

EMBRACING NETWORKED JOURNALISM BETWEEN SHALLOWNESS AND DEPTH

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Abstract

It is widely acknowledged that today's news media are changing radically. New forms of what is coming to be known as 'networked journalism' are increasingly visible. This new form of networked journalism based on new media is changing the core of news production and consumption, challenging the business models of the past and the efforts of traditional journalism organizations to control the news. In today's interactive digital information environment, journalists lose the power to define what makes and shapes the news. Media outlets now maneuver through a space characterised by continuous information flows, and share communication paths with new information providers in an online, always-on environment. This article sketches this dynamic sphere and introduces the paradigm of 'network journalism'. Structured around digital networks, the sphere of network journalism unravels evolving patterns of information production. The task for journalistic organisations now is to figure out how to include the many traditional and alternative information nodes in their everyday work. The loss of control over a formerly strictly regulated information-exchange sphere is viewed here as an opportunity for journalism to review its practices. However, as journalists take on new roles and more voices are heard, there is a growing need to understand the implications of the new forms of boundary crossing that are being encouraged by this new form of journalism. Emerging forms of journalism may provide a foundation for public dialogue that enables stories about distant others to be told and better understood. The consequence may be that there will be new opportunities for enhanced sharing of viewpoints. Although convergent media platforms create opportunities for new exchanges, there are reasons to question whether the potential will be met?

Keywords: networked journalism, traditional journalism, digital environment, media platform

Introduction

Ever since the emergence of the journalistic profession, the practices in this field have been constantly evolving, leading gradually to patterns that can be called rituals of the profession. Working practices have appeared, developed and changed in accordance with various factors that have shaped and reshaped the frames within which journalists work. There is no doubt that these practices are still continuing to evolve. In a technology-driven process of accelerated change, journalism is being transformed in the ways that it is produced, distributed, and used. We are witnessing the emergence of new tools and practices, phenomena that are yielding both a flurry of new ways to produce information and a redefinition of the place of professional journalism in this new information system. This spate of technological and other deep social shifts mean there is no way that journalism can avoid radical change. Perhaps it needs to go much further, more quickly. Journalism is now permeable, interactive, 24/7, multi-platform, disaggregated and converged. A couple of General Elections in some countries have made it absolutely clear that networked journalism has arrived. The journalism about the campaign, the result and its consequences has been a remarkable combination of online and mainstream, professional and citizen media. The question now is whether that added value can be produced in the future and in other areas of journalism.

The guru of networked journalism is US media blogger; entrepreneur and teacher Jeff Jarvis who says that journalism can and must expand even as the institutions that do journalism shrink. The future is 'pro-am journalism', doing things together. In the digital environment in which journalists now work, new facts are being unearthed daily; more audience feedback is being integrated; more voices are being heard; more

diverse perspectives on the same news stories are being presented; more stories are available, archived and searchable for longer periods of time; more men and women of power are being watched more closely; and more people are engaged more actively with the changes in the world—by taking photos or making videos of key moments, by commenting on blogs, or by sharing the stories that matter to them. This dynamic landscape of continuous and diversified witnessing and reporting does not represent a crisis of journalism, but rather, an explosion of it. In fact, the profession seems to be more alive than ever and going through a multiplication of both forms and content at amazing speed.

I think a better term for what I've been calling "citizen journalism", "social media" or "grassroots media", might be "networked journalism. The approach towards coining "network journalism" differs significantly from preliminary approaches of scholars who have used the term. Network journalism as well as the variation 'networked journalism' have appeared in publications over the past years, however infrequently, within different contexts and carrying various connotations. "Networked journalism" has various synonyms like "Participatory journalism," "stand-alone journalism," "citizen journalism," "open source journalism," "distributed reporting": Without reflection, they all mean the same thing and are used interchangeably by most people -- where citizens play an active or integral role in the collection, reporting, distilling, filtering and broadcasting of news and information. Networked journalism in the present context is not the same as citizen journalism (Gillmor 2004). The former is understood to retain the essential functions of traditional journalism, that is, to report, analyse and comment, filter, edit and disseminate. In the case of networked journalism, throughout the process of news production the use of digital and online technologies is at the heart of the process of newsgathering, processing and dissemination. The news process itself, however, changes from a linear to a networked process whereby there is constant communication and interaction with information.

Networked journalism is creating – or some would say reflecting – a new relationship between the journalist and the story and the public. Newsrooms are no longer fortresses for the Fourth Estate; they are hubs at the centre of endless networks. News is no longer a product that flops onto your doormat or springs into life at the flick of a remote control. It is now a non-linear process, a multi-directional interaction. And journalism is no longer a self-contained manufacturing industry. It is now a service industry that creates and connects flows of information, analysis and commentary. It seems to be accepted now that becoming more networked is essential for journalism in an era of social media'

Beckett argues that networked journalism creates value for journalism in three ways (Beckett, 2010). First, it foments editorial diversity, creating more substantial and varied news reports. Second, it produces connectivity and interactivity by distributing news in different ways. Third, it enhances relevance of news reports by relating audiences and subjects to create new editorial and ethical relationship to the news. The author believes a fourth element networked journalism helps increase trust should be included in this list. Media outlets increase trust and credibility when they provide links to their source material or answer questions publicly from their readers. These four benefits should provide motivation for journalism instructors and practitioners to embrace the methods that create networked journalism.

Scholars see networked journalism providing a variety of benefits. According to Beckett (2010), the practice generates editorial diversity—increasing the sources of information—to help create more substantive, authoritative, and varied news reports. Duffy (2011) also notes the increase in credibility. Outlets practicing networked journalism increase trust when they provide links to their source material or publicly answer questions from their audiences.

Journalism expert Jay Rosen calls linking to other sites or sources part of the “ethic of the Web” that is a focused on providing verification as a means to “connect knowledge to people” (2008). The refusal of news sites to provide links goes against the “ethic of the Web” and the natural tendencies of Web audiences.

Journalism is at its best when it is at its most reflexive and responsive. Networked journalism is a valuable enterprise. In a world of complex economic crisis, climate change, migration and conflict we desperately need better journalism. In an age of increasing education and individualism there is a growing demand for more open, accessible and informative news media. People like journalism so much they are prepared to help create it themselves – for free. This report is an attempt to highlight how we can deliver that through a journalism that values the public as well as the public value of what we do. Today’s globalized network communication shapes new interactive formats, relevant not only for the dissemination, but – increasingly – for the production of news. The ‘one-way’ flow of news from a news outlet to the audience has been replaced by a network structure. One of the key benefits of networked journalism is the presumed increase in trust and credibility that accompanies such reporting. Trust increases when audiences receive links to information sources, engage in conversations with journalists, and see the news as a collaboration of resources rather than simply a delivered product. Following Manuel Castells’ concept of the ‘Network’ (1996; 2001) as the central model of information structures in our 21st century Information Age, I argue in this paper that *networks* transform the professional journalism sphere in many world regions in quite similar ways and create new forms of journalistic practice. A globalized journalistic network sphere is taking shape which involves mainstream journalistic outlets *and* bloggers, independently operating journalists in various corners of the world *and* so-called “user-generated content”-providers alike. Within this sphere, an increasingly global flow of news is evolving which can be characterized by a new form of connectivity which establishes new (and continuous!) links between journalists, their sources *as well as* their audiences. As the roles of journalists in this revised news sphere change, the dynamics of newsgathering, production and dissemination are transforming and public service broadcasters are being challenged through new journalistic ‘network’ practices. In fact, a multiple platform structure of journalism is taking shape in which boundaries between traditional media outlets of print, radio, and television and between national and ‘foreign’ journalism are blurring and merging online. Information spheres begin to merge and influence each other. Bloggers, so-called user-generated content providers, citizen journalists or media activists have entered the global sphere of information exchange and have become a vital part of the news exchange chain. A new level of connectivity is emerging that demarcates the end of a ‘closed’ journalism sphere in which a very small number of ‘gatekeepers’ secured journalism as “broadcasting to the masses” (Chaffee and Metzger, 2001: 369). The ‘traditional’ “one-way, hub-and-spoke structure, with unidirectional links to its ends, running from center to the periphery” (Benkler, 2006: 179) is being eroded.

Networked Journalism is much more than a few blogs. It is about professional journalists recognising the full range of new media platforms and the role of the public throughout the journalistic process. It is about using their own blogs to reveal their workings and to invite comment and contributions. It is about using techniques such as crowd-sourcing to involve the citizen in the process of gathering information. It is about allowing a flow of user-generated-content as part of the reporting, rather than a separate item. It is about feed-in as well as feed-back.

On the basis of these introductory reflections, I argue that organizational structures in today’s print, broadcast and online platforms need to be reassessed according to the dynamics of an evolving global news sphere – not least through developing a ‘new’ sense of connectivity. Within this evolving global news sphere, information flows are in fact multidirectional. A ‘network’ character of communication is taking

shape based on a 'network' structure of journalism in which decentralization and nonlinearity are the key parameters defining news flows at the beginning of the twenty-first century. The basis of this evolving journalism culture is the structural pattern of what I have come to call 'network journalism.'

However, a more networked news media allows for greater public participation but it does not assure public control of its consequences. New networked journalism is providing an historic opportunity to use journalism for certain liberal, democratic, humanistic ends. Networked journalism as a synthesis between mainstream journalism and citizen activism is a compromise mode of co-production of news. It therefore contains the seeds of failure as well as progress.

Networked Journalism

Some scholars prefer to use the term "networked journalism" to describe the current incarnation of participatory, interactive, stand alone, open source journalism or distributed reporting: without reflection, they all mean the same thing and are used interchangeably by most people. I do think network journalism should enter the lexicon of citizen media more, but I don't know if it should replace "citizen journalism." What I suggest is a further refining of the various types of citizen journalism acts. Network journalism rests its fate on two principles: First -- the "wisdom of the crowd," the notion that a large network of people will have a collective intelligence that is greater than any single reporter. The second is "crowdsourcing", in this case -- crowdsourcing is the idea that a group of people will be able to tackle a large investigation in a more efficient manner than a single reporter.

New media expert Jeff Jarvis first coined the term "networked journalism" in 2006, suggesting it as a better term than "citizen journalism." "Networked journalism" means opening up the production process from start to finish - and beyond. It already has the tools: email, mobile-phones, digital cameras, online editing, webcams, texting, and remote controls. This is channeled through new communication processes like crowdsourcing, Twitter, YouTube, and wikis as well as blogs and Internet Protocol Television (IPTV). Networked journalism in the present context is not the same as citizen journalism (Gillmor 2004). The former is understood to retain the essential functions of traditional journalism, that is, to report, analyse and comment, filter, edit and disseminate. In the case of Networked journalism, throughout the process of news production the use of digital and online technologies is at the heart of the process of newsgathering, processing and dissemination. The news process itself, however, changes from a linear to a networked process whereby there is constant communication and interaction with information.

By 'Networked Journalism' I mean a synthesis of traditional news journalism and the emerging forms of participatory media enabled by Web 2.0 technologies such as mobile phones, email, websites, blogs, micro-blogging, and social networks. It demands concepts such as flow, creativity, crowdsourcing and – intelligence, wkinomics and open/user-driven innovations. Networked Journalism allows the public to be involved in every aspect of journalism production through crowd-sourcing, interactivity, hyper-linking, user-generated content and forums. It changes the creation of news from being linear and top-down to a collaborative process. Not all news production will be particularly networked. Not many citizens want to be journalists for much of their time. But the principles of networking are increasingly practiced in all forms of news media.

Networked journalism is a process not a product. The journalist still reports, edits, packages the news. But the process is continually shared. The networked journalist changes from being a gatekeeper who delivers to a facilitator who connects. The emerging forms of networked journalism are strongly collaborative insofar as professional journalists and amateurs often work together. Frequently boundaries are crossed within the production process as a means of sharing facts, raising questions, producing answers and ideas, and

challenging differing perspective (Jarvis 2007). This new form of journalism raises many ethical issues and it presents us with a paradox. It embraces the potential for both greater understanding and also misunderstanding to occur. This is because each boundary that is crossed in the production and consumption of networked journalism enables an increasingly wide range of different viewpoints, languages, cultures, values and goals to be encountered. As they are encountered, they are likely to affect people's everyday lives and their perceptions of distant others in ways that are increasingly unpredictable.

Networked journalism is about a shift in power. If you allow the public to help drive your agenda you are sharing editing. By gathering from the public you are compromising your ownership of editorial material. You are losing control of authority and impartiality. Some people see these as grave dangers. I do not. The Internet and its applications, including blogs, web sites, and new online social networks or cyber communities, represent a huge change for the media. It is clear that online spaces for discussion and dialogue are playing an increasingly significant role in people's lives where they have affordable access to such spaces (Livingstone and Bober 2005). Some argue that the digital environment and the Internet make possible a "space of flaws" (Castells 2001) and it is within this uncertain and complex space that perceptions of risk of insecurity of mind or body may be heightened and that trust in authoritative viewpoints may be reduced (Bauman 2000; Beck 1992). Boundary crossing enabled by networked journalism allows for, and may even encourage, disorienting experiences in a variety of ways (Chouliaraki 2006). Just as it contains the seeds of the possibility of greater understanding of difference, it also may heighten the possibility of misunderstanding. Frequently, when the new online spaces are privileged, the significance of mundane, familiar practices that happen in near and distant places are discounted despite the fact that they are encountered everyday through the media. The new forms of news media support Diasporas in many ways, enabling people to maintain ties with towns, countries, cultural, religious and political groupings, but, at the same time, they seem to encourage ever more fragmented communicative networks, giving rise to possibilities of misapprehension with respect to the values and desires of others.

Networked journalism also gives rise to more decentralized decision making and non-hierarchical structures as well as to greater heterogeneity and diversity. This confronts the traditional practices of journalism which tend to be much more centralized, homogeneous and less pluralistic. The impact of this confrontation is profound for the news media and it is arguably even more profound for us as human beings. The new globally organized news media enable new forms of border crossing that are uncomfortable because they bring us into confrontation with others in ways that we suggest can be resolved and understood only through persistent dialogue. Thus, a central responsibility of the journalist today arguably must be to support and encourage new spaces for dialogue in a manner that is ethical and enhances trust (O'Neill 2002, Paxman 2007)

Again, what a good time it is then to be a journalist if you can help people to filter, connect, and understand. The demand is out there if we can add value. Ask yourself, does your journalism add authenticity, immediacy, verification, context, personalisation, human interest, even entertainment? If it does, it will succeed. Networked Journalism is by nature democratic and delivers an unquestionable public service, which I firmly believe should remain journalism's main principle. But in order for Networked Journalism to take place, the responsibility of the professionals but also of the public is crucial. To exercise meaningfully access to the information, the audience requires what Charlie Beckett describes as media literacy, which means the ability of the public to make use of a wide range of media in order to access and understand the information contained in them. Should the audience want to take this ability to a higher level, it would have to comprehend the information provided by the media to the point of being able to analyze, question and

even construct a critical opinion. Once the public has obtained these participatory tools it will be “networked to journalism.”

Conceptualizing the ‘Global’

Views on the positive or negative impact of globalization are also highly polarized. Proponents credit globalization with promoting global prosperity, peace, stability, and democracy. For many, ‘global’ means big because we live in a global age. That goes too for the global village perspective, which emphasizes the scaling dimension and equates the global with ‘bigness,’ part of a nested hierarchy of levels of analysis based on size: beyond local, regional, and national. ‘Glocalization,’ a popular concept in this literature, can be seen not as the inevitable interplay between local and cultural forces from a distance, but as the uniform imposition of a global (village) standard across a range of local circumstances. These interpretations, however, obscure the real complexity of globalization. Today’s globalised network communication shapes new interactive formats, relevant not only for the dissemination but- increasingly- for the production of news. A globalized journalistic network sphere which involves mainstream journalistic outlets and bloggers, independently operating journalists in various corners of the world and so-called “user-generated content providers alike. Within this sphere, an increasingly global flow of news is evolving which can be characterized by a new form of connectivity which establishes new links between journalists, their sources as well as their audiences. Within this transformed news sphere the roles of journalistic outlets change. They become nodes, arranged in a dense net of information gatherers, producers, and disseminators. The interactive connections among these news providers constitute what is called the sphere of “network journalism.” Studies within the “global dominance” paradigm generally work within and update the critical tradition of political economy while those conducted under the “global public sphere” paradigm represent a more diffuse group of recent disciplinary infusions from cultural studies, anthropology and approaches to the global “network society.

There are several reasons to “go global.” First, the news media is increasingly global. The facts are familiar. Media corporations are increasingly global enterprises. Technology gives news organizations the ability to gather information instantly from remote locations. The reach of the

Al-Jazeera and CNN networks, for example, extend beyond the Arab world or the American public. The sufficiency of parochial ethics has been undermined by the globalization of news media. Journalism ethics will not be credible if it avoids engagement with these news complexities. Second, global impact entails global responsibilities (McPhail, 2006; Seib, 2002; De Beer, 2004). Reports, via satellite or the Internet, reach people around the world and influence the actions of governments, militaries, and humanitarian agencies. Publication of cartoons of Muslim’s Prophet Mohammed in one paper in one country, Denmark, spread violence around the world. A parochial journalism can wreak havoc. Unless reported properly, North American readers may fail to understand violence in the Middle East. Jingoistic reports can portray other cultures as a threat. Biased reports may incite ethnic groups to attack each other. We need to consider the impact of journalism across borders. Global issues and the power of global media organizations call for a media ethics that is global in its principles and in its understanding of media. This “global responsibility” is not reflected in most journalism codes of ethics.

Third, a global journalism is required in a world where media bring together a plurality of religions and ethnic groups with varying values and agendas. Our world is not a cozy McLuhan village. In such a climate, we need to emphasize journalism as a bridge for understanding across cultures. Fourth, a global-minded journalism is needed to help citizens understand the daunting global problems of poverty, environmental degradation, technological inequalities and political instability. These problems require concerted global

action, and the construction of new global institutions. Fifth and finally, a global ethics is needed to unify journalists in constructing a fair and informed media. Without global principles it is difficult to criticize media practices in other countries, including severe restrictions on the press and the Internet.

Global journalism today accesses instantaneous, multimedia communication networks, products and sources. However, these same technologies also remove journalists' monopoly on international news, forcing a re-evaluation of who creates, transmits and ultimately owns the news. 'Globalised journalism' may be an oxymoron; it is certainly a paradox. When considering globalization and journalism, it is tempting to come up with new categories of media, practice, professionals, and content and elevate them to 'global' status. To classify 'global media,' for example, or find a group that can be identified as 'global journalists' has presented a definitional challenge, given their dispersal and inter-connectedness (Reese 2001, 2008). Who qualifies as a 'global journalist' and is this just a new term for 'foreign correspondent'? This may ultimately be more of a provocative concept than a strictly defined empirical category. A volume entitled "The global journalist", for example, was in fact a country-by-country survey of professionals (Weaver 1998), with few attempts then or now to explicate the concept. 'Global media' have been variously defined as those having a global reach or in being owned by global transnational corporations (Herman and McChesney 1997). Global news media content also suffers from difficulty separating it out from other forms, although scholars have been experimenting with identifying in content analyses certain intrinsically global issues and perspectives in the news (e.g. Berglez 2008).

The world has become increasingly globalized in which "borders become markedly less relevant to everyday behavior in the various dimensions of economics, technology, cross-culture conflict and civil society (Beck 2000 :20) and in which "distances and boundaries, are not what they used to be"(Hannerz, 1996 :3), the content of news provided reflect diversity. Global journalism today accesses instantaneous multimedia communication networks, products and services whereas traditional media are deeply challenged by a number of different developments which question not only their business models but also ways of journalistic practice. Other studies of the sociology of news have examined how 'global media gatekeepers' affect the flow of news and information. These have included observations of editorial decisions at specific international news agencies, such as those key hubs in London (Paterson 2001) and more emergent forms of news organization, such as the way news leaders can participate with others across national boundaries to share agreeable stories. An early content and ethnographic look at the Geneva-based Eurovision was provided by Cohen et al. (1996) of what they called the 'global newsroom.' Each of these approaches touches on some aspect of the global, without offering a fully satisfying conceptualization. After all, globalization is built on the intensification of connections, so we need a theoretical approach that captures these changing structures. More than a flow of information, journalism is a social practice that adapts to global influences, even if one big 'global village journalism' has not evolved. Rather than speaking of 'flows,' other network-oriented concepts such as 'articulation' capture the sense of influence arising from the coupling across boundaries. Research in this area is relatively sparse, so for now I am speaking more of conceptual pointers rather than specific empirical results.

Changing Global News Arena

Educators face the same shifting landscape of global news as do professional practitioners, citizens, and media scholars. The rapid changes in technology have given rise to new media platforms and greater interconnectedness while dramatically altering traditional news institutions and eroding professional boundaries. This raises new questions about the potential for cross cultural understanding and the values of cosmopolitan citizenship. This interconnectedness is one of the hallmarks of globalization, which along with

a simultaneity and synchronization of communication contributes to our impression of the world as a single place. These networks of international journalism support what I've called a "global news arena" (Reese, 2008) which brings about pressures toward transparency, both on the part of governments and from journalism. Slanted or false reports are now more rapidly challenged or augmented—not only by other news organizations but by thousands of readers and viewers who circulate and compare reports through on-line communities. The emerging world networked journalism must be understood within the large context of a changing global news arena, in which the public naturally seeks perspectives beyond one specific locality and nation (Croad, 2003). The migration of news and information to an online platform has disrupted old patterns of reading and changed the relationship between audiences and news providers. Ultimately, it may be more useful to recognize that globalizing media and journalism simply mean that the creators, objects, and consumers of news are less likely to share the same nation-state frame of reference. To the extent that certain transnational media emphasize this approach to news, we may call it 'global journalism.' And to the extent that certain journalists operate from this perspective we may describe them the same way. Thus, the media role must not be regarded narrowly as equivalent to a specific satellite network, journalistic message, or world-wide audience, however vast. International channels and flows may be the most visible manifestations, but they constitute the 'CNN version' of media globalization. One can more broadly imagine a 'global news arena' supported by an interlocking cross-national awareness of events, in a world further connected by networks of transnational elites, media professionals among them, who engage each other through mutually shared understandings.

To understand the emergence of new spaces more generally, it will be helpful to examine how actors in specific local settings engage with these broader networks. Transnational elites, globally connected and oriented, interact with others in specific local cultural and political contexts. Here, the global is seen in the convergent changes in norms at the level of these elites and professionals, embedded in their own networks and geographical places. The question then becomes: How do they communicate global issues in local settings? How do they interact with other professionals, through what coordinating global and local associations? What are the routine structures for their interaction within and across specific locations, and how do they adapt to local circumstances? Journalism professionals and media officials are clearly among the globalizing elites who represent an important source of influence and social change. These transnational elites participate in global networks connecting local settings, bypassing official state channels, and introducing their own logic into national spaces, including with local journalistic cultures and media systems.

In earlier periods, we could speak of media logic, or a more specific journalistic culture, that was rooted in a national structure and local community. This logic was both a result of, and an integrative force for, the national system. A shared set of expectations and norms allowed the system to function and could be distinguished from other logics and cultures in other national settings (a comparative approach to these 'cultures' is exemplified by Hanitzsch 2007). In the weakening of that common national framework, however, what logic is emerging to take its place, or at least take its place among existing ones? This emerging logic often has been over-simplified as either the domination of Western (often American) transnational corporate media or a benign pattern of hybrid between the global and local (e.g. Chalaby 2005). That kind of cultural hybridity view, however, still fails to capture the systemic redistribution of power.

The ability of researchers to conduct comparative, cross-national studies, and the analytical tools of network analysis are beginning to converge with and support these more spatially rooted theoretical ideas. Studies on hyperlinked online news and the blogosphere must necessarily tackle this kind of pattern with network

analysis, which requires that every element in a social structure be understood in relation to other elements in the structure and to the external environment. Bourdieu (2005) similarly argues that a social field, including journalism, cannot be understood in isolation but rather in relation to other fields in society and in relation to its own unique historical development. We should not just measure attributes of people—including journalists—within social containers; they must be examined in their field relations to each other (such as with European journalists mapped by Kunelius and Ruusunoksa 2008), and with respect to specific spaces. A global network perspective, therefore, takes into account both the importance of local spaces and actors, and how they are positioned relative to a multitude of forces beyond the immediate locale.

The rise of comparative research, with an emphasis on institutional fields within national cultures, leads us to be cautious about regarding the journalism within countries as homogeneous. The cross-national perspective helps sharpen our understandings of how media institutional fields differ, but the institutional level has a tendency to collapse differences among a nation's media systems. But certain components of a journalistic field may be more likely to converge toward a global standard, such as television and increasingly online news. The printed press, more firmly rooted in historical styles, may be less likely to change compared to its modern national media neighbors. On one hand, certain globally oriented media are becoming more similar, and satellite news channels, in particular, have helped create a convergent media style, strongly influenced by the Western 'objective' model. Accelerating this tendency, the speed, rhythm, and interconnectedness of online media seems to encourage an idea of news as an 'always on' utility. The headlines of the mainstream press can be distributed quickly to cell phones or laptops, much like the weather, time, and stock quotes. Another class of media, meanwhile, have been freed to be hyper-local and hyper-opinionated, fragmenting into opinion and analysis for more local and more dispersed audiences. Thus, a globalized journalism, while interconnected, has many faces

Trends and dynamics in news media

I believe that for networked journalism to mean more than just interactivity it must be considered in the much broader context of changing technology and social behavior. Networked journalism can take many forms which contribute new opportunities for public debate. For example, radio is increasing its audiences, even in markets with highly developed television or new media access. Radio seems to fit with increasingly mobile and time-poor life-styles. Radio can now be accessed via television, the Internet or mobile phones. And radio phone-ins are increasingly offered thanks to the spread of the infrastructure for networks. However, for such phone-ins to be participative, the public needs to be allowed to influence the subjects for discussion and to trust that their safety as a result of participation is ensured (Ibrahim 2007 forthcoming). Web forums or blogs also provide an on line means of creating active spaces for discussion and the dissemination of information from public-to-public. They provide platforms for consumers to critique and correct the media, but for this to become an open forum, news organizations must be transparent and embrace the criticisms that they receive.

Networked journalism can allow the journalist greater engagement and more reflection upon their subject. This is the paradoxical goal of any good journalism. It is also a strategic as well as tactical concept. It is about more than focus groups. Networked journalism might ultimately move beyond the rather simple forms of 'interactivity' that are in use today. For example, journalists might retain their functions of editing, filtering and producing news but the 'journalist' might become the media literate citizen who initiates as well as contributes to the news flow. This, in turn, might lead to public debate which the networked journalist might report in a reflexive way as part of the news production process itself.

There are, however, several conditions that would need to hold if news journalism is to develop in this way. More media organizations would need to become the driving force by building user communities around their activities, thereby preserving their brands and markets. Successful networked journalism providers might offer the premium service of skilled journalistic functions: editing, analysis, technical support and information packaging, but this would become integrated into the flow of information from users. The journalist would not act as a gatekeeper as in the past, but instead as a facilitator or moderator as Jarvis suggests in the quotation above. In addition, policy makers would need to redistribute public service media funding away from the traditional media and towards support for increased media literacy, a topic we address later in this paper. If networked journalism is to develop in the way envisaged here, the public would need to encourage these developments as would the political classes. The enthusiasm with which Politicians will support the accumulation of enhanced literacy for new media within the general population is likely to be moderated by their realisation that networked journalism presents a threat which goes against the grain of hierarchical forms of governance. If greater openness conflicts with traditional modes of their operation, governments will become increasingly uneasy as few political systems are predicated upon the need for an informed, much less, networked, public (Monck 2007).

Networked journalism offers no guarantee of a new open or moral space for dialogue. The fractious debates on blogs such as Comment are Free at the British Guardian newspaper's website are indicative of the extent to which online debate does not guarantee greater understanding. Other studies of the blogosphere which benefit from systematic empirical research such as that by Kim (2007 forthcoming) in the case of South Korea suggest a similar development. Nevertheless, new discourses are emerging with new styles and languages, suggesting that networked journalism will also evolve as part of broader cultural changes (Ito 2006)

Another issue that is crucial to the further evolution of networked journalism concerns the authoritative status of news. Organisations that produce the news for traditional news media such as AFP, AP, Reuters, CNN, BBC, and Al Jazeera continue to have the means of delivering authoritative information and analysis. However, even where the traditional journalism models continue to work, the liberal news media are severely limited insofar as they tend to be self-contained, often self-referential, and elitist; they rarely cross difficult boundaries. In addition, audiences are fragmenting and the younger generation often prefers informal social networking sites and wikis which are freely available. As a result there is need to find ways to make news reporting economically viable in the long term.

At the same time, web forums and blogs provide a way of creating active spaces for discussion, offering platforms for individuals to critique and to correct the traditional news media. Little Green Footballs – a blog - for example, revealed how a photographer working for Reuters faked some photographs of the Israel/Hezbollah conflict. In this case, Reuters offered transparency and accepted criticism (Beckett 2007). In the case of networked journalism as indicated earlier, the journalist might become a facilitator. This facilitation role is illustrated by several examples of journalism initiatives which are enabling new boundaries to be crossed. For example, the BBC World Service Trust is enabling Pashto and Dari speaking audiences, inside and outside Afghanistan, to listen to their favourite radio programmes using the Internet (BBC World Service Trust 2007a). In another case, Zig Zag is allowing young people in Iran who use a secret language to communicate, offering the first chance they have had to hear each others' voices and to engage with figures such as religious leaders (BBC World Service Trust 2007b). And in yet another

instance, My Life offers a programme of workshops for young women in Egypt, Syria, Yemen and Saudi Arabia to tell their stories for the first time online (BBC World Service Trust 2007c).

From an economic point of view, if these and other new forms of networked journalism are to flourish, investment will have to shift from traditional journalism to promoting new business models and new media literacy capabilities. This shift will be necessary if the public, wherever they may be, are to become the producers of the news and of their own stories.

Journalists as Facilitators

Networked Journalism calls for journalists to be the facilitators of information. In most cases, though, reporters and editors cannot monitor what does and does not reach the public sphere. The boundaries of what is or is not noticeable or newsworthy are no longer set by journalists. Having in mind the traditional and unequivocal principles of truth and accuracy, Networked Journalism aims to provide the audience with the tools to actively participate in the public conversation, which usually means creating content in whatever medium: e-mail, mobile phones, digital cameras, online editing suites, webcams or texting and on whatever scale necessary

Networked Journalism, therefore, has to be regarded not as a final product, but as a continuous process shared in by the professionals and society that takes place in a space carved out by new media technology. This shared sphere is labelled by Professor Roger Silverstone as mediapolis in his work *Media and Morality: On the Rise of the Mediapolis*. Utilizing this concept, Silverstone makes a successful attempt to conceive this cutting-edge journalism. Networked Journalism is by nature democratic and delivers an unquestionable public service, which I firmly believe should remain journalism's main principle. But in order for Networked Journalism to take place, the responsibility of the professionals but also of the public is crucial. To exercise meaningfully access to the information, the audience requires what Charlie Beckett describes as media literacy, which means the ability of the public to make use of a wide range of media in order to access and understand the information contained in them. Should the audience want to take this ability to a higher level, it would have to comprehend the information provided by the media to the point of being able to analyze, question and even construct a critical opinion. Once the public has obtained these participatory tools it will be "networked to journalism".

Journalism Ethics

The concept of networked journalism is the result of the bulging fluid information flows that are taking place today. It is described as 'journalism's existential crisis'. Networked journalism essentially means opening up the production process of journalism. Networked journalism brings decentralized decision making, non- hierarchical structures, and diversity, face-to-face with the traditional practices of journalism. The impact of that confrontation is profound for the media, and it is even more profound for us as human beings. Border crossing is uncomfortable because it brings us into confrontation with others in ways that can be resolved and understood *only* through persistent dialogue. The responsibility of the media then is to support and encourage that dialogue in all ethical way. By "ethics" I mean the analysis of correct conduct, responsible practice, and fair human interactions in the light of the best available principles. Ethics is also about practical judgment—the application of principles to issues and decisions. Ethics encompasses theoretical and practical reasoning. Theoretically, ethics is the analysis (or "meta-ethics") of the language of ethics, of forms of ethical reasoning, and of the objectivity of moral principles. Practically, ethics is "applied ethics," the study of principles for such domains as corporate governance, scientific research, and

professional practice (Dimock & Tucker, 2004). Applied ethics or “normative utilitarianism and (b) using these principles to debate the goodness or rightness of actions.

Where is journalism ethics on this “map” of ethics? It is a type of applied ethics. It is the analysis of the practice of journalism, and the application of its principles to situations and issues. Journalism ethics investigates the “micro” problems of what individual journalists should do in particular situations, and the “macro” problems of what news media should do, given their role in society. The issues of journalism ethics include the limits of free speech, accuracy and bias, fairness and privacy, the use of graphic images, conflicts of interest, the representation of minorities, and the role of journalism. A question about journalism is an ethical question, as opposed to a question of prudence or custom, if it evaluates conduct in the light of the fundamental public purposes and social responsibilities of journalism. What are those purposes?

In an era of a mix of traditional news media and emerging networked journalism, to what extent is it feasible to encourage new modes of caring for distant others? The expansion of networked journalism may encourage or discourage public action that grants equal value to human life, regardless of whether such life belongs to ‘my’ community or ‘another’ community. Similarly, the traditional media may encourage us to experience a feeling of global intimacy through their representation of distant others, but they may not encourage reflection on why suffering is occurring or what can be done about it. If networked journalism is to succeed in fostering the kind of dialogue envisaged here, it must create spaces for news production and consumption which are consistent with such reflection.

The emerging forms of networked journalism are strongly collaborative insofar as professional journalists and amateurs often work together. Frequently boundaries are crossed within the production process as a means of sharing facts, raising questions, producing answers and ideas, and challenging differing perspectives (Jarvis 2007). This new form of journalism raises many ethical issues and it presents us with a paradox. It embraces the potential for both greater understanding and greater misunderstanding to occur. This is because each boundary that is crossed in the production and consumption of networked journalism enables an increasingly wide range of different viewpoints, languages, cultures, values and goals to be encountered. As they are encountered, they are likely to affect people’s everyday lives and their perceptions of distant others in ways that are increasingly unpredictable. If networked journalism begins to bring about the possibility of understanding local histories or a remapping stories of colonial difference and exclusion, the potential may exist to begin to build a more worldly and ethical culture (Escobar 2004: 219). As a result there may be potential to move beyond dichotomies between ‘north’/‘south’, ‘information rich’/‘information poor’, and ‘hegemonic’/‘indigenous’ knowledge, and towards a new, not yet completely understood, alternative. These would be foundations for a new global dialogue which respects the humanity of all.

Fostering New Literacies

We have entered the ‘prosumer’ society,” made up of producers who are also consumers of media content. The prosumer society has multiple forms of self-expression, and it is still early to tell which of these will survive the founding of the new era. Networked journalism stand out based on ordinary citizens creating online information. Literacy is the constantly evolving cognitive processes and social practices that members of a particular social or cultural group value, foster and engage in as they construct and communicate meaning (Langer, 1987). Media literacy can be regarded as a subset of critical thinking, which according to the Foundation for Critical Thinking on its website is defined as the art of analyzing and evaluating thinking with a view to improving it.” To the extent that it involves questioning, reasoning, discerning the strength of claims, evaluating evidence, and taking multiple perspectives, media literacy necessarily is thinking critically, a process we presume leads to better informed citizens, who can evaluate the strength of political

arguments and detect faulty logic as they make decisions. We want people to be able to stand back from news media objects, aesthetically, politically, and intellectually.

At the heart of this investigation is the confluence of journalism education, technology, and the perceptions future journalists have of the linkages between citizenship and media. Indeed, tomorrow's communicators are on the forefront of tremendous technological advances. Increasing Internet penetration worldwide and the growing influence of transnational, converged, and globally interconnected media industries have fundamentally altered how information is processed, distributed, and received. Journalism is in a paradigm shift. More than any generation to come before them, today's young people are participating in the creation and sharing of culture with the immediacy and connectedness that a digitally networked world provides. In many cases, these young adults are actively involved in what we are calling participatory cultures; a participatory culture shifts the focus of literacy from one of individual expression to one of community involvement. What are the prerequisites for networked journalism to foster this alternative? One prerequisite would be for the new journalism to support new forms of 'translation', a possibility that de Sousa Santos (2003) argues might underpin greater mutual understanding and intelligibility among those who have worldviews that are different and at odds with each other (Escobar 2004).

A continuous expansion on network journalism would gradually out-bid the mainstream printed newspaper industry as online attainment of information has become increasingly predominant. If networked journalism creates possibilities for new border crossings and translations, then it could underpin new understandings, reflections and, potentially, ethical action. However, for such translations to occur there must be substantial investment in new media literacies that extend beyond basic reading and writing. Literacy in the context of the media is often seen as a capability that is necessary to provide people with a means to protect themselves from harmful aspects of the media. But as our engagements with close and distant others are mediated increasingly by new media, new literacy become essential for participation, active citizenship, learning, and even cultural expression (Livingstone 2004). Although considerable effort is being devoted to gaining access to networks and to acquiring literacy for basic understanding, much less attention is being given to enabling people to acquire a more sophisticated understanding of the media, including news media.

This means enhancing capabilities for critical evaluation and for creating communications of various kinds for exchange in new media environments. Although, media literacy principles are being developed under charters and conventions, they are not being widely translated into teaching resources. Increasing resources and equalizing capabilities so that many more benefit is the challenge for the future if the implications of boundary crossing and networked journalism are to foster an ethical media.

As in the case of the predominant understanding of press freedom as a negative freedom, the emphasis in the case of literacy is mostly on those aimed at enabling people to avoid harm. If the goal of enhancing public dialogue and understanding is to be advanced, more attention will be essential to the positive aspects of literacy, that is, those which foster democratic participation and active citizenship through dialogue.. But as Livingstone et al. (2005) has pointed out, attention to literacy may begin to substitute for regulation and those who do not have the literacy skills required for participating in new forums will be excluded. Skills associated with critical evaluation and capabilities for determining reliable and trustworthy information are essential if there is to be an opportunity to foster a form of networked journalism that is consistent with border crossing and translation that can support reflection and action that is respectful of all and just.

Conclusion

In a global world of networked journalism, not only do we need to move beyond the familiar and damaging dualisms of the past, it will be essential to acknowledge exclusions when they occur and to investigate why they are occurring and how they are being perpetuated. An ethically grounded research strategy for understanding the changes associated with networked journalism would begin the task of assessing both the potential and the risks of the way the news media are evolving. As in other areas of media and communication studies, we need to follow Alhassan (2007) who asks ‘what is the relationship between the margin and the centre in the epistemic economy of communication studies? How is it established and maintained?’ As indicated above, both Escobar (2004) and de Sousa Santos (2003) argue in favour of new border crossings and translations which could encourage better understanding of the dynamics of power relations which give rise to inequality and, ultimately, to actions aimed at reducing it. We have suggested that networked journalism could create opportunities for journalists to facilitate public debate. However, we have also warned that if this is to happen, financial resources will have to shift from supporting traditional journalism to promoting the new forms of news media and to fostering new media literacy that do not exclude and which support new forms of border crossings and translation.

All these arguments make necessary a rethinking of what journalism at the start of the new millennium is - and what it is definitely not. Besides a new definition in terms of 'network journalism', we also have to reflect on the social and cultural relevance and societal position and responsibilities of media professionals. The importance of a free and fair press is generally recognised as cornerstones of contemporary democracies, and as a necessary element for political democracy and social cohesion. In this respect characteristics such as an increased audience-orientation, customisation of content and interactivity can revitalise old democratic ideals of participatory communication, public and civic journalism, a voice for the voiceless and so on (see Bardoel and Frissen 1999). For the same token these characteristics can also be used in a process of continuing commercialisation, that puts negative pressures on the profession (Van Dusseldorp, Scullion and Bierhoff, 1999). In our view it is not fruitful though to construct an absolute opposition between the 'old' newspaper journalism, as the exclusive platform for political debate within the framework of the nation-state, versus the 'new' Internet journalism, as the main vehicle of (post) modern service-driven journalism in the context of a globalising market economy. Both old and new media provide platforms for political, cultural as well as commercial communication. Therefore the new technologies offer new challenges for democratic communication as well as new threats, but who emphasises the latter exclusively might well end up defending the privileges of an established profession instead of the importance of a democratic communication system.

Many exciting networked journalism experiments are underway. But too many conversations about journalism are really about defending existing newsroom practices and arguments for “core values” of objectivity and professionalism. These concepts have new meanings and new applications in a networked environment. We need new vocabulary born of new mindsets to better describe what we do. The stakes are enormous. Some of our long term journalistic practices and routines are making things worse, contributing to political gridlock, economic meltdown and potential environmental catastrophe. We should not pretend we are just neutral referees in a global game of strategy. We are active players who need to take responsibility for the effects of our work. Networking is the only way of becoming an active member of the changing society. It is also the way commitment to problems emerges, and that is exactly where the greatness of our profession lies. Consequently, another golden age of journalism is about to arrive.

Just as advertising has become personalised and viral, so journalism will have to get closer to the communities that it is talking to, be they geographical or subject-specific. Think about how this opens up the space for a more participatory politics at all levels. Imagine how it can inform a more deliberative democracy. Instead of claiming a special dispensation, the journalist will now become part of a network of responsibilities and relevance. It's where I have always thought good journalism belonged.

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