, and good resourcing. However, Lancashire Police press office reported staffing problems which led to minimal police-media relations. This point was reiterated by a journalist at the *Blackpool Gazette* who said: "We don't get anything form the cops…our police, currently our press office with the police, they're short staffed and they're never ever proactive. Not at all." This central fact informs and explains much of the findings described above. Greater Manchester Police and Sussex Police both had adequately resourced press offices, Lancashire Police did not.

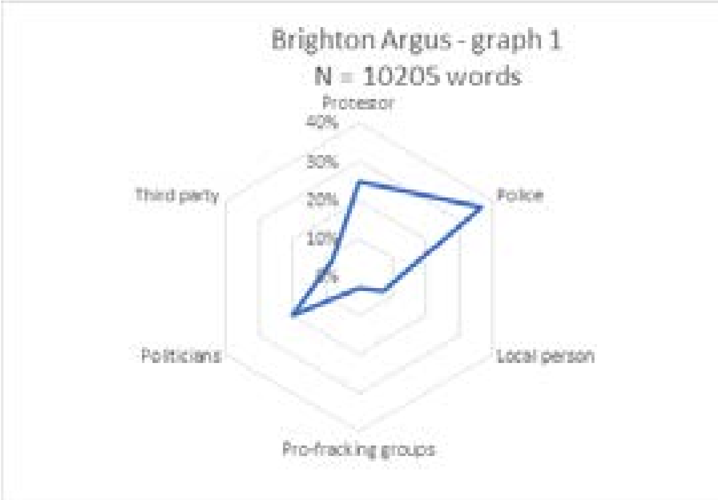
What is apparent is that Lancashire Police Press office was less active than its contemporaries in GMP and Sussex Police. This discovery provides an interesting case study in PR's absence from a field of practice. That is to say, it reveals indices of PR's influence on reporting, by its absence. The differences between those fields of reporting in which police-PR was present, and those fields in which police-PR difference is remarkable and salient. In the larger study it was also found in framing choices, but we shall focus upon share of voice, and the way in which different PR actors were represented in the news-copy.

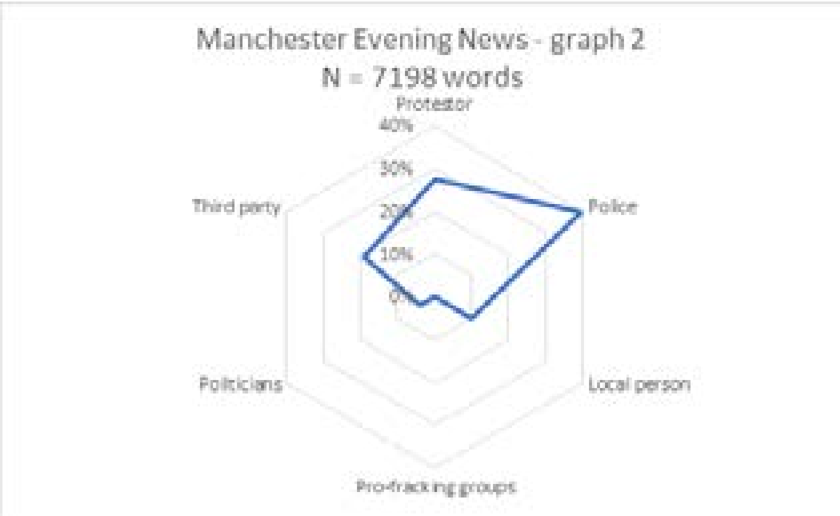
Share of Voice (graphs 1, 2 and 3) compares one agency's levels or amounts of coverage (in this case the news-text), against others. In this sense, SoV can provide an indicator of dominance within a field of news-discourse. And if, for instance, the police were seen to dominate the discourse this might be indicated by SoV data.

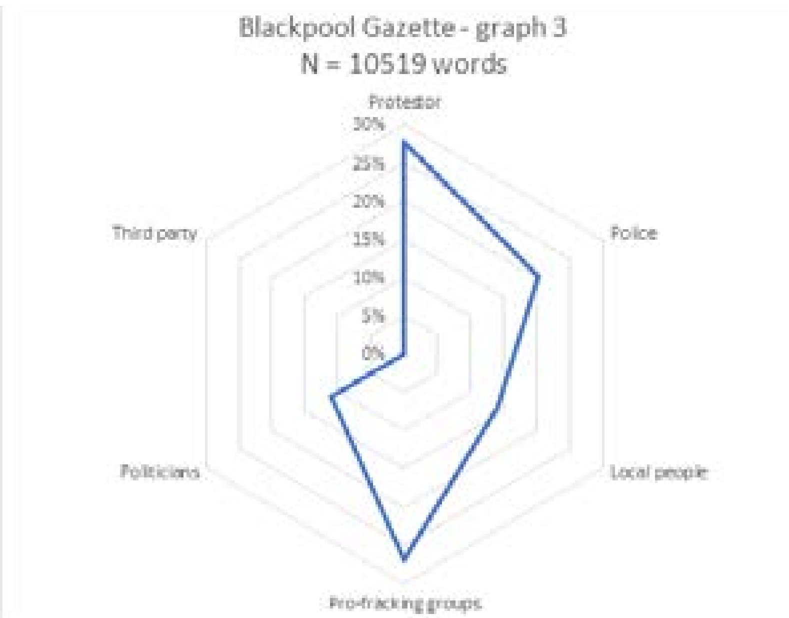
Lancashire Police had 20% of the coded speech in The Blackpool Gazette, Greater Manchester Police had 40% of the coded speech in the Manchester Evening News, and Sussex Police had 37% of the coded speech in the Brighton Argus – a salient difference. Protestors had 28% of the coded speech in Blackpool, 28% in Manchester and 25% in Brighton –there is remarkable consistency in the way protestors appear in the coverage. It might appear then, that protestor-positions in the text are expressed less, relatively speaking than those of the police, but these positions are also supported by interviews with some local people, and some local politicians; 42% at Blackpool, 29% at Manchester and 16% at Brighton. It is Lancashire for Shale which provides the most notable outlier – with 18% of total, combined with 9% from Cuadrilla (the drilling company) supporting pro-fracking positions. The difference in SoV is remarkable. The position of pro-fracking groups (in this case Lancashire for Shale) is greatly extended in the Gazette, while that of police is much less in comparison with GMP and Sussex Police.

Discussion

While the limitations of a small case study should be acknowledged, and while it is possible that other factors also influenced the results found here, the results seem indicative of the issue of rituals of objectivity of Tuchman (1972), the information warfare of MacKay et al. (2012), the dispositif and subjugation of Francoeur, or the 'both-sideism' of Maitlis. It appears that the choice here, made by Gazette journalists, was to replace police-PR-sources with other businesses-PR sources. In this case Lancashire for Shale has appeared


Brighton Argus - graph 1
N = 10205 words
Protestor
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
Police
Local person
Pro-fracking groups
Politicians
Third party


Manchester Evening News - graph 2
N = 7198 words
Protestor
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
Police
Local person
Pro-fracking groups
Politicians
Third party


Blackpool Gazette - graph 3
N = 10519 words
Protestor
30%
25%
20%
15%
10%
5%
0%
Police
Local people
Pro-fracking groups
Politicians
Third party

as a replacement, apparently like-for-like in editorial judgement.

'Astro-turf' groups - like Lancashire for Shale - are those "in which the firm covertly subsidizes a group with similar views to lobby when it normally would not" (Lyon and Maxwell, 2004: 561). To its credit Lancashire for Shale made no secret of its allegiance or its funding on its website: "Lancashire for Shale receives funding support from a range of people, businesses and organizations including Cuadrilla Resources and Centrica, WJF Technical Support, Abbey Telecom, Stay Blackpool and the Onshore Energy Services Group". (Lancashire for Shale, 2017).

Gazette reporters - like all reporters - claimed their practice was governed solely by the normative practice of journalism, characterised by their own internal rules and cultural practices. They argued they maintained the autonomy of their fields – that they remained neutral and objective in keeping with journalistic cultural norms. Such norms form the Habitus, the bringing together of Doxa - the unspoken implicit rules that underlie practice - and Orthodoxy – the explicit rules of the sort taught in university classrooms. This is touched upon by Schultz (Schultz, 2007) describing new sense as a 'gut feeling', a doxic understanding of what makes news.

This was directly challenged in interviews with activists – and one comment by an activist at the Lancashire site is worth citing here in full:

"And so, I'd asked the question via a Tweet and said Cuadrilla are involved with sponsoring one of the [Blackpool] Gazette's awards, a school award for head teachers award when the children aren't even allowed to talk about fracking. How does that work?

And about three minutes later I got a phone call from their deputy editor, and he said - and I took it down note for note - I wish I'd recorded it. He said, "if you don't remove that Tweet, you will receive less favourable coverage from us in the future." (Claire Stephenson, media activist - Interview - 20th February 2018.)

The account is surprising given the stated norms of journalism – but illustrative of the pressures on news when public relations practice is brought to bear. Here, media-relations and community relations, as public relations practice, have merged and crossed-over; an illustration of the influence of nested fields. While this is, of itself not new (See Herman and Chomsky, 1994), field theory offers a structured approach to analysing these processes. Thus, Preston Road serves to illustrate the nested nature of the fields of practice at play. Lancashire for Shale, and its successful PR activity, was able to promote the dominant government and business-elite. Lancashire for Shale voiced its opposition in a way that met with local press news-values. By doing so they met with many of the observations made by Hall et al. (1978) about the police. Moreover, in support of Bourdieu, the role of contingency (luck) in a staffing crisis at Lancashire Police, agency (the role of individuals) and the role of doxa and orthodoxy in journalistic practice (in seeking two sides of the argument) became equally, clearly apparent. It is also worth noting, because it illustrates PR's action throughout the societal policy making, that Lancashire for Shale was/is part of a larger campaign to promote Fracking. Anti-lobbying campaign group Spinwatch (2017) released a video-report looking at the extent of Public Relations involvement in that promotion, showing it to be present throughout the policy-making process, promoting parliamentary working groups, lobbying MPs, working with media, and, as shown here, conducting community relations programmes. The extent of this resource is extraordinary in its scope and capital resourcing.

Here then we can return to Bourdieu. He argued for nested fields in which power is transferred. He argued a main field of power in which capital is traded, and judicial and governmental fields which are incorporated in the foundation of the state. Other authors notably Edwards (2009), Cottle (2003), Ihlen (2009; 2005; 2020; 2007), and Benson and Neveu (2005) then argued for a journalistic field embedded within them; a dominated field of cultural production describe in Bourdieu's On Television. It is also redolent of Bernay's (2005) above-cited comment regarding an 'invisible government' that 'molds' [sic] our tastes and ideas. Figure 1 reproduces a visual representation of these nested fields (Fern, 2019b).

What is illustrated in figure 1 is how fields might sit within one another. Metaphorically, these fields create a 'gravitational pull' on each other, with each field representing its own 'gravity well' of capital and practice. Note the prominent and powerful position of public relations indicated here. It is given, in this analysis equal or perhaps greater scope than others, and this is not uncontroversial. However, as the literature and practice indicate, it is reasonable, given the evidence, to attribute public relations with this salient presence.

The exact number, identity and nature of these fields, is variable and debatable. And here perhaps is a weakness of its practical usage in newsrooms. It leaves much to the discernment of journalists reporting

Figure 1 – nested fields of practice (Fern, 2019)

upon these fields as news-sources in news-copy. The complex and often controversial editorial decisions are not eliminated by this model. However, it does provide an approach to analysis. Say for instance, within local government, if we were to add further nested fields to the analysis, as in figure 2.

This model can start to visualise the actors, agencies and practice involved an a local council story. It is possible to manipulate this visualisation to aid analysis – including or excluding elements, altering their relative dispostion and influence and discuss the analysis in a more objective manner. Of course, this process cannot be entirely objective, nor should it be. After all, the skill of journalist is in wieghing various sources, and understanding the overall position. But by foregrounding the role of public relations, and visualising its role on the various actors, reporters and journalism students can start to 'see' the overall picture more clearly. Moreover, a similar analysis can now be applied to the public relatons field itself. Figure 3 attempts

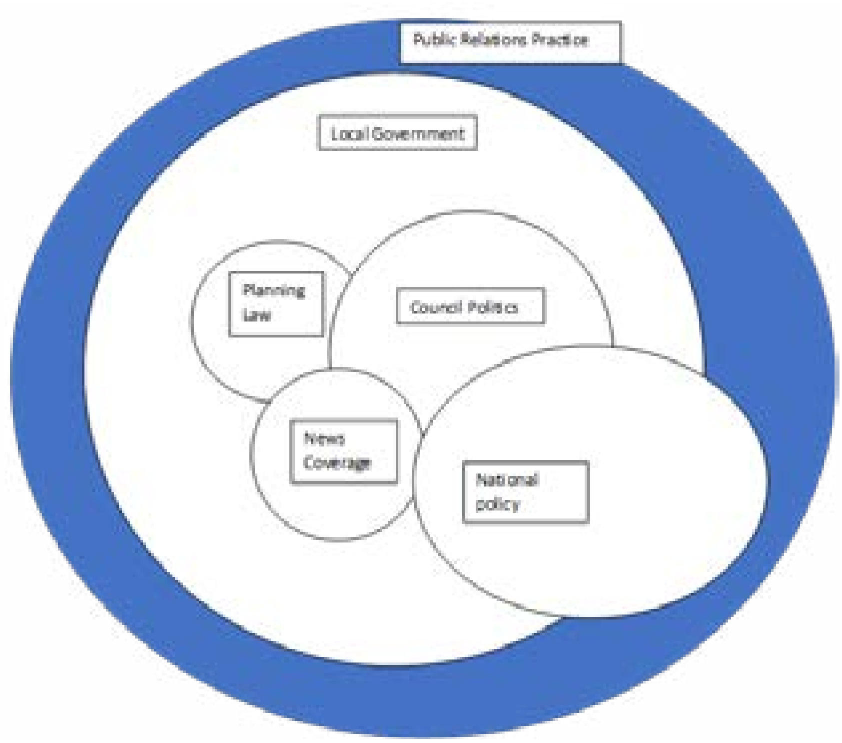


Figure 2 – Council decision making - nested fields of practice.

to do so.

Again, issue can be taken with the proportionate values given, but such a visualisation allows the analysis to 'drill down' into the actors and agencies involved, identify them and begin to quantify their involvement. The reporter or student journalist is no longer 'running blind', but rather, by sketching out the players and their dispositions can create an analysis. Case study material is no longer merely a dry account, nor is it a witty story told by a seasoned professional, but rather a professionally-structured approach that allows students an 'aha-moment' of understanding, and journalists a means to justify the story-telling decisions they have made. In essence, it allows the doxic gut-feeling refered to by Schultz to be made orthodoxy – both seen and explicitly taught. It allows for a quantification or qulalificaion of objectivity.

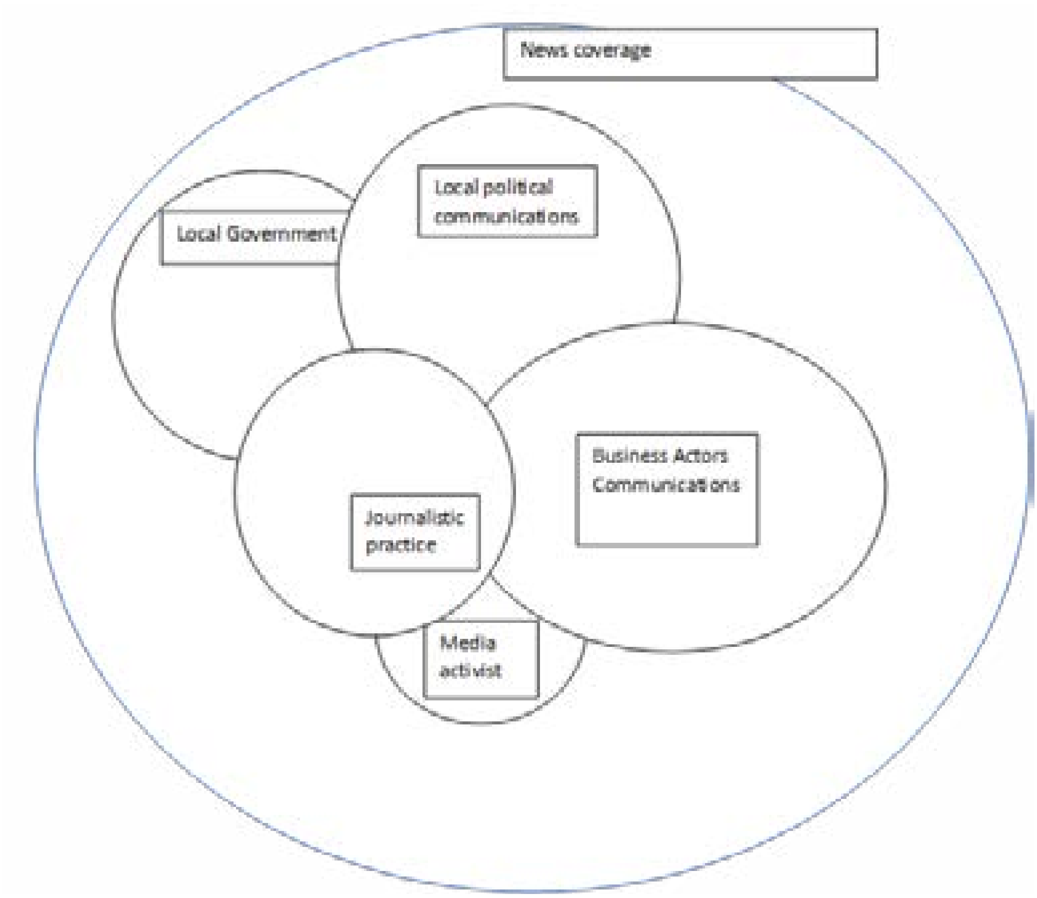


Figure 3 – public relations - nested fields of practice.

Conclusion

The teaching of public affairs could usefully incorporate a greater understanding of the power structures involved in reporting, choice of sources and the communications environment. By doing so it would provide a structure for analysis, an approach to case study material, and tool for identifying the key players. An acknowledgement of the role of public relations practice as being central and key to societal decision-making is necessary adjunct. Moreover, populism, as a challenge to media-relations and journalism practices can be readily built into this model. It can be reasonably expeted that student journalims will take this learning into professional practice, improving the way in which sources are identified and dealt with by them, improving their repsonse to the 'both-sideism' highlighted by Maitlis. Such an approach is not a cure-all, and controversial editorial decisions will still take place. However, such an approach would create a structured approach to analysing these decisions, and challenging their doxic nature.

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Holding back the tears - do court reporters really need trauma training?

By Polly Rippon, University of Sheffield

"The most harrowing two hours I've ever spent in a courtroom. I spent some of it writing through tears. The families' statements - delivered to an empty dock where Letby should have been sitting - were utterly shocking from start to finish," this was a tweet posted recently by Guardian journalist Josh Halliday during the sentencing of serial baby killer and neonatal nurse Lucy Letby in August 2023.

Journalists covering the case listened to a total of 13 victim impact statements in one morning written by the bereaved parents of the murdered babies and the parents of those she attempted to kill at the Countess of Chester Hospital, before Letby was sentenced to a whole life sentence in her absence for her horrendous crimes. Traditionally, court and crime reporters are a tough lot who don't show their emotions. But times are changing. Five or even ten years ago, based on my own observations as a court reporter, it is unlikely a journalist would publicly admit to feeling upset about a court hearing they'd been sent to cover.

But following Josh's tweet, several other journalists covering the baby murderer's sentencing hearing at Manchester Crown Court admitted to being in tears in court. Dan O'Donoghue, a BBC reporter, replied: "Completely agree with Josh. This morning was one of the hardest I've ever had as a journalist, thoughts with all the families" while Liz Hull, Daily Mail reporter for the north of England said it was the most harrowing sentencing hearing she had ever attended. She tweeted: "Echo this, not ashamed to say I also shed tears as these statements were read, so harrowing to listen to, the bravery of these families is astounding."

It has long been convention in the media industry that reporters ignore their emotions, get on with the job and don't show emotional distress or upset because it's a sign of weakness. But journalists are human beings first and reporters second and we should never forget that.

In recent years, anecdotal evidence suggests young journalists entering the profession and students studying on journalism degree courses, are struggling to deal with exposure to raw human emotion and explicit and distressing details, particularly of the kind heard in court. So how do we address this as educators?

Journalism and trauma

Research concerning the connection between journalism and trauma has been conducted since the mid-1980s (Castle 2002; Beam and Spratt, 2009). And just as therapists vicariously experience patients' emotional pain, a growing body of research has found reporters may also experience indirect, secondary trauma through the victims they interview and the graphic scenes they report on (McCann and Pearlman, 1990; Rentschler, 2010). This can result in vicarious trauma and/or secondary traumatic stress (STS) and telling the stories of those in pain, and thus reliving their suffering, can also lead to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (Aoki et al., 2013). Although initial studies focussed on war reporters (Feinstein, Osmann and Patel, 2018; Feinstein, Wanga and Owen, 2015; Markham, 2011) and those covering major human tragedies, such as the 9/11 terror attacks (Sylvester and Huffman, 2002), recent research has noted a rise in journalists suffering trauma symptoms on the domestic beat (Seely, 2019). Suffering symptoms of STS can result in a decline in productivity, increased absences and burnout and ultimately, it can result in journalists leaving the industry (Hill, Luther and Slocum, 2020) so this needs to be addressed by editors and educators.

Dealing with graphic detail

For over 20 years I covered the criminal courts in West and South Yorkshire for regional press titles. There isn't much room for emotional reflection when you are dealing with a daily diet of murders, rapes, child abuse, domestic violence, stabbings and baby shaking, so most reporters learn to block out the graphic details, separating their role as professional storyteller from the normal emotions they might feel as a human being.

That's not to say that some of the cases I covered won't stay with me forever. I reported on countless distressing hearings during my career, including the opening of the second inquest into the Hillsborough Disaster, which left 97 people dead. Surrounded by the bereaved, Liverpool FC fans' families sobbing, I sat in court and listened as the Coroner, Lord Justice Goldring, chillingly described events in the lead-up to the fatal crush, a description so vivid it left my pulse racing and raised the hairs on the back of my neck. It was heart breaking and devastating - had I watched it in a television drama I'd have been in bits.

But just as I always did, I separated my emotions from the job at hand, conscious I had to live tweet evidence for those who couldn't attend the hearing, write a piece for The Sheffield Star's website at lunchtime and a longer piece for publication in the newspaper by the end of the day. Another time I remember holding back tears at an inquest into the death of a six-year-old boy who was run over and killed by his next-door neighbour as he played on his drive in Sheffield. Almost everyone in the inquest was weeping.

In another hearing at Sheffield Crown Court, I listened to graphic evidence about a man beheading his teenage girlfriend with a kitchen knife. The paramedic involved left the service with post-traumatic stress disorder. In one of many murder trials I covered, a man stabbed his wife to death, plunging the blade into her more than 40 times. Yet despite being exposed to such graphic details, like most court reporters I wasn't disturbed by this content and most reporters I have spoken to claim they are unaffected by the harrowing content they hear, day after day, in court. I now teach the court reporters of the future in the School of Journalism, Media and Communication at the University of Sheffield and undertake occasional freelance court reporting work. It is the students' feedback about attending court on their own, which has made me consider how to better prepare them for court reporting in the real world, something they are likely to do if they work as general news reporters in the media industry.

Students and trainees

Regional newspaper editors in the U.K. have reported reluctance among trainee reporters to go to court through fear of being emotionally affected. Similarly, interviews with tutors in both higher and further education institutions reported a reluctance among students to engage in the practical teaching of court reporting, and more students finding court reporting assessments, both practical and in exam situations, difficult to handle emotionally. It can also be "triggering" for students, or trainee reporters, if they have personal experience of crime, in particular, sexual violence, child abuse or domestic abuse. (Bradley and Heywood, forthcoming 2024). While some journalism tutors might brand them 'snowflakes' who 'bang on' about their mental health and need to toughen up, or change careers, others, like myself, who teach court reporting and media law, realise this is now the reality we are faced with as educators and it's time to take this seriously if we want to train well-adjusted, resilient young journalists who go on to enjoy long and successful careers.

With this in mind, for the last six years educators at the University of Sheffield have embedded resilience and trauma training into the BA Journalism Studies Programme and practical MA Journalism programmes under the direction of the department's deputy head, Lisa Bradley. The U.K.'s National Council for the Training of Journalists (NCTJ) has just updated its performance standards to ensure resilience training is embedded in the courses it accredits. The aim is to ensure students are prepared and supported to deal with challenging scenarios in training and assessments and ultimately for life in the newsroom. (NCTJ.com 2023)

What do professional court reporters think?

It is not just student journalists who agree more needs to be done to prepare young reporters for covering graphic and distressing material.

For this piece I surveyed five professional news and court reporters in the U.K. aged between 39 and 54 with 125 years' journalism experience between them. I wanted to find out what kind of resilience training they'd received, if any, while training and also while working as trainee reporters. I wanted to find out whether or not they felt resilience training was helpful and important. Of the participants, one was female, four were male and all were trained by the NCTJ passing exams in media law and court reporting. Four of the participants were specialist court reporters and one was a general news reporter who had covered more than 2,000 criminal court cases at more than 80 different court centres during his 27-year career to date. The journalists wrote for a variety of outlets: one was freelance while others wrote for regional press titles and national news agency The Press Association. Participants completed a survey consisting of 18 questions ranging from basic personal and professional details to more complex open questioning around the training and support they'd received at work to deal with handling difficult court cases. My analysis of their responses showed there is still much work to be done to prepare newly qualified journalists for the realities of covering the criminal courts. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the survey, although with a very limited sample, revealed not a single journalist received any support or training at university, college or in the newsroom in relation to dealing with difficult and graphic content, attending court or dealing with traumatised interviewees.

All of the journalists surveyed underwent media law training and passed preliminary exams in the subject prior to starting their jobs as reporters but there was no practical preparation for going to court, such as attending a hearing in person or analysing court transcripts, for example.

One journalist said:

> *"Other than the NCTJ law exams, I had no special training. But I did do several court visits with other journalists when I was learning," while another said: "I was taken to a magistrates' court once, to see what it was like. But there was little in the way of training or preparation."*

The participants noted that once they began their first jobs in the journalism industry there was no support or training for covering difficult content or going to court, with most relying on colleagues or more senior newspaper rivals to show them the ropes.

The story of one retired court reporter, aged 53, illustrates this:

> *"It was pretty much sink or swim when I started 20 years ago. I recall one colleague who hated doing court so much that he quit journalism shortly after. I just thought you needed a thick skin to do the job. When I was younger, I thought I was Teflon-coated and was pretty comfortable with the knockabout fare you got in magistrates' court. But nothing really prepared you for the level of detail you would hear in the Crown court - child cruelty, sexual assault, murder etc. I found serious cases involving children particularly difficult to listen to."*

The journalist added that he did have very supportive news editors and editors who would have helped him had he spoken up. However, he did not wish to be perceived as weak and potentially taken off court reporting, which he loved doing more than general news reporting.

For another of my participants, it was only after he suffered from insomnia after years of court reporting that his bosses took action. The newspaper he worked for realised the impact covering serious criminal cases, including murders and sex offences five-days-a-week, every week, was having on him. As a result, his workload was better managed, and he was given general news reporting duties to ease over-exposure to court.

Another reporter recalled going to court and being shown round by a colleague and introduced to some of the staff in his first job but said he was 'on his own' after that. He remembered being informally mentored by two experienced Crown court reporters who worked on rival newspapers: "They really showed me the ropes and I learnt more from them than perhaps any other source," he said. Another journalist attended court as a trainee but was largely self-taught: "It was very much in at the deep end."

Coping mechanisms

The reporters I surveyed used a variety of techniques to deal with hearing difficult or graphic content in court which included drinking alcohol, talking to friends and family, compartmentalising what they'd heard, bantering with colleagues and exercising, as these quotes show:

"When I began court reporting it was in Gloucestershire and it was just after the trial of Rose West and the old-style committal hearing for Fred West. Many journalists who covered those hearings talked of the trauma it caused and how some accessed counselling, which was unusual at the time. The sharing was the coping."

"In the earlier days of my career, there was a lot of bravado and boozing in journalism as well as gallows humour which oddly, and to some extent ashamedly, seemed to work as a short-term coping strategy. However, in reality it was a bluff.

"In more recent times, I developed an ability to compartmentalise to cope with serious material but there are always limits where you cannot fail to be affected by the unfathomable depths of inhumanity perpetrated by some offenders.

While some reporters were completely unaffected by what they'd heard, others found they became more affected by the material the longer they worked as court reporters as this quote shows:

"There are always the most inexplicable, depraved offenders where the search for reasoning behind their crimes leaves you with no answers. All that is left in these cases is the horror and trauma felt by the victim's relatives and friends and that can repeatedly gnaw away at you as a court reporter. To live an everyday life knowing that there are always people out there capable of such offending, can leave you losing your faith in humanity."

Future training

All participants noted that formal trauma and resilience training should be an essential component of journalism training whether delivered on journalism courses or in newsrooms. They agreed it was important for young trainee reporters to be able to speak up and seek help at work without fear of looking weak and reporters should be warned about the possibility of being physically or verbally threatened by members of the public at court. All believed that students and trainee reporters need to know where support is available, and one suggested an expert psychologist should design trauma and resilience training:

"Bluff, bravado, boozing and gallows humour will only mask the effects of court reporting and not deal with them head-on. The key here is about understanding and coping with the emotional extent of the material, not ignoring it."

A retired reporter, who was physically threatened by a defendant, said:

"I had tremendous support from my colleagues and superiors when I was threatened. But rather than take a break I soldiered on and in hindsight that was a mistake."

How we prepare our students

At the University of Sheffield, BA Journalism Studies students take a module in court reporting in the second semester of their second year. At the start of the spring semester in February 2023, I took students on guided tours of the Crown Court to help them feel more comfortable in the court environment, and they were given the chance to put questions to a judge and a Crown court clerk about court procedures. This preparation took place prior to students attending on their own to observe and write up cases for summative assessment.

In the same month, we organised a mock court case in the University law department's Moot Court attended by a cohort of 100 undergraduate and 37 postgraduate journalism students. As educators we wanted to fully recreate the courtroom experience by staging a court play based on a real-life case, with actors playing the roles of the victim, defendant, counsel and judge. Students filed into the courtroom in silence and observed the actors playing the prosecution opening speech in a rape trial. The victim was called to give evidence-in-chief and was cross-examined, becoming distressed as she recalled the graphic details of her ordeal. The aim was to give students an insight into the level of detail they would hear in a public courtroom and the formal environment of a criminal court. They were asked just to observe, not to take notes. Tutors recreated the formal courtroom atmosphere to make it as realistic as possible. Following the mock trial, professional university wellbeing advisors spoke to the students about self-care and coping strategies. In follow-up workshop, sessions there were discussions with tutors around how the students would report the material they'd heard.

This appeared to be a good learning and teaching strategy and student feedback was extremely positive. The reporters all agreed guided tours of the court would be useful for students and novice reporters but were divided on whether or not attending a mock court case would help. One pointed out it would be difficult to recreate some of the horrors heard in criminal court rooms. He said:

> *"Some of the hardest things to witness are not always related to shocking gore, etc. It is often more the distraught witness recounting how their child was killed in front of them or how they were raped. Difficult to recreate that in a mock courtroom."*

Other suggestions for educators made by interviewees included reassuring students and young reporters that having an emotional reaction to some of the content they might hear is normal and ensuring they understand that their presence in court isn't always welcome.

The journalists encouraged students not to 'bottle things up' if they were affected by what they'd heard and highlighted it is 'normal' to be affected by upsetting details heard in court even if you haven't experienced the trauma first-hand. They pointed out police and paramedics receive extensive support, counselling and trauma training.

Conclusions

The views of court reporters clearly showed that support and training for journalists covering court cases in newsrooms and on journalism courses has been severely lacking to date. None of the reporters I spoke to received any kind of resilience or trauma training during their lengthy careers with most 'thrown in at the deep end' and learning how to cover court cases and deal with their emotions from more senior colleagues or staff on rival publications. The coping mechanisms they adopted were not always sufficient when dealing with graphic and upsetting content day after day, year after year. One thing is certain, all participants agreed better resilience and trauma training should be provided on journalism courses and within the media industry and seeking help and support should not be regarded as a 'weakness'.

As journalism educators, we now need to consider how best to prepare our students for some of the distressing content they are likely to encounter during their careers. When it comes to learning and teaching activities, these can include resilience lectures, behind-the-scenes guided tours of courtrooms and buildings, question and answer sessions with judges and court staff, use of actors to stage mock court cases, analysis of court transcripts, discussions around broadcasted sentencing remarks, and the use of role play or AI-generated scenarios in workshops. However, there are likely to be other methods, and this is an area in need of further research. There should also be sharing of best practice in preparing students and young journalists for court reporting, globally.

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The role of the "other" in the academy: why journalism education requires a social justice approach.

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Abstract

Though far from home, exiled[1] journalists often want to continue their careers in their host countries. However, the barriers they encounter are significant and force many to abandon this ambition. Their departure from the profession is a loss to the industry as there are significant benefits when these often highly experienced professionals continue working. This paper focuses on The Refugee Journalism Project, an initiative set up in 2016 to support forcibly displaced and exiled media workers to rebuild their careers. Using practical examples, it will outline and reflect on how this work has been integrated into the academy and how it is helping to build *social justice journalism* as an ethical framework for journalism students.

Introduction and context

This discussion has its origins in the Syrian revolution and the resulting significant migration flows across Europe. By the end of 2015 the unrelenting violence and persecution had forced an estimated 11.7 million Syrians to be displaced.

Though most sought refuge in neighbouring countries like Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan (UNHCR Global Trends, 2016), the numbers arriving in Europe were unprecedented and politically divisive. At the time, it was one of the largest movements of people across European soil and sea during this century. The global news media covered the story extensively, and it was able to play a significant role in simplifying the narrative and shaping host citizens' understanding of the situation (Greussing and Boomgaarden, 2017).

Although some excellent journalism was published during this time, other narratives served to dehumanise the refugees textually and visually, promoting moral panic in the host communities.

"Almost theatrically, the law abiding, tax paying British public were pitted against the

1 Throughout the document the terms exiled, displaced and refugee have been used interchangeably but they refer to those who have been awarded legal refugee-status in the UK or elsewhere.

untrustworthy, dark-skinned foreigners who they claimed were intent on marauding and pillaging their way across Europe and into the UK. It was a clear 'them' and 'us' narrative" (Francis, 2022:29).

A UNHCR/ Cardiff University analysis of the press coverage of migration in the European Union during this time noted that although the Guardian and Daily Mirror appeared to run stories that were more sympathetic towards refugees,

"the right-wing press in the United Kingdom expressed a hostility towards refugees and migrants which was unique. Whilst newspapers in all countries featured anti-refugee and anti-migrant perspectives, what distinguished the right-of-centre press in the UK was the degree to which that section of the press campaigned aggressively against refugees and migrants" (Berry, 2015:10).

Although there are no reliable estimations as to the numbers, the revolution in Syria, in addition to other global conflicts and violent attacks on press freedom, forced journalists at risk of persecution into exile. Some arriving in the UK were intent on continuing their professional careers, and at the same time keen to challenge the xenophobic and racist undertones within some sections of the press when reporting migration. However, research suggests that they faced significant barriers when trying to continue with their careers (Media Wise, 2005). A study into migrant media workers in Europe concluded that there were "many aspects of the recruitment process that could marginalise those outside of mainstream society" (Markova & McKay, 2013: 282-299).

Interviews that I conducted in 2014 with forcibly displaced journalists and those who had been part of a former Exiled Journalism Network in the UK drew similar conclusions:

"You're a journalist and you've fled your country, and all you're doing is security and other jobs, when you could be using your skills for the betterment of society as a whole. We need these refugee voices in the media. Using that expert knowledge, that's where we come in as exiled journalists, who can work hand in glove with other journalists…in the UK." ('Mo', 2014)

"I feel frustrated. I have experience, but there are too few opportunities. In every single industry you have a really closed circle and in journalism in the UK, more so. You need someone to believe in you, to open the door." ('Maria', 2014)

As a result of these experiences and findings, I began to develop an idea that resulted in The Refugee Journalism Project. Established in 2016, this work helps forcibly displaced professionals through this liminal period. It supports them to network and connect with the industry by updating their journalistic skills through workshops, and by identifying publishing opportunities, freelance work, and permanent roles. It focuses on valuing their professional identities and has led to collaborations with global organisations including Bloomberg, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees, The Guardian Foundation, and the Refugee Council. Since the project's inception, participants have gone on to win media awards, get work published in the national media and gain paid work. There are currently 'graduates' in working at Bloomberg, Middle East Eye, and the BBC.

Social justice as a guiding principle

The work of the Refugee Journalism Project is grounded around the principle of social justice-led journalism, and journalism for the public good. It shares some of the characteristics of other alternative forms of journalism, such as campaigning, solutions, or peace journalism, but it is a more expansive concept, incorporating ways of thinking, acting and structuring journalism that go beyond simply the intention of the journalist, the means of production and work's impact. Journalism can foster shifts in society by both enacting social justice practices and by making visible wider struggles for social change. As Maeseele and Raeijmackers (2017) argue, journalism has a crucial role in facilitating democracy and effecting social change, but this is only possible if the profession can:

"recognise and make visible the realities of power and exclusion that characterise each social order, but also assist in the creation of spaces for the expression of dissent and agonistic disagreement" (in Berglez, Oausson and Ots, 2017:116).

This work pushes for social change and justice through creating opportunities that support the agency of a group whose professional identities and perspectives struggle to get recognition in the UK's mainstream media. Through working collaboratively with media organisations, it attempts to challenge the structural power imbalances inherent within the journalism ecosystem. 'As a democracy, we need to think strategically about the kinds of voices, and vehicles, best equipped to provide the information, critique, and deliberations we need' (Harcup, 2020:1).

> *"Before, I felt alienated, like I had taken myself out of the equation somehow. But now I feel like someone has taken me by the hand and shown me the door. I feel like part of something, like I have an opinion, and I feel confident that I will be heard" (Fansa, 2023).*

Designing social justice in the academy

A social justice approach is needed in the journalism academy as it helps to build ethical practices amongst the industry's future workforce. It encourages students to:

> *"think deeply and critically about our society and its power structures and imbalances and are able to see beyond their roles as economic entities to one that is about serving a public good" (Hughes, 2023).*

With representation and migration being popular choices of topics for dissertation and practical projects, our students have a strong appetite for social justice-orientated journalism. While these traditional approaches to assignments and endeavours are of academic and journalistic value, their ability to transform thinking and behaviours are limited. A fuller social justice approach requires students to explore the minutiae of society's 'wicked problems' through seeing other perspectives. Furthermore, it allows students to discover what mechanisms or tools allow them to become more action-orientated and impactful in their journalistic practices.

The Refugee Journalism Project offers an opportunity to experiment with a more innovative, disruptive approach to engaging students in the process of conceptualising social justice within their journalism by bringing them into closer proximity with the issues and the affected people. Within the curriculum, we invite exiled journalists into the classroom as paid visiting lecturers to discuss their experiences and the context of their practice. For example, we have run workshops led by women journalists who had been exiled from regions where their gender has been an occupational hazard. However, the question is how can we build on these activities to create more dynamic, meaningful interactions, understanding and outputs?

Methodology

This paper considers three examples taken from London College of Communication (LCC) between 2021 and 23. All the students volunteered to participate. In most cases the students were paid for their contributions, as this aligns with LCC's stance against viewing the students as free pools of labour. The students were from the following courses: BA Journalism, BA Magazine Journalism and Publishing, MA Journalism, MA Photojournalism and Documentary, MA Media Communication and MA User Experience Design. Although the majority were from Western backgrounds, a couple were from China.

Prior to embarking on the activities, students were given a briefing on the ethical consideration of working closely with refugees and provided with the context for the projects. This included how they might handle the disclosure of traumatic, upsetting events, and confidentiality. The pre-project discussions also covered the principles guiding the activities: that they attempted to draw in those who described themselves as being marginalised in a way that removes them from being the object of research; rather, participants should have a more inclusive, primary role. As Lorde (1984) suggests, the power of difference can be harnessed and used as a springboard for creative change.

The activities and experiences were evaluated using a combination of methods: anonymous questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and the author's observations and reflections.

The work of the Refugee Journalism Project has been funded by London College of Communication, Unbound Philanthropy, Open Society Foundations and Google News Initiatives. The activities discussed below were resourced though these funds.

Project Example 1: Breaking the frame

Breaking the Frame was a participatory research project delivered in 2021. It considered how well the

UK's main news broadcasters covered migration. The team was made up of students, those from refugee backgrounds, and tutors. The mixed team analysed a year's worth of TV news bulletins, gaining an insight into the editorial priorities made by news producers. As the human impact of representation is often missing from research studies, those with a lived experience of forced displacement were then invited to take part in focus groups to discuss the results. The final layer of the inquiry was to commission the displaced journalists to produce multimedia content with the students that responded to what they felt was missing in the news coverage.

Project Example 2: Podcast workshops and production

Others Unheard was a podcast produced by women journalists in the Refugee Journalism Project (RJP), supported by undergraduate journalism and magazine publishing students. The group worked together in a series of workshops that focused on audio production skills and idea development. The resulting anthology series spotlighted one underrepresented human story in every episode. Themes ranged from the stigma experienced by menstruating girls in Sri Lanka, to young women reflecting on the loss of their education in Afghanistan.

Project Example 3: Cross-border collaboration

The second set of examples involved working with forcibly displaced journalists in Africa. It is estimated that by the end of the year there will be 44 million displaced people living in sub-Saharan Africa due to the interconnected pressures of climate change, political violence, and food insecurity. This work attempted to explore how students could collaborated remotely with forcibly displaced journalists living in the region.

In the first project delivered in 2020, we invited journalists living in Dzaleka Refugee Camp in Malawi – one of the poorest countries in the world – to tell the grassroots story of how the Covid pandemic was affecting those living in the margins of society. Using WhatsApp messaging to exchange ideas and materials, the students in the UK put the materials together into a long-form multimedia feature.

The second was in 2023 involving master's students in the UK and displaced journalists from an organisation called Journey Media, based in Uganda. The journalists delivered stories focusing on solutions and resilience in response to the global food crisis. The stories were edited by the students and published as part of a public event.

Discussion

The following discussion seeks to identify what social justice principles were enacted within the example projects.

Outcome 1: Collaboration led to deeper cultural understanding for all participants.

Collaboration within journalism itself has been frequently cited as one of the important trends of the future (Lewis, 2016; Sambrook, 2018 in Heft and Baack, 2022), particularly transnational journalism. Hepp and Loosen (2021:577) describe these collaborative journalism pioneers as "a particular group of professionals who incorporate new organisational forms and experimental practice in pursuit of redefining the field."

All the project examples incorporated collaboration, bringing together students with displaced journalists. The majority of the students were from Europe whereas the journalists were from the Middle East, Asia and Africa. This meant that the groups comprised a diverse range of ethnic, socio-economic, political, religious, age and cultural backgrounds. The level of journalistic experience, skills, and knowledge also varied considerably as many of the displaced journalists had worked at a senior level. As an approach to support social justice-led journalism, through putting together these diverse perspectives, backgrounds, and disciplines, those involved in the collaboration were able to have a deeper learning and understanding of each other (Kaats and Opheij, 2014).

From the students' perspective, these projects provided an opportunity for them to engage directly with regions and perspectives that often get overlooked in Western/European-led conversations around migration and global events. The students commented on how the collaborations allowed them to see nuances between groups, for example, the multiple Afghan and Syrian ethnic identities.

In the case of the collaborations with those in Uganda and Malawi, none of the participating students had prior experience of working with people from the African continent. The collaborations allowed the students to 'try on' other points of view and challenge their unconscious assumptions of the 'Other'. As Mezirow states, "The more reflective and open we are to the perspectives of others, the richer our imagination of alternative contexts for understanding will be" (Mezirow, 2000:20).

> *"It's my first time to work with an African context journalism project, I found it quite meaningful. One of the most critical I have learnt is how to maximum the outcome considering the current resources and how to support people in a complex setting. I am really grateful to have the chance to learn about those working in African countries with their current challenges" (Student 1, 2023).*

The students also spoke about the similarities they encountered, which many found surprising. They also pointed out that sharing a common goal brought them together.

> *The collaboration with journalists in a Malawian refugee camp has shown me that even in times of travel restrictions and lockdowns, working together across the globe is possible - if the team shares a similar spirit. I gained intercultural competence and, most importantly, learned to tell somebody else's story by leaving out my own narrative (Mödder, 2021).*

Outcome 2: Students learn to positively support the agency and authenticity of marginalised groups

The design of the activities allowed the participating students to reflect on how agency and authenticity are visible in journalistic practices, and how their actions can influence engagement and outcomes. While the interrelated concepts of agency and authenticity are socially constructed, highly subjective and problematic, they are related to social justice as they have the capacity to promote change and transformation.

Svejenova (2005) argues that having authenticity is acting with one's own authority; being truthful to oneself; balancing feelings with words; while at the same time presenting with distinctiveness and coherence. Emirbayer and Mische (1998) provide a list of words associated with agency that reinforce its relationship to authenticity: they include purposiveness, intentionality, choice, initiative, freedom, and creativity. To be able to exercise agency, an individual must be able to understand their values and motivations, and act in alignment with them. At the same time, to act with authenticity, means also feel empowered enough to reveal what an individual believes to be their true self (Rogers, 1961).

Within the projects, refugee agency and authenticity were supported as all the examples offered the journalists a platform to make their work more visible and to feel empowered to be able to contradict conventional migration narratives. They took on roles that encompassed and prioritised their editorial and production choices, whilst at the same time validated their world views and experiences. In her evaluation, one refugee participant noted:

> *"It has been quite exciting. I didn't even know I could tell my story that way. And discussing it and seeing it being formulated has given me ideas as well. You can tell your story verbally and think you are being understood, but because of the language you are not completely understood. Pictures, videos and illustrations facilitate better understanding and watching the end product I could see my own story more clearly. I never thought that was possible" (Dzemwa, 2021).*

Through working closely with those who had a refugee background, the students were able to challenge their understanding and assumptions around agency and authenticity – particularly around the label of being a 'refugee'. Prior to these experiences, most had been influenced by news coverage that typically told migration stories in a limited, simplified way that failed to encapsulate the diversity of being forcibly displaced. In addition to homogenising the refugee experience, these representations often replicated power imbalances by framing the refugees as victims and being wholly agency deficient. Whereas through their encounters, the students witnessed the strength and resilience of those they were working with. Most of the refugees that they encountered were highly educated and experienced – most had postgraduate degrees and had worked on national, sometime international, platforms and spoke several languages.

> *"I couldn't ever say that I'd talked to a refugee prior to this project. So, to get the insight and*

hear some of their incredible stories, getting that perspective is really important. I think it makes me a more rounded person" (Student 2, 2023).

They were also able to explore fuller definitions of agency and authenticity. So, for some of the female participants, being culturally or gender authentic would mean allowing the men and the seniors to have their say first and waiting to be invited to contribute. The students were forced to challenge their feminist-lens of social and professional interactions. As Ahearn (2000) warns it is important to avoid viewing agency with "Western atomic individualism", highlighting the need to consider how agency is conceptualised in different cultures and the impact of linguistic variations.

One student commented:

There are so many things that I learned professionally and personally. I learned a lot from (everyone's) perspectives. How we have to be careful about the words that we use, of the things we assume. The importance of making sure everyone's input is valued and making sure not to leave anyone out. Respect is so important, particularly when you don't agree with someone. Personally, there was a big growth in understanding that difference can be really good" (Binda, 2021).

Outcome 3: Students increase in confidence, helping them challenge traditional journalism orthodoxy and enhancing their graduate skills.

Dantley and Tillman (2010) assert, that a social justice approach requires us to investigate and come up with solutions that address the issues that create and reproduce societal inequalities. Within journalism, these conditions are more likely to happen when we are prepared to challenge traditional structures and ways of doing that reinforce the status quo, and if we experiment with different approaches. The design of the projects enabled the students to constantly question normative editorial expectations and practices. It brought to life some of the theoretical concepts that they had studied on their courses such as: what is journalism and what is its purpose? Is journalism universal?

One area that this was particularly visible was when it came to journalistic objectivity. Some of the exiled journalists shared experiences of having their objective and impartiality challenged when they attempted to pitch ideas about their home countries. This response is what Gaber (2014) describes as the 'Olympian objectivity' of some areas of the industry when journalists dismiss other viewpoints but fail to see how their own conscious and unconscious beliefs impact their editorial decisions. Through the projects, the students were able to explore these ideas in a very tangible way.

"For a young journalism student, the chance to collaborate with such a diverse group of people has been an invaluable experience. With each participant came a slightly different style of journalism influenced by the culture that they brought to Britain. These experiences… have added new dimensions into how my own journalism career will be formed in the future. For example, I've learnt from first-hand accounts of the conflicts that we often hear so much about but rarely engage with directly" (Student 3, 2021).

What frequently emerged in evaluation was the feeling that students felt more confident and ethical grounded in some of the core graduate and transferable skills demanded by their courses. They felt more confident in their interdisciplinary knowledge and skills, more confident in their communication skills and felt that their journalism practice had advanced, particularly around solutions-focused journalism. They also reported feeling better equipped to bring humanity to journalistic decisions, and in how to achieve more balanced representations.

"I got a chance to do things I hadn't had a chance to do outside a classroom setting, like offering feedback to other journalists. So being able to talk to journalists and say, maybe you can do this, maybe you can do that was empowering. And that they valued what I was saying was all very surprising to me" (Collins, 2021).

The Challenges

It is important to reflect on the challenges of integrating a social justice approach into student activities.

Resourcing: The complexity of the collaborations required a high degree of resourcing including staff time and materials. As most of the participants were paid for their contributions, resourcing needed to cover these payments.

Managing expectations: The displaced journalists have high expectations for the outcomes of the projects, as they often have limited opportunities to do journalistic work and to get to publish their work. They do not want to fail. However, this is sometimes in contrast with the risk that comes with creativity and experimentation.

Limited student reach: The voluntary nature of the activities means that they attract students who are already engaged and interested in the issues. The challenge is how to make these opportunities attractive to a wider student population, while at the same time respecting student choice.

Tutor assumptions: Tutors like myself need to reflect on the fact that not all students will share our world view, rather than to make easy assumptions.

Conclusion

Social justice requires us, whether we are journalists, academics or involved in another aspect of the business of journalism, to reflect deeply on our purpose, the impact of our actions, and how we might achieve alternative outcomes. Taking this approach does not mean that it needs to replace other forms of learning, but through creating opportunities for students to engage with social justice principles, they will develop the know how to adapt their journalistic tools to be able to produce journalism that has the power to transform the industry, and society.

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How working on a bilingual newspaper community changed my ideas on what it means to be a journalist

Dave Porter, Manchester Metropolitan University

Introduction

Before volunteering to help establish a bilingual newspaper for the Somali community in Manchester I hadn't come across the term 'preditor' (Bruns, 2008) or the notion of pro-am journalism.

I was simply searching for a way to blend my professional background as a journalist with a newfound academic role. There was no intention to exploit the research potential of the project, although I soon learnt the value of the newspaper as a knowledge exchange initiative. Similarly, I had no idea the paper would take up such a large part of my life, that it would last so long, and that I would end up becoming a trustee for the Somali charity behind the paper.

As I come close to submitting a PhD thesis on my time embedded in the paper, now seems an apposite moment to reflect upon the challenges and rewards of working in a disadvantaged community with a group of amateur journalists trying to set up their first newspaper. My time spent on the paper was in turns exhilarating and frustrating: it was confidence-boosting and led to bouts of self-doubt, which in hindsight I understand comes with the job title of preditor.

The paper – Sasca News – was started in 2015 and printed on a regular basis until the pandemic came along in 2020. I like to think we had a pretty good run considering that most pro-am ventures have a limited shelf life (Harcup, 2013; Luce at al., 2016), and I can look back with a certain degree of pride at what we achieved, both for the Somali community as a whole, and for the individuals involved in the project. It was midway through my time on the paper that the idea of conducting a PhD by Practice was mooted and it was then I first began to critically examine my role on the paper, its aims and objectives. The study morphed into an autoethnographical account of my time on Sasca News, examining my expectations as a professional journalist with those of the amateur participants. Bruns et al. (2008) borrow the term 'preditor' from Miller (2007) to describe professionals who collaborate with community journalists. The word is a neologism of producer and editor but for the purposes of my study I have further adapted it to indicate the professional role of the journalist involved in a pro-am project. In such a model, the preditor is the 'pro' and community journalists are the 'amateurs'.

What is the role of a preditor?

Bruns et al (2008) identity four key areas of work for the preditor:

Networking

Community work

Content work

Tech work

The preditor acts as an 'honest broker' into a network of civic and academic institutions, something which I found central to my work on the paper given my status as a journalism lecturer. What I came to realise is that the Somali amateur journalists were not simply tapping into my knowledge as a former print journalist in order to produce a newspaper, but were keen to tap into the wider opportunities afforded to them by the university. They specifically came to the university and not, for example, a news media company, for a simple reason: here was an organisation which had the resources, time and commitment to bring to a project and which was on their doorstep. As one of the participants stated:

> *"That's why we come to the university, to help us, we can do ourselves, in order to contact the university. We need the help, that's why we come to the university." (Sasca News participant)*

In time, the input I gave was supplemented by journalism students co-opted onto Sasca News and welcomed effusively by the Somali team.

> *"It was a good idea and I think they helped us, you know, a lot because you have more hands on the deck." (Sasca News participant)*

The idea of professional journalists helping set up a community journalism project is not without precedent. Cardiff University offers support to hyperlocal news websites through its Centre for Community Journalism initiative. It has been suggested (Dickinson, 2017) that journalism departments within universities are well placed to act as a conduit and training hub for community journalism ventures, something backed by Curran (2010:466) who says they could have "a vital role to play in advancing this revolution".

I was doubtful about bringing students on board for the project and had to be won over. After all, Sasca News was meant to be a paper for the Somali community by the Somali community, and not produced by student journalists. However, it became clear early on that recruiting volunteers for the paper was going to prove difficult. Why was this? The Somali community in Manchester is socially and economically disadvantaged. The amateur journalists I worked alongside volunteered at the charity, often worked two jobs, and had family and other commitments. Members of the community simply don't have the time to spend on a newspaper. Naively, I had assumed we would be turning people away rather than the other way round, and it was only while conducting my research that I fully understood the pressures members of the team were under. As one participant states:

> *"It was too hard for me, very hard, this extra work. It was very challenging." (Sasca News participant)*

Networking

Bruns et al. (2008) state that the preditor can help pro-am projects 'get noticed'. As a middle-class professional with industry knowledge and a wealth of contacts, this was definitely true with Sasca News. In a sense, the paper could not have been produced without networking. The journalism department where I work paid for the printing costs of the first edition and through my knowledge of how councils work we were able to tap into council neighbourhood grants to defray future print runs. Through contacts I was able to bring the paper to the attention of a much-wider audience: we had an article on Holdthefrontpage and in The Conversation and were even invited to take part in a discussion on a South African radio show about community news. Through contacts with the Media Trust, we were invited to a conference in London and the paper was even mooted as a potential model for other Somali communities in the UK.

What was also clear was that the Somali team cherished the relationship with the university: members of the team loved coming onto campus for a coffee and training and feeling part of a wider community. By accessing networks through civic organisations such as universities, they were building up social capital for themselves (Chung and Nah, 2011). Universities have a strong tradition of knowledge exchange and academics undertaking outreach work in the community, both as part of their research and in a civic role. They are repositories of knowledge, resources and funds and rightly take pride in being part of their local community. Besides providing jobs, educating students and training the workforce, their mission statement is to adopt a high profile in their communities (Chung and Nah, 2011; Dickinson, 2017; Forde, 2011; Omar, 2014) and a pro-am project is simply one instance of this wider civic engagement (Ahadi and Sherry, 2010).

This is not to put a rosy tint on the project. There are tensions within any pro-am project which may never be fully resolved and which I keenly felt. The nature of the relationship means it is unlikely to be an equal partnership, particularly regarding knowledge and technological resources and know-how. Rosen (2011) characterises collaboration of citizen and professional journalists as the "hard slog of bringing the two together", something I can attest to in my dealings with the amateur team. In my subsequent research I detail the frustration I felt at our slow progress, stories and images not appearing on time, deadlines being missed – all the things which as a professional journalists would not ordinarily be countenanced.

As a journalist I brought a set of professional expectations and standards of what a newspaper should look like, but these were soon tempered by the demands of the pro-am project. The Somali news team naturally had their own expectations of what the paper should look like. These roles were not clearly laid out at the start so that I had to lower my expectations of what we could achieve, while the Somali team came with their own agenda. And of course, the main source of tension was in how much time each of us would devote to the project.

However, one thing we didn't experience, was a clash of news values. Scholars argue that amateur journalists are less troubled by issues of balance, bias and impartiality (Bruns at al, 2008; Forde, 2011; Miller, 2007). We were not involved in advocacy or campaigning journalism, rather in writing informational stories to help Somali residents in Manchester better navigate what can amount to a hostile environment. We agreed on the kind of articles which should go in the paper – stories around jobs, welfare, housing, immigration – and that it should champion community heroes, and the work the charity carries out on a daily basis (SASCA is an acronym for Somali Adult Social Care Agency). A bilingual newspaper was needed so that first-generation members of the community with no access to digital media could read stories in their own language. The emphasis was entirely on the print product – there was no accompanying website, although there is now a weekly newsletter which serves a similar purpose to Sasca News.

Different roles

One thing we had to agree on early on was the division of labour: who would do which tasks? The reporting side was to be handled by the Somali team while I would edit and design the paper (the tech work as Bruns (2008) labels it). Training was a moot point. I had envisaged that I would be able to take the same approach with the Somali team as I do with students: introduce them to what news is, outline the principles of the inverted pyramid, hand out some intro-writing exercises and off they would go. This was not to be the case (although interestingly, in later interviews participants did say they thought of themselves as my students). We did not have the luxury of time to spend hours in a classroom discussing the finer points of news writing but needed to get our first edition out as soon as possible. In the end, after a few rudimentary sessions, most of the learning was carried out on the job (Harcup, 2011; Luce et al., 2016; Lay and Thomas, 2012; Fabregat et al., 2018). I felt uneasy about such sparse training and unsure of its long-term value, but for their part, the Somali team felt that they got a lot of useful information from the training sessions: "I learnt more here, on this project. I learnt a lot of things".(Sasca News participant)

While I worried about whether the writing would be up to scratch and how much editing would be required, members of the team later told me that they found the most difficult part of being a reporter was interviewing people, not least because there was the language barrier to consider as well as having to translate all interviews from English to Somali and vice versa.

As preditor my role was to provide editorial oversight (the occasional legal input) and steer the paper through to publication. The benefit of having professional on board is that it may increase longevity of any pro-am project and while interviewing members of the editorial team for my research it was clear they too felt the same: that they would not have had the resources to continue the project had I as professional withdrawn my services. As Min (2015) states, the preditor 'acts as mentor and facilitator' and is able to bring resources, commitment and knowledge to project unavailable to am journalists. The fact that the newspaper lasted five years is testament to the commitment from both sides, amateur and professional. It became clear to me early on that I needed a right-hand person on the Somali team I could rely on to make sure things got done. Mo was duly appointed editor and proved to be a fantastic and valuable resource in acting as the bridge between the Somali team and myself.

However, this also proved to be our undoing in the long run. When he was offered a job abroad with the Red Cross, I was personally thrilled for him but worried about how we could replace him. In the end my worst fears were confirmed: his leaving signalled the slow demise of the paper cemented by the arrival of Covid-19. It is impossible to overestimate how much I relied on the editor and the key role he played in the project. We had always struggled to recruit volunteers, a central motif of pro-am project. It can be extremely demanding to sustain production of a newspaper or a website on scant resources with few volunteers (Harcup 2011; Hickerson, 2016; Luce at al., 2008). For members of a disadvantaged ethnic minority, such problems are magnified by a language barrier, their marginalised position in society, and the need to devote more energy and resources into their day-to-day living (Bailey et al., 2008; Hickerson and Gustafson, 2014; Luce et al., 2016; Ramasubramanian, 2016; Shumow, 2010).

At the time it is fair to say I was baffled by the lack of volunteers. After all, the request to set up the paper had come from the Somali community itself, so why weren't people queueing up to be part of the paper? The reason was simple and one which points to the difficulty of sustaining pro-am projects, especially in marginalised communities: money. If we had been able to offer some kind of financial incentive for people to join up, our numbers would have improved. As one member of the team told me:

"…you know we have to recruit volunteers because the newspaper, it's not paid, the money, we give our time and our energy and say to people, the living crisis and they cannot contribute anything." (Sasca News participant)

For many Somalis living in the UK there is little free time between work and family life, and the daily struggle of adapting to life in a host country. During interview, one member of the team told me they had been accused by their wife of abandoning their family and spending too much time on the paper. This is something I had not anticipated, partly because as a professional journalist you take it as par for the course that you do whatever it takes to get the next edition out. It is clearly unfair for the professional to expect the same level of commitment from an amateur journalist, something I now regret for not appreciating more fully.

It is why the team welcomed the input of journalism students on the paper, which they saw as helping to make up the numbers. But students come and go and the amateur side has to be kept up somehow. No one fully stepped into the role once the Somali editor had left and the paper never recovered from his loss.

A future model?

As noted, Sasca News has been mooted as a possible model for other immigrant-refugee communities characterised by language barriers and economic hardship. If that is its legacy, then it has more than fulfilled its role. But there may be another conclusion to be reached with the benefit of both hindsight and distance. Instead of a purely pro-am model, for such communities a more useful model may be pro-uni-am with a central role played by journalism departments within universities. This, alongside a financial incentive for those taking part, is arguably a greater guarantor of longevity and success.

Conclusion

Having completed my research and now on the cusp of submitting my thesis, I have a far clearer – and more critical - understanding of the struggles we faced in setting up Sasca News and how they came about. Alongside professional pride, I know the paper was both well received by the community but also changed the lives of those taking part, something evidenced in my interviews with them. My research has also led me to a set of recommendations for other such pro-am projects:

Ensure there is funding to pay volunteers for their time and expenses.

Ensure there is a capable news editor on the amateur side who can inspire and lead the team.

As a professional journalist, understand the pressures amateur journalists are under in their lives, through work and family commitments.

As a professional journalist, do not rigidly apply professional news concepts, but adjust your standards and accept compromises – you will be forgiven. Remember that you alone are not the judge of what is a success.

As an amateur journalist, understand that more may be expected of you by the professional journalist than you sometimes feel able to give, but that this comes from a set of industry standards the preditor feels unable to shake off.

As a journalism tutor do not fret about enlisting the help of students. It is a way of deepening their learning experience and connecting two disparate groups of people that can learn from each other.

Both professional and amateur should agree on what constitutes a successful outcome.

In conclusion, I feel the last word should go to a member of the Somali editorial team:"It was worth it in the end and it's on my CV and it's something I'm very proud of and I will always remember what we did." (Sasca News participant)

An edition of Sasca News can be found here

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Porter, Dave (2023) 'How working on a bilingual newspaper community changed my ideas on what it "means" to be a journalist' *Journalism Education* 12(1) pp 85-89

Reviews

The reviews pages are edited by Sean Dodson. The AJE would like to give a big thank you to his predecessor, Tor Clark, who launched the book section of the journal and has kept members informed about journalism publishing for so many years.

If you have a book you would like to review or have recently read 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 Sean on s.dodson@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

Reviews editor

We are pleased to announce that Sean Dodson, postgraduate course director of Journalism and public relations at Leeds Beckett University, has been appointed the new editor of the review section.

We would like to thank Tor Clarke for his outstanding work as editor of the review section for the past years. Under his guidance, the journal has published a range of high-quality book reviews that have informed and engaged our readers. We remain committed to continuing this tradition and to making the review section an essential resource for journalism scholars and educators.

Sean will be circulating a list of books to review in the coming weeks, but if you are able to acquire a review copy of your own and are submitting a book review to Journalism Education, please send a pitch email to s.dodson@leedsbeckett.ac.uk.

In your pitch email, please include the following information:

The title of the book you would like to review

The author(s) of the book

The publisher of the book

The publication date of the book

A brief summary of your proposed review (approximately 200 words)

Book reviews for Journalism Education should be approximately 800-1000 words in length and should be submitted in double-spaced Microsoft Word format. Reviews should be critical and analytical, while providing readers with a clear understanding of the book's main arguments, contributions, and limitations. Reviews should, moreover, be accessible to a broad audience of journalism scholars and educators.

This issue we have two reviews and some suggestions for your Christmas library wish list.

Local Journalism: Critical Perspectives on the Provincial Newspaper edited by Rachel Matthews and Guy Hodgson

Review by Chris Frost, Liverpool John Moores University

Local journalism, once the mainstay of journalism throughout the UK has probably been the worst hit section of our industry as legacy news has gradually given way over the last 50 years or so, first to broadcasting and then to the new and entrancing world of the internet with its digital delights, instant updates and social media.

Advertising that was once a guarantee of profitable revenues has drifted off to the internet. Situations Vacant are no longer a staple of print. House are sold on Right move and Zoopla whilst cars and second hand goods appear on a range of sites.

This new book, aims to open up some of the issues facing this once powerful section of the media industry. Arising from a Liverpool conference examining the theme the book looks at normative meanings associated with the local newspapers using case studies from the UK, US, Ireland, Denmark and Spain.

The provincial press in the UK has been at the forefront of technological change introducing web offset printing technology to the media during the 1960s and 1970s before moving to the painful introduction of computers into newsrooms and away from press-room dominated typesetting in the 1980s. The 90s brought the introduction of the internet and the early 2000s saw its growth followed by social media rising quickly to importance in the 2010s. All this had a massive effect on an industry that used to be stable and profitable but is now fragile and its future highly uncertain as the smart money moves from legacy press to online.

The book has 12 chapters with 15 different contributors from Sweden, Spain, Ireland, Czech Republic, Denmark, US, and the UK and covers themes as varied as hyperlocal journalism, community and making money.

Reviewing books with such a wide range of chapters is always a challenge. The general topic of local journalism is obviously of considerable importance. People relate much better to local news. They want to hear what is happening in the community that effects them most and one of the most important of those is the place they live and work; the streets, building and neighbours that brush their lives daily. It is therefore no surprise that good research is going on at a time when the industry is hit by some remarkable forces of change.

The 15 authors here all bring their considerable expertise and their research analyses to bare on the topic but for the reader some will automatically be better or at least more interesting than others. As a journalist deeply rooted in my community for more than 50 years, I'm no different and so if I laud this chapter but ignore that, it is not because of quality but simply interest. Get hold of this book for yourself and decide which chapters you find most interesting.

For me David Bains on local papers "Switching from commodifying community to Doing Community" is an important chapter and a fitting finale to this book. Local papers were introduced to provide news for local communities often started by local worthies who wanted to foster community provided they got a decent return on their investment. Gradually money became the master and the UK provincial press is now dominated by four major publishing groups all of them concerned with making as much profit as possible for their shareholders with very little interest in local news, seemingly without realising this is the driving force behind their plummeting circulations.

Baines tells the story of four hyperlocal papers in the north of England that have taken on the big guys and seem to be winning. A real David and Goliath battle favouring the type of local paper I love.

Making money from local news is not just a UK phenomenon. Four chapters on local journalism fighting back in the marketplace come from India, Ireland, the south east of the UK, and the US allowing Priya Rajaseker and Shriram Venkatraman, Anthony Cawley, Sarah O'Hana, and Joaquin Cestino to address the same problem of large newspaper groups failing to understand their purpose: Newspapers are about journalism serving a community.

The first section also has four chapters that are more concerned with the actual structure and purpose of a local newspaper. Joy Jenkins examines how local news organisations in five European countries are navigating the challenges and opportunities of digitalisation. David Harte examines the discourses of hyperlocal journalism whilst Dave Toomer seeks help for local journalism trying to build closer links to deprived communities in the UK. Meanwhile Flemming Svith talks about notions of local territory, complaining that this important issue is often neglected in journalism studies with academics concentrating on concepts such as professional norms, ownership and competition. Concentrating particularly on Denmark this chapter examines this important concept of territory, a concept central to the future seen, if only dimly, by many of the authors in this book. The future of local news is just that – local. Whilst it would be good to imagine that those with money to invest would see this and support it, all the evidence is that this will happen with or without their help because local communities want it so.

Matthews, Rachel and Hodgson, Guy (Eds) (2024) Local Journalism: Critical Perspectives on the Provincial Newspaper Routledge: London pages: 220

The Diaries of Anthony Hewitson, provincial Journalist: Volume 1: 1865-1887 Edited by Andrew Hobbs

Review by Chris Frost, Liverpool John Moores University

From the future of local journalism to its history, and a very personal one at that.

Times were hard for most back in the 1870s and this edited diary of a local journalist based in the northern city of Preston is a fascinating glimpse of life for a provincial journalist from both a professional and personal perspective. This first volume starts off with the death of a daughter, her burial next to her deceased sister and is quickly followed by the birth of a baby son and continues with staccato descriptions of personal and professional life.

The 1860s and beyond were a good time to work in provincial newspapers. The London press was still limited by transport difficulties to the capital and nearby and taxation changes had made provincial newspapers more profitable. The national press as we know it now was still a distant dream as papers from London could easily take a day to arrive in more distant parts of the nation. Provincial papers meanwhile could cover national, international news and parliamentary reports, receiving telegraphed reports from agencies around the world. It took until the 1930s for the national press to become a serious challenge.

The life of a provincial reporter seems in many ways to be entirely more attractive than it is today. By 1865, after several years working as a reporter, Hewitson was earning three pounds a week as chief reporter on the *Preston Guardian* (equivalent to £23,400pa today). He was able to augment this by freelancing for other papers such as the *Manchester Guardian* or London papers. This was standard practice in provincial newspapers until a change in copyright laws in the 1980s that prevented newspaper reporters selling "lineage" to the national press. Evening papers would send copy from their best stories to the nationals and then divvy out the fees to the "lineage pool" of news reporters. After the law change, newspapers took the copyright not the reporters and the practice ceased. A senior reporter such as Hewitson could easily have added 25percent or more to his weekly wage.

Hewitson's family had also inherited a substantial sum. Since many of the family outings Hewitson writes about also included a servant, one suspects this servant was more of a nanny than a maid. Certainly they were young girls offered the post from the local workhouse.

Times could be hard. Hewitson reported for work at 9am on publishing day and on most occasions stayed until at least midnight: "Left work at half past 12 o'clock at night. Early for publishing night." (Page 23). Yet he was in the office the next day (a Saturday) at 11am facing "bucolic barrenness at the county police station". The day after was whit Sunday and an afternoon walk with "the wife, children and servant".

The diary a is 672 page doorstop. Andrew Hobbs, an expert on northern provincial newspapers is the editor and he has provided a fascinating introduction including a biography of Hewitson, an introduction to the life of a 19th Century reporter, and the way newspapers were edited at that time. But it is the diary itself that is the main course.

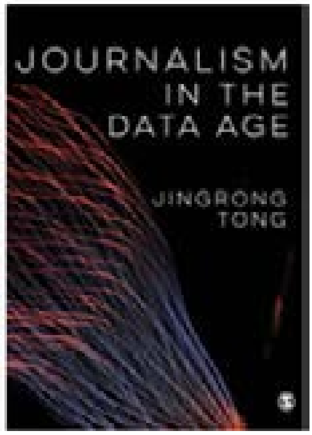
Varying from entries as mundane as: "Friday 30 November 1866 Nothing in particular." Through "Monday 10 December 1866 Easy forenoon & afternoon . This evening took back a little girl named Rachel, a servant with us, to Penwortham Workhouse. We didn't want her any longer. She told lies etc. At night went up street , bought a gill of rum to put into mincemeat. Then went to a teetotal meeting at Temperance-hall to report. Good speeches." And onto "Wednesday 12 December 1866 Another quiet dat. A terrible explosion occurred today at Barnsley in a coal pit. 300 persons killed. I studied Latin – first declension – hard today. Mr R. Sharrock's mill in Gregson Lane Higher Walton burned down nearly tonight. Damage about £10,000. Exchanged my watch guard for the one I now wear…" and all this on page 129.

This is a mammoth chunk of a book with more volumes to follow.

Hobbs, Andrew (2022) The Diaries of Anthony Hewitson, provincial Journalist: Volume 1: 1865-1887 Open Book Publishers: London pages: 672

Books for your Christmas library

Journalism in the Data Age by Jingrong Tong



This book is your guide to understanding what journalism is and could be in an age of digital technology and datafication.

Journalism today is entwined with the digital. Stories can come from crowdsourcing and content farms. They can incorporate data visualisations and virtual reality. Journalists can find themselves working as self-employed digital entrepreneurs or for tech giants like Google and Facebook.

This book explores the development of journalism in this era of digital tech, and big and open data. It explores the crucial new developments of online journalism, data journalism, computational journalism and entrepreneurial journalism, and what this means for our understanding of journalism as a profession, and as a part of society. Using a wealth of international case studies, Jingrong Tong explores contemporary issues such as:

AI, Automated news, 'robot reporters', and algorithmic accountability.

Digital business models, from venture capital to tech start-ups to crowdfunding.

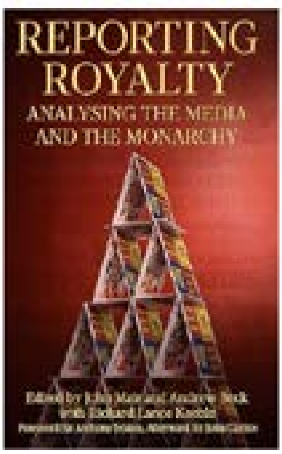
Audiences and dissemination in and age of platform capitalism

Questions of censorship, democracy and state control.

Digital challenges to journalistic autonomy and legitimacy.

With clear explanations throughout, Journalism in the Data Age introduces you to a range of ideas, debates and key concepts. It is essential reading for all students of journalism.

Dr Jingrong Tong is Senior Lecturer in Digital News Cultures at the University of Sheffield.



Reporting Royalty: Analysing The Media And The Monarchy Edited by John Mair and Andrew Beck with Richard Lance Keeble.

Foreword by Sir Anthony Seldon, Afterword by Sir John Curtice.

Against the backdrop of the first coronation in 70 years, polls reflecting the changing public mood about the British royal family, and an historic series of courtroom battles between Prince Harry and Britain's biggest-selling newspapers, here comes a book that examines the intriguing, explosive relationship between monarchy and media, past, present, and future.

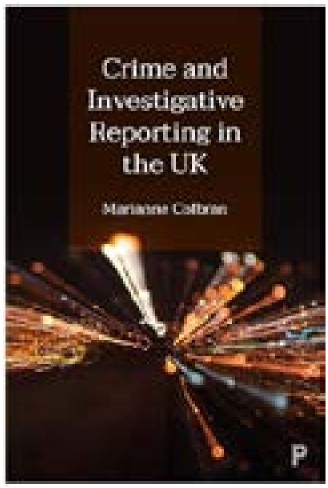
This unique collection brings together some very well known journalists with equally well-known academics, three knights and several professors to discuss Reporting Royalty in 360 degrees.

Contributors include: Robin Aitken, Angela Antetomaso, Norman Baker, Andrew Beck, Martin Bell, Phil Butland, Michael Cole, Paul Connew, Steve Foster, Alan Geere, Liz Gerard, Jason Lee, John Mair, Steven McCabe, Carole O'Reilly, Julian Petley, Sir Trevor Phillips, Charles Rae, Nathan Ritchie, Marcus Ryder, Raymond Snoddy, Deborah Wilson David, and Peter York.

This book is of the moment but also the first draft of the media history of the Carolean age.

Crime and Investigative Reporting in the UK by Marianne Colbran

Drawing on interviews with journalists, senior police and press officers, this is the first ethnographic study of crime news reporting in the UK for over 25 years. It explores changes over the last 40 years, including the aftermath of the Leveson Report and the breakdown of relations between the Met and the mainstream media. The book argues that new investigative journalism non-profits have been slowly repairing the field of crime journalism and reporting with – and not on – stigmatised communities. Nevertheless, the police continue to control the flow of policing news to the press and the public. Despite the radical transformation of the Fourth Estate, in the case of the police it has never been so restricted in its ability to speak truth to power.



"The book is skilled at reflecting changing relations between the police, press and public relations. It is a valuable resource for scholars, police and media practitioners worldwide on the changing landscapes of crime, policing and reporting." LSE Review of Books

"This is a valuable publication for journalism scholars and practitioners mainly due to its wide-ranging list of data from empirical research and theoretical resources. Journalists beyond the UK will identify similar structural problems in their relations with police and challenges in accessing data related to criminal investigations." Communication Today

Marianne Colbran is Visiting Research Fellow at the Mannheim Centre for Criminology at the London School of Economics. She was previously a television scriptwriter for the British police show, The Bill.

Welcome

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.

Editors

Prof. Chris Frost, Liverpool John Moores University

Chris Frost is emeritus professor of Journalism at Liverpool John Moores University and has been a journalist, editor and journalism educator for nearly 50 years, working in newspapers before moving into the academy.

He is a former Chair of the Association for Journalism Education in UK and Ireland. He is a former president of the NUJ and still sits on the union's National Executive Council and chairs the union's Ethics Council. He is a former member of the UK Press Council.

Chris has authored several books, including Journalism Ethics and Regulation, 4th edition (2016) and Privacy and the News Media and Reporting for Journalists, 2nd edition (2010) – as well as many book chapters and academic papers mainly concerning journalism ethics and regulation.

He has been a consultant or visiting professor in much of Eastern Europe, China, Malaysia, India, South East Asia, and Africa.

Dr. Lada T. Price, University of Sheffield

Dr Lada Trifonova Price is a Senior Lecturer in Journalism at the Department of Journalism Studies, University of Sheffield, UK.

Her current research focuses on challenges to media freedom and journalistic practice in Eastern and Southern European democracies, as well as examining physical and psychological threats to safety of journalists.

She has published several papers on journalism practice in fragile democracies, examining a range of threats to press freedom, censorship and self-censorship, ethical challenges, and media corruption.

She is the editor of the Routledge Companion to Journalism Ethics published in 2021 and just edited a special journal issue on trauma literacy in global journalism education and practice for the Journalism, Media & Communication Educator published in June 2023

Book editor - Sean Dodson

Sean Dodson is the course director for the postgraduate Journalism and Public Relations program at Leeds Beckett University.

Before this role, he worked as a staff journalist at The Guardian and contributed to various international publications like the Sydney Morning Herald, Melbourne Age, and South China Morning Post, among others. He has also written for newspapers and magazines such as Wired Magazine, Design Week, The Big Issue and Dazed and Confused. His academic work focusses on the ethics of digital journalism. His ongoing research project aims to gauge the extent of influence that traditional media wields over the news agenda in the realm of social media.

Sean holds the position of a senior fellow at the Higher Education Academy and has served as a judge for the Orwell Prize, which is the most prestigious award for political writing in the UK.

The next edition of Journalism Education

The next edition of Journalism Education will be a special edition, guest edited by Elisabeth Eide, Professor of Journalism Studies at Oslo Metropolitan University and Risto Kunelius, Professor of Journalism at the University of Tampere, Finland. It is due in spring 2024 and looks to be an exciting edition.

The editors will be aiming to publish the following edition in summer. The journal editors are always happy to see new papers submitted either for full referee or as a shorter unrefereed Comment and Criticism essays. Experienced researchers are very welcome to submit papers about journalism education or about journalism as it affects students or lecturers. However, Journalism Education was started by the AJE with less experienced researchers in mind and was structured to give members new to research a place to publish, where their lack of experience will not be held against them.

The editorial policy is to give a helping hand to new academic authors who may be highly experienced writers, but less experienced in academic research. We want to publish the best papers and cutting-edge research about journalism education and training but we believe we have to work closely with less experienced academics to help them get their paper into a publishable form. In order to facilitate that, please don't be afraid to contact the editors to discuss ideas and proposals. We will be happy to advise over what would work, and how to go about it and to make suggestions for improvements in paper proposals. Of course even experienced researchers find such discussions useful! You can get in touch at AJEjournal@gmail.com.

Academic papers to be submitted to referees

Papers should be between 5,000 and 8,000 words and involve some aspect of journalism education, teaching, research or pedagogy. The pandemic obliged much innovative teaching and new study methods, and these experiences deserve a wider audience. We also welcome papers that have followed your favoured area of research.

Essays, comment pieces or criticisms of published work

Journalism Education welcomes essays commenting on, criticising or describing innovative teaching practice, research methods, or scholarly debate on issues of journalism that crop up in your teaching. Debate is a key method of advancing good practice and is particularly important for an academic field that often welcomes experienced practitioners to become academic practitioners in mid career. Essays can be of any length from 1,000 words upwards. Please follow the style advice.

Book reviews or promotions

Book reviews are always useful in informing us of what has recently been published and giving careful guidance about why it might be useful. Similarly, if you are due to or have recently had a book published, write to us and tell our readership about it. Publishing a new book is a big deal for any author and it's important that people know that it is out there and available. Telling us about it will allow us to put it in our new books section, keeping other members up to date with the latest publication.

Our books editor, Sean Dodson will be pleased to hear from you. Reviews of appropriate books should be approximately 600 words. We do not accept unsolicited reviews of books, but are always grateful to be given the opportunity to consider a review proposal. Please contact Sean Dodson, the reviews editor, if you wish to submit a review. All book reviews should include author, title, ISBN number, publisher, number of pages and price.

Guest editing

If you are considering running a conference on some aspect of journalism in the near future then why not contact us to discuss the possibility of guest editing a future edition with articles from conference speakers? We welcome guest editions where journalism lecturers and researchers are able to expand on their special interest either by inviting colleagues to produce papers to a particular theme or by organising a conference and inviting colleagues to submit paper ideas.

Guest editors are responsible for identifying potential authors, inviting them to contribute, finding referees for their papers and then submitting the final version to the Journalism Education team. The team will then pull the journal together and send PDFs back to authors and editors for a final check before publishing.

This is an excellent way to spread your academic wings by making contact with authors and referees, assessing papers and deciding what is publishable and steering the research profile of journalism for at least one issue.

Talk to the editors

You can talk to the editors by emailing AJEjournal@gmail.com with your proposals, ideas, or finished papers. We look forward to hearing from you.

Our next issue is due in spring 2024.

The deadline for articles and papers for following editions is March 1, 2024 but material sent earlier would be appreciated. Articles should be submitted to the editors at ajejournal@gmail.com together with a 100-150 word abstract. Comment and criticism articles can be more polemic and do not require an abstract.

Presentation and submission:

Articles should be produced in Word format, double spaced and set in Times New Roman 12pt with the minimum of formatting. Please do not press the “enter” button to put a double space between paragraphs and do not use specialist templates. Referencing should be in standard Harvard form with citations in the form: (Simmons 1955: 404) whilst notes should be set as footnotes. References should put the publication title in italic with authors’ name in the form: Jones, Brian (2004).

Please include a short (100w) biography as a separate document.

All tables and figures should be produced separately either at the end of the article or in a separate file. Each should be clearly labelled Tab1e 1:….. Table 2…… Fig. 1:…. Fig. 2: etc and a note inserted in the text identifying approximately where it should be placed.

Copyright:

Authors should confirm they have cleared all copyrighted work for publication and agree that they will indemnify the editors against claims for defamation, copyright infringement or plagiarism. All authors will be asked to sign a contract confirming this.

Process:

Papers are sent to at least two referees for comment. On return your paper will be accepted, accepted following editing as identified by the referees or refused. Comment and criticism pieces and book reviews will be decided by the editors but may be accepted on the basis that they are edited as identified.

Proofs:

Once accepted, authors are expected to return proofs within 72 hours of receipt.

Style guide

Please provide a title and an abstract and author details together with a 50-100 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 names of all authors (including first name initial) 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, B (2003) ‘A Good Day to Bury Bad News?’: Journalists, Sources and the Packaging of Politics in Cottle, S (Ed.), News, Public Relations Power, London: Sage pp. 45-61

Hall, S, Critcher, C, Jefferson T, Clarke J, and Roberts, B (1978) Policing the Crisis. Mugging, the State and Law and Order. London: Macmillan

Harcup, T (2004) in Pape, S and Featherstone, S (2006) Feature Writing, London: Sage.

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Refereed papers

Conference proceedings

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