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## Teaching Journalism

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Santa Clara University

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## Table of Contents

### Teaching Journalism

I. Introduction: An overview of research on journalism during a decade of change . . . . .	3
2. Journalism education: The view from the academy . . . . .	4
3. Bedrock issues: Redefining traditional values . . . . .	7
A. Objectivity . . . . .	7
B. Ethics . . . . .	9
4. New areas for research and education . . . . .	14
A. Science writing . . . . .	14
B. The alternative press . . . . .	17
C. Literary journalism . . . . .	19
D. Reflections . . . . .	22
5. The newest challenge: A global perspective . . . . .	22
6. Conclusion . . . . .	25
Editor's Afterword . . . . .	26
References . . . . .	26
Additional bibliography . . . . .	28
Book Reviews . . . . .	31

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# Teaching Journalism

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## 1. Introduction

### An Overview of Research on Journalism during a Decade of Change

We face a rapidly changing mediascape that shifts faster than the 24-hour news cycle, often outpacing academic study, the ability to understand journalism, and the ability to teach it. Much of the scholarship, and hallway conversations, of the past has focused on either the failures of journalism itself—most notably with regard to the influence of corporate media—or the “gee whizzery” of new technologies and the wild, wild west that is the blogosphere. I do not dispute the deleterious effects of the former, or the possibilities inherent in the latter two. But while we have been consumed by hand-wringing on one hand and starry-eyed wonder on the other, I suggest we also need to focus on the fundamental issues that will propel journalism—practice, education and scholarship—into an affirmative future to best serve not only our students or the organizations that will employ them but most importantly, the public interest.

In the interests of transparency, I begin this review of the past 10 years of published work on journalism with full disclosure. I am a journalism professor and journalist and thus have taken a pragmatic approach to this review, scouring the archives for studies that could both take journalism education forward and map the course for future study. That is my frame—and my challenge. With an eye to journalism education, practice, and scholarship, I will frame the critiques and scholarship of the past 10 years as the foundation for a collective brainstorm on what we journalists call a look forward.

Balancing the cerebral and the concrete, this summary of key areas aims to prompt thoughtful debate and continued study on the questions that surround the meaning of good journalism as well as to arm those educating the practitioners of tomorrow with studies, questions, and points of discussion that they can pull directly into the classroom. The rationale is simple: While many scholars and thinkers have equated jour-

nalism’s messy transformation over the past decade as an indicator of an institution in crisis, I suggest that one element of this crisis may be our inability as educators and thinkers to not only keep pace with the implications of these changes but to provide coherent direction. What better place to stay ahead of the curve than the classroom and the academy?

This review begins by tracing the evolving thought on journalism education as an incentive for educators to rethink our curriculum as well as to spark creative scholarship that advances the current debate. The second section operates as the scaffold for the following sections, which address several substantive areas that can deepen and broaden the journalism curriculum (and the scholarship that supports it) either as it now stands or as it has yet to be reconceived. Section 3 investigates the continual reexamination of the bedrock values that inform good practice, regardless of the platform on which it is presented. The work reviewed there could advance and enrich classroom discussion on ethics and objectivity as well as prompt future areas for study and debate. Section 4 presents three emerging areas many educators and scholars believe deserve inclusion into a comprehensive journalism curriculum—or research portfolio. To date, none of these areas (science writing, literary journalism, and alternative media) has been studied extensively. Section 5 investigates the challenges inherent in today’s explosive global mediascape. Journalism as an institution is rapidly becoming border-free: It is imperative that we not only study the myriad implications of an emerging and complex global news media, but also bring such study into the curriculum. Finally, this review essay concludes with a brief series of questions with regard to rising issues that researchers have yet to address in depth.

While the vast majority of published work included in this review appeared in scholarly journals, I have

also included articles from trade journals specifically directed toward practitioners. (A bibliography of additional articles, books, and websites for further study appears as an additional reading list.) True to my roots as a journalist, I attempted a comprehensive literature search, but must acknowledge the sheer impossibility of having achieved that. While missing some perhaps pivotal articles this review does present a representative selection of the work on journalism and journalism education published over the past 10 years.

One caveat: Cohen (2005a) laments the disconnect between journalism practice and communication scholarship, wondering why theory and practice cannot work more closely in journalism education. He calls for reflection among scholars and educators, asking:

What do our curricula do in the modern university to connect the dots? Are we focusing on

research and theory that will sustain enlightened practice? (p. 338)

This disconnect appears, for example, between scholarship that preconceives of journalists as powerless in the corporate mediascape and real world experience, where I have found today's practitioners to be more educated, more independent, and less motivated by corporate goals than many media critics assume. Still, despite what some in the field may consider outdated preconceptions in the academic literature, journalism education can incorporate some "take-away messages" into the classroom—and ultimately the newsroom—to elevate both the profession and the teaching of it. This review, then, serves as one attempt to connect the dots: Those of us on the cusp of change—journalism educators, journalists, and news corporations—should utilize all the tools at our disposal in an attempt to reinvent journalism.

## 2. Journalism Education: The View from the Academy

In the last decade the debate on journalism education moved past the theory-versus-practice debate of the late 20th century toward a more nuanced, reflexive, and thoughtful vision. As originally conceived, journalism education was primarily hands-on, oriented toward professionalism, and focused on applied courses in writing and reporting. Despite the fact that a certain amount of theory is inherently embedded in the teaching of applied skills, theory was never labeled as such, which led some academics to view classes with such names as "news writing and gathering" as little more than trade school fare, teaching students to get a job rather than to think critically. But as more and more journalism programs began to be incorporated into burgeoning communication departments, the pendulum began swinging in the other direction: Courses emphasizing practice took a backseat to those emphasizing theory.

Medsgar (1996) marked a pivotal point of departure by articulating the growing tension between theory and practice in many departments of communication, where journalism programs were increasingly situated. Documenting the trend toward communication studies, she found that journalism courses were giving way to communication courses, leading to declining skill levels among journalism students

and sparking vigorous debate about the tension between communication studies and applied courses. The debate revived with gusto in 2002, changing course completely, when Lee Bollinger, president of Columbia University, suspended the search for a new dean of the Journalism School until a panel could come together to re-envision the concept of journalism education. No longer defining theory and practice as mutually exclusive, he argued that teaching craft was insufficient and called for a rethinking of the school's mission, reorienting it along the lines of other professional schools that integrate practical training with an academically rigorous education.

Within the journalism academy itself, any ideas for taking journalism education forward had begun simmering even before Bollinger's announcement. A New York University journalism professor, Stephens wrote what he dubbed "A J-school Manifesto," setting out his rules for rethinking journalism education. "At issue is not whether journalism programs should teach professional skills or wax theoretical. Obviously, they should do a lot of the former and some of the latter. The question is how" (Stephens, 2000, p. 63). Lamenting that journalism programs emphasized teaching the basics when their focus should be taking journalism forward, he called for students, educators and practitioners alike

to focus on “determining what journalism could and should be” (p. 64). The following year, Adam (2001) argued for more cohesion between journalism education and other disciplines within the university. Journalism education should promote not only the fundamentals of journalism but also the “ability to apply the forms of understanding born in the academy to the problems of the here and now” (Adam, 2001, p. 317). The ideal curriculum should train critics as well as reporters and writers, with a “tight fit” between professional practice and other academic disciplines to “educate the journalist as a whole rather than an apprentice” (p. 318). Advocating a focus on journalism rather than media, he urged educators to consider which disciplines most contribute to the practice of journalism in a “way that parallels the contribution natural sciences and math make to the practice of engineering” (p. 327).

These scholars and others who came later made the distinction that if journalism education is to matter at all, it must be about journalism itself: critically questioning the institution and taking it forward. The theory-versus-practice debate began to edge toward irrelevance. Deuze (2001), for example, reporting on a survey of literature from Europe and the United States, as well as on interviews with experts in several countries, advocated abandoning the theory-versus-practice debate in favor of a general program geared toward critical self-reflection. “Educators must be more aware that a gradual adaptation to new ideas and changes in journalism or a step-by-step approach toward integrating new journalism approaches like infotainment and online reporting is not servicing the needs of the changing and widening definition of the profession” (p. 15).

Several enduring themes of journalism education emerged that same year, when the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) invited nine colleges to reevaluate their concept of journalism education (Cohen, Reese, Liebler, & Brancaccio, 2001). Ethics and the influence of economic interests dominated; concerns related to multiculturalism trumped technology. Among the respondents, Reese called on educators to focus on training the future leaders of the industry rather than entry-level employees. To do so, he argued, calls for interdisciplinary synergy. Liebler supported establishing an ethical core in journalism and mass communication studies as a response to “the age of the global village” (p. 8). Rakow bypassed the skills versus theory debate in favor of a focus on public service. “We can race to keep up with teaching these new skills or we can look to

enduring principles of service to the public’s right and need to speak and be heard, to hear and be informed, to discuss and decide” (in Cohen, Reese, Liebler, & Brancaccio, 2001, p.14).

This discussion formed the prelude to Bollinger’s call to rethink journalism education. Proposing a task force to study the issue, he reiterated his purpose in an interview with the *Columbia Journalism Review* (Cunningham, 2002), suggesting that the divide between technique and theory was an artificial one. He argued instead that the journalism school be enhanced by looking for opportunities to integrate the school with other parts of the university, giving students a chance to develop expertise in other disciplines, and greater critical reflection on the profession itself.

If the profession said all we want are people who can do some technique, then it is our duty to decline. It is not worthy of a great university to produce graduates who know a technique and nothing else. But I don’t think that’s what the profession wants. (Cunningham, 2002, p. 23)

Indeed, as the mediascape morphs at breakneck speed, what’s state-of-the-art technique today may well be obsolete tomorrow. Clearly, the journalists who will succeed amidst the swirling change as well as assert leadership in taking their institution forward will be those whose journalism education taught them to think critically about journalism.

The discussion was not confined to the U.S. In Britain, de Burgh urged consideration of journalism as a serious academic discipline rather than vocational training. People expect journalists to analyze and broker information in a rapidly changing world, and so “the vaunted divide between the academic and the practical [becomes] a false dichotomy” (de Burgh, 2003, p. 110). Celebrating the recent launch of a growing number of undergraduate journalism programs throughout Britain, he suggested that journalism’s academic knowledge is “quintessentially cross-disciplinary” and should be recognized as such, an academic discipline in its own right. Like Deuze, he advocated a reflective and reflexive curriculum where students have the opportunity to think critically about the profession and to figure out how and where they might fit within it. He also argued for journalism as a separate academic discipline, in opposition to those critics who aligned journalism education with what he dubbed the U.S. model, merely a “delivery system, consisting of nothing but a set of skills, which is apparently perceived by some critics as formulaic and dependent upon accreditation to narrow-minded employers” (p. 102).

In a similar vein, Taylor suggests that universities support their practitioners and their researchers in journalism to become the new “amphibians” (Taylor, 2003, p. 188). Acknowledging the tension between the demands of an academy-driven education versus market-led training, she supports infusing the journalism degree with the values of the academy. Reviewing the undergraduate journalism degree in Britain 10 years after its inception, she asked whether there could be a “pedagogy of journalism” consistent with university traditions of innovation, creativity, and critical thinking, engaging students eager for professional work-placement with enough academic opportunity to think critically about the profession. Still, she worried that the above could be jeopardized by the rush toward multi-skilled training required by fast-paced technology, noting her concern that while multi-media programs may help students get jobs, as a result the academy may be producing technicians, not thinkers.

In the United States, Gans took the debate one step further by arguing for a linkage between journalism education and democracy. Schools should take the journalistic ideal seriously, looking for solutions to the profession’s shortcomings; theory courses should “encourage serious rethinking about what journalism can actually contribute to the maintenance and improvement of American democracy” (Gans, 2004, p. 14). He also emphasized the need for educators to teach their students the importance of analysis and explanation as intrinsic parts of journalism, enabling journalists to supply “informed opinions”; to look closely at the journalist-audience dynamic; and finally, to investigate new approaches to the economics of journalism: “Journalism will not be able to fulfill its obligations to democracy if it is required, first and foremost to be a cash cow” (p. 16).

One of the results of Bollinger’s clarion call was a presidential panel of journalism educators and scholars convened that same year by the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, entitled “Does Journalism Matter?” There, Dates argued for journalism as the linchpin of democracy, asserting that upholding these standards are essential to “beat back the increasing drumbeat for maximizing profit . . . to the detriment of . . . independent reporting” (Dates, Glasser, Stephens, & Adam, 2006, p. 145). Glasser advocated for journalism studies as a “distinct domain of inquiry” that links the *study* of journalism to its practice. He argued that the ideal journalism education, combining both practice and study of journalism,

begins at the graduate level where students can refine skills and interrogate the practice. Reprising his “J-School Manifesto,” Stephens set out 13 principles for a new model of journalism education. Among them: encouraging students to write on matters of “substance and significance,” experimentation, an interdisciplinary approach, studying the work of other journalists, and a critique of journalism itself. Finally, Adam argued, as in 2001, for increased connection between applied journalism and the intellectual culture of the university, suggesting that journalism students should be joint majors, fulfilling a capstone course that would combine both.

These panelists approached journalism education from an idealistic perspective. In counterpoint, Macdonald (2006) argued that journalism education called for not only more theory, but more questions as to the viability of journalism’s ideals, turning journalism’s claims into testable hypotheses. Finding the current reform emphasis on journalism as public service “laudable,” she considered the proposals problematic and simplistic, arguing instead for a critical curriculum that addresses the roots of the crisis in journalism: private corporate power. A curriculum that encourages students to “think idealistically” about the profession rather than analyzing powerful media industries and their influence on journalists’ working conditions does the profession a disservice. “If a critical journalism education succeeds in encouraging students to develop an analysis of the constraints of the commercial media, as well as exploring diverse journalistic practices, these students are arguably better positioned to rise to the challenge of promoting a journalism that better serves the public” (Macdonald, 2006, p. 758).

While I agree that a responsible and reflexive journalism education must indeed include an analysis of the constraints brought on by corporate media structures, as an educator I am more inclined to agree with those who take the idealistic approach, focusing on what journalism can and should be, and emphasizing creative problem-solving rather than the problems themselves. No matter where one stands, however, it is clear that the thought on journalism education has evolved significantly over the past 10 years, advancing the debate with depth and breadth far beyond a dichotomy of theory versus practice to a consideration of course content and approach. One clear consensus emerges: Those of us in the classroom must make sure we continually retool our courses, informed by that richness of scholarly inquiry.

### 3. Bedrock Issues: Redefining Traditional Values

No two issues consume the decision-making inherent in journalism more than objectivity and ethics. Subject to constant scrutiny, not only in their application, but in their redefinition, both inside and outside the academy, objectivity and ethics provide a lens through which to “interrogate the profession,” a discussion that necessarily migrates to the classroom.

#### A. Objectivity

No journalism value has prompted more hand-wringing or redefinition than objectivity. Much of the discussion resides in trade journals, which may indicate that while scholars examine objectivity on a critical level, professionals likely reevaluate the concept in order to formulate a definition that more clearly informs their practice, recasting the norm in terms of a defense of adversarial roles. Clearly, for the professional—and for the educator—the concept has continued to evolve from the “he said/she said” paradigm of the 1950s. Indeed, the concept forms the basis for vigorous and engaged debate in my classes (and, I presume, in those of others), from the introductory to the advanced levels.

Schudson’s (2001) review of the history of professionalism in American journalism and the way in which objectivity evolved to become a norm provides a good foundation for sophisticated analysis. He traces the evolution of objectivity from the days of Benjamin Franklin and the colonial printers, through the partisan press of the 18th and 19th centuries to the 1920s when journalists began building a professional culture. Journalists themselves linked objectivity to their development as professionals who saw their loyalties in terms of audience rather than employers, and began to articulate notions of impartiality and fairness. Referencing both Durkheim and Weber, Schudson writes that objectivity became both a discipline—a way for “editors to keep reporters in check” (p. 162)—and an ideology for an aspiring professional class.

While some critics envision objective journalism as both a fantasy and a failing, Ryan offers an impassioned defense of the norm by redefining it upward. “The overarching value for the objective journalist (or scientist) is the collection and dissemination of information that describes reality as accurately as possible”

(Ryan, 2001, p. 3). Comparing journalists to scientists in terms of method, he writes that the success of either depends on the integrity of the practitioners. He takes the standard definitions of journalistic objectivity one step further by arguing that the norm requires analysis and interpretation. “Objective journalists gather facts and opinions that conflict, verify information carefully, seek to determine why accounts conflict and which most accurately reflect reality, and evaluate and fully identify sources” (p. 5). While journalists cannot guarantee they are accurate in every respect, they can assert they have followed a process that allows them to produce a more accurate description “than any other process allows, and that allows society to move closer to an understanding of the real world” (p. 4). Ryan presents several alternatives to objective journalism—existential journalism, standpoint epistemology, civic journalism—arguing that the real problem with objective journalism lies in its difficulty in implementation.

It is far easier to argue that objectivity is a myth and then to simply slap one’s opinions together to produce a story or to claim that objectivity is nothing more than uncritically reporting what sources on two sides have to say. It is easy to avoid the hard work of objective journalism when the climate of opinion is against objectivity and journalists do not feel obligated to adopt its norms. (Ryan, 2001, p. 16)

Ryan wants proponents and critics alike to move forward, building an objective journalism that combines the best of all approaches: acknowledging their own biases; agreeing on the impossibility of objectivity; reporting on and for marginalized groups; wrestling with ethics; reporting effectively on important community issues. He suggests critics would be more helpful if they held journalists to the highest standards of objectivity by monitoring the news media. “Taking action to force journalists to ‘behave’ could go far toward improving a journalism that has lost its way, that too often privileges dominant groups, that is unfair and lazy, that is too reliant on official sources, and that just does not command much respect” (p. 18).

Interestingly, Poindexter, Heider, and McCombs (2006) found that while journalists and scholars might

argue for or against the ideal of objectivity, some segments of the public really don't care. In a survey of 600 adults selected by random digit dialing, the authors found that the public would rather have the press act as good neighbor (using techniques that "epitomize public journalism") than watchdog, one hallmark of the objectivity norm. This good-neighbor-watchdog dichotomy may be key to understanding the public's increasing disaffection with the press. Advancing earlier research, they found that women and minorities, groups most likely to be marginalized, likely favored the good neighbor role. Their study brings up several questions, among them how the good neighbor and watchdog roles fit together and whether or not they are incompatible. They suggest future studies should determine how the roles can coexist to mutually benefit the public and the press while reconnecting the public with civic life and revitalizing newspaper readership. My own question here calls scholars to examine whether or not the good neighbor role ultimately undermines that of the watchdog.

Bowman (2006) examined the broadcast journalism interview to show how challenging questions can be balanced against the need to maintain an "objective stance" on particular topics. Applying conversation analysis techniques to broadcast interviews during a politically charged labor dispute in Australia in 1998, he found that as the dispute raged on, the radio journalist's challenges to authorities increased in intensity. Rather than backing down, the journalists continued to press their sources with hard questions. Likening the interviews to legal cross-examinations, Bowman found that, despite literature replete with examples of interviewers deferring to authority figures, in this case at least, evidence showed how the professionally objective approach that journalists adopt in broadcast interviews allows them to challenge authorities in a way that orients to a "public interest: rather than the interests of power or the personal or ideological persuasions of the journalist or their employing organization" (Bowman, 2006, p. 642). A renewed belief in professional norms can "embolden" journalists by allowing them to challenge powerful sources on the basis of objectivity and thus avoid a charge of bias.

The fact that some of the most serious critiques and redefinitions of the meaning of objectivity come from within the profession itself will surprise many in the academy. To a certain extent, Bowman's study arose from a reaction to Cunningham. Suggesting that devotion to "what we call objectivity" (Cunningham,

2003, p. 26) accounted for the failures in reporting during the build-up to the war in Iraq, he argued that the principle led reporters to passively report the news rather than aggressively analyze it. Some problems stemmed from the sensitivities of some news organizations to an accusation of bias, leading them to use an artificial sense of balance as antidote. And while Cunningham still claims objectivity as an important value, he holds that blind adherence accounts for problems: lazy reporting; reliance on official sources and fear of digging deep for fear of losing access; and failure to push the envelope, to bring new issues into existing debates. All of these call for a better way to think about objectivity. Cunningham first redefines bias—as not what the public assumes, toward a particular ideology or political party, but toward stories with conflict; toward the safety of pack journalism; and toward events, because they are easier, noting that when reporting is elevated "beyond stenography, reporters make a million choices, each one subjective" (p. 30). Finally he urges reporters to rethink objectivity by acknowledging the subjectivity involved in reporting, by developing expertise, and by being willing to analyze competing claims. "Letting reporters write what they know and encouraging them to dig toward some deeper understanding of things is not biased, it is essential" (p. 31).

A few months later Gup likewise advanced the notion that a misguided interpretation of objectivity leads reporters to forfeit the watchdog role, to shy away from initiating debate, and to rely on quotes from official sources. "We crave the imprimatur of government and without it too often question the bona fides of our own suspicions and doubts, even though we know full well that official Washington itself is capable of producing its own counterfeits" (Gup, 2004, p. 60).

In another attempt to rethink the objectivity norm in the wake of the build-up to the war in Iraq, the *Columbia Journalism Review* presented an email exchange between Michael Getler, the ombudsman at the *Washington Post*, and Leonard Doyle, the foreign editor at *The Independent* in London, where the two journalists debated the virtues of the partisan versus the objective press. They argue whether or not objectivity is, or should be, a guiding principle and whether or not that value led to the inability of the press to challenge the Bush administration in the run-up to the war. In one exchange, Doyle writes: "If objectivity is the gold standard, then we must associate that word with fairness, honesty, and an acute sense of injustice—and not an

all-encompassing and spurious right of reply designed to protect reporters and their news organizations from powerful interests and their own governments” (Doyle & Getler, 2004, p. 45). Getler replies:

Readers understand, and can factor in, government or special interest spin. But they can smell reportorial opinion and bias a mile away and that is guaranteed to distract from the power of news . . . there is so much in news decision-making that is subjective that objectivity is hard to claim as much more than a sought-after idea. Fairness comes closer as a measure because editors and readers can sense it. (p. 45)

Finally, while some scholars and many professionals may wax philosophical about the theoretical implications of objectivity, a few studies have dealt with the norm empirically. In a content analysis of 255 stories written by 96 reporters for nine dailies, Fico and Balog (2003) found that in stories dealing with local conflict, partisan sources dominated both space and attention. While acknowledging that partisan sources obviously try to set the agenda, the researchers maintain that “if the goal of journalism is to fully inform the public of policy choices and implications, then stories must include nonpartisan perspectives” (Fico & Balog, 2003, p. 22). They argue that impartial sources help fulfill objectivity values, providing a more dispassionate assessment of either side. “The extreme source-use concentration on a limited group of sources is still troubling. In particular, as suggested by past research, journalists may not be getting or including perspective on aspects of issues that partisans ignore” (p. 33). The authors found that stories most likely to include nonpartisan sources, the most balanced in terms of not allowing one side or the other to set the agenda, received the most prominent display, indicating the influence of editors who might consider front page stories worth the extra effort.

In short, we learn from these discussions that objectivity, as a core tenet of journalism (at least in America) does not have a fixed meaning. Rather it is fluid, continually reexamined, and constantly evolving. Such ongoing examination provides a reassurance that bodes well for the future of the institution.

### *B. Ethics*

Two years ago, I wrote in an op-ed for the *Christian Science Monitor* that I emphasize to my students, “when it comes to reporting, there are some things journalists should always do, some things they

should never do, but that most of the day-to-day decisions reside in a vast landscape of gray” (Kelley, 2005). Much of that treacherous terrain has to do with ethics, a topic that for practitioners and scholars alike seems always to evolve, to have many layers, to remain an ongoing subject for newsroom and classroom discussion, and, I suspect, to cause more sleepless nights than even deadlines. The crux of the issue comes down to the very few clear cut answers, the very few definitive codes, and the very little time for overworked, stressed out professionals to deliberate. These result in anxiety at best and egregious breaches at worst.

Indeed, the United States has emerged from a bad decade for journalism ethics: In the late '90s *The New Republic* fired writer Stephen Glass after editors there discovered he had fabricated all or part of 27 stories for that magazine; the *New York Times* fired reporter Jason Blair after they found he had plagiarized and fabricated quotes in 2003; in 2004 *USA Today* fired reporter Jack Kelley after editors discovered that he had lifted quotes and fabricated parts of several major stories over a decade of work at that paper. While these transgressions may be extreme and, one hopes, atypical, the three have nonetheless become posterboys for some of the worst breaches of the newsroom's covenant with the reader, causing much examination on conscience within journalism as well as a lack of trust among readers and viewers. People have attributed the causes of this most recent spate of ethical lapses—and the small ones that often go unnoticed or unexamined—to the 24 hour news cycle; to the competition from instantaneous news on the Internet; to economic pressures to do it all faster, better, cheaper—all part of a mediascape that may encourage journalists to cut corners. Beyond speculations as to causes, however, most scholars, educators, and practitioners agree that one solution involves keeping the discussion open and on the table. Fortunately, most current research on ethics goes beyond case studies and post-mortems to deeper and more complex issues: reporting on vulnerable subjects, oversight of journalists' ethical practices, the development of moral reasoning, and how to instill values in future journalists.

Three themes—pedagogy, theoretical discussion and research, and case studies—provide a loose organizational approach to this complex topic of ethics in journalism education. The section ends with an optimistic look at the ethics of journalists themselves.

**Pedagogy and ethics.** Encouragingly, more and more journalism programs incorporate the study of ethics

into their curriculum. Writing the fourth in a series of studies addressing media ethics education over 20 years, Lambeth, Christians, Fleming and Seow found that the “media ethics course has established an ‘essential place’” in the curriculum (2004, p. 251). Though 31 fewer schools reported having separate media ethics courses since the previous survey nine years before, over a third of the journalism and mass communication units surveyed reported that they required a media ethics course and almost a third offered it as an option, an increase from the 1993 survey. The most striking change they found lay in the “sizeable upswing” in the reports of related research outside the classroom, including a new journal of mass media ethics and more conference opportunities. Finding that as a specialty, media ethics had not yet created a relationship with professionals in such a way as to influence their practice, the authors call for more bridges between educators and practitioners, and suggest that at this point, “academe can influence professional practice not only by the depth and relevancy of its instruction of students” (p. 250).

Bugeja (1997) offered a recipe for a successful journalism ethics class that focuses on values, rather than formal journalism ethics, *per se*. In an attempt to embed in his students a desire for journalists’ values—rather than their jobs—he threw out case studies and assignments asking students to analyze media practices. Reasoning that it seemed unproductive to have students with no professional experience analyze the values of “professionals in crisis situations” (p. 63), he had his class write their own personal codes of ethics, based on an analysis of several ethical abstracts, along with the completion of a series of exercises within each concept.

Similarly, Lee and Padgett (2000) reason that renewed attention to ethics might stem the tide of declining public trust in the media. But despite the increase in ethics courses overall, many programs still do not have stand-alone classes. Consequently, the authors examined the effectiveness of ethics education as a component of a course. Measuring students responses to a case study both before and after an ethics unit, the authors found that even students exposed to only a short course in ethics based on logical thinking such as the Potter Box (an ethical framework developed by Harvard Divinity School professor of social ethics Ralph B. Potter, Jr.) better appreciated the “gray areas” and reasoned with more complexity. Students reflected that they appreciated the

emphasis of such courses on how, rather than what, to think, though the course did not significantly change moral values.

Pointing out the difficulties inherent in teaching media ethics, Hanson (2002) assessed the disconnect between TV news directors’ and students’ perception of issues in media ethics. Reasoning that ethical training builds on a mixture of classroom and newsroom for entry-level journalists, he investigated whether the “syllabi” of the two venues were in sync, and found that they were not. Noting the tension between scholarship and practice in media ethics, as well as the difficulty in striking a balance between theory and practice, he noted that both students and professionals nonetheless agree that journalists best learn ethics on the job. While classroom-based case studies can teach critical thinking skills, critics suggest that lack of training in moral reasoning techniques as well as a focus on the problems from a managerial point of view rather than from the perspective of an entry level reporter, can undermine the usefulness of the case study approach. But other critics worry that, if reporters learn ethics in the newsroom rather than the classroom, ethical decision-making might depend more on socialization rather than moral reasoning. In general Hanson found that the percentage of news directors encountering specific ethical problems, such as conflict of interest or the impact of business pressures on decision-making, were lower than the percentages of students who anticipated facing those concerns.

In spite of journalism schools’ efforts to acculturate these students, the students may still be thinking more like the general audience than the journalists. The data also provide some insight into the low level of exposure to ethical decision making that interns and college-age media employees receive while on the job. (Hanson, 2002, p. 245)

**Theoretical discussions of ethics.** But while the literature has shown an increase in work on ethics in the classroom, Starck (2001) lamented the fact that scholarship remains “relatively underdeveloped” and still searching for direction. Tracing the history of the scholarship on journalism ethics (referencing Christians and Covert’s intellectual history of media ethics, 1980), he concludes that still, “most of the work on journalism ethics has been of an applied nature” (Starck, 2001, p. 142). New questions related to technology, commercialization, and globalization require that ethics be looked at anew; “applying traditional

philosophies of social responsibility or utilitarianism fall short” (p. 145). Given the crisis in credibility, journalism needs to investigate a philosophy more appropriate to the current corporate mediascape. “Any consideration must start with the idea that professional journalists work in the public interest, and the notion of public interest must carry over into the ethics associated with the business side of journalism” (p. 145).

A roundtable among Newton, Hodges, and Keith (2004) offers another theoretical approach to journalism ethics, offering three views on the process of forming accountability in journalism. Newton discusses accountability in the professions, arguing that internal trustworthiness holds professionals, such as doctors and lawyers, accountable.

If for any reason good or bad, I start distrusting my doctor and my lawyer, I essentially render them useless to me. For professions to serve us, trust must be institutionalized. (Newton, Hodges, & Keith, 2004, p. 171)

Hodges takes the process one step further. “Responsibility has to do with defining proper conduct, accountability with compelling it” (p. 173). Accountability in journalism differs from that of other professions because, while professional accountability of doctors or lawyers has to do in part with governmental agencies, the First Amendment insulates the press from governmental interference. Journalists should be morally accountable to their audience, to the profession, and to their sources. Finally, Keith seeks both internal and external accountability mechanisms that would ensure responsible behavior, such as codes of ethics, internal memos, published corrections, ombudsmen, research published by scholars in trade journals, and media coverage of itself, especially by alternative media. She finds that of all approaches, internal memos and corrections have the greatest force and suggests a compelling possibility in monthly “ethics and morality meetings” similar to the Morbidity and Mortality conferences that take place in hospitals—although this could create problems in that such meetings might reinforce the status quo. Suggesting the benefits of either in-house training by media ethics scholars or increased visibility of groups outside of journalism, she concedes that the best approach might consist of a patchwork of different mechanisms.

Focusing more on methods than theory, Ward (2005a) also tackles mechanisms for holding the press to social responsibility standards, arguing for a synthesis of the internal and external models in the face of

conflicting attitudes about efforts to reform media practices. “In an age when news media have global impact, the public have a right to be a part of society’s dialogue about news media” (p. 326). While the internal model favors emphasis on freedom of the press and “self-regulation,” the external model implies that journalism ethics should be “reduced to the consultation of the latest public opinion polls” (p. 326). He argues instead for a public participation model that brings together all the stakeholders to avoid external forces sacrificing principles of the free press and internal forces hiding “behind the rhetoric of self-regulation” (p. 327). As a solution, he calls for new and accessible social structures implementing discussions informed by an understanding of the complexities of the issues: media ombudsmen, citizen committees, and high-profile conferences established by journalism schools. He also calls for professionals to be more transparent in explaining their journalism.

Rather than post-mortems, Kennamer (2005) bases ethical debates on a set of easily understood and applied guidelines; he presents a useful set of concepts drawn from social science research, especially with regard to reporter-source interactions. Focusing on deception, privacy, and reporting on vulnerable subjects, he notes that social science researchers and journalists must protect the rights of their subjects even as they work to serve the public interest. Both groups should see the temptation to look at people as means to an end as unethical according to Kant’s theories of autonomy. However, while institutional oversight binds social scientists, nothing similar governs journalists.

The path followed by researchers in establishing a more humane and compassionate approach to their research participants can fruitfully inform journalist practice. While the potential harm done to research participants is private, the harm done by journalists is played out on a public stage, potentially greater. (p. 87)

Using as an example the ethical dilemma involved in photographing the family of a soldier killed in action—personally distasteful to the photographer for its intrusiveness, yet important to the public for the way in which it captures the full impact of the loss—he argues that difficult decisions must rest on robust discussion.

If the practitioners of the professions are sometimes disturbed, even repulsed by what it takes to do their jobs properly, then it is to be expect-

ed that the public, which does not understand the imperatives of the professional roles, will also be disturbed. . . . Therefore any action should be the result of considered choice, for only then can it be explained and defended. (p. 88)

**Case studies.** Writing from Canada, Fullerton (2004) examines the way journalists interact with children, and, like Kennamer, argues that media professionals adopt rigid guidelines similar to those set out by the social sciences to ensure the ethical treatment of human subjects. While many countries have guidelines in place with regard to the ethical treatment of children, Canada does not. “While reporters and editors virtually everywhere believe that children’s voices should be heard in the news, there is no standard procedure in place for anticipating or predicting how children’s lives will, or might, change because journalists write stories about them” (Fullerton, 2004, p. 512). In light of three feature articles on children—one on a 12-year-old with cystic fibrosis and two on children living within Toronto’s welfare system—she argues that informed consent alone may not alleviate ethical problems, citing the unequal power dynamic between reporter and child, possible parental pressure to participate, lack of understanding on the part of the child as to the impact of the coverage, the potential psychological risk involved, and the sense of abandonment the child might feel once a reporter who has befriended her withdraws from the scene. Fullerton both calls for a protocol to guide reporters in their responsibility when stories involve children, and suggests that journalism schools educate students about the ethical implications of interviewing children. Offering vulnerable interviewees a way to withdraw is extremely important and ought to be offered by all journalists interacting with minors. She concludes that, as social scientists must submit a risk-benefit estimation, reporters should similarly elevate newsroom debates from “how to cover” to “should we cover” (p. 521). As an example of the value of bringing ethical theory and case studies into the classroom, I recently cited several questions brought up by this study in a senior capstone class, prompting rich discussion among students, several of whom were pursuing long-form projects involving interviews with minors.

In a useful analysis of the ethical complexity of using anecdotes, Craig (2003) proposes a framework for choosing them more critically. Drawing on the literature on exemplification to show how personal frames can affect audience thinking by turning the

focus from the issues at hand to an emotional (and often misleading) connection with the exemplar, Craig argues for a more careful use of anecdotal information. While the wrong anecdotes can skew the meaning of a story, highly emotional anecdotes can overshadow the broader point. He uses three frameworks for evaluating ethical use of anecdotal information: his own framework for analyzing news coverage of ethics; Christians, Ferre and Fackler’s communitarian ethic (1993); and Gilligan’s relationship-oriented ethic of care (1982). Noting that all three provide an ethical underpinning for use of anecdotes, he admits the difficulties of choosing the right ones. Applying the three frameworks to stories about human embryo research, physician-assisted suicide, and HMOs [health maintenance organizations] to justify the use of anecdotal information, he proposes that an adaptation of casuistry could help journalists choose the right ones, such as using two anecdotes from ethical extremes, not in an artificial attempt at balance, but to illustrate the viewpoint spectrum, or using one morally ambiguous anecdote to illustrate the complexity of an issue. He also suggests that journalists consider expanding anecdotal information into multiple sidebars to maximize reader understanding.

Finally, in a look at causation, Lee (2005) tackles the link between competition and ethical lapses. A survey of investigative journalists revealed that the biggest predictors of tolerance for deception had to do with competition and the particular medium. Both television journalists and journalists who viewed “competition as an important consideration in ethical decision making are more tolerant of deception” (Lee, 2005, p. 22). Conceding that the media’s watchdog role may at times require deception with regard to sources, she argues that it nonetheless undermines media credibility. Deception occurs on two levels—deceiving the audiences by fabrication, tampered quotes, or staged events; and deceiving sources with hidden camera, misrepresentation, even flattery. When journalists treat these as separate entities, they risk alienating all stakeholders. Lee concludes that “ethical behavior may be located within the realm and grasp of the individual, but for journalists caught up in the pragmatic pursuit of the bottom line, ethics can only be an unattainable ideal” (p. 38). News organizations, then, have a responsibility to promote a deeper awareness about the pragmatic elements that contribute to deception. Lee also worries that as the

Internet leads to the convergence of media in presenting the news, the print-broadcast gap in tolerance for deception may erode.

With the growing popularity of the Internet and the proliferation of 24-hour news networks, there is a pressure on getting it first rather than getting it right. Media convergence may be a hedge against declining viewers and readership, but when a journalist's work is distributed across three platforms, a clash of values is imminent. (p. 36)

Despite the call for more scholarship on a theoretical level, much research still rests on case studies or applied ethics. While not necessarily advancing the pursuit of a well-defined theory of journalism ethics, case studies can serve as useful prompts for rich classroom discussion. Berrington and Jemphrey (2003) examine the ethics of reporting tragedy through the lens of a mass murder of young children by a lone gunman, who then turned the gun on himself, in Scotland in 1996. They paint a grim picture of reporters thrown into the crucible of reporting tragedy while caught within a competitive media system at odds with personal and professional ethics. While editors asked many reporters to "doorbell" the families of the bereaved, the industry still acknowledged that the press exercised self-restraint. An irony arises from the fact that, with the focus on the families and the feeling among many reporters that they should protect them, the press allowed official sources to "manage the information" regarding the killing itself. Overwhelmed by the personal impact of the tragedy, reporters neglected to aggressively question the police or to dig into the heart of the story: how the killer had obtained his gun licenses, despite multiple allegations against him that had not been pursued. In light of this case, the authors argue for codes of practice with specific guidelines for reporting on disasters as well as guidelines for protecting the reporters involved. They also acknowledge the difficult balance: "Empathy, consideration for the feelings of those involved in or affected by events, and respect for victims remain important issues to be balanced against journalists' responsibility to report events fully, without unnecessarily censoring or sanitizing the news" (Berrington & Jemphrey, 2003, p. 244).

Finally, on a nuts-and-bolts ethics issue, Fedler (2006) explores the long and varied history of plagiarism, the lack of a standard definition, and the reasons for confusion as to what constitutes it. He compares

different eras in terms of attitudes and practices, finding that, "by today's standards, much of the behavior in early newsrooms was blatantly unethical" (Fedler, 2006, p. 30). Some plagiarized, others eavesdropped, while still others impersonated the police to get stories. While plagiarism was accepted practice in early eras, plagiarism persists in today's newsrooms though journalists appear to recognize it as unethical. Fedler argues that journalists (and, I would add, journalism educators) can best curtail the problem by going beyond simple definitions, discussing its many forms, reiterating the need for attribution, and making serious consequences known. I find this article, like a number of the others dealing with ethics, useful in the applied classroom, especially with beginning-level students.

Much of the work of the past decade has value for the journalism classroom, where motivated and bright students might consider the theories and cases presented, digging deeper into the meaning of ethical decision making, using that framework to discuss methods of holding journalists accountable, and utilizing case-studies as foundation for a problem solving approach to what surely is one of the largest public crises facing today's news media: the presumed ethics—or lack of same—of its practitioners.

The irony is that journalists are actually more ethical than the public assumes. Despite research questioning the ethical behavior of journalists vis-à-vis competition, the influence of the bottom-line, and the presumed need of journalists to please the corporate powers-that-be, Coleman and Wilkins demonstrated the ethical standing of journalists in a series of studies beginning in 2002. Preliminary data using the Defining Issues Test found that a convenience sample of journalists ranked fourth highest among professionals in measurements of moral development, scoring behind seminarians/philosophers, medical students, and physicians, but above dental students, nurses, graduate students, undergraduates, and adults in general. They argue that "despite public perception, the journalists who completed our study are not moral pygmies" (Coleman & Wilkins, 2002, p. 220). A 2004 study with a purposeful sample of 249 journalists replicated their original findings (Coleman & Wilkins, 2004). These results remained consistent with yet another study. Considering the fact that in all the studies, journalists scored higher when ethical problems focused professionally, the authors suggest that "giving journalists the opportunity to work through more ethical dilemmas, whether they are real, occurring on the job, or hypothetical in semi-

nars and workshops, bodes well for the profession” (Coleman & Wilkins, 2004, p. 521) They also argue for

a journalistic domain of knowledge and that journalists think even better about ethical problems in that domain than they do about general problems. . . . [T]his suggests there is more to

being a journalist than learning to write in inverted pyramid [a U.S. journalism style that begins with the most important items] and mastering nonlinear editing. Thinking like a journalist involves moral reflection . . . at a level that in most instances equals or exceeds members of other learned professions. (p. 521)

#### 4. New Areas for Research and Education

As journalism education moves forward, I believe it necessary to investigate niche areas that have not received as much attention in either the academy or the classroom: science writing, literary journalism, and the alternative press. While these areas matter to the future of journalism education, relatively few people address them in the main journals. In our rapidly changing world, science reporting has found an increasingly important presence in the daily press, but often suffers from a rush to print. Section A reviews research on science writing that addresses the inherent constraints in “getting it right,” a body of work that may help to incorporate science-writing into a journalism curriculum. Research on both literary journalism (Section B) and the alternative press (Section C) relate back to suggestions in Stephens “J-School Manifesto”: encouraging students to understand and experiment with forms outside traditional journalism as a way to broaden and enrich discussion and practice.

##### *A. Science writing*

Science writing most closely conforms to the journalist’s mandate to provide equal access to information, to assure that knowledge never becomes solely the province of the elite. Without the daily press and the nightly news, most members of the public would have little knowledge of or connection to the breakneck pace of discovery within the broadening world of science once they leave school. For that reason, reporters must serve as both filter and translator, delivering relevant news on medicine, technology, and the environment, for example, in such a way that the reader not only understands the science and its possible applications, but also contextualizing it as well, so that readers can critically evaluate science as it happens. Bringing science writing into the curriculum matters for another essential reason: good enterprise reporting almost always requires the inclusion

of scientific studies and research as means of validation and verification. Reporters must understand the process of scientific inquiry so they can coherently interpret its findings.

Recent writing about science reporting addresses critical questioning of sources, framing of stories, news embargoes, language choices, and writing about—and evaluating—scientific forecasts.

A good science writer must critically question science findings. But an impediment here comes from the uneasy relationship between science reporters and science researchers and their mutual reliance on public relations practitioners whose press releases feed much of the quick stories on scientific findings in the daily news. Over 10 years ago, Walters and Walters (1996) compared news releases to the newspaper stories they generated and found that while newspapers simplified both the science and non-science stories generated by new releases, science stories retained key phrases and showed less overall editing. Journalists often let the language in the release stand rather than risk getting the story wrong, and in so doing “sharpened and leveled science” (pp. 178–79). This and prior research show that reporters take a less critical look at the research itself—they regard the methods and the science with more confidence than may be justified.

Framing based on community structure also affects credible coverage. Studying the dynamics of making sense of environmental risk information, Griffin and Dunwoody (1997) found that community structure affects framing, and framing in turn affects the use of risk-related information. A contamination story framed as a science story more likely included health risk information, but stories framed as a local government or accident story less likely dealt with complicated or sensitive information. Newspapers in larger, pluralistic communities more likely interpreted pollution as a science story—something more threat-

ening to the power structure and leading to a linkage to health effects—than did papers in smaller, homogeneous communities. Drawing on prior research that media in homogeneous communities less frequently question the power structure, they found that media in pluralistic communities more readily framed local polluters as “bad guys” (p. 365), and thus would use a science frame for a local contamination story. Citing the initial coverage of the nuclear power plant leak at Three Mile Island, first covered as an accident by general assignment reporters, the authors investigated the “extent to which science framing of a story about environmental contamination might predispose reporters to seek info about the level of risk or to ask questions that might be neglected if a story were treated, for example, as a political issue or as some kind of event, such as an accident or a hearing” (p. 367). A content analysis of 19 newspapers in 16 communities found that the pluralistic communities used science frames more often; further, it showed that risk linkages were somewhat more prevalent in the science frames. Papers with larger staffs also used science frames more, suggesting “that science framing requires allocation of reporting resources beyond what is required for routine coverage of news” (p. 375).

In a valuable and cautionary tale applicable to medical reporting in both the developed and developing world, Mercado-Martinez, Robles-Silva, Moreno-Leal and Franco-Almazan (2001) found that the framing used by the mass media in Mexico often leads to incomplete and biased coverage of chronic disease. Among other things, this stems from the absence of voices of people with the disease—a message that applies to reporting across many different areas, not just science or medicine. While the Mexican press gave important coverage to AIDS, it tended to neglect one of the most prevalent chronic diseases, diabetes. Further, when the media did address diabetes, they focused on a biomedical model rather than the personal cost of the disease, and thus “painted an idealized impression of health care” (Mercado-Martinez, Robles-Silva, Moreno-Leal, & Franco-Almazan, 2001, p. 235). With the AIDS mortality rate of 4.7 per 100,000 and the diabetes mortality rate, 37.4 per 100,000, coverage of AIDS remained over 10 times that of diabetes. The researchers also found that about half of all articles on diabetes focused on the prevalence of the disease rather than on its complications. Moreover, coverage was “partial to the voices of experts and officials. Not only are the voices of

patients and their families absent, but also the concerns they do express are not evident in the journalistic coverage” (p. 242). As a result, “readers of daily and weekly publications may not be receiving a comprehensive coverage of medical conditions that accurately reflects the magnitude of health problems for the population at large, the economic impact . . . or the importance of preventative measures” (p. 243). They suggest that editorial selectivity might account for this—AIDS coverage lends itself to more sensational reporting or to a focus on medical breakthroughs, thus generating greater reader interest. They also note that a focus on “acute-infection” diseases such as AIDS might relate to the perception that infectious diseases are related to poverty. This drives coverage from the “public health sector” and results in coverage biased toward the biomedical perspective with less attention to socio-economic factors, especially in the case of diabetes; the exclusion of the voices of the sick and their advocates, many of whom are critical of their care, presents a biased impression of existing services. I would argue that such coverage is also at odds with the journalist’s obligation to foster debate in the public as a way to effect change.

Kiernan (2003) addresses the news embargo as yet another impediment to good science coverage—and by extension, public debate. The embargo enables scholarly journals to shape their own coverage and results in pack journalism. Arguing that embargoes play to journalists’ “preference for breaking news” (p. 904), Kiernan showed by a content analysis of 25 dailies and the Associated Press (AP), along with embargoed press releases from *JAMA* [the *Journal of the American Medical Association*], *Nature*, *Science*, and *New England Journal of Medicine*, the coverage by the AP served as the most influential agenda-setter on dailies. If the AP covered a particular study, that story—or one written by a staffer or picked up from another wire service—would also appear in other media outlets. When it comes to breaking news about research, newspapers make sure they cover what other newspapers cover: “The goal is not to be different, but to be the same” (p. 917). This limits and even proscribes readers’ access to the full spectrum of available information.

Even the conventions of journalism language itself can work against credible science reporting (Macdonald, 2005). While most media critics focus on “cognition, political effects, sociological factors, the speed of journalism, or background research” (p. 277)

as the root of sensationalist science reporting, Macdonald looks to the language of popular media designed for audiences more likely to expect some degree of “simplification, vividness, or entertainment with their news” (p. 278). To examine the issue Macdonald analyzed the coverage of the Women’s Health Initiative (WHI) study of hormone replacement therapy (HRT), which was abruptly shut down in July 2002, as a lens into the language of science journalism, often criticized as being either sensational or alarmist. She found that nouns, verbs, attributions, and word order all played “crucial roles in shifting the science from forensic to epideictic” (p. 282). The most striking difference between the research itself and the writing about it was justification. “Whereas scientific writing spends nearly half its effort describing and justifying its reasoning . . . the journalistic accounts drop most of the reasoning and evidence-weighting (p. 285). The reader has only a focus on results, with no attention on gray areas. Another weakness came from journalistic attribution styles, which imply both a kind of balance and adds narrative tension; neither necessarily aids clarity (p. 288). Finally, she found that the use of anecdotal information (in the case of the WHI story, the continuing narrative was the anxiety felt by women who had been taking HRT) shifted the focus of coverage from the science to the women themselves. While acknowledging the value of narrative in engaging the reader, she concludes, “If journalists consistently choose concrete subjects and active verbs and bypass attending to the methods, reasoning, limitations, or the tentativeness of scientific news, their accounts of science are likely to be problematic” (p. 294). As a writer who has done a considerable amount of science writing, including on this issue, I have to ask why Macdonald presumes that a journalist cannot do both—report the people and the science.

A good deal of science writing addresses the future in attempts to forecast. How can it be done credibly and critically? Hyde (2006) traveled back to the days of Dolly the cloned sheep to search for trends in the coverage of genetic cloning in U.S. newspapers and online news sources from 1996–1999. His rhetorical analysis uncovered four trends: portrayal of cloning in technological terms, reliance on sources from biotech companies and research institutes, language depicting cloning positively, and overwhelming emphasis on future benefits. “When journalism significantly shifts from reporting about current and past events into reporting about possible futures, as it does in the case

of cloning, a reassessment of journalism’s role and practice is merited” (p. 230). Examining major news organizations (those most likely to set the agenda for smaller newspapers), Hyde discovered that the initial focus on the techniques and tools shifted in the following weeks to a focus on the potential of the technology in terms of new drugs and treatments. Fewer than 2% of articles addressed potential negative consequences; fewer than 3%, environmental consequences; and less than a third, social issues. He also found that reporters relied on a limited number of sources, most of them positive, and most of them related to either the biotech industry or research institutions, both likely to profit from further research. “Such industry slants may also reflect either a lack of spokespeople knowledgeable enough to articulate criticisms of current cloning procedures or reluctance on the part of news organizations to devote the space required to explicate problems, inadequacies, and risks in cloning research designs” (p. 241–42). When they turned to future concerns, writers more likely addressed potential medical benefits declaratively while they constructed ethical issues as questions. The attention to technology and its benefits and the reliance on a small number of sources reveal “that research corporations and medical organizations are setting the agenda for the ways in which scientific research is reported” (p. 246). Hyde suggests, wisely, that questions about science reporting raised by this study relate to all journalism: how should journalists present speculation? What responsibilities do journalists have in investigating and acknowledging the vested interests of their sources?

Several short essays by science writers regarding the constraints they find inherent in good science writing should prove useful in the journalism classroom. A 2002 *Neiman Reports* roundtable points to the need for expertise, time, and a healthy dose of professional skepticism in covering science properly. Holz addresses the vulnerability of science writers, like all beat reporters, to adopting the point of view of the sources they regularly cover, shifting their loyalties from the public to the science itself, which may account for coverage that is more “congratulatory than critical” (Holz, 2002, p. 6). Like Hyde he sees the difficulty in finding neutral sources in ongoing debates and the need for reporters to recognize conflicts between scientific impartiality and the commercial research contracts that support their work.

Franklin discusses the “wild ride” science writers have had over the past half century, mediating between

sources who often “despised the media for its many excesses and oversimplifications” and editors who often “dismissed our news as too complex and too specialized” (Franklin, 2002, p. 8). Despite its expanding importance, journalists tend not to recognize science news—until it breaks, with the result that “each scientific and technological advance has surprised us” (p. 9). In addition, providing readers with the backstory they need to contextualize the breaking story takes time, space, and expertise—often the casualties of newsroom cutbacks.

Dean attributes many of the difficulties inherent in science writing to both the increasing specialization within science itself, along with the commercialization of research, including the influence of PR practitioners whose press releases often go further than the results of the research.

If we are insufficiently vigilant, we can get sold on something whose true significance is far from clear. Or we might be so cautious that we miss truly important developments . . . these difficulties can be addressed only by scientists committed to explaining their work to the lay public in clear and dispassionate terms. (Dean, 2002, p. 26)

To do the job well, Rensberger suggests science writers keep the uncertainty of science in mind. Science is a discipline of “incremental steps” and problems occur when science writers zero in on conclusions rather than cautions. “Their focus should be more on increasing the public’s understanding, and less on hyping apparent ‘gee-whiz’ moments” (Rensberger, 2002, p. 12). Similarly, Blum argues that science writers should assert the same watchdog role when covering science that they assume when covering city hall: hard questions, investigating researchers’ reputations, not accepting face value. Reporters find such skepticism much more difficult when it comes to science writing. “Because we still, culturally, are deferential toward science, the pronouncements of research too frequently go unchallenged” (Blum, 2002, p. 15).

In reviewing these and other studies, it becomes clear that the inclusion of science writing into the journalism curriculum is valuable not only for its own sake, but additionally as a good lens through which to examine journalism practice in general. The same imperatives apply: critical thinking; careful use of language; utilization of a wide variety of sources; and a willingness to go beyond the pack, rather than to be a part of it.

## B. *The alternative press*

Some studies cited in this review—and indeed, many media scholars themselves—tend to privilege the alternative press, seeing it as more independent from corporate influence and as a more credible, less contaminated source of news than the mainstream media. I define the alternative press broadly, from grass roots journalism to advocacy journalism to alternative weeklies, which, as evidenced by the 2006 merger of New Times Newspapers with Village Voice Media, may one day suffer the problems of their mainstream counterparts. Even without a large body of research on alternative journalism, we can still discern lessons applicable to journalism as a whole, especially with regard to utilization of sources outside the mainstream, independent attitudes among the journalists and editors themselves, story selection, and less bottom-line oriented business practices. In addition, many regard alternative media as better able to stand apart from local power structures than to become a part of them.

*The Alley*, a neighborhood newspaper in Phillips (a diverse and impoverished neighborhood in Minneapolis), a paper originally published out of the garage of its editor, provides a good case study. Hindman (1998) presents an ethnography of the role of a newspaper straddling the line between mainstream and advocacy journalism, illuminating the way *The Alley* redefined objectivity, newsgathering, and story construction. The paper grew out of the history of the neighborhood press, borne of the “radical” press movement of the 1950s, whose primary focus was a sense of social justice brought to the local level, with journalist as activist.

Clearly the primary focus of the new urban press is on the local community, and on giving power, access, and group identity to city neighborhoods. And in certain lower-income neighborhoods, neighborhood newspapers act as an advocate for the poor, challenging assumptions about the inner city and its residents. (Hindman, 1998, p. 181)

*The Alley* illustrates the tension between the conventions of professional journalism and advocacy journalism: in this small, award-winning paper, though the editor edges toward professionalism, he still acknowledges his goal of speaking from the perspective of the poor. Begun in 1976 as a monthly paper with no employees other than the editor, *The Alley* now pays

writers, encouraging them to investigate different sides to an issue, incorporating official voices when necessary. However, the writers are all neighborhood insiders, and the editor encourages balance, rather than objectivity, in keeping the focus on the neighborhood. Hindman concludes that *The Alley* has struck a good balance in resolving the tension between the two worlds: “*The Alley* tries to present various sides of an issue, organize around general beats and use local expert sources, and balance literary and journalistic writing styles. Yet the topics the paper takes on, and the battles it fights, place it squarely in the advocate camp” (p. 191).

Exploring the contrast between what he refers to as a “liberal-minded reform movement” and a more radical alternative, Howley (2003) conducted an empirical study of *Street Feat*, a street paper from Halifax, Nova Scotia, to draw a distinction between public journalism and street newspapers, which he finds much more compelling in their ability to engage readers in fundamental issues of social justice. While both forms seek to improve public life, public journalism operates from within the mainstream, while street papers align themselves more squarely with advocacy. By giving a voice to people or issues that rarely have a presence in the mainstream press, street papers form “a unique form of communicative democracy . . . [that] underscore the glaring power differentials between those with considerable economic, material and symbolic capital and those with little or no access to such resources” (Howley, 2003, pp. 274–75). Because street papers “construct a discursive space” to articulate and publicize concerns with regard to housing, health care, and social services, street papers “more fully realize public journalism’s potential” (p. 280). These papers, though, have their own inherent conflicts, which apply as well to other forms of alternative media: while the activist newspapers publicize poverty and in so doing, call into question the capitalist system, they still, by design, provide entrepreneurial opportunities for the homeless people who sell them and, as such, must adopt a business model. Even with this conflict, “by providing such a forum for the voices of the poor, street papers democratize journalistic practice in a far more fundamental and substantive fashion than does public journalism in its present form” (p. 287).

Much of the difference between the alternative and mainstream press involves the framing of stories and the sources utilized in telling them. Harcup (2003) explored the difference between alternative and main-

stream journalism in the United Kingdom by examining the difference in coverage of 1981 riots in Leeds, England. He found that the mainstream daily, the *Yorkshire Evening Post*, reported the riots as a law-and-order story, focusing on destruction of property and the issuance of more weapons to police, while the alternative paper, *Leeds Other Paper*, “contextualized the events within a framework of poverty, unemployment, low pay, alienation, and racist attacks” (Harcup, 2003, p. 363). While the mainstream paper utilized official sources, the alternative paper did not and instead privileged the voices of the powerless. The alternative press, by providing access to alternative voices, arguments, facts, and perspectives “may indeed be able to subvert the dominant discourse, albeit to a limited audience” (p. 367).

Continuing his research into the alternative press two years later, Harcup (2005) examined the “crossover” of both practice and personnel between alternative and mainstream media, noting that evaluating the different forms of media should reflect less of an “either-or” approach and more of a continuum. In order to explore the complexities of the relationship between the two forms of journalism, he invited 22 journalists from the United Kingdom who had worked in both venues to reflect on their experiences. He found it encouraging that in many cases, the reporters’ alternative values informed their mainstream practice. They often used sources they had developed in the alternative media in their mainstream reporting and evaluated news values differently as well, pursuing stories other reporters might overlook. Harcup suggests that his findings “echo a trend that can be detected in some recent writing about alternative media: that such media cannot be understood in isolation from the mainstream” (p. 368). He argues that neither the media nor the journalists they employ can be regarded as monolithic entities, and calls for a search for more nuanced positions, positions that recognize back and forth movement.

Kenix (2005) also found reason to reject the binary approach—but not in a positive light—in her examination of 29 years of reporting on air pollution from four groups of newspapers, representing both alternative and mainstream press, different ownership models, and different socioeconomic and ethnic readerships. In examining the widely-held theory that the alternative press reports issues differently in response to its unique audience, she found no difference whatsoever between media when it came to environmental coverage, which was “overwhelmingly directed to

upper-socioeconomic groups across all four categories of newspapers” (Kenix, 2005, p. 49). She attributes this to a combination of journalistic norms and a dependence on advertising. In nearly monolithic coverage, she found that the realities portrayed in the news coverage catered overwhelmingly to upper socio-economic individuals while issues that matter to lower socio-economic and minority groups, those most likely to suffer environment-related health problems, were neglected. For example, nearly all papers covered improved household efficiency, population control, or boycotting polluters while they typically neglected references to civil rights or socioeconomic class factors. Because all of the papers had different owners—both large conglomerates and private owners—organizational structure had little or no influence on coverage. Because of this, Kenix calls for a fundamental change within journalism itself. While it is unclear whether reliance on advertising or journalistic norms explain the monolithic coverage, she suggests that because coverage skewed toward upper-socioeconomic groups, that advertising plays the more powerful role.

On the other hand, Rauch (2003) found substantial difference between mainstream and alternative press service coverage of the Group of 77 Summit, convened in Cuba in 2000. While the Associated Press filtered and framed stories through the lens of the United States’ perspective, emphasizing “disunity, neglect, and controversy,” the Inter Press Service, an alternative news service that highlights developing world issues, emphasized the southern nations’ “cooperation, achievement, and goals” (Rauch, 2003, p. 87). While AP stories focused on controversial leaders of the developing nations—Castro, Arafat, Gadhafi—as main actors, they still quoted U.S. sources as frequently as sources from the developing nation. IPS stories, on the other hand, provided richer analysis of developing issues, and greater use of activist and critical sources. Rauch concludes, “As vital elements of the mediascape, alternative news sources such as IPS construct social identities, challenge the regime du savoir, and help audiences adequately assess world events” (p. 101).

Kelleher (2000) suggests that one of the great roles of the alternative press is watchdog of the mainstream media. The best work of the alternatives comes from those that put more emphasis on reporting, rather than simply printing “gripes” from disgruntled staffers, and that point out overlooked story angles as well as

distortions in coverage. Kelleher quotes *Slate’s* media critic Jack Shafer:

In most American cities, the daily newspaper is a monopoly. It has ceased to be just a daily newspaper and become an institution. The press critics at the alternative dailies do what no one else will do. They write biting, skeptical, honest stories that demystify that institution—that show the interests, biases, and human foibles behind it. (qtd. in Kelleher, 2000, p. 49)

The effect of alt-weeklies in keeping the dailies honest poses an interesting topic for future research. Within the curriculum itself, incorporating study of the alternative press would clearly benefit students in terms of helping them evaluate and build a wider repertoire of journalistic skills. It would also provide a yardstick against which to measure the mainstream press. Finally, juxtaposing the alternative vs. mainstream press in the classroom could provide students with a larger platform from which they could more critically evaluate what constitutes best practice—and why.

### C. *Literary journalism*

The growing popularity of literary journalism may be one of the enduring legacies of the dwindling Sunday magazine sections of the mainstream dailies, as well as the alternative weeklies, whose cover stories often feature this hybrid form of journalism, which people call everything from “narrative journalism” to “literature of fact” to “creative non-fiction.” While difficult to define categorically, the best examples of the genre show literary techniques such as scene-setting and dialogue and a narrative structure, all based on comprehensive and exhaustive reporting. Most often found on the pages of glossy magazines, literary journalism’s elements have begun to migrate to the pages of daily newspapers, where reporters, editors, educators, and readers alike have begun to recognize the value of journalism that transcends the standard inverted pyramid format.

According to Moore and Lamb (2005), the growing popularity of the form led to the introduction of feature writing to the Pulitzer prize categories in 1978 (with the first such award given in 1979). With its modern roots in the New Journalism of the 1960s, literary journalism shifts focus from official sources and public policy to the story of real life. In the introduction to his anthology of literary journalism, Harrington writes:

We keep reporting the movement of the planets  
when the big news is the unseen matter in which

they spin. At best, most journalists are oblivious to reporting the incredible human beauty and subtlety that surround them. At worst, they militantly oppose reporting what they are untrained to discern and describe. But either way, readers are being denied a look at much of the world they inhabit.

In the language of the craft, we are missing the story. (Harrington, 1997, p. xii)

Little critical scholarship has examined literary journalism to date. Hartsock (1998) explores why the form defies easy definition and why both the English and mass communication academies have ignored it. One reason for this critical ambivalence lies in the fact that the form has no delineated boundaries. "It has presented itself as a moving target, defying the critical calipers of the academy born of positivist assumptions that require definitive identification" (Hartsock, 1998, p. 64). He traces the history of American literary journalism from Stephen Crane and Lincoln Steffens through the marginalization of journalism by the English academy in the 20th century to the dismissal of literary journalism in favor of modernist objectivity by the journalism community and, later, to its rejection by the mass communication academy, which upheld the tenets of social science. "Journalism would be condemned as a merely utilitarian exercise by the rise of the concept of objectivity and the scientific direction mass communications study would take, both of which are founded on positivist assumptions about what we can and are permitted to know about the world, a world that could not be 'literary'" (p. 81).

Hartsock (1999) expands on the theme, mentioning that people cannot even agree on definitive terminology. Another problem results from the intrusion of the writer's subjectivity into the narrative texts. "Narrative literary journalism then has attempted to drag the journalistic concept of a verifiable truth claim 'into a zone of contact with reality' that more openly acknowledges its shaping by subjectivity, as opposed to a repressed subjectivity in objectified news" (Hartsock, 1999, p. 440). Trying to categorize the form by means of "discrete classification" only leads to failure and so critics should use the form's fluidity as the critical site for investigation. "Like the chameleon, the form changes color according to the mode of questioning brought to bear on it. By acknowledging this, we gain greater insight into the nature of such literary 'factions' as part of a larger 'quantum' narrative; of inter-

pretation or approximation, not a narrative of neatly delineated certainty" (p. 440).

A key element of literary journalism reporting practice involves immersion journalism techniques, where reporters utilize a wealth of time and space to learn about their subjects from the inside. The process can take days, weeks, even months. Weinberg investigates the practice, which calls for writers to inject "real storytelling into their stories, producing memorable narratives, long ones, about the not-so-ordinary aspects of ordinary life" (Weinberg, 1998, p. 56). He traces its history back to 1979, when Jon Franklin won the first of two Pulitzer prizes for "Mrs. Kelly's Monster," a narrative for Baltimore's *Evening Sun* of one woman's losing battle with brain surgery, written through the perspective of the doctor who performed it (Franklin, in Harrington, 1997, pp. 97–106). Referencing the work of Leon Dash, Tracy Kidder, Walt Harrington, and Gary Smith, among others, Weinberg notes the enormous requirements in terms of time and discipline to get such stories exactly right. Weinberg also addresses the final writing of the piece, referring back to Tom Wolfe's New Journalism benchmarks: scenes, character description, dialogue, and details.

Still, literary journalism brings important ethical caveats, what Kovach and Rosenstiel call "the implied contract of nonfiction" (2001, p. 36). They caution that ethical literary journalism must avoid rearranging events and conflating characters or events, while letting audiences know exactly how writers verified reconstructions and identifying sources as fully as possible. Frank (1999) looks specifically at the ethics of reconstruction, a mainstay of narrative journalism, and the need therein for solid attribution. Because of the "powerhouse" effect of reconstructive narratives, when writers play the "omniscient narrator" and neglect to tell the reader where they got their facts, the reader becomes distracted at best, deceived at worst.

Without such familiar signposts as "police said," or "according to court records," the reader loses his bearings. He wanders off in search of the reporter, only to discover that, unlike Waldo in the popular children's picture-book series, the reporting is not in the picture at all. At that point, he begins to doubt: if the reporter was not there, how does she know all this? The more detailed the reconstruction, ironically, the more the reader has grounds to suspect that the reporter embellished the facts for the sake of a good yarn. (Frank, 1999, p. 147)

Frank further explores the differences between eyewitness reports and reconstructions, the ethical implications of the latter, the writer's obligation to let the reader know where the information originated, and his concerns whether even an editor's note allays readers' doubts. Confusion caused by blurred lines between reconstructions and eyewitness accounts leads (through the absence of attribution) to the appearance of fabrication. Suggesting that the reason for withholding attribution in a reconstruction is primarily aesthetic, he suggests that in "collapsing the distinction between a story based on eyewitness reporting and a story based on other people's stories, the writers of reconstructions privilege storytelling over reporting, preserving artistic integrity at the expense of journalistic integrity" (Frank, 1999, p. 155). Readers have a right to assume that reporters witnessed unattributed information; they deserve more than an editor's note at the beginning or end of the story.

Bringing the debate into the classroom, Abrahamson (2006) reexamines literary journalism as a return to similar forms of the past, acknowledging the pedagogical challenges of teaching this form of journalism in a time of changing rules. The trend away from the inverted pyramid over the past 15 years suggests that competition from alternative media may partially account for the rise of literary journalism. Similarly, journalists influenced by Tom Wolfe also choose to move outside the constraints of objective journalism. Finally, a careerist aspect indicates the presence of editorial direction to do this kind of journalism, along with enhanced career opportunities deriving from the greater attention it garners. As a teacher of literary journalism since the early 1990s, Abrahamson offers several pedagogical insights: Because students often want to know where literary journalism fits within more conventional practices, educators should explore the reasons why to do it, such as the timelessness of literary journalism versus the "ephemerality" of the 24-hour news cycle. Literary journalism allows students to do personal work on unconventional or under-reported topics *they* find important—an individual versus institution issue. Third, literary journalism gives students a venue for experimentation. Finally, literary journalism allows students to see journalism as a profession, rather than a trade. "The presence of higher aesthetic or artistic standards of writing embedded in literary journalism contributes to the claims of journalism as a whole to the status of the profession" (Abrahamson, 2006, p. 433).

Abrahamson observes that teaching literary journalism has taught him that there is no inherent conflict between fact and story.

The sacred inverted pyramid may have become somewhat diverted, but its factual imperatives remain. There are, however, not only different forms of truth but also many different ways to communicate the truth. . . . I and, again I hope, my students see cause to celebrate the claim of what we call literary journalism to the realm of legitimate professional practice. (p. 433)

Having also taught literary journalism for the past eight years, I would have to agree.

Finally, in an important look at the law on this relatively new journalistic form, Forde (2005) addresses the victory for the defendants in *Masson v New Yorker*, the libel suit brought by psychoanalyst Jeffrey Masson against the *New Yorker* magazine for defamatory statements made by writer Janet Malcolm in a two-part essay in 1983. In Forde's view, the decision has shaped "the legal landscape in which narrative journalism is practiced for more than a decade" (Forde, 2005, p. 101). She notes that courts have used the decision in favor of the *New Yorker* in numerous defamation cases across the nation to define whether "storytelling is a legitimate vehicle for delivering the news" (p. 102). "Courts are applying Masson's material alteration test in ways that consistently protect journalists who do not substantially alter the meaning of speakers' words" (p. 112). In the *Masson* case, the issue hinged on the deliberate modification of a quote from Masson, wherein Malcolm reported him referring to himself as an "intellectual gigolo." In ruling for the *New Yorker*, the majority opinion of the U.S. Supreme Court established that quotation alteration does not necessarily show malice, but still acknowledged that a fabricated quote can "injur[e] reputation" (p. 107). By applying the "gist rule," the court thus established a test that says that minor inaccuracies do not reach falsity as long as the substance of the defamatory matter is substantially true (p. 106), thus extending First Amendment protections to narrative journalists. Forde cautions, however, that "in defamation cases where issues of narrative technique involve anecdotes or juxtaposition, Masson has not immunized the defendant as a matter of law but rather left the defendant open to a jury determination of falsity. And of course Masson itself made clear that the First Amendment offers no protection for narrative journalists who substantially alter their quotations" (p. 131).

### *D. Reflections*

Certainly journalism teachers should explore subject areas other than these three more definitively in their journalism curriculum or research agenda. Reporting on religion is one. But we see in these three emerging areas three bodies of work that succeed in positioning journalism beyond the bounds of the traditional box. In published work on science writing, we find examination of reporting and writing techniques that not only serve an essential function in the coverage

of today's cutting edge, but also provide techniques generalizable to other forms of journalism. Alternative media can provide a comparative lens through which to measure mainstream practices. And published work on literary journalism creates a venue for not only analyzing the work of journalism masters, much as might occur in the literature academy, but also provides a framework for encouraging scholars, students, and practitioners to investigate structures that lie outside the mainstream norms.

## **5. The Newest Challenge: A Global Perspective**

As the world gets smaller and journalism extends its global reach, one must teach and study journalism from a global perspective. We must also realize the futility of either a one-size-fits all approach or exporting Western journalism values throughout the world. Most research over the past decade has shown that journalism—or journalism education—does not live in isolation from the politics or culture of the country in which it resides. The recent introduction of several scholarly journals devoted to the study of journalism on the international plane, as well as a growing number of international conferences, indicate the growing importance of this topic.

Ten years ago, Chang, in his introduction to a special issue of the *Journal of the AEJMC* on international education, argued that “only through comparison can we better understand the spirit and practices of such education in a world that has increasingly been made smaller by the flow of resources and technologies between regions and among nations” (Chang, 1997, p. 4). While journalism education around the world might link to an “indigenous quest for modernization,” the imprint of U.S. influences are “clearly discernible” (p. 5). Because many countries inextricably tie politics to journalism education, a “holistic” view becomes necessary to “answer the perennial question of why the U.S. educational model does not work, or may not be the best solution when it moves overseas” (p. 5). Two articles in that issue are cases in point.

Morrison (1997) explores the changing model of Russian media and journalism education, noting that during the Soviet period, universities trained journalists to serve the state, but as controls have

eased since the 1990s, journalism training has evolved toward the Western model. Much of that training stems from imported educators from the U.S., resulting “in a proxy-war for the hearts and minds of Russian journalists and journalism students” (p. 26). Raising questions on the suitability of the commercial U.S. media model, she suggests that instead Americans might consider adapting elements of the European model. In Russia, where until 1991 courses trained journalism students “not to question, but to inform” (p. 27), the training followed those European models in structure. U.S. educators might consider elements of this model—focusing more on literature, philosophy, theory, and the critical questioning of the profit-driven system—rather than continuing to export its own methods and the U.S. mass communication models of teaching journalists. Were these educators to be open and critical about the commercial system, robust debate on the merits of the system would result, to the benefit of all. “U.S. journalism educators could take an honest look at the state of our media, and of our education programs. There is possibly something to be learned from the Russian and European models that might improve the quality of U.S. journalists” (p. 34).

Xiaoming and Xiaoge (1997) trace the history of Chinese journalism education, which uniquely attempts to integrate Soviet and American models, training journalists to be accountable to both political leaders and the public, while balancing the demands of both the burgeoning media industry and the Party. Though perhaps transitory, this hybridity could still become a model for journalism education in other transitional societies. “Changes in journalism educa-

tion are determined by the political and socio-economic restructuring of a society rather than the other way around. That is at least what China's case has shown us" (p. 46).

Chinese journalism originally followed the pattern of the American model, then aligned itself with the lines of the Soviet model after the communist victory, linking journalism with service to the working class, and positioning journalists as the mouthpieces of the Party. Recently, however, responding to the massive political and economic changes, Chinese journalism revived the American model and brought in U.S. professors, as well as American textbooks, to teach applied skills as well as First Amendment issues. But with the Jiang era, the state again reminded journalists that their role was to guide society. "With such bipolar forces at work . . . China's journalism educators found themselves again at a loss for a model. Neither the American model, which suits the commercial development of China's media industry, nor the Soviet model, which suits party leadership, could be copied" (Xiaoming & Xiaoge, 1997, p. 42). This results in a journalism education similar to the Western model in terms of professional skills but with a difference: students learn moral and civic values that define social responsibility as accountability to the Party.

Knowledge is socially defined and school education invariably has to adapt itself to a changing social context. This is especially so for journalism education which is closely tied to the form of a country's media system, which is in turn shaped by the restructuring of a country's political and social-economic systems. (p. 43)

Several years later, Pan and Chan also focused on China in an examination of the "shifting journalistic paradigms in a transitional society" (Pan & Chan, 2003, p. 649), finding that in today's China, professional journalism has emerged as a direct competitor to the party-journalism paradigm. In studying the impact of the emerging market economy on whether journalists more closely aligned themselves with the professional or the party-propaganda models, the authors measured journalists' preferences for two forms of media: one more aligned with the Western model and another more aligned with the party-propaganda organ. In China's transitional society, both paradigms exist, though journalists in China in general view professional news as more desirable than party-organ media, tending to see themselves in terms of the "dissemi-

nator" role, indicating their preference for the professional model. With the impact of globalization, China's journalists borrow from the Western model to fit specific situations. But, "while Western media may serve as a source of inspiration—and may currently serve as exemplars—searching for the "right" Chinese translation is a persistent effort" (p. 671). In some areas, party journalism remains the defining principle while in others, journalists draw inspiration from such Western models as the *New York Times* and *60 Minutes*. The influence of professionalism appears more in open areas such as Shanghai.

Holm agrees that the biggest challenges to journalism education come from "the twin processes of globalization and identification-building" (Holm, 2002, p. 67). Arguing that the process by which we educate new journalists needs to break free of the national mold, he examines a transnational model in Europe against the backdrop of a locally and globally-integrated media system. Even as globalization pulls nations together, "questions of identity are surfacing" (p. 68) and exacerbate the problems for a journalism education focused on training and technology. "Courses that reflect on national stereotypes, global affairs and global-social transformations are few and far between. Both the media and journalism education run the risk of increased parochialization in a time of globalization of the media" (p. 69). As remedy, Holm explores the one-year "Europe in the World" program co-created by Danish and Dutch journalism schools, where students from different countries spend the fall semester in the Netherlands, then the spring in Denmark. This results in an atmosphere of transnationalism where students learn to reflect on the meanings of globalization on a broad stage as well as to question national stereotypes as a way to understand cultural differences. By way of example, he cites American students questioning why Danish TV journalists never do stand-ups, which leads to learning less about technique and more about differences in cultures.

Investigating the importance of cultural identity in the face of standardizing media norms, Holm (2006) also uses Danish TV to show that the search for "best practices" often conflicts with cultural values. Not only do cultural differences *matter*, but not understanding them can have serious consequences for journalism educators. Even though personality-driven Anglo-American on-camera styles

have become acceptable practice with the globalization of media, many Europeans still take offense at the “journalist as media star” approach. In Denmark, for example, a culture that values modesty runs deep, making on-camera reporters seem not only unnecessary, but egotistical. In an era where “the Bologna Process” calls for standardized higher education across Europe, resolving the tension between practice and culture becomes highly problematic. While satellite TV might argue for teaching Anglo-American on-camera style, cultural values may underscore a need to teach the reverse. Hence journalists in countries like Denmark must train for two platforms. “In the meantime, if Denmark’s TV journalism industry wants to change its performance practices to look more like those in Great Britain or some of the other European nations, it will require a profound shift in cultural self-confidence” (p. 385-86).

Perhaps one of the thorniest—and most telling—debates involves ethics. While some scholars call for the development of a universal code, still others have shown how cultural differences may intrude on any sense of uniformity. A trio of researchers from the United States and Israel looked at differences in ethical considerations between American and Israeli journalists and found that the most important factor in ethical decision-making appeared to be the country of origin (Berkowitz, Limor, & Singer, 2004). They presented journalists from one midwestern state and Israel with three ethical scenarios: the first involved negotiating with a source for information, the second involved deception, while the third considered the protection of a confidential source. Despite the fact that the journalists all operated in democratic societies, the results “showed clear differences in response to the first two scenarios, with U.S. reporters much less likely to negotiate with a source, and Israeli reporters much more willing to use deception” (p. 172). Journalists from both countries protected confidential sources. As “correspondents work in other countries, and as news events attract global coverage, shared ethics create cultural bridges, but diverging ethical perspectives may also create barriers, at least in the short term. Over time, as journalists from various nations increasingly interact, ideas about ‘proper’ professional behavior and professional achievements will continue to be exchanged” (p. 177).

Similarly, Rao and Seow (2005) find that implementing a universal code, especially one dominated by Western values, will create problems in the face of different political systems. Their ethnographic study of journalists from India, the Middle East, and Asia found respondents ultimately suspicious of any western-imposed set of values.

One cannot simply *presuppose* the existence and acceptability of universal moral truths or of moral imperatives among journalists across diverse cultures. It is particularly dangerous post 9-11—and post Iraq war—to make such assertions without taking into account the voices of journalists who work in varied, and often radically different cultural, social, organizational, and political settings. (Rao & Seow, 2005, p. 100)

Many journalists eyed any linkages between 9-11 and the search for a global system of media ethics with “post-colonial” suspicion. Several journalists, who requested anonymity in the survey, also feared that because they worked for government-controlled media organizations, codes would not help them anyway.

Still, when asked the desirability of developing cross-cultural and cross national ethical codes, many of the journalists were receptive to the idea, with four themes emerging: respect for others, tolerance for religious and cultural diversity, telling the truth with restraint, and freedom and independence. Given the important role that religion plays among Middle Eastern journalists, any universal principles must take both religious tolerance and cultural differences into account, such as “different ways of conceiving what is right and wrong within social groups that are manifested in the form of customs, beliefs, and traditions” (Rao & Seow, 2005, p. 114).

Finally, Ward (2005b) proposes a framework for formulating a global set of ethics. Journalists need a “radical rethinking” of current principles in a media-linked world that brings together different religions, values, traditions, and political structures, building a cosmopolitan journalism that promotes understanding between groups, addresses global problems, and guards against ethnocentrism. “A successful appreciation of the problems that face the world, and what actions are necessary, requires reporting from an informed and nuanced international perspective” (Ward, 2005b, p. 5). Advocating for a contractual approach where a wide spectrum of journalists, ethicists, and members of the public can

debate a journalist's responsibilities to a global community, he suggests basing the conversation on three claims: "credibility, justifiable consequence, and humanity, [which is] developed further by the formulation of three imperatives: to act as a global agent, to serve world citizens, and to enhance non-parochial understanding" (p. 3). This last claim

might prompt the most controversy in that it suggests that when "journalists consider their journalistic standards and duties, the place of birth, race, or culture of their readers is morally irrelevant. When political partisanship conflicts with principles of humanity, journalists should give precedence to the latter" (p. 15).

## 6. Conclusion: A Look Forward

I recall a journalism class several years ago when my professor quoted a renowned broadcast journalist who once said the reporter's role was to "look under the rug and at the horizon." As scholars and educators, the latter forms our most serious challenge. In this review I have surveyed a broad (and, I hope, representative) sample of research that has in part analyzed failures of the past in order to ground our understanding of what should be done to take us forward. But many other areas and questions that I have not addressed here have begun to bubble up. I conclude now with some areas of study that might fuel our understanding and analysis of the issues necessary to address journalism's future. These include

- *The business of news*: Save the dismantling of media corporations, what can we do to prevent greater erosion of good journalism practice in the face of bottom-line priorities? Do new business models exist that can work in the public interest? How would society fund them? Could they be regulated in the U.S. within the First Amendment? How might they adapt to rapidly changing technologies? Such study might also include a look at the failures of independently-owned media as well, such as the *Santa Barbara News Press*, whose infrastructure imploded last summer when the wealthy private owner attempted to enforce her personal views on news decisions.
- *New technologies*: In many instances the rapid rise of new technologies has taken us by surprise before we have figured out how to think about their impact. How can the journalism academy get out in front of the debate? How do we guard against chasing after new styles of news delivery at the expense of substance?
- *The Internet*: Much debate has centered on the impact of the web on newspapers, but not its impact on journalism itself. What ways can the

web make newspapers better, rather than hastening their demise? (They need not disappear—Jack Shafer, media critic at *Slate*, pointed out that the only news media now extinct is the newsreel, 2005.) How do we manage the rapidly increasing marketplace of ideas, especially in the blogosphere? How do we resolve the tension between filtering and censorship? Are there new ethical imperatives at play? Clearly, when it comes to cyber-news, old rules, even old definitions, no longer apply.

The same applies to "citizen journalism," rapidly becoming cell-phone journalism. Will news organizations begin to rely more and more on citizen-reporters for local news in the face of newsroom layoffs? Does this democratization of the news increase or diminish journalism's mandate to serve the public interest?

- *The newest generation of news consumers*: How do we engage a sizeable demographic that is more likely to get its news from Jon Stewart's *Daily Show* [a televised U.S. comedy program] than any other news media? What impact does this have on journalism itself?
- *Enriching the curriculum*: Many areas, not addressed in this review, are essential for the training of the journalists of the future. Among them are reporting on religion; incorporating multiculturalism into journalism study; and fostering mathematical literacy, often essential for contextualizing and interpreting the news.

A certain amount of irony lies in the fact that, in a centuries-old field with a long history as a profession, we find ourselves yet again at the beginning. Where we will go from here is at once troubling, but also exciting. Before us lies a blank canvas. There is work to be done, both within the curriculum and in the scholarship that sustains it.

## Editor's Afterword

Early in this report authors were cited who called for a broader and more meaningful approach to journalism education in the United States. One (Stephens, 2000, pp. 63–64) wanted journalism courses to teach not only “the basics,” but also to consider “what journalism could and should be.” Another (Adam, 2001, p. 318) asked that journalism courses “educate the journalist as a whole,” rather than as “an apprentice.” Others insisted that technique alone is not enough and that journalism schools should be integrated with other parts of the university so students can develop expertise in other disciplines and greater critical reflection on the profession of journalism itself (Cunningham, 2002, p. 23—interviewing Bollinger).

Journalism schools in some European countries have long emphasized that their graduates require more than techniques but also should have strong, in fact, professional or nearly professional backgrounds in one or more other disciplines, such as law, history, or one of the physical sciences. Such a background would give them a vantage point from which to evaluate their own journalistic practices as they pertain to other aspects of life, the matrix into which their journalism must fit. It also would help them guard against oversimplification when writing about topics unfamiliar to them.

Ethics and objectivity were mentioned above, and some attention was given to the difficulty journalists have in arriving at a truly objective stance in their writing. Ethics poses similar problems. Although courses in ethics are finding their way into journalism curricula, the content of such courses might vary widely, due to the differing assumptions of teachers and textbook authors. The need to avoid plagiarism, would probably find universal acceptance as one content of any ethics course, but some other, more subtle topics could encounter more questioning. Ultimately, I think, ethics must be philosophically grounded, but the condition of philosophy in contemporary academe would seem to have more the qualities of quicksand than of solid ground. The number of authors cited in the text as working on journalistic ethics is encouraging and necessary. Reaching widespread agreement on many ethical questions may, however, be quite problematic.

In the final analysis, much of the responsibility for ethical journalism devolves upon the individual

journalist, himself or herself. The relatively high scoring of journalists compared with other professionals on the Defining Issues Test, cited earlier (Coleman & Wilkins, 2002, p. 220), is an encouraging sign that many accept this responsibility. Topics mentioned above as needing more attention in journalistic education include “niche areas” such as science writing, literary journalism, and the alternative press. Religion, as Kelley notes, might be added to that list, as recent incidents indicate, such as the worldwide turmoil stirred up when a Danish cartoonist included the Prophet Muhammad in one of his cartoons. Religion is one of the most difficult topics for the journalist (or the cartoonist!) to deal with. Its complexity equals or surpasses that of science, especially when all a religion’s subtleties and geographic variations are considered, and the reactions of believers to both intended or accidental misstatements about their own religion can be strong, or even violent.

The incident of the Danish cartoon also suggests that journalists—and others involved in the mass media—must be aware that what they write or say in one language can be quickly translated and made available to unintended audiences, both near and far. This fact need not be a “wet blanket” on expression or a reason for extremes of self-censorship, but should be a stimulus for more decency and politeness in public discourse.

—W. E. Biernatzki, S.J.

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## Book Reviews

**Baker, Andrea J.** *Double Click: Romance and Commitment Among Online Couples.* Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press, Inc., 2005. Pp. ix, 220. ISBN 1-57273-606-2 (hbk.) \$45.00; 1-57273-607-0 (pb.) \$21.95.

Andrea J. Baker's *Double Click: Romance and Commitment Among Online Couples* has its strength in its structure. Baker constructs her study effectively, concentrating on the step-by-step process in which couples engage in an online courtship, and then eventually meet face to face. She uses questionnaires, interviews, and online documents (email exchanges). She also observes websites and engages in participant observation in online communities. In Chapter 1, Baker

introduces the reader to the study by answering this question: why study online relationships? She answers this question by emphasizing the fact that these couples are making a connection without the benefit of close proximity initially, creating soul ties and forming meaningful and intimate relationships from a distance. It is this first revelation that is the study's first structural element lending to its strength. Baker reveals that many of the couples who met online were not searching for a serious relationship. Baker studies the progress of 89 couples who met online, keeping track of their progress as a couple, from their first online meeting, to their first offline, face to face meeting, and their plans for a future together. Using grounded theory, Baker concentrates on observing the empirical data that emerges from the participants' online and offline interactions. Baker's sample, couples ranging in age from 18 to 70 years, with a mean age of 33.7 years, provides a fascinating look into the processes by which couples who meet online interact. A key additional strength-in-structure of her study is the diversity in geographical location of the participants. In addition to representatives from the U.S. in the study, there also were participants from India, as well as Australia and Great Britain, representing a mix of cultures, ethnicities, genders, and lifestyles.

In Chapter 2, Baker focuses on the study of online communication and online relationships. She reviews the existing literature on online relationships, concentrating on emerging themes and findings from previous qualitative studies. Here she thoroughly studies these emerging themes, creating a time line of rich data—an effective strategy showing how far in information and popularity online communication has come, especially from the point of view of these encounters actually turning into serious relationships. One key revelation in this chapter is the distinction between online and offline proximity between couples. Baker explains that, based on the few studies completed on online relationships that progress to offline status, proximity online, unlike offline, is based on the frequency of interaction of the couples. She emphasizes that couples who meet online are comfortable with going online frequently, and when they do meet, it is in an online environment that they are used to accessing on a regular basis. Baker explains that a key factor here is the couples' common interests, and their meeting online in an environment that contains subject matter of interest to them. In addition, Baker emphasizes the breaking of the previously-held belief that self-disclosure happens in a faster and

more in-depth way face-to-face than online. Baker points out that due to online factors such as anonymity, a more intimate, more detailed self-disclosure may actually take place faster between online couples than with those who meet only offline. Baker indicates that the use of email and instant messaging are cyber tools in which this self-disclosure takes place.

In Chapter 3, investigating meeting, Baker indicates how couples meet online, yet notes that the process in which couples meet in cyberspace environments differ. For example, she states that people who met in virtual communities such as listservs were usually not looking for serious relationships, yet found common ground and similar interests. Further, she states that previous research suggests that people who meet online should establish friendships first. The key revelation in this chapter takes place when Baker shares a summary of a couple who met online via a dating service. The emerging themes she finds that are shared by the couple are common interests, sense of humor, impact of nickname, and writing style—all form key factors regarding online attraction among couples.

In Chapter 4, Baker concentrates on the subject of the environments in which people go online, actually meet, and establish relationships via cyberspace. She identifies online games, virtual communities, listservs, web sites, web logs, chat rooms, instant messaging, and dating sites as the key places. Of importance here is Baker's finding that the majority of the couples studied used asynchronous communication through emailing each other once having established communication, mainly via meeting in virtual communities. She also points out that this form of communication, although not in real time, was the main choice of computer-mediated communication among the participants.

Chapter 5 delves into issues of communication and intimacy online. Here Baker emphasizes the research questions on which the study is based. Baker identifies the fact that the couples studied primarily chose email communication over real-time communication due to the contemplative nature they found in writing email. Baker also identifies instant messaging as the second way of communication between the couples. Here she shows the couples' desire to, in many cases, take the relationship at a slow and comfortable enough pace via use of email and instant messaging, before real-time communication through use of the telephone and eventually by face-to-face communication. Also she reveals the importance of the use of emoticons such as smiley faces and other symbols of

emotions in communication via email and computer-mediated communication. This theme is an emergent and recurring one, and is the most powerful in the entire study, one that reveals the fact that asynchronous communication in a dyadic interaction via computer-mediated communication can and has established a foundation of intimacy between couples who have met online. In addition to the use of emoticons to indicate affection between the couples, Baker also finds the frequency in which the couples participated in cybersex with each other. She found a fascinating trend, in which the couples engaged in this act infrequently, with less than half across all age groups doing so. This seemed to indicate that the couples were more focused on intimacy than sex, and making sure that the former was established before the latter.

Following the progression of the online relationship between the couples, Baker then uses Chapter 6 to provide insight into the couples' actual real life first meeting, and how it happened. First, she indicates to the reader that the couples refer to the first face-to-face meeting as "the meet." Baker finds that although the majority of the couples provided photographs before meeting in real life, emphasis on personality and compatibility ranked higher than physical attraction; the majority of the couples emphasizes this key point. Baker also finds that the couples who took the time to get to know each other online had fewer surprises, if any, upon meeting face-to-face, as long as there was mutual honesty before the actual meeting offline. Therefore, the study shows here that couples who meet online and invest quality time in getting to know each other online through regular communication, learning each other's personalities, learning to solve conflicts during their time spent communicating online, result in a smooth and successful first meeting offline, with the potential to have a meaningful, long-term relationship.

Chapter 7 shows Baker's analysis, regarding what emerging factors were prevalent regarding the success or lack thereof of the online relationships. Key among the factor regarding the longevity of the relationships was (1) where they met online; (2) what kinds of obstacles they faced and how they overcame them; (3) how forthcoming and transparent they were when it came to sharing details about each other's lives; and (4) the time period in which they decided to meet offline. Baker creatively calls these the four factors of P.O.S.T.: place, obstacles, self-presentation, and timing. For example, Baker finds that reasonably close proximity regarding geographical location and, in some cases, religious, eth-

nic, and lifestyle similarities, became key factors regarding couples' meeting online and offline. The author also finds that overcoming obstacles such as job schedules and geographical distance also indicated the success or the lack thereof of the couples. Accuracy, truth, and meeting each others' expectations became key factors regarding self-presentation. The aspect of the importance of timing was prevalent regarding this key finding; the more time spent getting to know each other online resulted in the couples having to know each other when the offline encounters begin.

Finally, Baker uses Chapter 8 to provide suggestions for further research. She suggests longitudinal studies in the future, where there is more detailed probing into the couples' online messages, tracking of the couples' relationships over a number of years after meeting in real life, and more studies concentrating on more ethnic and cultural diversity.

Baker has set the stage for additional research that will engage in more emergent themes regarding the interaction of couples regarding the development of their relationships online. Through Baker's establishing of a foundational text on the subject, *Double Click: Romance and Commitment Among Online Couples* is now the structural springboard from which future studies on intimate relationships between couples online can be pursued.

The book contains a bibliography and subject and author indices.

—Patrick L. Stearns, Ph.D.  
Morgan State University

**Bruschke, Jon and Loges, William E.** *Free Press vs. Fair Trials: Examining Publicity's Role in Trial Outcomes.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2004. Pp. 189. ISBN 978-08058-4325-5 (hbk.) \$75.00; 978-08058-5703-0 (pb.) \$32.50.

Jon Bruschke and William Loges have produced a highly readable, thought-provoking look at research on the issue of pre-trial publicity and its potential influence on a trial's outcome. Based on their analysis of the existing research and their own research, they conclude that, for most trials, the impact of pre-trial publicity usually is negligible and a factor that can be mitigated by evidence, jury instructions, jury deliberations, and/or other relatively inexpensive remedies.

They come to this conclusion by systematically challenging experimental research using a checklist of factors and by their own field research that statistically

analyzes FBI crime reports, surveys that measure amount of crime on local TV broadcasts, surveys that measure concern about crime, and trial results to investigate whether there is a cultivation effect.

The authors realize that examinations of pre-trial publicity involve disciplines with widely varying assumptions and practices. They use social science—including psychology, sociology and communication—and legal and critical approaches to look at the question of pre-trial publicity. Obviously, the authors can't go deeply into each, but they recognize the benefit of examining pre-trial publicity from that variety of disciplines.

For that reason alone, this would be a valuable book for scholars from many disciplines. The authors' examination of current literature on pre-trial publicity also offers a great example of the way to critically review literature. The authors don't disparage other research, but they use a carefully constructed list of criteria to evaluate whether the lab-based findings can be generalized to criminal trials. I believe it would be a valuable template for researchers of all stripes, from novices to the most practiced. The book offers many discussion entry points ranging from the use of students as test subjects to the benefits and problems with social science lab studies. Their own field research, which uses the cultivation hypothesis, also provides an example of creativity in study design by using data from a variety of sources.

The advantages and shortcomings of all the research provide fodder for discussion. For example, much research uses newspaper coverage, but most people do not get their news from just a newspaper. The authors note that what people remember from the news can be fleeting at best. Brusckke and Loges use statistics from a study that looks at television coverage in their field research, but that is in isolation as well. And, as with much social science research, the data often are dated. The authors offer a comprehensive outline of future research possibilities.

The book is a valuable one for its approach and methods in examining social science research on whether there is a pre-trial publicity influence, but the authors also pull the research results from the lab and the statistical packages into the realm of practicality to discuss other legal system issues. Here is where the legal and economic theories emerge. The authors contend and make a strong case for the idea that problem of pre-trial publicity can, for the most part, be addressed by relatively inexpensive remedies. Lab studies that indicate a negative influence for defen-

dants often don't include deliberations, jury instructions, or even a time lapse that a trial would include, and these factors often can overcome the publicity even when the publicity is a retracted confession, an emotional case involving children, or a particularly heinous crime.

In their conclusion, Brusckke and Loges make the case that a bigger concern than pre-trial publicity is the economic status of defendants:

In short, social science research has demonstrated that less wealthy defendants fare more poorly than wealthy defendants, and that this occurs both because they are discriminated against at trial, and because they are treated differently at the start of the trial. In both legal and extralegal ways, resource-poor defendants do not receive equal treatment from our legal system. (p. 145.)

It's a compelling argument.

I recommend this very readable book and can envision its use in a number of courses, both undergraduate and graduate. Its strengths as a curricular tool include the opportunities to spark discussion, the templates of a critical lit review and creative study design, and the application of research results to finding solutions to problems. The book features an appendix, references, and author and subject indices.

—Carol Zuegner  
Creighton University

**Davies, David R.** *The Postwar Decline of American Newspapers 1945-1965*. Westport, CT: Praeger. 2006. Pp xi, 182. ISBN 0-313-30701-6. \$109.95 / £59.95.

This excellent but very sad account of 20 years that most likely doomed American newspapers as we have known them brings to mind one word—dinosaurs.

Like the dinosaurs, newspapers once ruled the land, at least the media portion of it. At the end of World War II, they dominated news and advertising. But like the dinosaurs, they declined because they were slow to adapt to a radically changing environment. Even when they finally understood the massive economic, technological, demographic, and political shifts of the 1950s and 1960s, they responded sluggishly at best. The book's last paragraph says it all:

Facing changing conditions that demanded improvements in a stagnant industry, newspapers moved only half-heartedly towards the solutions that might have met some of the chal-

lenges. Publishers might have met the increasing costs by switching more quickly to new technologies, for example, but they did not. Editors might have met the challenge of television by further emphasizing interpretation, but they did not. . . . For American daily newspapers, then, the postwar years were a period of missed opportunities for an industry in decline. (p. 136)

This book is a scholarly but readable account of how we got from the text-heavy newspapers of the 1940s that looked exactly like those of the 1920s to today. Reading it was painful because I fell in love with newspapers as a child. I spent 11 formative years as a newspaper reporter. Now I am working to adapt our journalism curriculum to the brave new world of “convergence” in which newspapers increasingly will only hire reporters who can also shoot video for the website.

What a change from the close of World War II when circulation climbed to an all time high of 48.3 million (p. 2) with a doubling of advertising revenue between 1945 and 1949! In 1949, newspapers received 37% of the advertising dollars as radio and magazines’ shares dropped. Television was in its infancy and attracted a mere 11% (p. 3). So healthy were newspapers economically that they focused at least briefly on how to improve their news product.

But even when things were at their brightest, there were portents of trouble ahead that they failed to adequately address including:

- The birth of technology that threatened the traditional, labor-intensive newspaper production process and the unions that ruled the back shops. It took several major strikes that doomed a number of weaker newspapers in competitive markets for newspapers to join the computer revolution.
- Population shifts from the central cities to the suburbs with readers gradually shifting their allegiance from metropolitan dailies to suburban papers. This loss of circulation, in turn, cut advertising revenue.
- A decline in newspaper reading as ever fewer readers read even one paper let alone the two or more.

Of course the biggest monster that newspapers could not figure out how to respond to was television. Initially, according to Davies, they regarded it as an entertainment novelty or even a source of new revenue. Many newspapers started or bought TV stations and

often charged for the TV program listings until public interest doomed this.

TV quickly became both an advertising juggernaut and a powerful news vehicle. Increasingly people saw a story unfold on TV long before they read about it in the newspaper. This doomed much traditional reporting but editors were slow to catch on. They discussed interpreting the meaning of complex events instead of covering the action in traditional fashion but found it hard to do.

The superiority of TV in covering breaking news became powerfully evident during the school integration crisis in Little Rock in 1957 when broadcasts featured high impact footage of the 101st Airborne escorting the nine black students into school past crowds of hostile whites.

“The thing about Little Rock is that it was where television reporting came to influence, if not to maturity,” recalled Harry Reasoner, who covered Central as a young reporter for CBS News. “You could not hide from news as delineated by TV.” (p. 74)

By 1965, the space race, the Nixon-Kennedy debates and, most powerfully, the assassination of John F. Kennedy had turned the United States into a nation that turned first to television for breaking news. While millions still read their daily papers, they were now a secondary source of news to more and more. Still others stopped reading entirely or never started.

This book includes a bibliographic essay, extensive footnotes, and an outstanding bibliography. It should be a handy reference for anyone teaching journalism history or anyone with a professional interest in media. It is both scholarly and accessible and should provoke thought among media professionals about how to respond to the challenges of convergence.

A closing note: in my media history class, I don’t talk about newspapers between the 1920s and the Pentagon Papers/Watergate cases. I focus on the birth and growth of radio and TV. Now I will probably change that slightly. When we get into the birth of *USA Today*, I will be better able to explain the stagnation that Al Neuharth was trying to counter.

Every newspaper publisher in the U.S. should read this book for guidance in how to respond to today’s rapid news changes. I only hope it isn’t too late to preserve news organizations that are critical to our democracy.

—Eileen Wirth  
Creighton University

**Einstein, Mara.** *Media Diversity: Economics, Ownership, and the FCC.* Mahwah, NJ and London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. 2004. Pp ix, 249. ISBN 0-8058-4241-1 (hb.) \$79.95.

In *Media Diversity*, Mara Einstein argues that

television's reliance on advertising as its primary source of revenue is the reason we have so few program choices. This economic structure inherently puts limits on program content that far outweigh anything that occurs due to media consolidation. These limits include time length for program, a 'lowest common denominator' mentality because advertising perforce requires that programmer generate large audiences, and finally, programming cannot be too controversial or denigrate consumer products or their producers because they are footing the bill. (p. vii)

Chapter 1 provides extensive overview of the U.S. regulatory tradition in the area of broadcasting, specifically, attempts at safeguarding—and increasing—diversity of content. Einstein argues that, consistent with the First Amendment tradition, the FCC and the Congress attempted to achieve diversity of content by means of structural regulation. The chapter concludes with a brief overview of studies of media diversity, specifically diversity in television, minority and diversity, and concentration and diversity.

Chapter 2 explores the genesis and implementation of the so-called *financial interest and syndication (fin-syn) rules*: “The broadcast networks controlled the pipeline to the American viewing public. The fin-syn rules eliminated the networks’ stranglehold on the industry and limited them to making money from advertising and from selling the rights to what limited programming they could still produce for a single payment” (p. 68). Also discussed are the anti-trust investigation by the Justice Department in the 1970s and President Nixon’s relationship with the media, in particular with the networks.

Chapter 3 offers a detailed account of the demise of fin-syn rules, from their beginning in the early 1980s to their final repeal in mid 1990s. Technological changes, most notably the spread of cable networks, led to the fin-syn rules and prime time access rule being repealed in 1993. Chapter 4 analyzes the structure of television industry with the focus on broadcast networks. It concludes that the major networks, despite the fact that their combined share of viewing audience fell from over 90% to around 50%, continue to exercise

a dominant influence on what is being produced. Reasons for that are twofold. First, networks are the sole providers of *mass* audience. Second, as a result of industry consolidation, networks have become parts of larger integrated media companies.

Vertical integration has led to concentration, which has in turn limited the diversity in program suppliers and program outlets, at least in terms of the largest outlets. . . . This concentration of power denies access to viewpoints that communicate a different perspective of the world. . . . This integrated structure makes it virtually impossible for an independent company to succeed because of exceedingly high barriers to entry. (p. 151)

Einstein found that the “fin-syn era” was characterized by a drop in number of program genres. Thus, “it may be possible to say that fin-syn contributed to a decline in diversity, since the drop [in diversity] occurred at the same time as the rules. Similarly, the repeal of the rules led to an increase in the diversity of genres within two seasons after its repeal” (p. 176). This increase in the number of genres represented in prime-time coincides with the concentration in the area of production. In 1970, 20 producers, about a half of which were independents, produced approximately 67% of prime-time content. In 2002, six producers (including four largest networks) produced approximately 82% of content.

In Chapter 6, program producers and network executives discuss the prime-time selection process. The repeal of fin-syn rules, followed by unprecedented vertical integration of electronic media, resulted in a situation where networks again have a financial interest in most programs that are being aired. Networks’ gatekeeper power in many cases curtails not only the business success of producers, but also their creativity. In the concluding chapter, Einstein summarizes the causes for the drop in diversity and quality of television content. They include: (1) A flawed approach to regulation: The government (society) wants to achieve greater diversity and quality, but is banned from regulating content. The history has shown that structural regulation does not achieve this policy goal. (2) A proliferation of outlets that stretches the available production talent too thinly. (3) The fact that all broadcast media depend on advertising as primary source of income. This dependence has direct effect on the kind of content that will be produced and shown. The author concludes with a case for a new definition of diversity. She argues for making “space within the media mar-

ketplace that is insulated from advertising and its accompanying need to produce large, homogeneous audiences. It is only in this way that we will be able to have content that serves multiple audiences, and puts public interest over profit motive” (p. 226).

—Peter Lah S.J.  
Saint Louis University

**Fortunato, John A.** *Making Media Content: The Influence of Constituency Groups on Mass Media.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2005. Pp. xv, 232. ISBN 0-8058-4748-0 (hbk) \$79.95.

What factors influence media content, from within media organizations as well as outside of them? John Fortunato’s *Making Media Content: The Influence of Constituency Groups on Mass Media* offers the reader an overview of a number of levels of influence on media content, from within mass media in terms of economics and decision making processes as well as from external influences.

Fortunato, an assistant professor at the University of Texas at Austin in the Department of Advertising of the College of Communication, received his Ph.D. from Rutgers University, and many of his past publications involve sports media.

Fortunato defines media content as “the messages that the audience actually has the potential to see, hear, or click onto—the messages that are given exposure by a mass media organization that the audience has the opportunity to retrieve” (p. 3). This definition excludes stories that never come to air or print, stories that might not be seen as interesting enough to cover, and program ideas that never evolve into production.

While this is a broad definition of content, the majority of Fortunato’s focus is news content rather than entertainment. He does not discuss entertainment extensively as a type of content, although he addresses advertising as content in and of itself as well as being an influence on other content, but most of the attention and research cited focuses on news content. Fortunato explains the purpose of *Making Media Content* is “to examine the complex decision-making process of national mass media organizations in determining what news content to put on the air, in print, or on an Internet site” (p. 4). This description narrows the conceptualization of content further, as it excludes local news or alternative media content.

*Making Media Content* follows a very logical order, beginning with background and theory, moving

on to the internal workings of media and factors influencing content, and concluding with chapters on external factors that influence media content. These nine chapters follow the precise order of topics I would envision in a class on this theme. These chapters are informed not only by groundbreaking as well as recent scholarship on these issues, but also by contemporary examples. Additionally, Fortunato conducted interviews with a number of executives and practitioners in the news media, advertising, and public relations to offer additional context for these chapters and the notion of media content.

A number of media theories are discussed in these first chapters, including uses and gratifications, media dependency, framing, and agenda setting. These are likely agreed upon theories that need to be addressed in this discussion, and Fortunato’s book offers them in straightforward form, with explanations, reviews of research, and examples to illustrate each theory. As the book is not solely focused on mass media theories, these represent key concepts in media usage as well as news media decision making.

The chapters on the internal mass media organization work to explain the “heart” of media decision making within newsrooms and media companies. Issues of news routines and practices, ownership and economic pressures, and gatekeeping practices in the newsroom are all addressed in the chapters of the second section of the book, “The Internal Mass Media Organization.” The reality of the economic forces that influence news decision making, such as those regarding the expenses of international news coverage, are acknowledged. Fortunato includes a discussion of branding of mass media organizations that we might consider more commonly applied to other consumer goods, but it is quite appropriate in the media business as well. The chapter on ownership provides a strong background into issues of ownership, as well as contemporary examples of issues of synergy in media ownership patterns.

The final set of chapters discusses the external mass media organization, such as public relations, advertisers, and the audience. The title of the text implies that these constituency groups are of primary focus in the book, yet they appear in only the final three chapters of the book. That issue notwithstanding, the influence on media content from these outside sources may be the most invisible and yet pervasive factors shaping news content. An overview of the key issues involving their constituency groups provides a summa-

ry, as each could easily be the focus of an entire book on their own. The influence of sources, whether public relations practitioners promoting story ideas or government sources offering access to information, holds the key to understanding news decisions for print or broadcast news content.

Advertisers form another source of content and appear in this section of the book; as noted earlier they also serve as a potential influence on other media content. Media content must attract not only audiences, as Fortunato discusses in the chapter following the one on advertisers, but content must also attract advertising sponsorship and support in order to continue publishing or remaining on the air. The placement of audience as the final chapter in this discussion may connote a secondary importance of audience to influencing media content, as it is also the shortest chapter in the book. However, the impact of audience on media content is raised in many earlier chapters, regarding media theories, decision making, and economics. Perhaps including a review some of those earlier issues related to audiences in this final chapter prior to the book's conclusion would have heightened the legitimacy of what is clearly a key constituency group in this text.

Fortunato's *Making Media Content* provides a strong overview of the wide variety of issues that influence contemporary news media content. The text is quite suitable to college classes that focus on media structure and influence issues. However, factors regarding non-news content would need to be addressed through additional readings, and audience issues in such a course may benefit from additional sources of discussion as well.

The book includes a bibliography as well as author and subject indices.

—Joan Conners  
Randolph Macon College

**Fuller, Linda K. (Ed.).** *Sport, Rhetoric, and Gender: Historical Perspectives and Media Representations.* New York, NY: Palgrave, Macmillan, 2006. Pp. ix, 274. ISBN 1-4039-7328-8 (hbk.) \$65.00.

*Sport, Rhetoric, and Gender: Historical Perspective and Media Representations*, as the title suggests, is a collection of writings that address women in sports from both historical perspectives as well as print, broadcast, and visual media representations. The edited book may serve as a text for a special topics course on gender and sports. It also may serve as a text

for courses in sport business that want to explore sportswomanship.

Part I of the edited book focuses on sport language. Specifically, Chapter 1 is a strong essay that examines sportswomanship and its cultural acceptance. For example, the differences between sportsmanship and sportswomanship is examined as part of the 19th and 20th century literature. An argument is then provided as to why the term sportspersonship may emerge as a more appropriate term in the 21st century. Chapter 2 offers a strong review of the research literature focused on language, gender, and sport. Finally, Chapter 3 focuses on gender, language, and power within the context of sports.

Part II includes three chapters that focus on historical perspectives. Chapter 4 deals with images in American popular culture between 1880 and 1920. The author looks at many aspects of the athletic woman including attire and knowledge needed to engage in athletic activity. Chapter 5 provides a strong historical perspective on one of America's first sportswriters, Winifred Black. Black wrote for the San Francisco *Examiner* under the byline "Annie Laurie" (p. 65). Chapter 6 focuses on the fictitious stories written by George Helgesen Fitch. The author provides a historical perspective of how Fitch's fiction contributes to "issues of difference and team-naming" (p. 73).

Part III focuses on print media representations of sports, rhetoric, and gender. Chapter 7 deals with the WNBA and the marketing of female athletes. Chapter 8 focuses on discourses of sport and femininity in the print publication *Sport Illustrated for Women*. The author uses Foucault's theories to conduct a discursive analysis of the magazine. Chapter 9 is an analysis of the now defunct "Women's Running" column in the magazine *Runner's World*. Chapter 10 uses 13 fitness texts such as fitness magazines and exercise manuals to examine "how fitness media articulate the dual concerns of bodily health and appearance through a language of empowerment" (p. 120). Chapter 11 provides an ethnographic study dealing with physical activity for adolescent mothers. Specifically, the authors gained entry into a high school physical education program designed for adolescent mothers. They used various data collection methods ranging from field observations, interview and focus group questions to analyzing school documents.

Part IV focuses on broadcast media representations. Chapter 12 deals with television and aerobic sports. The author uses feminist media rhetorical criti-

cism to analyze Denise Austin's daily aerobic workout shows aired on the Lifetime Television for Women Cable Network. Chapter 13 is a study that focuses on commentary and women's athletics. Specifically, the author focuses on the "preferred reading of broadcast narrative through an analysis of the 2002 NCAA Women's National Basketball Championship using the construct of hegemony and the framework of fantasy theme analysis relative to media depictions of women athletes and their coaches" (p. 160).

Part V has three chapters examining visual media representations. Chapter 14 analyzes the newspaper articles from mainstream media sources "written about professional female tennis players since the 1970s" (p. 174). The author focuses on six-top ranked players from the past 25 years. The visual representations are unclear. Chapter 15 uses a critical approach to examine women, language, and baseball films. Chapter 16 provides an essay that takes a political economy focus on "music images and lyrics and music celebrities as they pertain to various body and sport related culture industries" (p. 201). Specifically, the authors conduct in-depth analyses of three Britney Spears' songs and videos. Again the connection with visual representations and sports is unclear.

Part VI provides case studies of NASCAR, Little League mothers, girls' soccer, football coaches' wives, and "Girlspeak"—"reports on pre-teen and teen girl athletes in their own words" (p. 9). Chapter 17 deals with NASCAR and Jeff Gordon's image. The author examines the reactions of 20 graduate students to a Gordon advertisement. In Chapter 18, the author uses the performance turn to examine the rhetoric of Little League mothers. Chapter 19 examines the culture of girls' soccer. In Chapter 20, the author argues, "When coaches talk or write about their jobs, it is serious to them, so when they write about their wives, it should be taken seriously, as it functions rhetorically as a type of coaching" (p. 241). In Chapter 21, the author uses the words of eight adolescent females to give voice about "both positive and negative aspects of playing sport, learning physical skills, and demonstrating athletic competence" (p. 253).

The strongest elements of the edited text are the references and Parts I through IV. Parts V and VI need clarity and further explanation of the rationale for the inclusion of the chapters in the collection.

—Jennifer F. Wood, Ph.D.  
Millersville University of Pennsylvania

**Harris, Richard Jackson.** *A Cognitive Psychology of Mass Communication, 4th ed.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. 2004. Pp. vii, 464. ISBN 0-8058-4660-3 (hbk.) \$55.00.

In 1994 a Seattle enterprise launched a passenger submarine with portholes and underwater spotlights and charged tourists \$80 a ride. To ward off disappointment, the savvy entrepreneurs also installed bubble-wafting air lines beneath the portholes. Passengers weaned on Disney movies and fictional images had come to *expect* bubbles and would refuse to quaff the scientific truth that bubbles emerge only when a submarine surfaces—and are never visible to *real* crews.

That truth is now weighted against fiction and found less "real" was noted by the cultural critic Jean Baudrillard. His notion of *simulacra* describes the social world as a psychological construct where *signs* of the real are substituted for the *real itself*.

This premise—via different antecedents— informs *A Cognitive Psychology of Mass Communication*, a textbook by Richard Jackson Harris, a psychology professor at Kansas State University. As the author explains,

our minds create knowledge—indeed, even a mental reality—about the world based on our experience with the media. . . . Instead of the media being a more or less accurate reflection of some external reality, it has *become* the reality against which the real world is compared. The media view of the world has become, to many people, more real than the real world itself. (p. 2)

An offshoot of this theme is the confluence between religion and entertainment. The media critic Neil Postman spotted this trend: as more "religious services are broadcast on TV and as pastors are more acquainted with the television medium, the 'danger is not that religion has become the content of television shows, but that television shows may become the content of religion'" (p. 334). Harris provides the colorful example of an Arkansas Baptist church that "hired Wacky World Studios in Tampa for a \$279,000 make over of a former chapel into 'Toon Town,' with buzzers and confetti that explode during joyful celebrations like baptisms" (p. 335).

Like other introductory mass communication textbooks that promote media literacy, *A Cognitive Psychology* demarcates the field into the stock categories and covers well-known themes and anecdotes: the Super Bowl's origin as a promotional event; Nixon

“losing” the Kennedy debate on TV, but “winning” it on the radio; GM’s Latin American marketing *faux pas* with the Nova (“no go” in Spanish).

However, the textbook’s emphasis on perception and comprehension, i.e., its cognitive perspective, adds several fresh facets. Take the following gem about *time compression*: a 36-second ad may be compressed “into 30 seconds by playing the ad at 120% of normal speed, an acceleration small enough that it is not readily detected and does not produce a higher pitch or other noticeable distortion” (p. 107); or how brain imaging explains why the emotional memories of violent images “endure long after the associated cognitive memories have faded, thus explaining why someone might be afraid of swimming in the ocean years after seeing *Jaws*” (p. 260).

Harris is also very good at explaining linguistic manipulation. He uses the contested 2000 Presidential election to show how semantic tricks “framed” news coverage and shaped perceptions of reality in the Florida vote count. Having won the machine count, the Republicans fought the call for a hand recount. In framing news coverage, Republican operatives always termed the machine count a “‘full count,’ ‘complete count,’ or ‘hand count.’[!] Efforts to force a recount were described as attempts to ‘overturn the results’” (p. 244). While Al Gore insisted that overseas absentee ballots that missed the required Election Day postmark be thrown out, “the Bush campaign framed those ballots as ‘military ballots’ (which only some of them were) and questioned the patriotism of those trying to ‘disenfranchise’ the voting of our ‘brave men and women defending our country’” (p. 244).

The rhetorician Richard Weaver ranked cause-and-effect as the least noble form of argumentation. Its quasi-logical elasticity permits advertisers and politicians to append specious effects to goods and events. For example, in 4th century Rome the Emperor Julian claimed that homosexuality *caused* earthquakes; and more recently, George Bush claimed Congress *caused* the East Coast blackout of 2003 by refusing to allow oil drilling in Alaska’s National Wildlife Refuge.

Apart from such baldness, false causal relationships are often hinged to unconnected inferences by implication: “Help stop crime. Buy a Kalashnikov assault rifle today.” Harris calls this technique juxtaposing two imperatives, one of several types of linguistic constructions he covers along with hedge words

(*may help*), and elliptical or vacuous comparatives, “Bromide X gives you *more*.”

Persuaders must also factor cultural upheaval into message reception. State Farm Insurance discovered that words are not static. Its widely recognized slogan, “Like a good neighbor, State Farm is there,” used since 1971 to evoke warm feelings, was recently scrapped. Harris explains:

younger and more urban consumers increasingly saw a ‘good neighbor’ in different terms. To many of today’s young adults, a good neighbor is one who stays on their side of the fence and leaves you alone, not one who gets involved in your life. (p. 97)

The author’s early interest in deceptive advertising is evident in this passage on what “food stylists” do:

ice cream may be mashed potatoes covered with chocolate sauce, because ice cream melts too fast under hot studio lights. The head on beer is often shampoo or soap suds, because real beer bubbles do not last long enough for photography. White glue is added to milk to make it look whiter and creamier, and roasted chickens are spray-painted golden brown to look like they’ve been in the oven for hours—but aren’t wrinkled. (p. 110)

*A Cognitive Psychology* is a solid undergraduate social science textbook that covers the major approaches to media studies and the field’s key theoretical constructs. The book will find favor among undergraduates for its readability and ample references to popular culture. Boxed off anecdotal sidebars complement the main narrative, and fun facts packaged as questions and answers introduce each of the 12 chapters: Q: The world’s most popular leisure activity? A: TV watching, which, in the U.S., outpaces reading by 15 to 2.8 hours per week (p. 1).

The book contains author and subject indices as well as a lengthy list of references.

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**Kanigel, Rachele.** *The Student Newspaper Survival Guide*. Ames, IA: Blackwell Publishing, 2006. Pp. xiv, 188. ISBN 978-08138-0741-6 (pb.) \$34.99.

Kanigel provides a well-written survival guide for what she calls the “miniature city” (p. 19) of a college campus. The guide is useful for newspaper staffs,

practicum courses, as well as beginning and advanced journalism courses that want to emphasize to students not only newsroom organization but how to cover a “miniature city.”

The survival guide content may best be described in four categories (1) organizational issues, (2) three levels of reporting, (3) newspaper sections, and (4) production of print and online publications.

First, organizational issues begin in Chapter 1 with a discussion focused on the role of the student press. Specifically four functions are discussed including chronicling campus life, serving as a community forum, serving as a watchdog, and serving as a training ground for future journalists (p. 5). Chapter 2 deals with staff recruiting and training. This chapter includes a checklist of how to plan a training seminar as well as training exercises to be used during the seminar. Chapter 3 focuses on helping student leaders determine the best ways to cover their campus, such as developing a beat system, how to cultivate sources, how to use the public information office and, of course, how to conduct readership surveys. The chapter contains sample beat report forms and a sample readership survey. Another organizational issue is how to start a new newspaper. Specifically, this information appears in Chapter 15 and focuses on business plans, staff manuals, mission statements, constitutions, production, and how to create a newsroom. A complement to the information comes in Chapter 10, which focuses on editing—not copy editing—but the leadership roles of editors. The chapter focuses on the roles of editor-in-chiefs, managing editors, and section editors. It goes far beyond editing the page or sections but addresses skills in diplomacy, leadership, the organization and management of people, and even how to boost battered egos and smooth ruffled feathers (p. 77). The chapter details how to organize a staff selection process. The guide comes complete with a series of forms—ranging from application to evaluation. This is a valuable chapter that introduces many aspects of budgets, meetings, headline writing, and coaching writers that are all a part of successful editorial leadership.

Chapters 4, 11, and 12 explain many details and challenges associated with reporting, investigative reporting, and photojournalism. The reporting chapter covers the basics of notetaking, interviewing, emails, math for journalists, and accuracy. In addition, the survival guide focuses on news judgment, background research, the reporting process, and developing a

reporting plan. The information is useful for the one-time freelance writer as well as the daily or weekly reporter. Students learning investigative reporting will find useful information about how to request a document, the different types of public records, and some investigative and enterprise story ideas. The information in the photojournalism chapter is useful for all student photographers especially as many continue to shift to digital cameras. Student photographers will find information on shooting perspectives and types of photographs. They also will be provided with checklists focused on photo editing and writing cutlines.

Chapters 5 through 9 deal with the newspaper sections including news, lifestyles, sports, arts and entertainment, and opinion pages. These chapters are meant to help every writer survive even if it is their first story assignment within a section. News writers will find details on the 5 W’s and H, quotes and attribution, the inverted pyramid, ledes, and self-editing. Lifestyle writers can learn about different types of lifestyle stories, how to find an angle to their stories, how to write profile stories, and even information on relationship columns. Sports writers will be introduced to the unique areas of scoring and notetaking for sports and how to cover game stories, advances, and news stories. In addition, sports writers are introduced to information to help them go beyond team sports coverage. They also will gain valuable knowledge of how to plan and prepare sports special sections and sports columns. Arts and Entertainment writers will be guided on how to write previews, reviews, and columns. Finally, opinion page writers will find detailed information about the editorial process, how to find and write an editorial, and the role of the newspaper ombudsman. Writers will truly get a sense of what it means to write for each section.

Finally, Chapters 16-18 deal with the production of newspapers including advertising, design, graphics, and online publications. Students are provided with a handbook that addresses the basics of modular design, the differences between broadsheet and tabloids, as well as style guides. Students will be reminded that the key is design consistency. They will learn how to achieve this through creating checklists for design content and a checklist for page layout. Students are also made aware of how online newspapers differ from print publications. Award-winning campus newspaper website addresses are included as a resource. The production of a newspaper is not complete without advertising. The advertising chapter helps students deal with the logistics of policies, rates, and design. It also pro-

vides information on the four types of newspaper advertisements, the most common types of online advertising, how to assemble sales kits, and how to do advertising for special issues and special sections.

Overall this is a needed publication to support college media advisers in their quest to provide students with a detailed handbook of the workings of the student newspaper. Students will definitely find the book accessible. It does not read like a textbook but as the title suggests—a guidebook. In addition, newspaper leadership staffs, advisers, and instructors who work with the student publications will find useful information within each chapter such as *Tips from a Pro*, and sections labeled *To Read*, *To Click*, and *To Do*. The sections provide further reading, online resources, and assignment ideas. Within the appendix section there is a list of contests for student journalists. Every newspaper staff will be closer to entering the contests after fine-tuning their publications with this useful and effective survival guide.

—Jennifer F. Wood, Ph.D.  
Millersville University of Pennsylvania

**McAllister, Ken S.** *Game Work: Language, Power, and Computer Game Culture*. Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 2004, Pp. vii, 232. ISBN 0-8173-1423-7 (hbk.). \$39.95.

*Game Work* offers an analysis of computer games framed within a critical cultural studies perspective. McAllister positions computer games and their production as worthy of serious study, arguing they transform social structures, national economies, as well as the lives of game workers and players.

The book is divided into two parts. In Chapter 1 of Part I, McAllister identifies five rhetorical forces that drive his analysis: computer games as an element of mass culture; as a relatively little studied form of mass medium; as a psycho-physiological force wherein game play is analyzed for its potentially positive or harmful effects on their players; as a significant economic force in the entertainment industry; and finally, as an instructional force. The second chapter provides an extensive discussion of a rhetorical method for the analysis of the “computer game complex,” which McAllister defines as “the combination of computer games, gamers, and the industries that support them” (p. 29). McAllister lays out a “grammar of gameworks” that directs analysis in five

areas of power: agents, functions, influences, manifestations, and transformative locales. As McAllister writes,

The grammar of gameworks is a method that enables rich and insightful understandings of the nature of the particular dialectical struggles located both inside and outside the computer game complex. Its central task is to facilitate investigations of how meanings are made and manipulated in and among computer games, which is to say how the computer game complex negotiates power through rhetoric. (p. 64)

In Part II, McAllister applies the grammar of gameworks to various aspects of the computer game complex. In Chapter 3, he looks at game developers and how they negotiate the popular critiques of games and the ways in which they define their own work (often as an art form, despite the pressures to adhere to popular consumer tastes). Game developers’ discourse taken from various forums is analyzed in this chapter showing, among other things, the ways in which technical power is asserted. Chapter 4 examines the work of game reviewing and the role it plays in the computer game complex. McAllister considers online and print sources for game reviews (and how they differ), the criteria they use in evaluating the games, and how the five rhetorical forces mentioned in Chapter 2 play out in the work of game reviewers. A detailed analysis of a computer game entitled *Black & White* is the focus of the final substantive chapter (Chapter 5), paying particular attention to the influence of economic force and how resources in the game are defined and deployed. What emerges is a nuanced ideological analysis of games that provides an excellent model for other scholars seeking to explore the construction of meaning in particular games.

The book includes five appendices. Appendix A and Appendix B are visual representations of the rhetorical arguments from Chapter 2. Appendix C lists the computer games mentioned in the text. The fourth appendix (Appendix D) offers a procedure for organizing a group-based analysis of computer games that emerged from the “Learning Games Initiative” that McAllister co-directs at the University of Arizona. Motivated by the Initiative’s three goals of exploring how to study games from a multidisciplinary viewpoint, develop pedagogical techniques to teach game analysis, and develop new games based on the critiques and insights from game analysis, this appendix provides a

very practical and informative set of guidelines and insights from McAllister and his colleagues' experiences. It would be useful in guiding classroom discussions of games as well. The final appendix (Appendix E) contains an extensive glossary covering game terminology as well as terms used in rhetorical theory.

The book has a works cited list and an index.

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**Van Evra, Judith.** *Television and Child Development*. Third Edition. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. 2004. Pp. xv, 278. ISBN 0-8058-4863-0 (hbk.) \$89.95; 0-8058-4864-9 (pb.) \$29.95.

In her own words, Judith Van Evra's third edition of *Television and Child Development* provides the reader with "as current and complete a summary and synthesis as possible of what is already known about the media's role in and impact on children's cognitive, social, and emotional development and to discern the complex and significant interplay between other forces in a child's life and their use of various media" (p. xv). Despite its title, the book does include some research on other media, particularly computers and video games, although the emphasis is on television—reflecting the majority of work in the field that takes a developmental approach to studying media and children. In addition to updating the research included throughout the book, Van Evra wrote seven new chapters for the current edition.

The book's first chapter is devoted to explaining three central theories in the media effects literature: social learning and cognitive theory, cultivation theory, and uses and gratifications theory. Van Evra then attempts to integrate these theoretical perspectives into a cognitive developmental framework. The second chapter introduces the reader to a brief overview of several of the research methodologies used in studies of media and youth, with an emphasis on experimental and correlational approaches. From these first two chapters, the reader will note the orientation of the book falls within a positivist research paradigm consistent with the author's background in psychology. More qualitative research and interpretive theoretical perspectives such as reception theory are not given much attention in this book.

One strength of the text is, indeed, its developmental approach. A chapter on information processing

provides a detailed overview of the developmental milestones associated with children's attention, comprehension, and retention of audio-visual content from television. Throughout the book, age or developmental differences among children are emphasized to better explain the processes and outcomes involved in children's exposure to media content. This is most evident in the chapters devoted to language, reading, and academic achievement (Chapter 4); violence and aggression (Chapter 5); gender, occupational and racial/ethnic stereotyping (Chapter 6); advertising and behavior (Chapter 7); television and the family (Chapter 8); health-related issues (Chapter 9); and social/emotional issues (Chapter 10).

Several other chapters focus on computers, the Internet, and video games, offering a broad assessment of these media in terms of access, usage patterns, and impact. In these chapters, there is some overlap in the subject matter from previous chapters, but with an emphasis on the newer medium (e.g., video game violence and aggression). The division that Van Evra offers in separating the newer "technologies for information" (Chapter 12) from "technologies for entertainment" (Chapter 13) is not a terribly meaningful distinction, for the same technologies may be used for informative and entertaining purposes (e.g., computer games). It will become increasingly important for scholars to account for similarities or differences across various media from a theoretical perspective and work toward more integrative presentations of research in a given area. The final section of the book offers intervention strategies (media literacy, technology aids for parents such as the v-chip) and a conclusion.

Each chapter of the book contains a summary and set of discussion questions that serve mainly as review questions, but also promote critical thinking. Advanced undergraduates would find the text fairly readable, but some of the summaries of research are so brief it might be hard for a student to come away feeling they have an in-depth understanding of a particular area. The book certainly provides a road map to the central research areas and findings in the field, however, making it easy for a faculty member to build on this by assigning additional readings from original research projects.

The book includes a bibliography, author index and subject index.

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