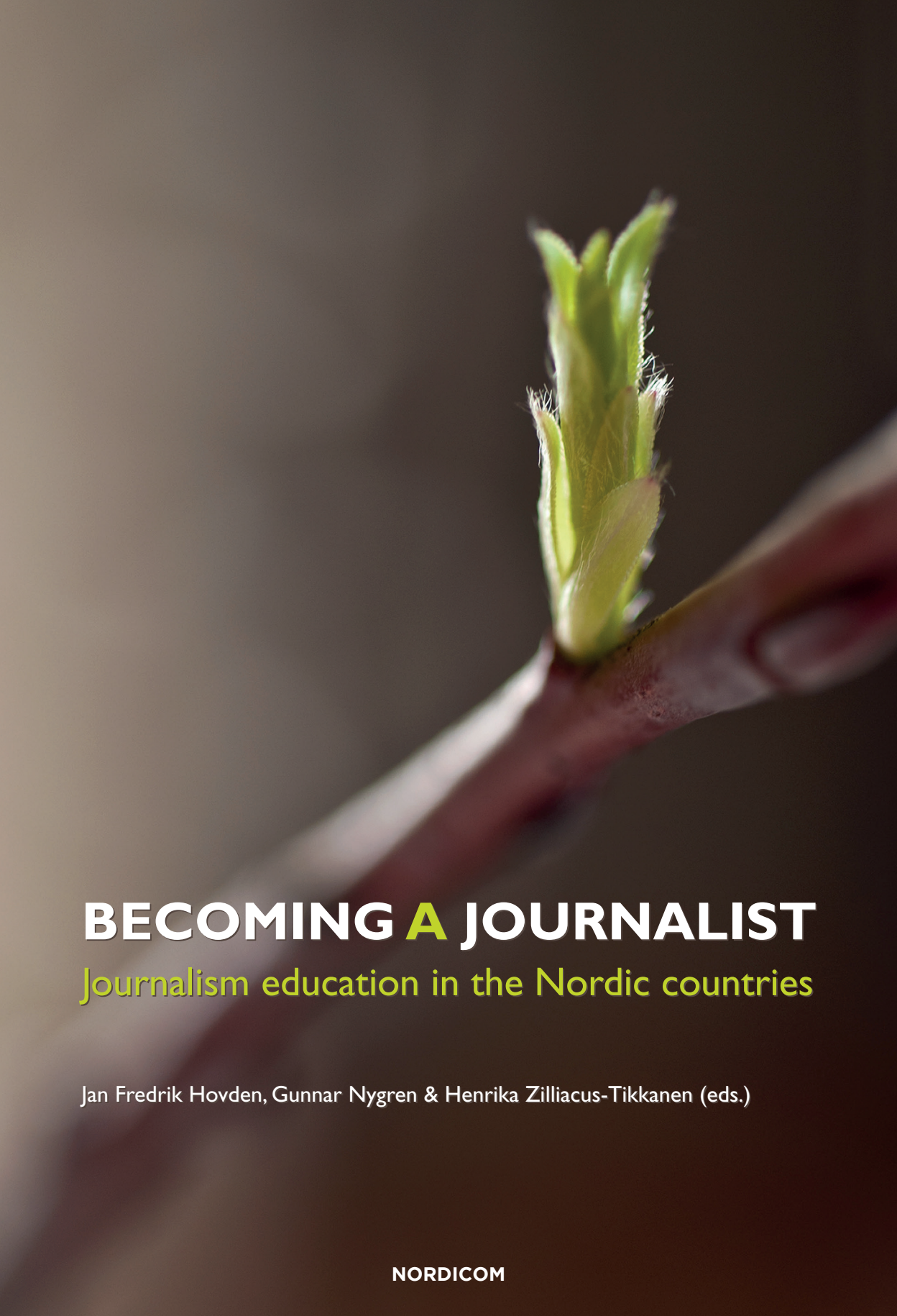




# **BECOMING **A** JOURNALIST**

**Journalism education in the Nordic countries**

Jan Fredrik Hovden, Gunnar Nygren & Henrika Zilliacus-Tikkanen (eds.)

**NORDICOM**



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## Preface

What kind of journalists do modern journalist students want to be? What are their views on ethics or the role of the journalist in society? Why do some journalist students quit their education and some thrive? Why, indeed, do young people want to be journalists – and is this changing? Are “our” students different from other students? How should changes in the media markets and technology affect the way we teach journalism?

Rapidly changing circumstances in a profession, as in society, induce an element of what sociologist Émile Durkheim (borrowing the concept from Jean-Marie Guyau) called *anomia* – a condition where social and/or moral norms are confused and unclear. Being a teacher for a profession in such conditions means that one often becomes an amateur ethnographer, wondering daily about the customs, mentality and lifestyles of the students, the colleagues and the professionals one encounters in the flesh and through journalistic work. If such thoughts in our busy daily lives are usually concerned with individuals and practical solutions (Why is this so hard to learn for him? Why does she want to quit journalism school? Did he really mean what he just said?), it is not strange that this daily reflection has resulted in many academic projects concerned with the professional socialisation of journalists.

This book is strongly rooted in the Nordic Conferences for Journalism Teachers. The first versions of most contributions in this volume were presented at *Making Journalists through Journalism Education: Nordic Perspectives*, a pre-conference for the teacher conference in Reykjavik in autumn of 2014. It seems only fitting that this initiative came from what has been known as the Hofdabrekka group, a network of Nordic journalism teachers who, since a previous teacher’s conference in 2004 that also took place in Iceland, started work on a series of surveys of Nordic journalism students, which by 2012 had become the largest survey of this kind in the world, answered by almost five thousand students at thirty institutions of journalism learning. While working on early plans for an anthology from this survey project, we were struck by two facts. The first was that the research tradition on journalism education in the Nordic countries is remarkable, and is also so by international standards. Not

only is the number of researchers and projects very high, but also the variety, and very often the quality, of this work is high as well. The second fact was that this tradition is hardly known outside the Nordic countries. For these reasons, we found it much more fitting to make a broad Nordic anthology on current research regarding journalism education, which made it possible to unite in one volume a multiplicity of different and complementary works, illuminating many aspects and challenges of modern journalism education in both the Nordic countries and elsewhere.

For the realisation of this book, we want to express our gratitude to the people of Nordicom and the many institutions that have given financial support for the book's production: the Nordic Network for Journalism Education, Tre Smeder, the Finnish-Norwegian Cultural Foundation, Södertörn University, the Bergen University Funds, and the Department of Information Science and Media Studies at the University of Bergen. It also goes without saying – and therefore needs to be said sometimes – that this book could not have been possible without the discussions with and encouragement from our colleagues and students.

Bergen, Stockholm and Helsinki, August 2016

*Jan Fredrik Hovden   Gunnar Nygren   Henrika Zilliacus-Tikkanen*

## I. A NORDIC MODEL



## Introduction

### *The Nordic Model of Journalism Education*

Jan Fredrik Hovden, Gunnar Nygren  
& Henrika Zilliacus-Tikkanen

There is a “Nordic model” of journalism education. This is partly due to great similarities in the Nordic countries and their history, which has led to similar political and media systems, systems of professional journalism and education. But it is also a result of the extensive dissemination of ideas across borders due to a tradition of close collaboration and close social ties among the Nordic journalism educators.

The Nordic countries are part of a common history and culture, both in the broad sense and in the more specific history of their media and journalistic systems. Since Viking times, the countries have been intertwined. Politically this has happened through the various unions since the 12<sup>th</sup> century, and they have a highly shared literature and arts background, made possible by the linguistic situation (the Scandinavian languages are dialects with a common root in Old Norse, and are easily understandable across borders. The Finnish language has different roots, but Finland is a bilingual country, Swedish being its other official language). Liberal democracy was gradually introduced in all these small countries throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, and strong welfare states have developed with a largely shared social-democratic politico-cultural foundation, with principles of universalism and justice, and an ethics of contribution, work and distribution (Brochmann and Hagelund, 2012) – often referred to as the “Nordic model”.

Within the Nordic region the organization of mass media and communication has followed parallel paths, leading to distinct media systems whose similarities are often emphasized in international reviews (Meier & Trappel, 1992; Curran, 2002; Hallin & Mancini, 2004). As noted by several scholars (e.g. Gustafsson, 1980; Hallin, & Mancini, 2004; Mancini, 2005), the formation of European media systems – marking an important difference to the US – have been closely connected with the underlying philosophy of the welfare state. Two incorporations of such ideal objectives entail the establishment and strong support of public-service broadcasting, and economic subsidies for the press, the latter practice having started in Scandinavia and later being adopted in many other countries (Mancini, 2005). While these ideas have been variously implemented – and upheld – in the European countries, the Nordic countries can

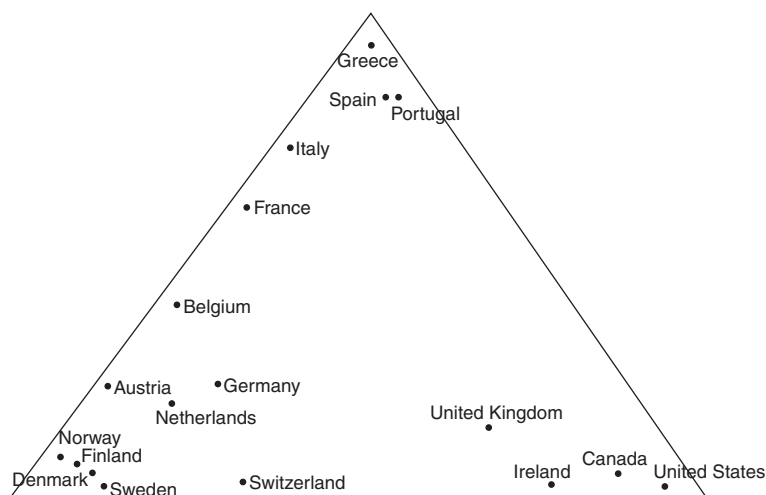
be said to form a relatively homogenous case, with a particularly strong link between these welfare ideals and media organization, bringing some scholars to suggest the notion of media welfare states (Syvertsen et al., 2014).

In the work of Hallin and Mancini (2004), the Nordic countries are seen as the most similar of all the countries within the *Democratic Corporatist* model of media systems, as well as the most ideal-typical example of it, opposed to the Southern European countries in the *Polarized Plurist* corner and the mostly English-speaking countries in the *Liberal* corner (Figure 1).

Some of the common features emphasized for Democratic Corporatist systems, as summarized by Nord (2008), are: an early development of a mass-circulation press and a high relative circulation of newspapers even today; historically a strong party press thus providing external pluralism; a shift towards a neutral commercial press and broadcasting relative autonomy in political issues; strong journalistic professionalism and institutionalized self-regulation; strong state intervention at a structural level; press subsidies; and strong public service broadcasting. In contrast, the Liberal model (e.g. the US and UK) is seen as characterized by a press with more moderate circulation, market-oriented media, highly professional but non-institutional self-regulation, and less state intervention in the form of subsidies and regulation (Hallin & Mancini, 2004).

Nordic scholars have discussed at length the adequacy of this description for the Nordic countries. Lars Nord (2008), in a historical study based mostly on media market statistics (excluding Iceland), notes that international media market trends have weakened many of the central traits of Hallin and Mancini's model, and moved the

**Figure 1.** The European Media System



**Source:** Hallin & Mancini (2004).

Nordic countries towards the Liberal model: a loss of newspapers' party press character; declining importance of governmental press subsidies; ownership concentration; and a shrinking number of newspapers and falling audiences for both the press and public service broadcasting, to name but some. At the same time, the changes have not been the same in all four countries or occurred with the same strength. Particularly Denmark, which has traditionally had the least developed newspaper market, also appears to be the country to have moved most towards the Liberal model (Ibid.)

On the other hand, Nord identifies many persistent characteristics of the Nordic media systems: the press still has a strong self-regulation system, the daily newspapers and public broadcasters have been quite successful in defending their market position in the age of Internet (with the Nordic countries having the most digitally connected public in the world, cf. Bilbao-Osorio, Dutta, and Lanvin, 2014) and increasing private competition, and readership figures are still generally much higher than in most Liberal countries. While Nord suggests that the Nordic countries are best seen as "four different variations of a mixture of democratic corporatist national structures and more external liberal influences" (Ibid.) he still, like ourselves and other scholars (see e.g. Syvertsen et al., 2014), finds it meaningful in an international context to talk of a Nordic model of media systems, although perhaps more with the logic of what Wittgenstein (1965, p. 166) calls family resemblance than in the form of essential core traits shared by all.

### A Nordic model of journalism education?

Not surprisingly, given their comparable societies and media systems, journalism education in the Nordic countries has many similarities, in both the history of their development and their present situation.

Whereas there were some important pre-war initiatives for the teaching of journalism in the Nordic countries, the start of formal journalism education – like in most other North European countries – was mainly a feature of the post-war era. With the introduction of television and the expansion of the traditional press and radio, the in-house apprentice system could not train enough journalists to keep up with demand. Also, the rising importance of journalism in society strengthened the view that it should become a profession and needed a formal education structure (Weibull, 2009). The initiatives for formal journalism programmes were often a joint effort by the press organizations and universities, although the power relations between these actors appear to have varied (Ibid. and Gardeström in this anthology), resulting in a variety of arrangements. Often, journalism programmes started as independent institutions and were later nationalized and became part of the college and university system, reflecting the high level of trust in government institutions in the Democratic Corporatist model (Ibid.), in contrast to the often more hesitant development of formal journalism education in many Liberal systems (cf. Hallin & Mancini, p. 222).

Furthermore, regional and other interests have contributed to the geographical and institutional spread of institutions offering vocational training, contributing to today's mosaic of journalism programmes in the Nordic countries.

Until the late 1990s, journalism education in Denmark was completely dominated by one institution – the Danish school of Journalism in Aarhus, which in 1960 was disassociated from the University of Aarhus and began being led by a board of journalism professionals. Offering vocational training for newcomers and established journalists, it in effect held a monopoly on journalism education until the late 1990s, when two much smaller university-based education programmes were established in Roskilde and Odense (Minke, 2009). Aarhus has also hosted a Nordic course for journalists, usually lasting three months, for more than 50 years.

Norway's modern journalism education has been institutionally more pluralistic. Starting as a press-governed journalism school in 1965, it was later incorporated into Oslo University College. Competing programmes were established in several coastal towns – starting with Volda in 1971, followed by Bodø and Stavanger in 1987. A Christian Lutheran institution, Gimlekollen, established its school for journalism in 1981 and was approved as a full college in 1996. Later establishments include programmes at the old universities of Oslo and Bergen (the former in cooperation with its city's university college), one in Kautokeino for the indigenous Sami people, and others at a major business school and an international college – both of which later discontinued their programmes (Bjørnsen, Hovden, & Ottosen, 2009).

A similar pluralism can be seen in Sweden. A journalism institute was established in Stockholm in 1960. Two years later a similar institute was established in Gothenburg, and in 1977 both were integrated into the university system. In the 1980s and 1990s many new programmes were established, including Södertörn University, Mid-Sweden University in Sundsvall, and Linnaeus University in Kalmar. Universities in Umeå, Uppsala and Lund have also offered short journalism programmes. In addition, a number of independent vocational programmes are offered in different forms (Weibull & Ghersetti, 2009).

In Finland, short courses for journalists were introduced in 1925 at the Civic College in Helsinki, a semi-academic institution primarily educating civil servants. In 1960 the school was upgraded and became the University of Tampere, and began offering an academic journalism programme and a vocational programme in 1966. A journalism programme in the Swedish language started in 1962 at the Swedish School of Social Science. Today, journalism programmes in Finland are located at three universities and a few polytechnics. Master's degrees are offered in the Finnish language at two universities, the University of Tampere and the University of Jyväskylä, and a Bachelor's degree in Swedish is offered by the Swedish School of Social Science at the University of Helsinki, with the option to continue with a Master's in communication. Polytechnics in Helsinki (Haaga-Helia), Turku (Turku University of Applied Sciences) and Oulu (Oulu University of Applied Sciences) also offer journalism programmes. (See the chapter by Hujanen, Jaakkola, and Zilliacus-Tikkanen for more information.)



Comparable journalism programmes did not exist in Iceland until much later. The Union of Journalists instead assisted its members in finding relevant courses and training within and outside Iceland, and the courses at the Nordic Journalism Centre in the Danish city of Aarhus were very popular. The University of Iceland started offering a one-year study in practical communication in 1987, which became a two-year Master's degree in journalism in 2004. A BA program mixing traditional media studies and journalism has been offered at the University of Akureyri since 2003 (Guðmundsson, 2009).

There are some notable differences between the offerings of journalism education in the Nordic countries. In Norway many regional universities teach journalism, a result of an active state policy to develop the country's less inhabited regions. Denmark, in contrast, which is a smaller country (in area but not in population), had for a long time only one journalism programme. In Finland the language divide (both Finnish and Swedish are official languages) has resulted in journalism programmes in both languages. In Sweden the most important academic journalism programmes originally developed outside the old universities, partly as a result of difficulties establishing a new professional education in an old academic environment.

In a review of the journalism education landscape in 33 European countries, Kaarle Nordenstreng (2009) concludes that "... the overall landscape emerging ... is far from clear and does not follow the simple division into three proposed by Hallin and Mancini". While we agree with this description on a European level, we will still argue that the Nordic countries, despite their many differences, offer a largely shared, and somewhat different, model for journalism education than most other European countries. Whereas countries like Germany usually admit only students with a strong academic background to their journalism programmes and offer in-house training (*volontariat*), the Scandinavian countries offer an integrated model (Weibull, 2009) whereby the programmes offer both practical courses in media production and more academic subjects, often taking in young students with little educational or work experience. Also, the process described by Splichal and Sparks (1994) as the "graduatization" of journalism is very strong in the Nordic countries, as a Bachelor's or Master's degree in journalism has become the norm as a prerequisite for entering the profession. In Sweden, about 70 per cent of all journalists under 35 years of age have an academic journalism education, and universities have become the main path into the profession. In Poland, in contrast, only a minority of young journalists come from an academic journalism programme (Glowacki, 2015).

The many similarities of their educational and media systems, and relative lack of language barriers, means that Nordic journalism teachers have very often looked across the Nordic borders for useful models and inspiration for their own programmes. The development of the early journalism schools in the 50s and 60s was done in close collaboration across the borders, and in 1963 this was formalized in the establishment of a Nordic network for journalism education which today includes 21 schools<sup>1</sup>, and has since then organized regular meetings, seminars and exchange programmes for

Nordic journalism teachers (for more information, see Westman, 1993). Helped by the small size of the Nordic teaching community, this network has strengthened the social bonds of this group and also constituted a common marketplace for pedagogical ideas, normative ideals and practical ways of teaching journalism which has contributed to their swift spread and a remarkable homogeneity in the journalism programmes in the Nordic countries.

## New challenges for journalism education

The Nordic system of journalism education can be regarded as something between a unique and a typical case (cf. Yin, 2003). While being a part of Western Europe, the Nordic countries constitutes a region with offer a distinct system and tradition for journalism and journalism education. The focus on the particularities of this case and its internal variations show ways of making journalists which differ from more well-described cases in other media systems (particularly the UK and the US). And if read in an anthropological spirit, such comparisons provide insight in the way journalism as a practice, a belief and a subject of teaching is connected to a particular societal situation – the organization of the national state, its media markets, the educational system, national and journalistic cultures and so forth. This book thus adds a broad collection of studies of a (internationally, at least) relatively little-known case to the small, but fast-growing international academic literature on the subject (see in particular de Burgh, 2005, Franklin & Mensing, 2011, Frölich & Holtz-Bacha, 2003).

On the other hand, the case for a Nordic *exceptionalism* should not be overstressed. Even if journalism research has lessened considerably the former faith in the universalism of the US model of journalistic professionalism and other countries' inevitable movement towards it (for a critique, see e.g. Weaver & Wilnat, 2012), the general aims of teaching journalism in most countries are quite similar: students need to know how to express themselves, understand the genres, master the instruments of production and how to handle sources, become familiar with the national professional norms, and so forth. As a consequence, the teaching of journalism is in important ways quite similar all over the world. Furthermore, journalism in the Nordic countries is subject to changes and pressures shared with most other countries in the Western world. On a societal level these are linked to megatrends like economic and cultural globalization, a changing composition of the population (e.g. due to increasing immigration and level of schooling), the impact of new information technology, and so forth. A major ongoing reorientation is simultaneously taking place within journalism; Martin Eide (2015) has suggested four major trends:

- *a de-industrialization of journalism* (e.g. changes due to the collapse of traditional business models for news journalism, and a digitalization of production which means it is less bound to time and space than analogue journalism);

- *an increasing need for the justification and legitimation of journalism* (e.g. via media accountability systems and other systems of transparency vis-à-vis the public and politicians);
- *a participatory turn: changing relations between journalistic professionals and amateurs* (e.g. blogs, citizen journalism); and
- *a changing cognitive framework among professionals for understanding journalism* (e.g. the increasing use of metaphors of teamwork, dialogue, conversation).

Each of these aspects poses major challenges for journalism education. The changing needs (real and perceived) for the various qualifications of a journalist, the changing organization of the production of journalism, uncertainty about the relevant norms and obligations of journalism versus the public, new ways of communicating with a highly educated public, new technology for the production and dissemination of news – everything that changes the production of journalism and its role in society necessarily poses both problems and possibilities for those who take on the task of educating the new entrants to the profession.

## Summary and plan for the book

The work with this anthology started, fittingly, as a pre-conference to the conference for Nordic journalism teachers in Reykjavik in September 2014. But the initial idea for this book came much earlier, at a similar conference in Höfðabrekku in 2004. While not offering an exhaustive or representative review of the research tradition for this theme in the Nordic countries – not least because of its emphasis on the most current research and on studies encompassing more than one school – this book demonstrates many of the common preoccupations in this extensive and growing body of research.

### *Part 1. A Nordic model*

The book consists of twenty chapters organized in four parts. In the first part, this introduction is followed by a comparative review of the early institutional history of Nordic journalism education. Criticizing whig history presentations of journalism education as a natural progression in the history from trade to profession, *Elin Gardeström* (chapter 2) argues that the establishment of formal journalism programmes in Sweden was a solution largely forced upon the press organizations, who fought to maintain control over the accreditation and training of journalists, wanting to socialize them to the particular regional and political culture of their newsrooms. As mass media expanded and was commercialized in the post-war years, however, this original apprentice system broke down, as the newspapers were neither able to train enough journalists nor keep their trainees very long. Given the real threat that other actors (universities, the Nordic council, political parties, private entrepreneurs) would arrange

journalism education according to their agendas, the press was forced to collaborate in establishing independent schools of journalism, which were later nationalized and became part of the state educational system. While there are important variations on this story in the different Nordic countries, not least in the degree of collaboration of the press with academic institutions and the time frame of the integration into universities, Gardeström argues that the Nordic countries have largely followed similar paths.

As *Ida Willig* (chapter 3) notes, the strong similarities between the dominant Nordic journalism educations and their shared focus on journalism as a craft, combined with the practice of long internships, is not unproblematic. Does this contribute to an orthodox and conserving dynamic in the journalistic field? In her case, Denmark, where there are only three formal places of education, the question also arises as to whether the schools do not contribute to a narrow recruitment to the profession. She suggests that there is very little competition regarding the core values of journalism, and a homogenous culture consecrating the craft perspective of journalism.

In chapter 4, *Jan Fredrik Hovden* and *Rune Ottosen* present an overview of the Hovdabrekka study, the largest survey of journalism students in the world at the time of writing, surveying almost five thousand students from 30 journalism programmes in the Nordic countries in the years 2005-2012. They provide an overview of the main differences in the students' professional ideals and views regarding journalism, their job aspirations and social recruitment. Interpreting their data largely from a Bourdieuan perspective, they find that Nordic students overall have a largely shared professional orientation (with the Scandinavian countries being the most similar), but note that the differences are larger within in each country than between the countries, which points to the importance of understanding the particular social recruitment patterns and the nature of the institutions involved. The authors also argue that Nordic students are becoming more similar in their professional orientation.

## *Part 2. Professional (re)orientations*

In the second part of the book, Nordic journalism students' professional orientation is analysed in more detail through a series of chapters mixing more detailed regional accounts, comparisons to other countries, and further contextualization through comparisons with professional ideals asserted by teachers and curricula. *Gunnar Nygren* (chapter 5) looks at how Swedish journalism students differ from their Polish and Russian counterparts, and how the students differ from the professionals in their country. While it is found that important national traits of the professional culture of journalism are transferred to the students (e.g. finding more tolerance in Russia for the political activity of journalists than in Poland, a lower tolerance for working with PR in Sweden, and lower watchdog ideals in Russia), there are also quite surprising similarities. In each country students are not more but less focused on the critical role of journalism, and less critical regarding quality in journalism and the development of press freedom than the professionals, who also emphasize professional integrity and

neutrality more than students do. As Nygren writes, this might indicate that important parts of professionalism (the borders of the profession, detachment, and what a journalist can do) are still a matter for socialization in the newsroom.

Combining surveys of students, interviews with educators and analyses of syllabi within three very different Swedish journalism programmes, *Gunilla Hultén* and *Antonia Wiklund's* work (chapter 6) identifies divides and conflicting positions between the students' and educators' journalistic ideals, between teaching practices and the content of the syllabi, and between educational ideals and learning outcomes. Educators are generally more inclined towards investigative journalism, while students are more oriented towards the aesthetic and narrative aspects of journalism, the latter occupying a weak position in the learning outcomes of the universities' syllabi. In particular, their work points to the challenging position of the educators, who must navigate between the need to adjust the training to a transforming media landscape and to meet the expectations of the students, and the obligation to comply with the requirements of the national educational system.

Using data from the Hovdabrekka surveys, two Danish and three Finnish scholars then give an overview of the professional orientations of the students in their country. Focusing on the students' attachment to the "hierarchies of production" in light of the changing industry, *Jannie Møller Hartley* and *Maria Bendix* (chapter 7) find that while Danish students have somewhat increased their interest in specializing in multimedia and online journalism in recent years, their ideals remain quite stable and largely traditional, with work in television and print being valued higher than working online and at magazines, and ideals of the investigative reporter, working in hard news and so forth, are still dominant among the next generation of journalists in Denmark. *Henrika Zilliacus-Tikkanen*, *Jaana Hujanen* and *Maarit Jaakkola* (chapter 8) provide a thorough discussion of the particular history of journalism education and the changing industry situation in Finland, noting a similar pattern in this country and also pointing out a conflict between how the journalism students see the role of the journalist in society – as a watchdog, a criticizing power and a catalyst of debate – and their relatively individual motives for choosing the occupation.

The last two chapters in this part are concerned with an important part of journalism students' orientation to their future profession which is seldom studied: their media consumption. As the authors note, such consumption is important, firstly because up-to-date general knowledge of the social world and its debates is an important prerequisite for contributing to the grand conversation, a task whose importance is not only stressed by the schools and the profession but is also cited by students as a very important motivation for becoming journalists. Furthermore, media consumption is also an important way for students to learn journalistic craftsmanship (e.g. genres, storytelling) and professional norms. Finally, the students' media consumption may also provide us clues about their future professional use of and preferences for various media. *Ulrika Andersson* (chapter 9) finds that while there are national variations, Nordic journalism students generally consume printed and online newspapers to a

higher extent than the average young adult media user. They are also much like their peers in that they devote a great deal of time to social media activities and television watching, and prefer online media to printed news media. A similar result is found by Erik Eliasson and Maarit Jaakkola (chapter 10) in their investigations of Swedish and Finnish students, where they argue that the ubiquitous ownership of private smartphones and the students' active readership of new media and fundamental cross-media behaviour have an unrealized pedagogical potential for journalism schools.

### *Part 3. Meeting the challenges*

While the professional orientation of journalism students will always be different from that of previous generations, and thus holds the potential for conflicts with and a rejuvenation of the profession and the teaching of journalism, these are but some of the many challenges journalism teachers face in these turbulent times for journalism.

What exactly is it, for example, that the industry wants from the journalism school? Bypassing the speculation of other researchers, Arne Krumsvik (chapter 11) goes to those in the industry who hire his journalism students, and asks them. In their view, the new talent required in the market of today consists of critical journalists who have good communication skills and understand the business of news. Journalism school, however, is seen as doing a better job teaching competences regarded as less important to recruiters, such as genre- and medium-specific knowledge, and the role of the journalist in society. This points to a gap between supply and demand, which journalism schools need to consider carefully.

Another challenge is not only that many journalism students have a hard time finding relevant jobs, but also that their chances for a successful career is strongly gendered. Tracing 500 alumni from a journalism school over a 20-year period, Hege Lamark (chapter 12) finds that while women in Norway have long been in the majority among journalism students, men are still in the majority when it comes to starting work as a journalist after qualifying, and this gender gap increases over time. While the reasons for the gap appear to be complex, Lamark's demonstration of gendered patterns of exclusion should be heeded by every journalism educator. The same goes for the work of Anders Graver Knudsen and Gunn Bjørnsen (chapter 13), who both quantitatively and qualitatively explore the situation of journalism students – and journalists – with a minority background. Exploring first the various attempts to increase their numbers and success, the interviews also shed light on the particular challenges these journalists face in their professional life, particularly what they call the burden of representation – the expectation that they have a special obligation to represent the ethnic “others” in Norwegian society.

The increasing multi-ethnic character of the Nordic societies and the need for journalists who reflect this development is linked to another series of challenges, related to increasing globalisation. First, many journalism schools have a transnational cooperation, in many cases with non-Western countries, offering exchanges and

meetings of both teachers and students. *Terje Skjerdal* and *Hans-Olav Hodøl* (chapter 14) argues that for students, such experiences are often very positive, and in some cases appear to be directly responsible for leading them to careers working with global issues. *Kristin Skare Orgeret* (chapter 15), while also arguing for the many benefits of such institutional cooperation, demonstrates how certain issues in which the cultural and political differences are great – in her case, attitudes to homosexuality among Norwegian and Ugandan journalism teachers – can be both a highly thorny subject in cooperation but also educational, by shedding light on how journalistic concepts that appear to be globally shared – like “objectivity” – are actually highly polysemic, with varying definitions across and within geographical regions.

Last in this section, *Roy Krøvel* (chapter 16) tackles the issue of how journalism education prepares students for a theme like global warming, which demonstrates the problems of treating journalistic objectivity as a question of balance. Surveying professional journalists, journalism students and educators, Krøvel finds that whereas the students are initially more idealistic and positive regarding political engagement, they gradually become more similar to the journalists in their professional norms, e.g. becoming less inclined to accept membership in political organizations and more inclined to see objectivity as balance.

#### *Part 4. Meeting the field*

Many of the changes and troubles facing Nordic journalism are personally and intensely experienced by the journalism students themselves. The internal training in “doing real journalism” at the journalism schools and their first time spent at a “real” newsroom outside are very important, formative experiences for the students in their professional careers – in some sense, a professional rite of passage (van Gennep 1981). How do the journalism students experience this meeting with a new journalistic reality that is often far from the protected situation and ideals of journalism school? How do they learn to decide what is newsworthy and to give – and receive – criticism and input concerning their journalism work?

In chapter 17, *Jenny Wiik* complements the previous, mostly quantitative studies with written reflections by Swedish journalism students following their internships. She shows how the expectations of the fundamental flexibility of labour and willingness to change are inscribed in the experiences of the students, who express a pragmatic and perhaps disillusioned attitude regarding working in news media. They feel that their creativity, enthusiasm and proficiency in digital media are desired, but often find themselves being used for simple, monotonous duties and believe their chances for a stable, long-term appointment are slim. If the journalistic ideals they learned in school are mentioned, it is usually to emphasize their unattainableness. Some students question their choice of career while others are more optimistic, and see possibilities to reinvigorate the field and strive for journalistic ideals, albeit perhaps in new forms. Wiik notes that journalism educators need to not only think more about how to pre-



pare students for the great variation in internship organizations and the realities of their work, but also how to use the students' experiences to re-evaluate and redefine the journalistic role in a democratically sustainable way.

In the next three chapters, four scholars discuss how professional competences should be – and are – learned at journalism schools. Based on a study of twelve Danish journalist interns, *Gitte Gravengaard* and *Lene Rimestad* (chapter 18) criticize deficiencies in the traditional teaching of the news criteria in the Danish journalism education, offering instead an eight-factor model of what they see as a more adequate description of what “a good news story” is in real newsrooms. *Hilde Kristin Dahlstrøm* (chapter 19) finds that students feel they learn a great deal from internal practice periods and get a realistic taste of the profession that awaits them, but that practical skills are highlighted as learning outcomes. *Astrid Gynhild* (chapter 20) discusses the usefulness of feedback training in building productive and trusting learning environments for students.

## Note

1. <http://nordiskjournalistutbildning.org> (In Swedish only).

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## Educating Journalists

### *The Who, When, How, and Why of Early Journalism Programmes in the Nordic Countries*

Elin Gardeström

#### Abstract

This article compares systems of journalism education in the Nordic countries, focusing on how education programmes for journalists first emerged. The theoretical perspective of the sociology of journalism education used by sociologist Margaret Archer, who views national educational systems as always being shaped through a struggle between interest groups. The questions are when education programmes for journalists were founded, who initiated them and how the process of founding schools and programmes progressed. In addition to these questions, the article discusses the emergence of journalism education in relation to the party press system and to the process of professionalisation. The respective developments of journalism education in the Nordic countries emerged in similar patterns. The apprentice system was, at first, combined with short courses arranged by press organisations, and then step-by-step replaced by journalism schools. In this process, the press organisations lost control over journalism education, even if they tried to maintain control through independent schools or through cooperation with universities. The mix of subjects in the journalist training curriculum has been discussed in all countries, centred on the balance between theoretical and vocational subjects.

**Keywords:** journalism education, apprentice system, sociology of journalism education, national educational systems, theory versus practice, history of education

## Introduction

For a long time, journalists managed without special training or education. The usual tale that is told is that the formal education of journalists was a key factor in the professionalization of a former trade, and education made journalism better (Petersson, 2006: 305-348; Weibull, 1991: 176ff; Melin-Higgins, 1996: 9-15, 24, 127ff; Stuart, 2001: 2). But another tale is waiting to be told. What if we look at the emergence of journalism education from a different perspective, as a system emerging parallel to the expansion of the powerful print press? In this context, what various interest groups tried to shape journalism education in the past? This path of study has been described by Lee B. Becker as the sociology of journalism education, a perspective he believes to have

been neglected in the research on journalism education (Archer, 1984). The sociology of journalism education asks *who* initiated education programmes for journalists, *when* they were founded, and *how* the process of founding schools and programmes progressed (Becker, 2003). This article compares systems of journalism education, focusing on how education programmes for journalists first emerged in the Nordic countries. In addition to these questions about the emergence of Nordic journalism education, I discuss different answers to *why* journalism education emerged.

This theoretical perspective leans heavily on sociologist Margaret Archer, who views national educational systems as always being shaped through a struggle between interest groups. In this view, a long-term stable educational system is a sign of a prevailing group's long-term holding of power. One crucial difference between countries is whether various interest groups choose to build their own schools or try to influence the government to centrally create the education system they advocate. Archer argues that debates about "the ideal training" often serve to clarify the objectives of the group and to persuade others to share these goals. Archer also describes the change that takes place when a new educational collective takes control over an education, through a government takeover and becomes autonomous, independent from the various interest groups (Archer, 1984: 1-3). Her perspectives can apply to journalism education as well as a national educational system. In this view, journalism education can be analysed through how the institutions were shaped by an interplay of interest within a nation, or even an interplay of interest within a journalism education institution.

Journalism education has developed differently in the Nordic countries, despite the fact that they have similar media systems. My understanding of journalism education in Sweden derives from years of archival studies. My thesis *Training Journalists* (2011) analyses the interaction between various interests in Sweden when the existing apprenticeship system for the journalism profession was to be replaced by a formal journalism education programme (Gardeström, 2011). By contrast, my understanding of journalism education in the other Nordic countries is based exclusively on secondary sources. Thus, my treatment of journalism education in Norway, Denmark, Finland and Iceland is somewhat more tentative than my treatment of its emergence in Sweden.

In this article I give an overview of the origins of journalism education in Sweden, and will survey the emergence of similar programmes in other Nordic countries as recounted in the literature. I will proceed to compare these educational efforts, asking *who*, *when* and *how* questions. Finally, I will propose a tentative answer to the question of why journalism education was established, showing in the process how the history of journalism education can develop into an interesting field of research.

## In the beginning of the beginning

In the beginning of the 1900s a journalist could be an author, an agitator, a politician, a dropout from university, or almost any kind of male person. Wages and status were

low, forming a period in early journalism with a drunken romantic aura described to us by novels and seen in films. In Sweden there was a distinct difference between the average journalist and publishers who wrote editorials, had a university degree and sometimes held a chair in Parliament (Gardeström, 2011: 45-52).

In the early 1900s journalism was often seen as a talent, an aptitude some people had. Journalists and the press could be opposed to a formal education. Journalists in Sweden believed that the demand for a special education to enter the trade was an obstacle to freedom of speech and freedom of the press; it was only in totalitarian countries that a journalism education was obligatory (Desmond, 1949; Gardeström, 2011; Hultén, 2001; Jarlbrink, 2009: 208-214). Important questions about the past are: how was journalism developed, and how was the unruly first-generation journalist, using print technology to spread news and views, turned into a profession with its own educational programme? Was it the need of discipline, to “domesticate this unruly class, turn them into disciplined workers and end their flirtation with socialism and trade unions”, as James Carey (2000: 1) states, that served as the driving force for Pulitzer to establish a journalism education at Columbia University in 1903? Partisan journalism could be a problem even in the Nordic countries, where the tradition of a political press had a strong hold. The first Social Democrat leader in Sweden, Hjalmar Branting, also head editor of the daily *Social-Demokraten*, wanted to have a respectable newspaper. He had to argue with one of his young journalist/agitator adepts that describing an old church as a “used up sugar-barn” was not appropriate (Magnusson, 1939: 84).

For a long time, journalists managed on their own. Internationally, journalism programmes were first established in the United States and in many countries did not emerge until after the Second World War. At that time, journalism education became an issue within UNESCO: a substantial journalist training was seen as a tool to guarantee global freedom of information, to prevent propaganda in newspapers. The well trained objective journalist was to become a responsible source of news. The American model, with journalism programmes as part of universities, was presented as a good example. A UNESCO conference in 1956 established the existence of three different journalism education systems worldwide: the first at universities with the US as the leading role model; the second on-the-job training as in England, Belgium and Norway, where journalism education was controlled by the press organizations; and a third system, identified as a mix between the first two (Desmond, 1949; UNESCO, 1958).

The starting point in journalist training in all Nordic countries was short courses to support the apprentice system: young people were accepted as apprentices by newspapers at reduced wages for a couple of years. They were basically educated “on the job”, depending on helpful colleagues or simply fending for themselves. If they were lucky they could attend a course prior to or during their apprenticeship.

The facts differ as to when journalism education was established in the Nordic countries, depending on source and time of publication. In the 1940s a three-month course was considered a valid education, but this is no longer the case. I argue that the

scope of a proper journalism education must be considered in its historical context; we cannot apply today's standards of education to yesterday's programmes, as education as we know it was not available then.

An interesting Nordic aspect is that in the 1920s journalism education was considered a tool to unite Nordic culture. The organization Föreningen Norden, a forerunner to the Nordic Council, arranged courses for Nordic journalists from 1919, as part of their strategy to influence the press to write about Nordic matters. In 1936, at the initiative of the Swedish publisher Torgny Segerstedt, a committee was organized to start a Nordic journalism education programme, which Segerstedt believed to be crucial to cooperation between the Nordic countries. There was also a Nordic journalist training course at a folk high school in Sweden, and in 1957 the Nordic Council initiated a three-month, advanced training course for journalists in Aarhus, later named the Nordic Journalist Centre. Aarhus training courses played an important role later, especially in Iceland (UNESCO, 1958; Gudmundsson, 2009). But over the years all the Nordic countries saw the need for a national journalism education programme, instead of depending on a Nordic initiative (Gardeström, 2011; 47f; UNESCO, 1958; Gudmundsson, 2009: 152).

## Origins of journalism education in the Nordic countries

The traditional path to becoming a journalist was to start working as an apprentice, a volunteer, at a newspaper. In Sweden in 1946, there were early attempts to include a course in journalism within an academic degree at the College of Gothenburg in cooperation with local newspapers. Similar courses were arranged at the College of Stockholm during the 1950s. A private initiative in 1947, the Poppius School of Journalism, offered courses meant to prepare students for the obligatory two-year apprenticeship. Following the Second World War, a growing number of courses were developed for journalists that were run by different interests: political parties, private entrepreneurs, colleges and companies developing courses aimed at providing information to journalists.

The Swedish press organizations had a difficult time agreeing on a programme, and the issue was discussed for over 50 years. Although the apprentice system could not supply enough trained journalists to the labour market, the press organization continued to favour the existing system. Journalism was considered a trade to be learned "hands-on" and not in a school. After three internal reports, Sweden's press organizations finally reached an agreement and founded a journalism school run by the industry in 1959. Two factors forced them to end discussions and agree on an educational programme.

Firstly, as the universities had made plans to start journalism programmes, accordingly the press organizations had to agree in order to maintain control over how journalists were trained. Secondly, there was a huge demand for educated journalists as

the apprentice system was not working. A few years later, in 1962, journalism education was nationalized, although it was not integrated with the universities, which the press opposed. The press organizations' influence on journalism programmes continued, in part through their control over the selection of students and their representation on boards overseeing the programmes. However, the two national journalism schools were able to achieve a certain degree of independence, which was strengthened with radicalism of young people in the late 1960s. The journalism programmes held their autonomy until 1977 when they were integrated into the universities, a process that some members of the press organizations strongly opposed (Gardeström, 2011).

In Denmark the first three-month courses in journalism took place at Aarhus University in 1946, when the Aarhus University School of Journalism was founded as an independent institution in cooperation with the university and Danish press organizations (Gaunt, 1992: 53; Holm, 2013: 123). Courses were offered for young journalist apprentices, and subjects such as law and public administration were taught along with vocational courses. The school also offered continuing education courses for journalists with work experience. The initiative came from the university and Principal Troels Fink, who had in mind an academic journalism education (UNESCO, 1958: 54ff, 181f). Danish press organizations, the union and employers aligned, opposing the integration of journalism into the world of academia. In 1962 they succeeded in establishing the Danish School of Journalism, DSJ, as a private institution offering a six-month training course, which became a compulsory part of a three-year probationary period for new journalists. The press organizations helped finance DSJ until 1971, when it was taken over by the Danish government. It remained an independent institution, with representatives from the industry and the union on the school's board. The Danish School of Journalism dominated the field, as the sole provider of higher journalism education for many years. Discussions within DSJ were turbulent; the curriculum and institutional setup is described by Minke (2003) as a compromise between "professional hands-on supporters and educational reformists" (Minke, 2009: 112; Gaunt, 1992: 53f). In 1998 the monopoly on educating journalists in Denmark was broken, with Roskilde University and the University of Southern Denmark introducing their own programmes. Today the University of Southern Denmark has a bachelor's programme and two different master's programmes [kandidat-uddannelser], whereas Roskilde University has a programme at the master's level [kandidat-uddannelse].

In Finland, short courses for journalists were introduced in 1925 at the Civic College in Helsinki, from 1930 the School of Social Science, a semi-academic institution that primarily educated civil servants. The School offered three different degrees, one of them in newspaper journalism. A chair for a professor in journalism was established in 1947. In 1960 the School was upgraded and became the University of Tampere, and began offering an academic journalist programme and a vocational programme in 1966 (Salokangas, 2003: 8f). Courses in journalism in the Swedish language started in 1962 at the Swedish School of Social Science. All journalism programmes in Finland required a high school diploma, except the private initiative by the large newspaper

publisher Sanoma Company, which selected students for a practical course (Salokangas, 2009: 121f). The debate over journalism education took place within a number of state committees beginning in the late 1960s, when the political field engaged itself in how journalists were to be educated (Salokangas, 2003: 10f). Today in Finland, journalism programmes are located at three universities and a few polytechnics. Master degrees are offered in the Finnish language at two universities, the University of Tampere and the University of Jyväskylä. The journalism education in the Swedish language is offered within the Swedish School of Social Science (SSSS) at the University of Helsinki. Polytechnics in Helsinki (Haaga-Helia), Turku (the Turku University of Applied Sciences) and Oulu (the Oulu University of Applied Sciences) also have journalism programmes. (See Hujanen, Jaakkola, & Zilliacus-Tikkanen for more information on journalism education in Finland.)

In Norway, a ten-month course was established at the Journalist Academy in Oslo in 1951. This was an independent school founded by the press organizations. Despite its name, the course it offered was a highly practical training course for students with working experience, even though there was representation from the universities on its governing board. It was stated that journalism was not a science but rather a liberal profession which demanded general knowledge in a broad area, and teachers and lecturers were engaged from all sectors of society. Even the Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs held a lecture in foreign policy. The principal headmaster was Carl Just, formerly a teacher at the Norwegian School of Correspondence, where courses in journalism had been offered since 1943 (Just, 1958; UNESCO, 1958: 185ff; Gardeström, 2011: 140). The Journalist Academy was superseded in 1965 by the Norwegian School of Journalism, a state-financed school, independent from universities and in cooperation with the press organizations. In 1994 the school became an integrated part of Oslo University College. In 1971 a journalism programme was established at the Regional College of Volda (Katzen, 1975: 128; Gaut, 1992: 59). Bodø and Stavanger followed in 1987. A Christian Lutheran institution, Gimlekollen, established its school for journalism in 1981, and was approved as a full college in 1996. Later establishments include programmes at the old universities of Oslo and Bergen (the former in cooperation with its city's university college), one in Kautokeino for the indigenous Sami people, and others at a major business school and an international college – both of which later stopped offering their programmes (Bjørnsen, Hovden, & Ottosen 2009).

Iceland depended on other types of education for many years. Journalists could attend shorter courses at the Nordic Journalist Centre in Aarhus in Denmark, and university degrees in other subjects were considered adequate training. Journalism as a profession in need of education was not accepted until late in the twentieth century, due to the structure of Icelandic media whereby the journalistic field was connected to the political field for the longest period among the Nordic countries. At the end of 1970s the need for an education for journalists was discussed by the Icelandic Union of Journalists, which began supporting continuing education in the 1980s. A



university programme for journalists was developed at the University of Iceland in 1987, entitled “Practical Communication Studies”. This was a cooperation between the Icelandic Union of Journalists and the university, and vocational training at media companies was part of the programme. In Iceland, journalist training at the universities developed out of communication studies, which had been taught as part of the universities’ social studies programmes since 1970. In 2003 a mixed programme of journalism and communication studies was introduced at the University of Akureyri (Gudmundsson, 2009: 151-156).

## Comparing journalism education in the Nordic countries

### *When*

The question of when the first journalism education started in the Nordic countries poses in turn a second question: what can be considered a proper journalism education? In the beginning, political and economic interests could be involved in arranging courses aimed at influencing journalists. In the case of Sweden, there were courses for journalists run by different interests, for example political parties and an insurance company, which cannot be labelled journalism education (Gardeström, 2011: 50f). I initially argued that journalism education must be seen in the context of history, and we cannot rule out past educational efforts because they do not meet today’s standards. When comparing Nordic countries, if we disregard the length of the education, the workable premises chosen are: A) involvement of the press organizations, and B) involvement or founding of an academic or semi-academic institution.

Based on these premises, Finland was the first of the Nordic countries to establish an education. Organized courses began in 1925, at the College of Social Affairs. Denmark is second, with the joint initiative in Aarhus in 1946. Norway is third in 1951 and Sweden fourth, in 1959, even if it can be claimed that in 1946 the College of Gothenburg had integrated journalism education into an academic degree, in cooperation with local newspapers. Iceland is another story, establishing journalism education much later.

### *Who and how*

The respective developments of journalism education in the Nordic countries share some major features. Norwegian, Danish and Swedish press organizations had a major influence, founding independent institutes for journalist training. Finland’s journalist training started as part of the state-financed Civic College, which eventually became an academic institution. Iceland developed journalist training in the 1980s, in a different educational landscape, as part of a communication studies programme.

In Denmark and Sweden there was an ardent struggle over who was to rule over journalism education, the press or academia. In both countries, initiatives in the

1940s by universities to educate journalists backlashed; initiatives from a university were first accepted, then rejected. At first the battle was “won” by the press, as they managed to found their independent education institutes outside the university system while receiving government funding. As time went by and the educational systems developed and expanded in the post-war years, government agencies added journalist training to their responsibilities, and schools were nationalized. In Sweden the press organizations readily accepted the nationalization of journalism education in 1962, as they were having difficulty financing an independent institute for journalist training (Gardeström, 2011: 170). In Sweden, journalism education was integrated into the universities in 1977. The Norwegian Journalism School is part of the university system, but has a certain degree of autonomy. In Denmark in 2008 the oldest programme, at the Danish School of Journalism, became the Danish School of Media and Journalism, together with the Graphic School in Copenhagen. The new unit is an independent educational institution, but other university-based journalism programmes have developed.

At the beginning of the 1900s, irregular courses lasting one to two weeks were organized by the press organizations in all Nordic countries. After the Second World War, ambitions and the need for educated journalists grew and the courses became longer. Courses were organized through joint effort, and lasted several months: three months in Aarhus in 1946, ten months in Oslo in 1951, and 12 months in Sweden in 1959. It is important to note that work experience was required to attend these courses. Even in Finland, where journalism education was offered at Tampere University in 1966, journalist apprenticeship was required along with a high school diploma (Salokangas, 2003: 9). In Denmark, an apprentice had to work for two years before having access to a journalist course (UNESCO, 1958: 181). During the 1960-70s when journalism education in the Nordic countries became part of the national higher education system and became state-funded, the education was prolonged, but work experience was often required in order to apply to a journalist programme. In Sweden, this requirement was replaced by an internship included in the programme in 1967 (Gardeström, 2011: 201, 230f).

Also of note is that journalist training and education were to be discussed within state-appointed committees in Finland, Denmark and Sweden. Finland had four committees discussing this issue between 1969 and 1984, each trying to balance the theoretical and vocational parts of journalist training. Discussions grew exceedingly vibrant during the 1970s. In Sweden, journalism education had been an issue for press organizations’ investigations and state committees almost incessantly since 1946 (Salokangas, 2003: 10f; Gardeström, 2011). Comparing Sweden and Finland, in 1921 plans were presented by a committee in Sweden to establish a journalism programme at the Swedish Civic School of Social Policy, an equivalent to the Finnish Civic College, where a journalism programme was established in 1925. If this had occurred, more than 30 years of Swedish discussions might have been spared (Gardeström, 2011: 47).

## Similar features and differences

Journalism education has historically emerged in similar patterns in the Nordic countries, which can be described as follows:

1. Apprentice system + short courses arranged by press organization or other interests (All Nordic countries).
2. Apprentice system, combined with three- to ten-month courses at independent schools founded by press organizations themselves (Norway, Sweden), or in cooperation with universities (Denmark), or at semi-academic institutions (Finland).
3. Nationalization or major state funding of journalism education, two- to four-year journalism programmes (all Nordic countries).
4. Integration into universities (Finland 1960, Sweden 1977, Iceland 1987, Norway 1994).

The mix of subjects in the journalist training curriculum has been discussed in all countries, centred on the balance between theoretical and vocational subjects. In Finland, Norway, Iceland and Sweden the journalism education is integrated into universities. The Finnish journalism education originated in a semi-academic environment, which became the University of Tampere. In Denmark and Norway major schools of journalism long remained independent institutions apart from universities, and the Danish School of Media and Journalism is still independent. Iceland's education of journalists was developed in a later historical context, and started within the university.

## Discussion – why journalism education originated

In the following I will discuss how we can understand why journalism education originated, proceeding mainly from the conclusions from my dissertation (2011) on the history in Sweden.

In earlier research on the subject, journalism education has been analysed on the basis of theories of professionalization, in relation to different nations' media systems, or in comparison with other higher educational programmes. The education of journalists has been viewed as a key factor for democracy (Petersson, 2006; Teriz, 2009; Stuart, 2001: 2; Medsger, 2005: 205-226; Hume, 2007: 4, 8, 12f). The theory a researcher chooses to apply surely affects the result. Traditional answers to the question of why journalism education developed in these lines of research are: because education made journalism better, because journalists needed better general knowledge, because education liberated journalism from the party press system, and because education was an important step on the road to professionalization. This might be true – if the working premise is that education is always something intrinsically

good that develops a better society. In the research field of the history of education, “whig history” is a term applied to historiography that presents the rise of educational systems as an inevitable progression towards liberty and democracy (Cunningham, 1989; Jarausch, 1986). There is little doubt that the education of journalists played an important role when the party press system in the Nordic countries lost its grip. But in my perspective, professionalization is not a valid answer to the “why question”. Professionalization by education is only a concept used to describe the next stage in the long struggle over who is to define what a journalist should know. As my focus is on this struggle, my “why answers” differ.

Conclusions from Sweden are that the formal education of journalists was a forced solution when the apprentice system broke down, as mass media expanded and commercialized in the post-war years. The press wanted to train their own journalists, to socialize them into the regional or political culture of their specific newspaper. But this strategy simply did not work anymore, as they lost their apprentices to other newspapers paying higher wages when the media sector expanded and trained journalists became scarce. In Sweden, the press organizations wanted to maintain control over who was to become a journalist and what training they were to get, which in the end forced them – after years of discussion – to establish a formal journalism education in 1959, under the threat that other actors (read universities, Nordic Council, private entrepreneurs, etc.) would arrange the education according to their agenda. After the Second World War the educational systems expanded in Nordic countries towards the mass education of today, a line of development to which journalism education had to comply (Gardeström, 2011).

Margaret Archer (1984) has compared the development of state educational systems in France, Russia, England and Denmark. She concludes that national education systems mirror the dominant interest groups in each country, interest groups wanting to influence what is to be considered a legitimate education. In some countries interest groups start their own schools, while in other countries negotiations take place within government, in committees and government agencies. When schools are nationalized, former interest groups lose their influence to an educational institution with state funding. Archer’s conclusions regarding the development of educational systems do comply with the development of journalism education. Through journalism education, groups in society can intervene to influence the development of journalism, as journalists are a key resource for groups of power to influence the public opinion. In Sweden the press organization slowly lost its grip over the education of journalists, which might also be the case in the other Nordic countries. At first the press organizations did open their own schools, but these schools often came to be nationalized. The struggle about how journalists should be educated took place within state committees, where different interest groups tried to influence governmental agencies regarding how journalism education should be organized. In Sweden, Denmark and Finland there are several state committees whose mission is to establish or change the national journalism education programme, which according to Archer can be understood as

a transition towards negotiations between interest groups over journalism education taking place within the government (Archer, 1984: 1-3, 68-76, 90-93, 109f; Gardeström, 2011: 28, 206, 240f, 260).

In the history of journalism education, government agencies became engaged in running and influencing the education rather late; this did not happen until the 1960s, and nearly the 1990s in Iceland. A tentative conclusion is that the media sector was left to itself for a long period, but as the importance of mass media became evident, and as the party press structures began to lose their hold, there had to be another way for the government to influence the press, for good or bad, namely through education. In Iceland the period of political party press lasted almost until the 1990s, followed by privatization and market views, which according to Gudmundsson (2009) forced political parties to communicate with the media in new ways. Evidently, at this point the education of journalists was a political priority (Gudmundsson, 2009: 156).

What other interest groups tried to intervene over journalism education? I have already mentioned political parties and the media sector itself, but the universities were also part of the game. Universities are one of the oldest still existing institutions in the world, and have an interest in ruling over what is to be considered legitimate knowledge (Gardeström, 2011: 39-43). French Sociologist Pierre Bourdieu discussed the relationship between the political, journalistic and social science fields in his late writings. For Bourdieu a “field” is a research tool to enable the scientific constructions of social spheres in society, which have shared interest and beliefs; “a universe of the tacit presuppositions that we accept as natives of a certain society” (Bourdieu, 2005: 37). A field does have a certain autonomy and internal logic; rules are inscribed in the field that agents inside it follow or fight to transform (Bourdieu, 1997: 127-134; 2005: 30f). I will not thoroughly explain more of Bourdieu’s theoretical tools in this article, but merely point out that he offers a complementary map of perspectives (besides Archer) from which conflicts over journalism education can be analysed. Bourdieu describes similar features in these three fields; they are interconnected, and they all lay claim to being able to present a legitimate vision of the social world (Bourdieu, 2005: 38f). Bourdieu comprehends it as a struggle over “symbolic royalty”, over how the social world should be understood. In the history of journalism education, I argue, all three of these fields have been present, wanting to inscribe their legitimate vision of the social world in the heads of young journalists. How journalists are trained to understand the world has been a key to trying to achieve symbolic royalty in the public sphere. As educational programmes emerged over time, these fields of forces migrated and continued to exist within journalism education institutions.

## To conclude the discussion

In the educational history of journalism there exists an interplay of interests (in Bourdieu’s term: fields of forces) that chronologically develops in four distinct steps:

1. Interest groups start their own courses for journalists.
2. Joint efforts of groups, usually press organizations and academic or semi-academic institutions, organize courses.
3. Government agencies are involved in shaping journalism programmes and initiate governmental investigations, whereby interest groups are represented. Accordingly, the discussion migrates into these committees.
4. Journalism education becomes an integrated part of the national education system with state funding, and an interplay of interest takes place within journalism education institutions.

Theoretically, Archer can be used in analysing the macro system of the interplay of forces in the development of a national educational system. Bourdieu can help in analysing the micro system of interest, or the representation of interest that continues to struggle to inscribe its rules into journalism education.

The perspective I present and discuss is one of several ways to understand the history of journalism education. There are many interesting questions yet to be asked and perspectives to be applied to a history that in many countries is sleeping in archives, or has mainly been the subject of historiography, in which the history of one journalism school has been documented. I believe this could be an interesting emerging field of research. There are numerous archives full of history, waiting to be opened to shed new light on journalism education.

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## “We All Think the Same” *Internships, Craft and Conservation*<sup>1</sup>

Ida Willig

### Abstract

The Nordic countries have a history of combining journalism studies at universities with formalised internships in news media organisations. This chapter discusses the particular form of journalism education using Denmark as the empirical case. Denmark has a history of a monopoly on journalism education, with the monopoly continuing until the late 1990s. In addition, it also has a unique system of long internships for all journalism students. This chapter argues that Danish journalism education is characterised by relatively narrow recruitment to the field (only three formal places of education) and a strong focus on journalism as a craft (regardless of length and level of course training, all journalism students work as interns at a media organisation for 12 to 18 months as part of their training). This chapter also discusses how this particular form of journalism education can be seen as an orthodox and conserving dynamic in regard to the journalistic field.

**Keywords:** journalism education, Bourdieu, journalistic field, media industry, Denmark

### Introduction

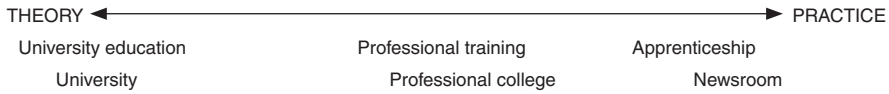
Whether journalism is a craft or a profession is a classical research question in journalism studies (see for example Golding & Elliot 1979; Dickinson, 2007; Eide, 2011; Frith & Meech 2007; Sigelman, 1973; Jensen, 1963; Andersen et al. 1977; Kjær, 2000; Skovgaard, 2010; Örnebring, 2009). For instance, in the 1970s Tunstall proposed that journalism aspired to be a semi-profession (Tunstall, 1971), and recently Donsbach argued that the goal of journalism should be a “de facto professionalization”, by which he means “the development of an educational and behavioural standard in the profession, without these standards being imposed and controlled by the authorities” (Donsbach, 2013: 670). On the one hand, journalism can be considered a craft because it involves learning by doing, or even osmosis (Breed, 1955), because it is based on practical skills involving researching, interviewing, etc., and because it does not necessarily require a specific formal education (which, for instance, becoming a doctor does) or an authorization (as it does to become a

lawyer, for instance). On the other hand, journalism is a trade with strong, shared professional values. Different media sociological perspectives agree on its strong institutional nature, from the point of view of either media system theory (Hallin & Mancini 2004), new-institutionalism (Ryfe, 2012) or mediatization theory (Hepp, 2012). Field theory (Bourdieu, 1998), which is the theoretical backdrop of this analysis of Danish journalism education, also addresses the strong institutional nature of journalism, although Bourdieu was very critical of the concept of "profession", not least as an empirical tool (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992: 242). This chapter presents an analysis of three historical phases in Danish journalism education, the apprenticeship phase, the professional college phase and the university phase and discusses how a relative narrow recruitment to the field and a focus on craft points towards a conserving dynamic of the journalistic field.

### Education at work, university or college?

In *Comparing Media Systems*, Hallin and Mancini (2004) propound the thesis that there are three main media systems in the Western world: the Anglo-American, the southern European and the northern European. These media systems are the result of specific historical developments in politics and economics, developments in the profession of journalism, and other factors. With regard to education, Hallin and Mancini argue that although there is a paucity of comparative research in the area, the secondary literature suggests that American ideals relating to the training of journalists have influenced international cultures of journalism (Hallin & Mancini 257f, see also Tunstall & Machin, 1999). As Hallin and Mancini note, few comparative studies of journalism education have been undertaken, but there are some sources that describe study programmes in different countries (e.g. Desmond, 1949; Just, 1954; Nordenstreng, 1990; Wale, 1990; Gaunt, 1992; Fröhlich & Holtz-Bacha, 2003; de Burgh (ed.) 2005). According to Gaunt (1992) there are three general models for the education of journalists, depending on where the majority of the training takes place: be it in the newsroom, at the university, or at specialized colleges of journalism. In practice, most countries have an educational model that combines these various training sites, and most have also debated who should be responsible for the education of journalists: the industry, the state or the academic community (Gaunt, 1992). The overall picture is that the US has the longest and most widespread tradition of educating journalists at university, while Europe has had a tradition of various forms of internship-oriented training. European journalism education is located on a continuum between "on-the-job-skill training" at one end and "communication-oriented university-based media studies" at the other (Gaunt, 1992: 41), which corresponds to two ideal-typical positions, namely "theory" and "practice". This can be illustrated as follows.

**Figure 1.** Journalism education ideal types from theory to practice



On the left side of the continuum journalists are mainly educated at university, without any practical training, while at the opposite end of the spectrum they are trained on the job with no formal theoretical education. In the real world, however, we must assume that the vast majority of programmes, especially the professional training and the professional colleges, will be located around the middle of the continuum, with various distributions of theory and practice.

### The Danish model – from apprenticeship to professional college to university

The history of formal journalism education in Denmark can be dated back to 1961, with the establishment of the Danish School of Journalism (since 2008 called the Danish School of Media and Journalism), or perhaps 1946 when the first courses in journalism were offered at Aarhus University. Looking back, we can detect three periods: an initial period of practical training in journalism and journalism courses at university; a second period following the creation of a professional college; and the third, current, period of monopoly break-up.

#### *The apprenticeship phase*

The first phase in the history of Danish journalism education could be called the apprenticeship phase, as journalist training during this period consisted primarily of practical apprenticeship, later possibly in combination with short courses at Aarhus University. Around the turn of the 19th century, Danish journalists received no formal training other than what they acquired at the newspapers where they were employed (Grey, 1971). If they came under the guidance of a skilled editor who was willing to teach others, they naturally had a good opportunity to acquire the essential skills of the profession, but in many places the training was deficient.<sup>2</sup> The Copenhagen newspapers enjoyed a special status as they themselves did not train journalists, but recruited trained people from the provincial press, or university graduates for specific subject areas, e.g. historians for foreign stories, economics graduates for financial matters, etc. (Graae, 1971: 6). Provincial trainees often came directly from lower secondary education, but more and more frequently with an upper secondary school degree. Some were also trained as typographers, and had perhaps attended a folk high school before beginning to work as journalists. All in all, the education of journalists before and around 1900

was informal, and varied from newspaper to newspaper. The idea of “establishing a course for journalists “in free association with Aarhus University” has been attributed to Professor Adolf Stender Pedersen, who in an interview in the newspaper *Demokraten* on 24 December 1938 expressed his wish for the founding of a study programme for journalists (Graae, 1971: 8). In this interview he said, amongst other things:

I imagine that the proposed journalism course, or whatever you might call it, would in principle be organized in a similar way to the other courses at the university. It should probably not be too theoretical in nature, but there could on the other hand be a core that would have a general and lasting impact on the journalist's work. During the course, an appropriate mixture of permanent and variable subject matter would be presented. The participants would probably be promising young journalists who would be chosen for these courses by their organizations or editors, but voluntary participation should also be allowed. Neither degrees nor grades should be offered, but a kind of certificate of participation should probably be issued (Adolf Stender Pedersen, in Graae, 1971: 8-9).

The idea, in other words, was that this would primarily be a course for selected young people who were already employed by the newspapers. In 1954, in an international overview of specialized training for journalists, Carl Just wrote the following regarding the background for creating this type of course:

In order to prevent a journalist proletariat arising – a large number of young women and men vainly running around to newspaper editors with their educational certificates in their purses or pockets – professional journalist training in both Denmark and Norway is reserved for young people who already are attached to a publication, and who have worked as journalists for a year or more (Just, 1954: 77).

Haakon Stangerup was very interested in the idea, and suggested in 1941 that a press research institute be established at Aarhus University or Aarhus Business School as early as 1942 (Graa, 1971: 13). At the Provincial Journalists and the Social Democratic Press Association, the idea of a journalism course won support, while in Copenhagen journalism circles there was some scepticism about the value of such training (Graae, 1971: 6). The journalism courses at Aarhus University did not begin until 1946 (see Fink, Reske-Nielsen, & Hansen, 1958), however, and around 1957 the outlines of a new institution were beginning to take shape, with independent buildings and facilities at the university (Minke, 2009).

### *The professional college phase*

In 1961, a reform of the journalism courses at Aarhus University was launched, which led to the creation in the following year of an independent institution, the Danish School of Journalism (DJH) (Minke, 2009). From 1963 on, all Danish trainee journalists had to attend a mandatory six-month course at DJH as part of their three-year training, and permanent teachers were employed. However, the study programme was

not placed under the auspices of the Ministry of Education like other programmes but was managed by the press organizations, albeit with substantial state subsidies. During the 1960s the training acquired a more academic content, including co-operation with the Institute for Press Research, and "the ability of the journalist study programme to meet the modern and complex demands of society for journalism" became increasingly problematized (Kjær, 2000: 108). With the adoption of the Danish School of Journalism Act in 1970 it was determined that the mandatory course at DJH would be extended to 18 months, while at the same time the programme became fully funded by the state and the close association with the industry associations was maintained. The apprenticeship model thus evolved into a professional college model. In 1974 the supervision of DJH passed from the Prime Minister's Department to the Ministry of Education, but this did not mean that the press industry lost its influence over the management of the programme.<sup>3</sup> From 1979 on, a week's supplementary training became an integral element of the collective agreement for journalists, and in response to the need for this the Centre for Journalism and Supplementary Training (CFJE) was founded, and later a course on journalistic training for university graduates (Gaunt, 1992: 56). In 1992, Gaunt concluded that the Danish system was based on a dynamic relationship between the educational authorities and the journalists' and employers' organizations, but that a significant development in this area was that more universities had begun to offer communication studies with journalistic skills.

### *The university phase*

The third phase is what we might call the university phase. In 1998, the monopoly of the Danish School of Journalism was broken through the creation of two new journalism study programmes at Roskilde University (RUC) and the University of Southern Denmark (SDU). According to Minke, the reasons for this included the fact that leading Danish politicians were unimpressed with the existing skills and training of journalists (Minke, 2009: 13), and found the monopoly situation worrisome. At SDU, the study programme in journalism was located at an independent Centre for Journalism under the Department of Political Science, while at RUC the programme was established as an independent spin-off from the popular programme in communication. Both programmes at SDU and RUC emphasize a mixture of theory and practice, similar to the tradition in Sweden and Norway, and the curricula alternate between learning journalistic skills and studying theories of media and journalism. At SDU there are courses with the character of necessary background knowledge for journalists (e.g. the structure of the political system), while at RUC background knowledge is expected to derive from the student's other university courses. In all three programmes, the workshop-based, practical learning is given the most emphasis, and according to Minke the norm has been that theoretical academic knowledge is seen as a supplement to practical training at DMJX (formerly called DJH) and SDU as well as RUC (Minke, 2009: 114).

At RUC, the study programme has in practice been part of the MA programme since the beginning of 1998, as it is combined with another subject at BA level, and culminates in a written thesis and the award of an MA in journalism (*cand. comm. i Journalistik*). SDU has offered a BA in journalism since 1998, and in 2002 also began offering an MA (*cand. public.*). Since 2005, it has also been possible to earn a *cand. public.* degree in Aarhus, offered in a collaboration between DMJX (formerly DJH) and Aarhus University. The two *cand. public.* programmes attract both BA graduates from media studies and other disciplines, as well as graduates from DJH, by virtue of the historically new title awarded of "professional bachelors". In addition to these BA and MA programmes, SDU offers two other MA programmes, namely journalism and editorial management, both targeted at experienced journalists.

At SDU and DMJX the internship period lasts 12-18 months, while at RUC it lasts 12 months. Both universities SDU and RUC offer students various seminars during their intern period to ensure that the link to the learning environment is not lost, but formally the internship is a matter between employer and trainee.

In 2004 the Danish School of Journalism was accepting 125 students twice yearly and Roskilde University 50 students twice yearly, while SDU was accepting 75 students once yearly (Danish Evaluation Institute (EVA) 2004). In 2011 this figure remained the same for Roskilde University, while SDU was now also accepting 25 students yearly for their Master programme and DJH continued to accept 250 students yearly (Minke, 2009). In 2014, the government's strategic effort to better align the education system with the needs of the labour market meant that DMJX would take in 40 fewer students (Journalisten, 2014).

As in the other Nordic countries, Danish journalism students typically come from a very homogeneous background, usually with Danish parents from the upper middle class. A growing proportion of prospective journalism students are women (Hovden et al., 2009).

## Discussion: Narrow recruitment and a focus on craft

Looking at the history of Danish journalism education, one of the most important characteristics is the fact that for many years there was a monopoly. Different countries have different traditions of journalism education, but in almost all countries there is a plurality of educations in, for instance, the private and the public sectors; in Denmark, however, there was only one school of journalism until 1998. Secondly, the tradition of 12-18 months of internship for almost all future journalists – including candidates with a five-year university degree – stands out compared to the pluralism of university education in other countries. By comparison, the internship schemes in Swedish and Norwegian university programmes have a maximum duration of six months, and under the Anglo-American media model there are no institutionalized internships in university-based journalism programmes.<sup>4</sup> In a field perspective, the

monopoly and the emphasis on internship taken together can be interpreted as a narrow recruitment to the journalistic field and a homogenous professional culture with a focus on journalism as a craft (rather than, for instance, as an academic discipline). This will be discussed below.

The narrow recruitment to the journalistic field can be seen both in the fact that there was a monopoly on journalism education until 1998, but also in the fact that the education at the Danish School of Journalism from 1971 to 1998 – as well as now – is focused on creating a specific kind of journalist: one with a solid practical foundation taught not only within the practical curriculum at the journalism school but also in the long practical training during the internship. Furthermore, Denmark is a small country and the Danish journalistic labour market is accordingly relatively small, which means that the chance of working with former classmates from journalism school at one point or another in your career as a journalist is fairly high. In the quote below, an experienced journalist reflects on the professional socialization of the generations of journalists before 1998:

We've been trained in the same environment (...). Everyone has a story like mine: a history of three or four workplaces is very common when you have 25 years' seniority. We've gone back and forth between the same places, so we've been trained by this environment.

In a field perspective, this can be interpreted as very little competition regarding the core values of journalism, and a homogenous culture consecrating the craft perspective of journalism. Furthermore, the Danish journalist union is very strong, and media organizations have a tradition of only rarely employing journalists with other backgrounds than formal journalism training (examples of exceptions to this rule are critics or cultural journalists in public service television or from large newspapers who might hold a humanistic university degree). This means that the vast majority of Danish journalists employed during the 60s, 70s, 80s, 90s and 00s as well as today come from one of the three formal journalism education programmes. In a field perspective, this narrow recruitment to the field and relatively homogenous professional culture consecrating the craft aspect of journalism can be interpreted as a journalistic field with a high degree of orthodoxy: the majority of Danish journalists are graduates of the same school, where they had the same teachers and were taught the same curriculum according to the same professional norms; and when the monopoly was broken, the two new schools continued to have the same practical curriculum and practical training during long internships.

It is difficult to place the Danish model – especially the two new programmes – on Gaunt's continuum, with university education at one end and practical training at the other. Although SDU and RUC were clearly intended to present alternatives to DJH/DJMX (Danish Evaluation Institute 2004: 9), these programmes still incorporate 12 to 18 months' internship. In other words, there is neither a primarily theoretical model of education with short or no internships (as exists at many universities in the

US), nor a primarily practical training model with a few university courses (as in the British apprenticeship model with 12-week courses). The question is also whether it makes any difference in the long run. An editor reflects on whether the journalism programmes at SDU and RUC will make a difference:

We all think the same, and we're all raised in the same environment. For our part – most people here have some years of experience – we were almost all trained at the Danish School of Journalism, while the new programmes came along later. Not that I think the other programmes have created any changes. We've been trained in the same places, we move in the same circles and the same environments, and we were recruited the same way.

The editor above is very clear about the fact that in his view, the workplace socialization is so strong that even though there are now three formal education programmes, of which the two at SDU and RUC should at least formally be different (i.e., more academic) than the one at DMJX, this will not make any practical difference. This is also the understanding of an experienced reporter:

We teach them the same things, whether they're from one place or the other. The fact that they're being trained in different places is not going to change anything on the Danish media scene. I don't think it will. [...]

Again, we see the distinction between two forms of socialization: the education that students receive at various universities, and what they learn in newsrooms. This reporter also suggests that the socialization that takes place during internship is so strong that it virtually irons out any differences the students may have acquired from their various study programmes.

## Conclusion

Formally, there is no longer a monopoly on journalism education in Denmark, as you can train for the profession at two universities (SDU and RUC) and at the journalism school DMJX (formerly DJH). This was not possible 20 years ago, when there was just one journalism education in Denmark, at DJH. However, it could be argued that there is still somewhat of a monopoly – not of institutions offering journalism education, but rather in the *form* of journalism education offered in Denmark: a particular form of journalism education offered in collaboration between the state, a strong union of journalists and a strong employer organization, the principal ingredient of which is, in comparison to other countries, a markedly long period of practical training through 12-18 months' internship – regardless of whether you are studying for a BA or an MA and what other experience you might have. This, of course, says nothing about the quality of journalism education in Denmark but only about its diversity, or lack thereof.



The end of the monopoly obviously resulted in more study programmes but not necessarily in greater diversity, as has been pointed out by Kim Minke, former rector of DJH (Minke, 2009). This was also pointed out in an evaluation of the journalism study programmes in 2004, with a recommendation for greater independent profiling on the part of the three programmes (Danish Evaluation Institute 2004). Peter Kjær has argued that the monopoly era was an expression of the “academization” of journalism (2000), and that when the DJH programme became a “professional bachelor” programme, it can be said that all three programmes had become academized. But inasmuch as the journalism programmes at RU and SDU remain characterized by a practical curriculum rather than academic subjects, just as at DMJX, and in addition to a long period of internship, it is perhaps more of an academization on a formal level than a practical one.

In a field perspective, one might theoretically imagine two general scenarios in the future: one transformative and one conservational. In the first, journalism is challenged by new journalists and new ideas regarding what good journalism comprises. At the moment, one of the places this development could come from would be the area of web journalism, where – often young – journalists struggle daily to win recognition from their fellow competitors with fast, column-focused, rewritten and updated news for the Net (Hartley, 2011). If we look at the education of journalists, however, there is much that points in the direction of conserving culture: firstly, because the three current programmes possess more similarities than differences, in that they all prioritize practical skills rather than theoretical subjects; and secondly, because there are only three study programmes and not the greater diversity on the road to journalism such as that expressed by, for example, the Swedish and Norwegian folk high schools and private schools of journalism. These two factors alone paint a picture of very little conflict concerning the field’s fundamental values, and very little challenge to the prevailing orthodoxy.

## Notes

1. This chapter is an updated and revised version of the chapter *The Strong Culture of Internship* (in Danish: *Den stærke praktikkultur*) In Ida Willig (2011) *Bag nyhederne. Værdier, idealer og praksis*.
2. Insightful descriptions on what it was like to be a trainee journalist (and a qualified journalist) under the apprenticeship model can be found in Claus Øgendahl’s *Dansk Journalistliv 1920-1970 (Danish journalist lives 1920-1970)* (Øgendahl 1995). See also Nielsen (ed.) 2001.
3. Also in 1974 an initiative was taken at the then Roskilde University Centre to establish a journalism programme, but this ended up becoming the popular study programme in Communication.
4. Germany has a strong tradition of the so-called “Voluntariat” – a two-year salaried position, which is an important means of recruitment to the profession, especially for university graduates who have studied journalism (Frölich & Holtzh-Bacha 2009). However, the scheme is not part of the educational system but is rather the media industry’s own institution.

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## New Times, New Journalists?

### *Nordic Journalism Students Entering an Age of Uncertainty*

Jan Fredrik Hovden & Rune Ottosen

#### Abstract

This chapter summarises some of the findings of the Hovdabrekka project, a series of surveys conducted in 2005, 2008 and 2012 to almost five thousand journalism students in 28 journalism schools in the Nordic countries. After emphasising the methodological challenges for transnational studies of journalists' professional orientation via questionnaires, the students' role orientations are analysed in detail. Two important oppositions are identified: between ideals of participation and intervention versus objectivism and neutralism, and between journalism role of fulfilling ideals for the public space versus the private space (e.g. recreation, entertainment). While there are national differences, the analysis also demonstrates a need for understanding such differences as complex aggregates including many important factors – not only national journalistic cultures, but also the type of schools, varying social recruitment, the students career aspirations, which are again linked to the opportunities of the national media markets, and so forth. The rest of the chapter discusses broad Nordic trends in the period, noting a shift away from newspapers as a preferred work place, and a relative strengthening of investigative ideals. While the Nordic journalism students appear to have a largely shared professional orientation, they have also overall become more similar in the period under study.

**Keywords:** journalism education, professional ideals, professionalization, comparative journalism studies, Nordic countries

## Introduction

The ongoing changes in the Nordic media markets bring great uncertainty to the prospects of journalism students. Will they get jobs? What kinds of journalism and journalists are in demand – and appreciated now – and what kinds will be in ten years' time? Are traditional media going the way of the Great Auk (the Nordic equivalent of the Dodo)? Are democratic and intellectual values for journalism still relevant? Even if the changes in the media markets have not affected the Nordic countries in the same way and with the same strength (Nord, 2008; Allern & Blach-Ørsten 2011), and the changes are ambiguous, with contradicting elements (e.g. state-owned and private public broadcasters continuing to coexist), it is widely expected that such changes and uncertainties

will have an impact on students' professional orientation. For similar reasons, intensified with the increasing importance of journalism school as the dominant path into the profession, journalism researchers have shown great interest in journalism students, not only as "the new breed" of journalists (e.g. Delano & Henningham, 1995) but also as indicative of general changes *within* and differences *between* national journalistic systems. Starting with the pioneering study by Splichael and Sparks (1994) and further inspired by the proliferation of multinational surveys of journalists (particularly Weaver & Wu, 1998; Hanitzsch et al., 2010), and also the work of Hallin and Mancini (2004), many comparative studies of journalism students have emerged in the last ten years (e.g. Hanna, Ball & Sanders 2006; Sanders et al., 2008; Hovden et al., 2009; Nygren & Stigbrand, 2013; Hanusch et al., 2014; Mellado et al., 2014).

In this chapter, some results from a series of surveys of Nordic journalism students will be presented. The first survey was administered in 2005, and was followed up with new surveys in 2008 and 2012. A total of almost five thousand students from 28 institutions have participated, making this the largest study of journalism students in the world. Whereas data from this project have been used for many published works, only the results from the first survey have been the subject of a broad presentation (Hovden et al., 2009). Therefore, in this chapter we will try to sum up some of the more persistent differences between the Nordic students and also suggest some apparent changes in their professional orientations in this period, while also trying to soberly discuss some of the methodological challenges surrounding this type of research. This means that we are not able to either relax in the appearance of the scientificness of crass positivism to, in the words of W. H. Auden (1955), present the "facts" as "a voice without a face", or enjoy the grand oratory of methodological damnation ("all surveys are worthless"), but instead have to rake out some pebbles of truth from the flames of doubt.

Understanding the professional orientations of journalists (be they students or working professionals) – not to say their causal link with the changes in the media markets – is a sociologically more difficult exercise than many journalist researchers appear to realize. After some of the common challenges involved are briefly noted, the methodical design of the Nordic project is presented. Following this, the general relations between the schools and countries are suggested via a constructed *space of journalistic ideals*, whereas more specific national traits and changes in the period 2005-12 are discussed for a variety of characteristics, including social recruitment, job preferences, journalistic ideals and gender differences. Finally, the changes are discussed in light of the question of increasing professional homogeneity in the Nordic countries, suggesting some ongoing changes in regard to journalistic ideals and preferred workplace.

## Complex canaries; researching journalism students

In their hurry to proclaim the grand narrative of the status and future of the profession, journalism researchers appear to very seldom have time for methodological

worries about the validity of the answers they receive in their surveys, once the magic bar of sufficient response rate has been cleared. A small step towards a more realistic assessment of surveys as a research tool for understanding the professional aspirations and attitudes of journalism students would be to remind ourselves first of some of the basic sociology of their situation, and second, of the sociology of the survey, particularly in regard to the measurement of attitudes and the problems added by national comparison.

In regard to the first problem, one can suggest a highly simple model of journalism students as being caught in the nexus of *three markets* (Hovden, 2015). First, students are constantly reminded – via their teachers, journalists, trade magazines and the media etc. – of the journalistic *job market*, suggesting their probable and most easily accessible future careers. The gross *market failure* of the students in this regard, shown in their “unrealistic” job aspirations as they appear in the questionnaires (e.g. preferring a job as a foreign news correspondent to the more likely position of a local journalist or online desk journalist) should, however, not be explained as simply a form of youthful immaturity or lack of awareness of “the realities of real life”, but rather as a failure of this simple one-market model of students’ aspirations. There are other markets than those studied by economists.

The second market, which students are aware of very early on, is *the symbolic hierarchy of the national journalistic field*, where national newspapers appear as more honourable positions than magazines and local newspapers, political journalism is better than cultural journalism, the columnist is better than the desk journalist, and so forth, according to the logic of the peer recognition continuously negotiated in journalists’ daily life and totemized in the grand journalistic prizes (Hovden, 2008). We should note here that this hierarchy is continuously being contested, with the journalistic field as a battleground for competing symbolic narratives on what a journalist ought to be and do, ranging from emphasis on their role as the fourth estate and a corrective of other social elites, as public intellectuals, as educators of the public, as artists (e.g. “golden pens”), and so forth. Some of these ideals are stronger in some schools than others, which can be seen in, for instance, the similarities of the role models of students from the old universities vis-à-vis the vocational schools. Furthermore, each journalism school can be thought of as a *subfield* where such symbolic struggles are fought on a local level.

Finally, journalism students do not come to the profession sans a history. Here we are not first and foremost thinking of their previous journalistic experience, although this is of course important, but rather their complete social trajectory from their birth, embodied in their *habitus* as inclinations to thought and action, which brings us to the third market: *the social space* (Bourdieu 1990). Instead of the sociologically unrealistic idea of students (or new journalists) coming to the profession *tabula rasa*, revealing an unconscious regression into the etymology of the concept (where to profess meant to publicly say goodbye to one’s old life before entering a religious order), there is every reason to expect that this sacred barrier between profession and life (where in

this particular cosmology “professional” is another word for being worthy) is mostly of an ideological nature. In this aspect, the journalistic lives students aspire to and that feel proper for them, the beats and tasks that are attractive or repulsive to them, the perceived appeal of various journalistic ideals, their view of the public – in other words, everything meant by the daily use of the concept of professionalism – can only be adequately understood if we also consider them as being subject to a social logic analogous to that of *cultural taste* (Bourdieu, 1984), as a field-specific (if always censored) expression of a more general orientation to the world. We do know, for example, that Norwegian journalism students with higher class backgrounds have not only different job preferences than those of a more common origin, but also a stronger belief in journalism as a talent rather than a craft, and place more weight on the needs of journalism than the need for *caritas* for their sources or subjects (i.e. a difference between “pure” and “barbaric” journalism, cf. Hovden (2008). The fact that journalism students’ fundamental professional outlook also seems to be well formed already at the very start of their studies, and relatively resistant to later socialization in school and working life (Bjørnsen, Hovden, & Ottosen, 2007), is another indicator of the importance of such social dispositions for the formation of the journalistic mind as well as the student and professional, and their attraction to different *professional lifestyles*, e.g. the investigative political reporter, the entertainer, the public intellectual etc.

It seems reasonable to suggest that journalism students, faced with journalistic choices, will try – in a sociological variant of what Freud termed *sublimation* – to reconsolidate their own social dispositions with the various pressures and expectations they encounter in the larger journalistic field, mediated through their contact with journalism, which may come in many forms: not only through their own job experiences, but also (becoming more important because of the decline of such experience), e.g. through their reading of journalism (see Anderson in this anthology) and accounts of the profession (e.g. in trade magazines and fictional accounts), and of course, through journalism school, not only via the lectures and curriculum – but probably more importantly – through the myriad small everyday exchanges of speech acts and bodily language, suggesting journalistic worth and worthlessness in contact with other students, with teachers, with visiting journalists etc.

When asked of their preferred beat or workplace, be it in an interview or a survey, we should thus see this as neither a simple adjustment to the job market, an expression of naked personal desires, nor reflecting the dominant “professional norms” in the country – the latter of which is essentially the argument of Splichael and Sparks (1994), which makes it possible for them to use a small sample of journalism students as an indicator of the professional cultures of journalists in each country – but rather a complex combination of all these, where the respondent’s statements, as commonly demonstrated in interview situations, is seldom univocal, and whose origins are often a mystery also to the respondent (Kvaale, 2007).

When we give journalists (of whom journalism students are a subgroup and not, as often envisioned, outsiders) a questionnaire, we are giving them a series of tasks



which range from routine (e.g. filling out their gender or birthplace), via the somewhat more involved (e.g. would they prefer to work at a newspaper or in radio), to the nearly impossibly complex (e.g. asking them to rank on a linear scale the importance of a journalist having “knowledge of society” or “a charming personality”, or their adherence to journalistic ideals, like “to criticize injustice”, “to entertain” or “to be a neutral reporter”). The model underlying such research designs seems often to be a traditional stimulus-response model, whereby the answers a respondent gives to questions are seen as more valid (more “neutral”) if they are asked without providing a specific context, and the idea that respondents have stored, like a crate of oranges, simple opinions and attitudes that can be “collected” without being sullied by the method of measurement (for a critique of such views, see Foddy 1993). The enormous variation in the journalistic world means, however, that different skills and ideals will be very differently relevant and expected for a task (compare, e.g., hosting a radio talk show to working as a political journalist). The lack of a precise framework for such questions very likely means that students have to give *probabilistic answers*, whereby dominant norms are weighted against their own expected future and the inclinations in their habitus. While this may appear to suggest that the survey is an inferior tool to regular interviews for studying professionalism, as the interview allows more room for probing and reflection, interviews are not exempt from the problems described. Here one should remember some of the methodological strengths of the survey for studying professionalism: first, survey data can reveal – if often only vaguely – how journalistic aspirations and inclinations are systematically linked to the characteristics of the journalism student (experience, gender, school etc.), and thus suggest something of their origin. Second, survey data can demonstrate how the various aspects of professionalism (role ideals, job aspirations, views on ethics etc.) are *correlated* and combined in *journalistic world views*, in unified perspectives on what is valuable and worth striving for in professional life. In this perspective, for instance, rather than seeing a preference for the democratic role of journalism as an “effect” of wanting to be a political journalist or the other way round, these are probably better understood as different expressions of common, underlying dispositions.

Moving from national to cross-national studies of journalism students introduces new challenges. Here one can briefly note, first, the problem of the *equivalence of survey questions*. Lexical similarity (e.g. “neutral” in France and the US) is not the same as semantic similarity, and especially when asking about vague ideals for journalism – “neutrality”, “criticism”, “entertainment” etc.) there is every reason to fear that the same questions will conjure up quite different associations in different countries, and this problem will be worse the greater the cultural, journalistic and linguistic differences. The second problem is *sampling*. First, it is difficult to determine the borders between “journalism studies” and similar studies (e.g. documentary film, media and PR studies) which also often lead to work in journalism. Second, while usually just one or a few schools of the many available in each country are included in national samples for comparison, the number and variety of schools in many countries – not only in

regard to institutional characteristics but also in terms of the students' backgrounds – makes it challenging to convincingly construct comparable national samples. Third, the comparison of countries is almost always done using statistics aggregated to a national level (e.g. the total percentage of students in a country who want to work with political news), reminding us of Stein Rokkan's (1970) critique of *whole-nation bias* in political science, which in the case of journalism students appears to easily lead to the negligence of highly significant variations *inside* the countries (e.g. between schools and between students with different backgrounds) in favour of nation-level explanations (as caused by national "journalistic cultures" or "media markets"). In fact, such problems were the reason many political scientists preferred to compare regions inside a country rather than countries, as the latter strategy made it hard to separate the relevant causes for phenomena from the myriad differences separating two countries (Lijphart, 1971). While some of these methodological problems can be lessened through careful translation, sampling and analysis, we will suggest that, even in the age of worldwide journalist surveys, there are some comparative advantages to examining similar regions of countries when studying journalism students – which has been the research design in our Nordic project.

### The data and analytic strategy

Largely borrowing its methodical design from a series of surveys administered to Norwegian journalism students in the 2000s (Bjørnsen, 2003; Bjørnsen, Hovden, & Ottosen 2007), a group of researchers at the 2004 Nordic Conference for Journalism Teachers at Höfðabrekku in Iceland formed a working group for a large-scale survey of Nordic journalism students<sup>1</sup>. In this way, from the start the project was focused on a small, relatively homogenous region (in terms of both type of societies and journalistic systems), a feature of the Nordic countries which is also suggested by Hallin and Mancini (2004) whereby they are seen as forming a tight cluster within the Democratic Corporatist model. And rather than do a strategic sample of one or two institutions to "represent" each country, we have aimed for – if with varying success – a more complete<sup>2</sup> sample of the major institutions providing vocational journalism training on a university level in the Nordic countries.

Finally, including data from three time points over seven years for four of the five Nordic countries (Iceland was added in 2012), and comparative data back to 2000 for the Norwegian sample, the surveys are a rich source for exploring both persistent patterns and trends in the students' professional orientation.

The data used here are based on three web questionnaires administered to a selection of Nordic schools of journalism in 2005, 2008 and 2012. In total, 4,616 students from 30 institutions responded to the surveys (total response rate was 51 per cent)<sup>3</sup>. In 2005 and 2008, respectively, 19 and 18 schools in Norway, Denmark, Sweden and Finland were surveyed. In 2012 the number of participating schools was raised to

**Figure 1.** The Nordic journalism student surveys, 2005-2012

|                                     | Finland                                                                            |      |      |  | Sweden                                                                                                                                                                   |      |      | Norway                                                                                                                                  |      |      | Denmark               |      |      | Iceland                                            |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|--|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|-----------------------|------|------|----------------------------------------------------|
| Institutions included in the sample | TOTAL SAMPLE (28 institutions, N=4616)                                             |      |      |  |                                                                                                                                                                          |      |      |                                                                                                                                         |      |      |                       |      |      |                                                    |
|                                     | Helsingfors, Jyväskylä, Tampere, Turku <sup>1,2</sup> , Haaga-Helia <sup>1,2</sup> |      |      |  | Gothenburg, Stockholm <sup>1</sup> , Södertörn <sup>3</sup> , Kalmar <sup>1,3</sup> , Umeå <sup>1,2</sup> , Lund <sup>1,2</sup> , Uppsala <sup>1,2</sup> , Mid. Sweden U |      |      | Volda, Oslo, Stavanger, Bergen, Bodø, Gimlekollen, BI <sup>3</sup> , NKF <sup>2</sup> , Bjorknes <sup>3</sup> , Kautokeino <sup>2</sup> |      |      | DMJ, Roskilde, Odense |      |      | Akureyri <sup>1,2</sup> , Reykjavik <sup>1,2</sup> |
| Year                                | 2005                                                                               | 2008 | 2012 |  | 2005                                                                                                                                                                     | 2008 | 2012 | 2005                                                                                                                                    | 2008 | 2012 | 2005                  | 2008 | 2012 | 2012                                               |
| Sample size (N)                     | 63                                                                                 | 245  | 189  |  | 74                                                                                                                                                                       | 573  | 297  | 287                                                                                                                                     | 511  | 537  | 179                   | 854  | 747  | 60                                                 |

<sup>1</sup>=not surveyed in 2005 <sup>2</sup>=not surveyed in 2008 <sup>3</sup>=not surveyed in 2012

25, including two schools in Iceland. All first-year students were surveyed in 2005, while in 2008 and 2012 every student was surveyed. The participating institutions and samples are shown in Figure 1. The questionnaires, translated into each of the five major Nordic languages, contained over 60 questions covering a wide array of subjects including social recruitment, motivation for studying journalism, preferences regarding future journalistic working life, views on the role of journalism in society, attitudes toward the profession, journalistic ideals, media use, and ideas about what traits are most important for journalists.

### The Nordic space of journalistic orientations

As noted earlier, the different aspects of the journalism students' professional orientations – e.g. differences in ethics, ideals, preferred themes or workplace – tend to be systematically linked. A Nordic student who says he or she is very interested in working with political news, for example, is four times more likely to say that criticizing injustice is a very important ideal than one who would prefer to work with sport, three times more likely to want to work at a national newspaper, and twice as likely to say that it is very important for a journalism student to learn ethics. When we now present a map of the main differences between the students' ideals for journalism, it is thus not only to show what kinds of ideals tend to be opposed and how they are preferred differently by students of separate nations, types of institutions and social characteristics, but also to suggest how these ideals are linked to other aspects of the students' professionalism, and in this way give a rough idea of the *total* system of professionalism, or alternatively, the *journalistic cosmology* of the Nordic students, and the placement of different journalistic lifestyles in this multiple hierarchy.

Two fundamentally conflicting views can be identified in the Nordic journalism students' attitudes to the listed ideals for journalism: *the horizontal dimension* in Figure 2a places the students in opposing positions in a manner similar to Cohen (1963) and Johnstone, Slawski and Bowman's (1976) well known distinction between a "participatory role" and a "neutral role", with students on the left more often agreeing with the ideals of criticizing injustice, scrutinizing the powerful, stimulating the public to embrace new ideas, influencing public opinion, defending individuals against injustice and contributing to intercultural understanding, whereas the students on the right more often agree with the importance of being a neutral reporter of events, providing objective information, mirroring common opinions, and being free from all interests. *The vertical dimension*, in contrast, is first and foremost linked to the question of whether providing recreation is an important journalistic ideal, whereby those who agree are less supportive of investigative ideals (criticizing injustice, defending the individual and scrutinizing the powerful). While the centrality of the "watchdog" ideal in this opposition suggests similarities to the latter authors' distinction between a "passive" and "active" role for a journalist, it seems more correct to see this as an opposition

**Figure 2a.** The Nordic space of journalistic ideals: journalism students, 2005, 2008 and 2012 (MCA analysis)

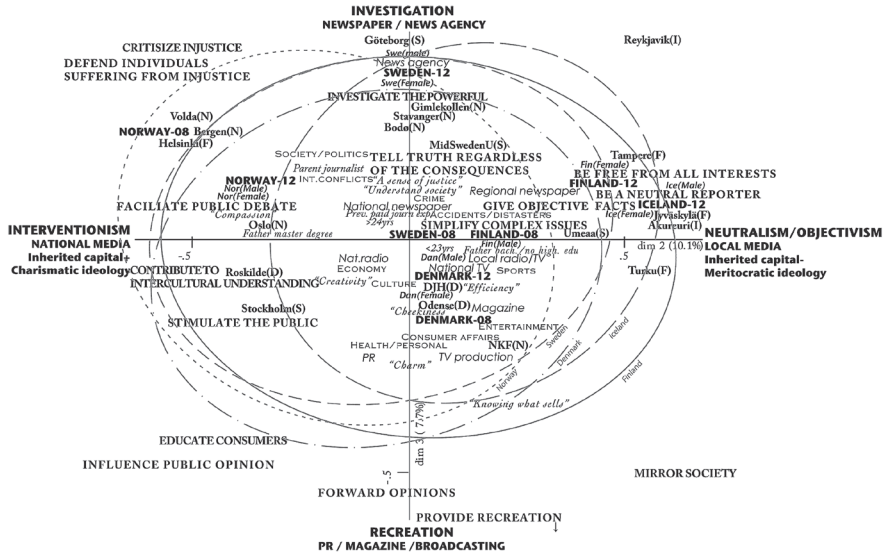
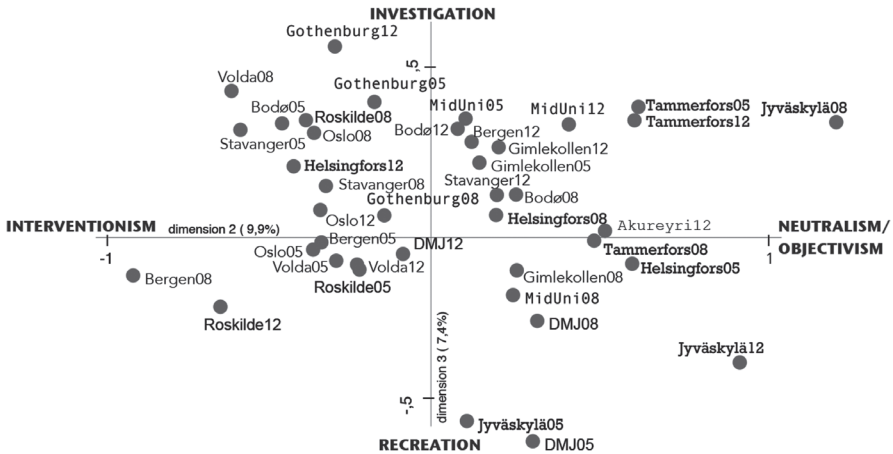


**Figure 2b.** The Nordic space of journalistic ideals: nine journalism schools, 2005, 2008 and 2012 (MCA analysis)



Source: Hovden (2014).

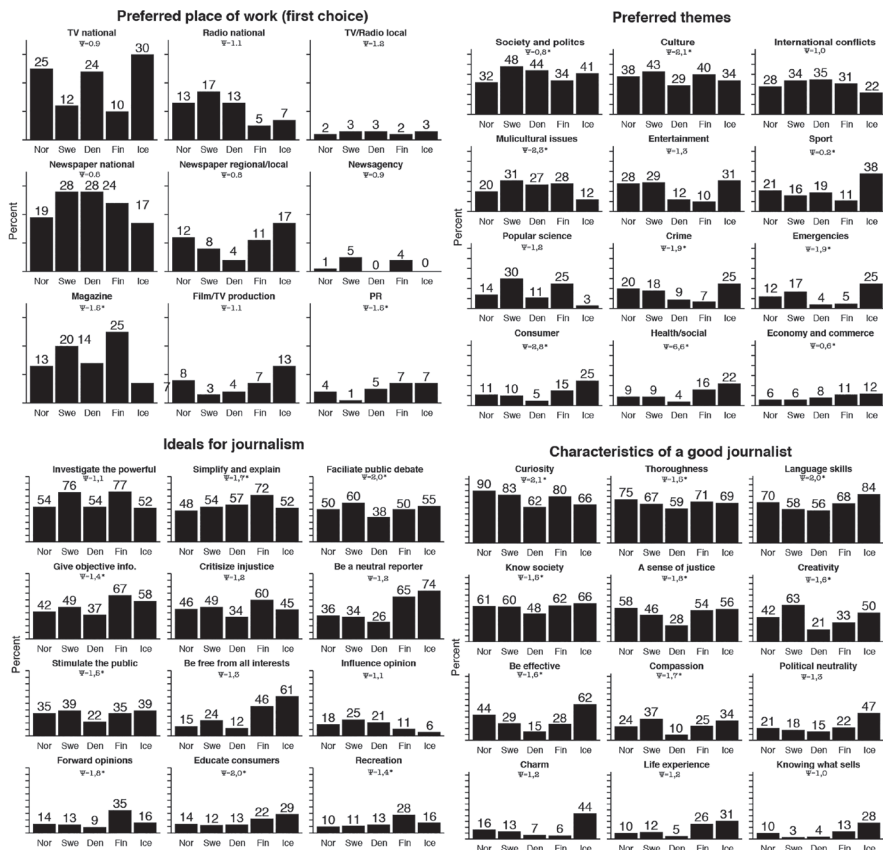
Note: N=3794. Active categories in capital letters. Schools' position and indicator for country/gender is based on 2012-data. The question was: "Here are some assertions regarding the professional role of the journalist. What is your opinion of these? A journalist ought to regard himself as ..."

between different types of journalism, linked to their various distances to the symbolic core of the profession (cf. Becker, 1982), and therefore also to the journalist's role as a caretaker of the private versus the public (political) sphere.

The most "investigative" students more often than others have some social link to the profession – via parents who are journalists, or by having done paid journalistic work before starting their studies – and are also more likely to say they want to work as a journalist and are most oriented towards the traditional ideal type of journalist: they want to work at newspapers with the traditional "hard news" of politics, society, crime, international conflicts etc., and see knowledge of society and a sense of justice as key characteristics of a good journalist. While the other students – who prefer jobs in broadcasting and at magazines, or in PR or TV/film production – do not differ dramatically from these traditionalists, they are marked by a stronger interest in lifestyle-type content, culture and entertainment. A leaning toward neutralism and objectivity, in contrast, is more common in students who want to work in local press or local broadcasting, and is associated with less privileged social backgrounds (it is negatively linked to having a parent with a master's degree) and correlated views of journalism (e.g. they are more likely to say that "efficiency" is a more important quality in a journalist than "charisma").

Finnish and Icelandic students more often agree that being objective and neutral are very important, whereas the Norwegian students are less likely to do this. Danish students, in contrast, are the least likely to agree with ideals related to participatory, neutral and investigative ideals, and are thus placed closer to the pole of recreation. A notable feature, however, is that the differences between schools are greater than those between countries; for instance, universities which usually place less emphasis on practical skills and more on the intellectual ideals of journalism tend to place themselves further from the right/neutral (and often also the lower/recreational) pole of this space compared to students at other, more vocational schools in the same country. Also, the often great differences between the vocational schools in the same country (Figure 2b) appear to only be explainable if one also takes into account other variables – like the different social profiles of their students. *While there are important national differences, the differences are only partly national in origin* (for a more detailed discussion, see Hovden 2014). While the students' position on the first axis appears to be mostly linked to differing social integration into – and expectation of entering – the traditional parts of the journalistic profession, the second axis appears to be more strongly linked to differences in the students' habitus (Bourdieu, 1984) and national differences. In a larger perspective, one can also say that *the ideals of the students in the Nordic countries are more or less shared* (suggested by the confidence ellipses in the map), which probably reflects similarities between the societies as well as the journalistic cultures and teaching of journalism in the Nordic countries (cf. the introduction in this anthology).

**Figure 3.** Preferred workplace and themes, agreement with important personal characteristics of a good journalist and important ideals for journalism among Nordic bachelor students in journalism, 2012 (per cent)



Note: N=1556. The percentages for preferred themes, important characteristics and ideals are all for the strongest category of agreement. Also, the odds ratio for this preference for females (compared to males) is given (Ψ). An odds ratio of 2 means that a female student is – controlling for country – on average twice as likely as a male student to hold this preference. An odds ratio of 0.5 means that males are twice as likely to hold this preference (1=no difference).

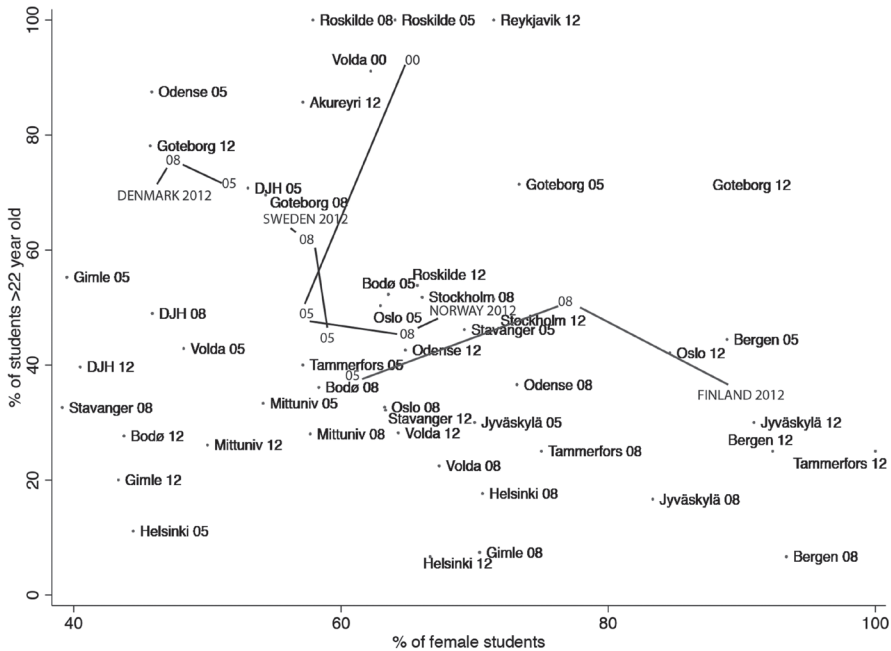
## Persistence and change

### *From journalists' apprentices to media students*

We cannot discuss the job aspirations of the Nordic journalism students without initially noting that *one in four students is uncertain if they want to work as a journalist*. This statistic, however, has remained quite stable over the seven-year period and thus does not necessarily appear to be as much a response to the latest fluctuations in the job market as reflecting the students' social composition: in 2012, 64 per cent of the Nordic first-year bachelor students of journalism were younger than the average 24 years old, and only 6 per cent had previously held a full-time journalistic job

(18 per cent had held a part-time job). While *the overall level of job experience has fallen during this period* – twice as many students reported having held a full-time journalistic job in 2005 – there has been little overall change in age and gender distribution. Whereas historically the journalist profession was male-dominated until the 1980s, females have outnumbered male journalism students during the whole period. Here there are important differences between schools as well as countries: in Finland, the majority of female students in the bachelor programmes has increased and is now over 80 per cent (Norway is stable at 60 per cent). In Sweden and Denmark this is lower, at 40–50 per cent, and these two countries also have the oldest students (Figure 4)<sup>4</sup>.

**Figure 4.** Share of Nordic first-year students who are female and under 22 years old, 2005, 2008 and 2012 (per cent)



Note: The position of the four countries are suggested based on the average of the following institutions: Helsinki and Jyväskylä (FI), Gothenburg and Sweden Mid University (SE), Oslo and Volda (NO), DMJ and Roskilde (DK).

Whereas journalism studies for most students in earlier decades came at the end of their educational career and marked the start (or in many cases, the continuation of) a career in journalism, most Nordic journalism students in 2012 are probably not expecting to enter a journalistic career directly after journalism school. This is part of a longer historical shift away from journalism school as an *apprenticeship* towards journalism as a type of *media studies*, and merely a first area of study in a longer career – which may or may not involve a job in journalism. This, no doubt, is bound



to have a profound impact on the students' orientation towards the studies and the profession, in a looser mental and social integration into the world of journalism and its ideals (an effect quite similar to what Max Weber terms *Entzauberung*), and to be misunderstood by older teachers as a series of individual failings in ability and seriousness in their students.

### *Newspapers in decline*

In the last decade the widespread economic crisis has been evident, with falls in the market for advertisements and the total circulation for traditional newspapers (the Watson Institute 2013). For Nordic journalism students, the same period shows *a shared trend of an increasing preference for broadcast journalism and a declined interest in working at newspapers*: whereas in 2005 only 28 per cent of the Nordic first-year students said they wanted to work in broadcasting, this rose to 42 per cent in 2012, and newspapers and national news agencies declined from 54 to 32 per cent (national newspapers from 42 to 24 per cent) as first choices. Also here these trends differ somewhat: the decline of newspapers as first preference appears strongest in Finland and Denmark, but whereas in Finland it appears mostly as a shift towards magazines, in Denmark it is a shift towards PR and other uses of journalistic expertise outside traditional media organizations (Figure 5). In Norway the declining attraction of the national newspaper is somewhat less pronounced, and appears more as a shift towards broadcasting. In Sweden, in contrast, there is no such decline, with changes appearing mainly as a shift away from magazines and towards national broadcasting. In terms of *themes* (Figure 6), Swedish students also share with Finnish students an increasing interest in working with society and politics, a theme which is on the decline in Norway and Denmark (along with most other themes). Such drops in “interest” in themes and workplaces, however, are highly complex to interpret. While, for example, the dwindling interest in working at newspapers often correlates with changes in the media markets – for instance, the number of newspapers is declining the most quickly in Denmark (Allern & Blach-Ørsten 2011) and might suggest a “reaction” to the job market – one should also bear in mind that newspapers are now a much less important medium for young adults than before (Blekesaune, Elvestad, & Aalberg 2010), and might also have lost interest for the journalism students as an *audience*.

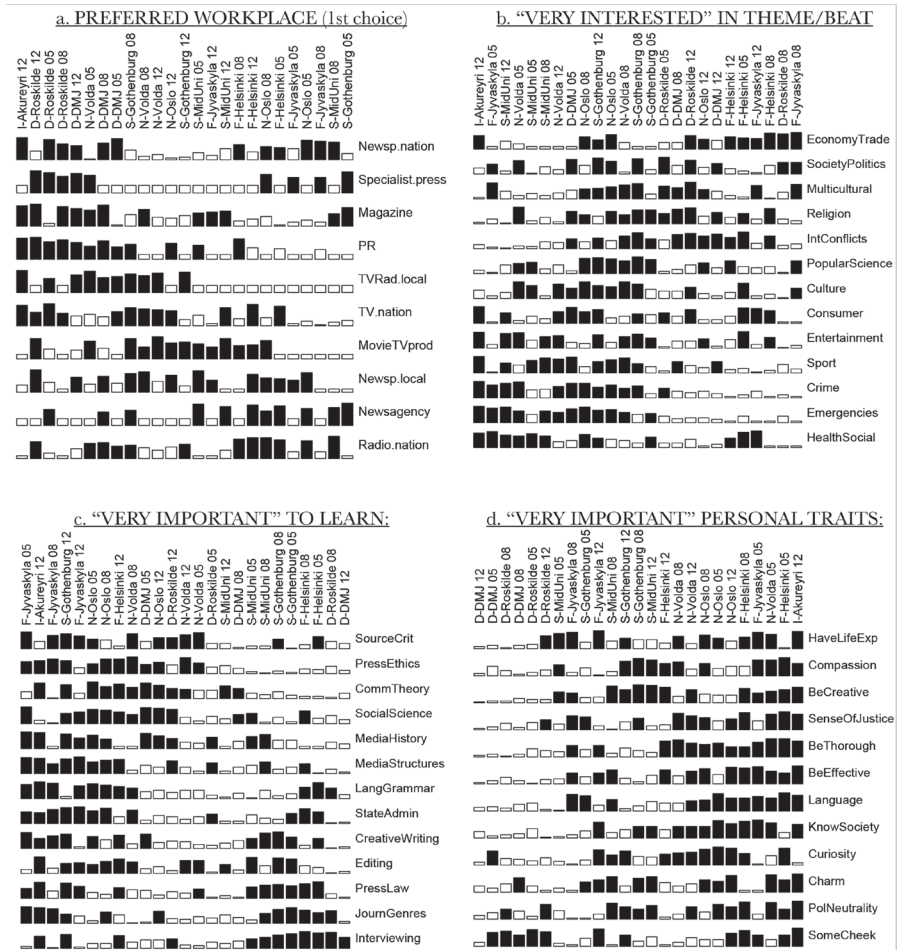
### Strengthening of investigative ideals

In regard to ideals, the data suggest a shared reorientation in the Nordic countries, with the *decline of ideals of neutrality and objectivity* – and to some lesser degree, *cultivating the public* in the aspect of either citizens or consumers (stimulating to new thoughts, facilitating public debate, educating consumers, providing recreation), whereas there



loss of other democratic and intellectual ideals for journalism, and one might wonder whether this trend in the journalism students is also strengthened by some kind of “stereotyping effect” influenced by their increasing lack of job experience, which means that they probably have a less nuanced image of the variation within the profession.

**Figure 6.** Preferred workplace and themes, views on important subjects to learn in journalism school, and important personal characteristics of a good journalist, by first-year students at nine Nordic journalism schools, 2005, 2008 and 2012 (Bertin plots)



Note: N=1324. Ordering by sum of absolute rank differences (cf. Hahsler, Hornik, et.al 2013). A Bertin plot rearranges the cases (here: schools) and variables to maximise the underlying logic of their relationship. To ease interpretation, percentages above average for a variable is given by the height of the bar, and bars above average are coloured black. This makes it easy to see, for example in figure b, that Finnish students are generally characterised with a relatively high interest in societal themes (economy, politics, multicultural issues etc.) and a relative low interest in more popular themes (sport, crime, emergencies), while this appears as less of an opposition in Norwegian journalism schools.

## Gendered journalism

If we look at the odds ratios for female vs. male journalism students in the preference for different workplaces, themes and ideals for journalism (Figure 3), we find that female students in 2012 – controlling for country – are almost seven times more likely to be interested in social and health-related themes, five times less likely to be interested in sport, and more likely to want to work at magazines or in PR and to see compassion as an important characteristic of a journalist, and so forth. As suggested by these examples, male and female journalism students very often part in their journalistic orientation, and very often their differences appear to be expressions of traditional gender logic (Hovden 2008)<sup>5</sup>. Still, interestingly, there are often marked differences between the countries in this regard. Whereas, for instance, female students in 2012 in Sweden and Denmark were almost twice as likely as males to want to work in broadcasting, the reverse was true for Norway. Similarly, while “contributing to intercultural understanding” in 2012 was a more common ideal among female students in Sweden and Norway, this was not the case in Denmark. Some trends also seem puzzling: in regard to broadcasting, for example, for most countries the gender differences in 2012 were a reversal of those in 2005. Such variation reminds us that gender differences are not necessarily the same even in highly similar countries, and also that they need to be analysed in their combination with other social characteristics. Approaching the problem as one of statistical classification, analysis suggests a general trend towards smaller gender differences in ideals for journalism and also (if less strong) in terms of job orientation, but towards *larger* gender differences in regard to their preferred beats<sup>6</sup>. In regard to the first question, a student’s gender is generally much easier to guess than their country from their professional orientation<sup>7</sup>. In sum, if traditional gender differences in journalism appear quite resilient, they appear most persistent when it comes to the preferred type of journalistic work, and less so in terms of one’s professional values.

## Changing times, changing ideals?

Are the professional aspirations and ideals of Nordic journalism students changing? Even though we are looking at a very short timeframe – seven years – and have to consider the many uncertainties haunting this kind of survey research, there seem to be signs of some *broad Nordic trends* among the students – most strikingly, a declining interest in working at newspapers (coinciding with a rising interest in working in broadcasting) and a strengthening of investigative ideals vis-a-vis other journalistic ideals. In both cases the students’ views appear to be congruent with larger trends, firstly with the increasing economic precariousness of the newspaper market, and secondly with a historical process of ideological consolidation among Nordic journalists (Djerf-Pierre & Weibull 2008; Wiik 2010). While these parallels suggest that some of

the changes in the journalism students' views are heavily influenced by the changing economic<sup>8</sup> and symbolic markets for journalism, many other trends – like the falling level of previous job experience of the students, signs of falling social exclusivity of journalism studies<sup>9</sup>, changes in the journalism programmes (e.g. more often offering cross-media courses instead of strict specialization) and greatly changed media habits in the younger generations (including lower readership of traditional newspapers) – complicate this picture.

At the same time, the data show *many changes which appear to be more nation-specific*, appearing in only one or two countries and absent or even reversed elsewhere. For instance, entertaining the public emerges as an increasingly important ideal in Sweden but less so in Finland, and fewer students in Norway want to work with political news – but more of the Swedish students do. Some of these national differences appear to echo specific changes in the national media markets; for example, the dramatic fall of the Danish and Finnish newspaper market is accompanied by a marked fall in their students' interest in working at national newspapers. Other, persistent, differences seem to express more durable differences between national cultures. Here the Finnish-speaking Finnish students – exemplified by their continued high adherence to ideals of neutrality – appear, together with the Icelandic students (who, because of the financial crisis and systemic banking collapse in 2008-11, form an exceptional case), to differ somewhat from the other Scandinavian students (who are more similar, with the Danish being among those three the least similar to the other two). Again, it is complicated to interpret such “national” differences, as they are accompanied by different landscapes of journalism education (e.g. in Denmark, concentrated to much fewer institutions than in the remaining countries; cf. Willig in this anthology), and not least in the social recruitment of students (e.g. the very high – and increasing – ratio of females in Finland).

Here we ought to remind ourselves that the differences between the journalism students in our five countries are, in an international perspective, not very great. And given that many institutional and personal characteristics of the students – for instance their gender, being a first- or second-year student, whether they are studying journalism at an older university or a younger institution, or have a parent with a master's degree or not – is generally easier to guess from their professional orientation than from their country, this appears to be reasonable evidence to suggest *a shared professional orientation among the Nordic journalism students*. Splichael and Sparks (1994) famously argued for an ongoing process of professional homogenization of journalism in the world, finding that the ideals of journalism students around the world were strikingly similar. While this general thesis has later been heavily contested (see e.g. Willnat & Weaver 2012), it is an interesting question for our Nordic data: are the journalists becoming professionally more similar? Using a similar statistical approach as the one previously used to study gender differences<sup>10</sup>, it appears that Nordic students have, *overall*, become more similar in terms of their ideals for journalism in society and their ideas of what important personal characteristics of a journalist are,

and also (but less marked) more similar in regard to their preferred future workplace and what themes they would like to work with.

In sum, while there is clearly no simple, monotonous process at work, applied with the same force (or even direction) in all the countries, the Nordic students appear to be becoming more similar in their professional orientation, and this process of *professional homogenization* seems to be strongest in terms of their journalistic ideals.

## Notes

1. For more information on this project, including members of the network, publications, the methodology of the surveys, the questionnaires used (including English translations) and additional tables, see the project website at [hovdabrekka.wordpress.com](http://hovdabrekka.wordpress.com)
2. While we have been able to sample the largest and oldest vocational schools of journalism training at a university level in each country, the smallest schools of this kind are included to a varying degree (the list is close to complete in Norway, Denmark and Iceland, but less so in Sweden and Finland). Note that there are also some changes in the selection of schools between the times of the surveys (e.g. in Norway, two schools were discontinued between 2005 and 2008).
3. Note that even if the total response rate for each year is relatively stable (varying from 45 to 53 per cent), the response rates vary greatly between institutions and year of sampling. For example, of the 25 institutions surveyed in 2012, eleven had a response rate between 50 and 85 per cent, seven between 50 and 40 per cent, three between 40 and 30 per cent, and four below 30 per cent. Our general procedure was to get complete lists of email addresses from the institutions, which were then used to send a direct email with an invitation letter and a link to the survey. Students who did not answer were then reminded through new emails up to six times over the following two months. Brief orientations were given to the students beforehand on-site by members of the research group or local teachers. The lowest response rates appear among the schools which refused us access to the students' email addresses and instead distributed the link to the survey in a way they deemed fit: Haaga-Helia, Tammerfors and Turku (FI), Odense (DK) and Lund (SE). This combination of general invitations and the lack of selective reminders is commonly associated with low response rates (Dillman 2000). The second major negative factor was the unreliability of many of the lists of email addresses given to us: in many cases the lists contained names of people who were in fact not active students (either because they had quit, or in the case of the first-year students, because they had accepted the invitation to become a student but had later reconsidered and never turned up), and with the proliferation of learning management systems, students and schools are now much less dependent on email contact via a single email account.
4. Note that when we talk about national changes in this chapter, we have been careful to always only compare studies that were available for all the years discussed in order to keep the numbers comparable.
5. Such traits are also commonly reported in studies of regular journalists (see e.g. Melin-Higgins, 2008).
6. While 70 per cent of female first-year journalism students were successfully classified by a logistic discriminant analysis into their correct gender (using the resubstitution classification table) by their adherence to journalistic ideals in 2005, this percentage fell to 58 per cent in 2012. In regard to important personal characteristics for a journalist, this similarly fell from 76 to 69 per cent. Knowing their first choice of preferred place to work correctly classified 67 per cent of the female students in 2005, but only 48 per cent in 2012. Using their preferred themes, however, the gender of female students was easier to predict in 2012 than in 2005 (rising from 66 to 78 per cent). The variables used in the classification are the same as in Figure 3. A decreasing percentage of correct classifications means that knowing their answers to the variables is less able to help us guess their gender.
7. For instance, knowing their answers (all non-Icelandic students 2005-12) regarding their ideals for journalism classifies 59 per cent of the female students into the correct gender (33-55 per cent of students are classified into their correct country on the same basis). Some 64 per cent of females are

identified as such by their notions of important characteristics for a journalist (correct country: 38-52 per cent), 60 per cent by their preferred themes (country: 27-51 per cent) and 57 per cent by their preferred place of work (country 27-44 per cent).

8. In light of these changes, it is somewhat surprising to find that Nordic journalism students have not become much more pessimistic in regard to threats to a free and independent journalism in the countries.
9. For Norwegian and Danish students there is a decreasing proportion of students with a parent with a master's degree, at the same time as the educational level in these countries during this period has risen. While this might suggest a decreasing status of journalism studies in general, it also probably reflects increasing social differences – and therefore also, very likely, prestige – between the programmes, which might be linked to the expanded availability of journalism studies.
10. Using the same statistical procedure as used for gender (cf. note 6), the changes between 2005 and 2012 in the percentage of students correctly classified into their country based on their answers to various questions on professional orientation are as follows. Ideals: 69-58 per cent (FI), 64-51 per cent (SE), 55-58 per cent (NO), 61-46 per cent (DK). Important characteristics for a journalist: 59-34 per cent (FI), 66-43 per cent (SE), 64-51 per cent (NO), 51-59 per cent (DK). Preferred themes: 46-56 per cent (FI), 65-51 per cent (SE), 37-27 per cent (NO), 51-49 per cent (DK). Preferred place of work: 42-33 per cent (FI), 59-61 per cent (SE), 44-46 per cent (NO), 55-49 per cent (DK).

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## II. PROFESSIONAL (RE)ORIENTATIONS



# Journalism Education and the Profession

## *Socialization, Traditions and Change*

Gunnar Nygren

### Abstract

What is the role of journalism education in the socialisation of future journalists into the profession? This question is discussed in a comparative analysis of two large surveys among journalism students and journalists in Sweden, Poland and Russia in 2011–2012. In the analysis, attitudes towards professional values and integrity are compared between students and professionals. The results show clear differences: Journalists show more professional detachment and less activist ideals than do students. Journalists are also more critical towards development in the quality of journalism and press freedom compared to students. One conclusion is that important parts of socialisation into the profession are still taking place in the newsrooms. There are also important differences between the three countries in terms of traits that are transferred to the students from journalistic cultures in the three countries. An example of this includes the borders of the profession in relation to PR and commercial pressure that are weaker in Poland and Russia compared to in Sweden. The ideals of watchdog journalism are weaker among both students and professionals in Russia compared with other countries.

Keywords: journalism education, integrity, detachment, Poland, Russia, Sweden

### Introduction

Academic journalism education has a complicated relation to the profession, one of both conflicting interests and mutual dependency. A growing share of journalists enters the profession through professional education, either on an academic or a vocational level (Deuze, 2006). Professional education can be an “agent of change” in journalism, raising professional standards and the status of the profession. But it can also have a strong element of conservatism, transferring old values and traditions to students becoming journalists (Mensing, 2011). The conflict between practical skills and critical academic thinking has a long history, both within journalism education and between academia and the industry (Philips, 2005).

Journalism education is also part of the socialization into the profession. Teachers with a professional background pass on the language and perspectives of profession-

als to the students, and training in practical exercises gives the students experiences and ways of thinking regarding how journalism is produced in newsrooms (Mensing, 2011). This socialization is continued during periods of internship, and when students return they are filled with tacit knowledge and values from the workplaces.

In the US, journalism education has played an important role in professionalization. Professional standards and ethics, as well as the professional roles of journalists, developed together with universities and their journalism programs, beginning with the first school of journalism in Missouri in 1908 and Pulitzer's donation to Columbia University in 1912 and continuing throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Medsger, 2005; Mensing, 2011). Journalism education was introduced much later in Europe; in most countries not until after 1945. The result of this late introduction was that the journalistic profession in fact lost influence over both the recruitment and education of future journalists to the academic sphere (see also the chapter by Elin Gardeström in this book). This lost influence is an important explanation for the constant conflict between academic journalism education and the industry. Academic journalism education emphasizes critical thinking, independence and flexibility, while the industry in many countries criticizes education for not offering enough practical training. To gain influence, the media industry in some countries has systems of accreditation in order to set certain standards for education (this conflict in a UK context is described by Philips 2005).

### Comparing journalism education and professionals in different media systems

The position of journalism education also differs between media systems. The degree of professionalization plays an important part in analyzing media systems. In early research on journalism students, an increasing homogenization was discussed (Splichal & Sparks, 1994). In later and expanding comparative research in journalism studies, it is clear that the professional culture differs in various parts of the world. Research has shown different patterns in the position of the journalistic profession in relation to the political system, market conditions and the degree of state influence in the media system (Hallin & Mancini, 2004). It is also clear that there are differences in values and ideals among journalists in different media systems. These differences are considered to reflect the national and cultural context of journalism on a national basis (Hanitzsch et al., 2010; Weaver & Willnat, 2012). In this context, journalism education has developed in relation to society, the industry and the academic system.

Research on journalism education often compares journalism students in different countries, examining their motivation to be a journalist as well as values and attitudes towards their own future as journalists (Sparks & Splichal, 1994; Hovden, 2009; Nygren et al., 2010; Mellado, 2012; Stigbrand & Nygren, 2013). There is little comparative

research on the relationship between journalism education and the profession. Key questions in this area include the extent to which education only transfers ideals and practices from the profession to future journalists, or whether the students also have a critical attitude and ambitions to change journalism. The general relationship between education and the profession is also a measure of the degree of distance/closeness between education and the industry. This relationship is also closely connected to the media system.

The purpose of this chapter is to study the relationship between journalism education and professionals in the media industry in three different media systems. Three research questions are discussed:

- RQ 1: Are there any differences between journalism students and professionals regarding professional values and the position of the profession in relation to other fields in the media sphere?
- RQ 2: What role does education play in the socialization of future journalists into the profession? Are there any differences in this role in various media systems?
- RQ 3: Is journalism education bringing ideals and values within various media systems closer to each other, or are national differences reproduced and transferred to new generations?

## Methods and empirical material

In various research projects in the past five years, attitudes and values among journalists and students of journalism have been studied in Sweden, Poland and Russia (Nygren et al., 2010; Nygren & Degtereva, 2012; Nygren & Stigbrand, 2013; Nygren & Dobek-Ostrowska, 2015). In some of the surveys the questions have been similar, making it possible to compare answers from students and professionals. In this chapter, these results are analyzed in the following areas:

- Professional ideals and the journalist's role in society
- Opinions on quality in journalism and whether journalists fulfill their role in society
- Attitudes towards the political system and towards PR and corruption
- The relationship between journalism education and the profession

A survey of students in five journalism programs was carried out in autumn 2011. It was constructed in cooperation with representatives of the five departments researched in the project, and was distributed and collected during lectures among students studying for a regular daytime journalism degree, in their second or third year. The sample of students represents typical groups in each department. However, it is not

possible to give any response rate, because the survey was distributed by local teachers and filled in during lectures.

A total of 527 students from five universities answered the survey. The largest groups come from the three big universities in Stockholm, Moscow and Warsaw, with around 150 students at each site. Two smaller groups from Tartu and Jyväskylä also participated in the project, but these results are not included in the analysis in this chapter. The complete results can be found in Stigbrand-Nygren (2013), which also includes interviews with teachers and an analysis of the curricula to give a broad picture of journalism education in these five countries.

**Table 1.** Characteristics of journalism student at five universities 2011, in term of age (average) and gender (per cent)

|                       | Södertörn | Moscow | Warsaw | Tartu | Jyväskylä |
|-----------------------|-----------|--------|--------|-------|-----------|
| Age (average)         | 25.0      | 21.5   | 22.0   | 23.9  | 23.7      |
| Gender (per cent)     |           |        |        |       |           |
| Male                  | 41        | 18     | 30     | 17    | 20        |
| Female                | 59        | 82     | 70     | 83    | 80        |
| Number of respondents | 157       | 141    | 145    | 47    | 31        |

In all five places, there is a clear majority of female students; the only department with more equal numbers of male and female students is at Södertörn University. One explanation for this may be the strong emphasis on multimedia in the journalism degree program at Södertörn University, as degrees with more focus on technology have traditionally attracted more male students. Swedish students are also older than those in Moscow and Warsaw.

In spring 2012, a survey among professional journalists was conducted as part of the research project *Journalism in change*. In this project, researchers at three universities (Södertörn University in Stockholm, Moscow State University and the University of Wrocław in Poland) cooperated to study how the professional journalistic culture in the three countries is influenced by media development. The questionnaire was constructed in cooperation between the researchers to reach highest possible validity, so that each question would be interpreted the same way. The fieldwork was organized and carried out by teams in each of the three countries. There are no registers of journalists in the countries, except in Sweden, where earlier research on journalists has been based on the members of the Union of Journalists (Asp, 2012; Strömbäck et al., 2012). In the other two countries, unions organize only a small part of the population and it was not possible to use their records to achieve a representative sample. To use the same methods in the three countries, the project instead used quota sampling to select participants in the survey, in order to build as representative as possible a sample of journalists in each country (Lavrakas, 2013).

Drawing on previous knowledge about the media structure and where journalists work, a quota of journalists was determined for each media type, with the goal

of collecting 500 surveys in each country. Surveys were sent to a wide range of newsrooms in different parts of the country and within different types of media, both by post (mostly Sweden and Poland) and by e-mail, with links to a web-based survey (mostly Poland and Russia). The survey was not sent to named journalists, but rather contained instructions to distribute the questionnaire to all journalists in the newsroom. The journalists returned the questionnaires themselves or filled in a web survey anonymously. When the quota for each media type was filled, the survey stopped.

**Table 2.** Characteristics of journalists in the survey Journalism in change 2012 (per cent)

|                                                    | Poland | Russia | Sweden | Total |
|----------------------------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|-------|
| Male                                               | 58     | 38     | 47     | 48    |
| Female                                             | 42     | 62     | 53     | 52    |
| ≤35 years                                          | 42     | 69     | 27     | 47    |
| 36-50 years                                        | 39     | 23     | 36     | 33    |
| ≥51 years                                          | 18     | 7      | 38     | 21    |
| Printed paid newspapers                            | 26     | 35     | 42     | 34    |
| Magazines                                          | 25     | 29     | 13     | 22    |
| Public service/state radio and TV                  | 22     | 10     | 16     | 16    |
| Commercial tv and radio,<br>online and free-sheets | 25     | 21     | 12     | 19    |
| Subcontractors                                     | 3      | 6      | 17     | 8     |
| Number of respondents                              | 497    | 500    | 500    | 1 497 |

*Note:* Subcontractors include news agencies, production companies and freelancers

The results reflect the media systems in the three countries: Sweden as a strong newspaper country, and Poland and Russia as strong TV/radio countries. The results also show clear differences among journalists: in Russia journalists are predominantly female and under 35 years old; in Poland they are predominantly male and young; and in Sweden the relationship is more equal between the genders and journalists are quite old – nearly 40 per cent over 50 years old. The complete results from the project are presented in Nygren and Dobek-Ostrowska (2015).

In this chapter, results from the two surveys are used to compare students and journalists. The analysis also includes a dimension reduction with a factor analysis (Barmark, 2011). By analyzing correlations between results on the variables within the questions on professional duties, a few dimensions can be defined among the answers. 11 and 16 professional duties among students and professionals are reduced to four and five dimensions. The factor analyses are done using the method of principal components and a Varimax rotation (Kaisers egenverdi >1). The correlations within the dimensions are given alongside each analysis.

## Professional ideals

Similar questions posed to the students and the professionals concerned professional values and ideals. A list of “duties” was presented, and each person was to evaluate them on a scale from 1 to 5 (where 5 is very important). The list was based on earlier surveys in Sweden as well as other parts of the world (Asp et al., 2007; Weaver & Willhoit, 2012). The students evaluated eleven different duties, and the same duties were also given to professional journalists in the survey 2012. The journalists also had five other duties to evaluate, in total 16 variables.

The results show similar general patterns in values among students and journalists in all three countries. Traditional neutral ideals such as presenting various opinions and standing free from special interests are important to both students and professionals, while commercial values like economic results for the media company are valued low among both groups. But there are also important differences between the groups:

In *Poland*, professionals put more emphasis on critical ideals such as investigating the powerful and criticizing injustice, but also on neutral ideals like presenting various opinions and standing free from special interests. They also feel that entertainment is important, which is not the opinion among students, who put more emphasis on activist ideals such as influencing public opinion.

In *Russia*, there are clear differences between students and journalists: professionals put much more emphasis on ideals connected to neutrality, while students are much more activist, wanting to influence and educate the public. Students are also more concerned about telling the truth regardless of the consequences, while professionals are much more careful. To be entertaining is much more important to students than professionals.

**Table 3.** Importance of different duties for journalists (mean)

|                                                  | Poland   |             | Russia   |             | Sweden   |             |
|--------------------------------------------------|----------|-------------|----------|-------------|----------|-------------|
|                                                  | Students | Journalists | Students | Journalists | Students | Journalists |
| Bringing forward various opinions                | 4.3      | 4.6         | 4.3      | 4.3         | 4.1      | 4.4         |
| Criticizing injustice                            | 4.1      | 4.4         | 4.1      | 4.0         | 4.3      | 4.4         |
| Stimulating new ideas                            | 4.0      | 4.0         | 4.3      | 3.8         | 3.8      | 3.9         |
| Educating the public                             | 4.1      | 4.3         | 4.5      | 3.9         | 3.8      | 3.9         |
| Being free of special interests                  | 4.3      | 4.5         | 4.0      | 4.3         | 4.0      | 4.4         |
| Being a neutral reporter                         | 4.3      | 4.2         | 3.7      | 4.4         | 3.8      | 4.2         |
| Investigating the powerful                       | 4.0      | 4.6         | 3.5      | 3.7         | 4.3      | 4.7         |
| Telling the truth regardless of the consequences | 4.1      | 4.3         | 4.1      | 3.3         | 3.9      | 4.1         |
| Influencing public opinion                       | 4.1      | 3.5         | 3.9      | 3.5         | 3.4      | 3.1         |
| Entertaining the public                          | 3.1      | 4.2         | 3.6      | 2.8         | 3.1      | 3.3         |
| Ensuring that the media business does well       | 3.1      | 3.2         | 3.3      | 3.2         | 2.5      | 2.6         |
| Number of respondents                            | 144      | 489         | 143      | 492         | 152      | 491         |

Note: The question was the same to both students (2011) and journalists (2012) – how important are the following duties/tasks for journalists in your country? The scale range between 1 (not important) and 5 (very important). The students come from University of Warsaw, Moscow and Södertörn.



In *Sweden* as well, professionals put more emphasis on neutral ideals than the students do, such as standing free from special interests. The most important to Swedish professionals is to be a watchdog concerning power, and this is also important to students. In general, there are only small differences between students and professionals – the ideal of a detached watchdog is most important in both groups, and the commercial ideals are weak.

Altogether, the pattern is similar in all three countries: professional journalists put more emphasis on ideals connected to neutrality and detachment than the students do. On the other hand, students put more emphasis on activist ideals like influencing public opinion and educating the public. There could be many explanations behind this pattern: one could be the strong professional ideology of detachment, the professional experience of using neutrality to protect integrity. This ideal is important to professionals with experience of external pressures and political/economic influence in the daily work of the journalist. If sources and/or owners put pressure on the journalist, ideals of neutrality are important to defend professional autonomy. Students do not have this experience yet, and might be more eager to exert influence in issues important to them.

The results also show that some national differences in journalism are similar among journalists and students. The ideal of “investigating the powerful” is weak among Russian professionals as well as students; this ideal scores 4.6-4.7 among Swedish and Polish journalists, but only 3.5 and 3.7 among Russian journalists and students. This indicates that the weak watchdog tradition in Russian journalism is being transferred to the new generation. But on the other hand, there are clear differences between students and professionals in Russia regarding activist ideals such as educating the public and influencing opinion – it appears as if the old educating ideal of Russian journalism (Trakhtenberg, 2007) is much stronger in education than among professional journalists. Among professional journalists it is more important not to be used for political purposes; for example, Russian journalists say no to promoting the position of women in society in their reporting, with similar arguments (Voronova, 2014).

Also some more commercial values are stronger in Poland, compared with Sweden. Ideals of entertainment and ensuring media business are doing well scores higher among both students and professionals. But in general differences between the three countries are less obvious than between students and professionals.

## Dimensions in professional ideals

In a factor analysis of the professional duties, the patterns among students and professionals become more visible. The analysis shows correlations between ideals: those who place high importance on certain ideals are also likely to give high marks to the other ideals within the same dimension.

The analysis of correlation between ideals among students gives four dimensions, four types of ideals among journalism students in the three countries:

1. **Activist – educator:** This dimension has three main parts; to stimulate new ideas, bring forward various opinions and to educate the public. Also the ideal of influencing public opinion and to criticize injustice is related to this dimension, but to a weaker level. This dimension is also responsible, and the ideal of always telling the truth regardless of consequences scores negative. This dimension stands for an active journalistic ideal.
2. **Entertainer:** This dimension is the second most visible among the duties. It includes to entertain the public, to ensure that the media business does well and to influence public opinion. This dimension shows more commercial ideals among journalists, less connected to investigative ideals.
3. **Advocate of justice:** The traditional “fourth estate”-ideals are found in this dimension; to criticize injustice, tell the truth regardless of the consequences and investigate the powerful.
4. **Neutral reporter:** The dimension of a detached journalism is less visible than others among students, to be a neutral reporter and stand free of special interests. This is quite passive journalistic ideal, it is also related to bring forward various opinions but negative in relation to stimulate new ideas.

**Table 4.** Dimension in professional duties among journalism students, 2011 (factor analysis)

|                                               | <b>Activist<br/>educator</b> | <b>Entertainer</b> | <b>Advocate<br/>of justice</b> | <b>Neutral<br/>reporter</b> |
|-----------------------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Stimulate new ideas                           | <b>.659</b>                  | .293               | .158                           | -.140                       |
| Bring forward various opinions                | <b>.656</b>                  | .005               | .029                           | .377                        |
| Educate the public                            | <b>.564</b>                  | .290               | .312                           | -.024                       |
| Entertain the public                          | .014                         | <b>.752</b>        | -.113                          | -.062                       |
| Ensure that the media business does well      | -.056                        | <b>.665</b>        | .374                           | .143                        |
| Influence public opinion                      | .396                         | <b>.568</b>        | -.109                          | .092                        |
| Criticize in justice                          | .256                         | .005               | <b>.772</b>                    | .043                        |
| Tell the truth regardless of the consequences | -.069                        | .189               | <b>.678</b>                    | .273                        |
| Investigate the powerful                      | .405                         | -.086              | <b>.555</b>                    | .065                        |
| Be a neutral reporter                         | .072                         | .014               | .139                           | <b>.813</b>                 |
| Stand free of special interests               | .167                         | .076               | .117                           | <b>.797</b>                 |
| Explained variance (per cent)                 | 17                           | 14                 | 13                             | 13                          |

*Note:* The students comes from University of Warsaw, Moscow State University and Södertörn University, n=443. Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. Explained variance in total 57 %.

The same patterns of ideals appear among professional journalists, but in a different order and with some differences in the duties within each dimension. The most clear dimension is the same, the activist-educator. But among professionals, also the “neutral

reporter”-dimension is almost as clear as the “activist”. There is also a difference within the dimension of “advocate of justice”, among professionals the ideal of entertainment is also part of this. The five dimensions of professional ideals among journalists are:

1. **Activist-educator:** To mobilize people to act, educate the public, stimulate new ideas, represent different social groups and influence public opinion. These ideals are all part of a traditional activist ideal in journalism in media systems with roots in party press and strong political parallelism (Hallin & Mancini, 2004), and this dimension is the most visible in Russia, Poland and Sweden.
2. **Neutral reporter:** This dimension of a detached and more passive journalist is also clearly visible: to be neutral, bring forward various opinions, stand free of special interests and give objective information.
3. **Advocate of justice:** The ideals within this dimension are close to the traditional “truth teller”, with no responsibility for consequences. To investigate the powerful and criticize injustice, but also with a clear element of entertainment.
4. **Watchdog:** This ideal is in some sense more responsible, more critical towards government claims and scoring high on simplify and explain.
5. **Entrepreneur:** This is the most diffuse of the five dimensions created in the factor analysis. It is focused on media business, but also related to entertainment and influencing public opinion.

In a comparison between dimensions in professional duties among journalism students and journalists, we can see both similarities and differences. The patterns in the dimensions are quite similar, the same kinds of ideals are related to each other among both students and journalists. We can also see that the most clearly visible pattern is the same – the activist-educator. This dimension is non-commercial and oriented towards influencing the society, an old ideal with connections to party press and politics. All three countries also have this kind of background in the media systems.

But there are also differences. The “neutral reporter” is a clear dimension among professional, it explains a larger share of the variance among ideals than among students. In comparisons of single dimensions (table 3) these ideals related to neutrality are much stronger among professionals than among students. Among students, the “entertainer” is the second most visible ideal. These commercial ideals are more diffuse among professionals, more related to entrepreneurial ideals and to be an “advocate of justice”.

**Table 5.** Dimensions in professional duties among professional journalists 2012 (factor analysis)

|                                                        | Activist<br>educator | Neutral<br>reporter | Advocate<br>of justice | Watch-<br>dog | Entrepreneur |
|--------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Mobilize people to act                                 | <b>.792</b>          | -.027               | .228                   | -.074         | .081         |
| Educate the public                                     | <b>.754</b>          | .184                | .116                   | .059          | -.084        |
| Stimulate new ideas                                    | <b>.728</b>          | .156                | .048                   | .134          | -.026        |
| Represent different social groups                      | <b>.559</b>          | .320                | .162                   | -.102         | .079         |
| Be someone who influences<br>the public opinion        | <b>.551</b>          | -.078               | -.022                  | .223          | .324         |
| Be a neutral reporter                                  | .013                 | <b>.806</b>         | -.012                  | -.105         | .073         |
| Bring forward various opinions                         | .255                 | <b>.704</b>         | .088                   | .158          | .037         |
| Stand free of special interests                        | .044                 | <b>.695</b>         | .293                   | .124          | -.036        |
| Give objective information                             | .160                 | <b>.671</b>         | .278                   | .158          | -.027        |
| Tell the truth with no regards<br>for the consequences | -.024                | .129                | <b>.760</b>            | .051          | -.060        |
| Investigate the powerful in society                    | .173                 | .280                | <b>.636</b>            | .354          | -.044        |
| Criticize injustice                                    | .332                 | .133                | <b>.584</b>            | .044          | -.006        |
| Provide entertainment                                  | .242                 | .116                | <b>.552</b>            | -.094         | .456         |
| Scrutinize government claims                           | -.023                | -.036               | .059                   | <b>.838</b>   | -.033        |
| Simplify and explain                                   | .136                 | .250                | .113                   | <b>.701</b>   | .032         |
| Ensure that the media<br>business does well            | .020                 | .032                | -.054                  | -.005         | <b>.905</b>  |
| Explained variance (per cent)                          | 17                   | 15                  | 12                     | 9             | 7            |

Note: The analysis is based on the survey Journalism in change 2012 with 1 500 respondents among journalists in Poland, Russia and Sweden. Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. Explained variance in total 60 per cent.

## Professional integrity

Professionalism includes a degree of detachment from other areas in society. It is often a question of keeping the borders clean, to defend one's professional autonomy. These professional borders, in relation to other areas, define the profession (Freidson, 2001). In their daily work, journalists are in touch with actors from many other areas such as politics, PR and commercial interests. Keeping these professional borders clean becomes a way to create a space for professional autonomy.

The surveys show clear differences between students and journalists in the attitudes towards these borders. In general, professional journalists are more restrictive in their attitudes, maintaining more strict borders to other areas than students. The pattern is the same in all three countries, with more restrictive and detached professionals, and students more open in relation to other areas. But there are also differences between the three countries (table 6).

In *Poland*, both journalists and students are very strict regarding the borders to politics. Journalists are not supposed to be politically active, and political influence in media companies is not acceptable. There is a strong sense of integrity in relation to politics among students and professionals.

In *Russia* there is a greater acceptance of political activity, and many students and journalists accept political influence in the media company. This reflects traditions in the media system and a high degree of political parallelism in Russia (Hallin & Mancini 2004). The attitudes in this area are clearly transferred to the young generation (and are stronger among Russian students than professionals).

In *Sweden* the results are more unclear: neither students nor professionals accept political influence in media companies, but students are not as opposed to political activism among journalists as professionals are. This could also be a result of different meanings of the word politics; in the young generation it may have a wider meaning than “party politics” and also include activism outside the parties. It could also be a result of the older generation still having experiences of a “party press” and political pressure on journalism.

When it comes to PR and gifts from sources, the surveys show a slightly different pattern with Poland and Russia being quite equal and Sweden entailing a special case. The borders to PR and communication are more unclear in Poland and Russia than in Sweden, among both students and professionals. A third of the Polish students and two-thirds of the Russian students feel it is acceptable for journalists to also work with PR. One explanation for this may be the fact that PR is integrated in different ways in the departments of journalism, and some students of journalism also study PR and communication (Stigbrand & Nygren, 2013). In Sweden few feel it is acceptable for journalists to work with PR, but this share is larger among students than in the profession. In Sweden the Union of Journalists draws a clear line regarding PR, and in the 1990s it was determined that working with PR/communication is not acceptable for members of the union.

While receiving gifts from sources is acceptable for nearly a third of the Russian journalists as well as many Polish journalists, it is nearly forbidden for journalists in Sweden. These patterns are transferred to the students in all three countries, and the differences are quite small. One explanation for this (as well as for working with PR) could be the financial situation for journalists in Poland and Russia. Another question in the survey shows that almost 50 per cent of the Polish and 43 per cent of the Russian journalists say they can simply survive on their salary, or have to find additional incomes to supplement what they earn from journalism. In Sweden, this figure is 9 per cent. It is easy to have principles when you have a stable economic situation (Glowacki, 2015).

**Table 6.** Opinions on the relation between journalism, politics and sources among journalism students (2011) and journalists (2012), share who agree (per cent)

|                                                                                                                             | <b>Poland</b> |             | <b>Russia</b> |             | <b>Sweden</b> |             |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|
|                                                                                                                             | Students      | Journalists | Students      | Journalists | Students      | Journalists |
| A journalist can't be active in politics when he/she is working as a journalist.                                            | 78            | 87          | 49            | 43          | 47            | 65          |
| As a journalist, one has to accept political influence in the media company and the limits this places on journalism.       | 12            | 6           | 37            | 22          | 7             | 2           |
| It is no problem for a journalist to also work with PR and information management.                                          | 31            | 21          | 65            | 31          | 19            | 13          |
| It is acceptable for a journalist to accept gifts from sources, as long as it does not influence his/her professional work. | 28            | 21          | 32            | 30          | 9             | 4           |
| Number of respondents                                                                                                       | 140           | 494         | 136           | 484         | 152           | 490         |

*Note:* The scale range between 1 and 5, and the table shows the share (per cent) who answered 4 or 5. The students come from University of Warsaw, Moscow State University and Södertörn University.

## Press freedom and quality

In the evaluation of press freedom, the general opinion is the same among students and professionals in all three countries. In Poland there was a positive development 2011-2012 when Civic Platform was in the government, compared with previous years with "Law and Justice" in rule (from November 2015 "Law and Justice" is back in government). In Russia both journalists and students 2011-2012 think press freedom is being restricted, every second journalist say it is decreasing. In Sweden, the situation is quite stable according to both students and journalists.

But there are clear differences between students and professionals in each country – in all three countries, students are more optimistic than professionals. This is most clear in Poland, where 71 per cent of the students believe press freedom is increasing while the same figure among professionals is 34 per cent. Journalists in Poland are more critical, with nearly a third believing the opposite; they see decreasing press freedom. In Sweden, students are significantly more positive than professionals – very few journalists perceive increasing press freedom, but the figure among students is 38 per cent. One possible explanation for this is different perceptions of what press freedom is: for the young generation, freedom of expression might not be only the absence of state repression but also the possibility to publish. With new net-based platforms (blogs, online news sites and social media), this aspect of press freedom has increased in all three countries.

**Table 7.** Opinions among journalism students (2011) and journalists (2012) on how press freedom has developed in the past 5-10 years in their country (per cent)

|                       | Poland   |             | Russia   |             | Sweden   |             |
|-----------------------|----------|-------------|----------|-------------|----------|-------------|
|                       | Students | Journalists | Students | Journalists | Students | Journalists |
| Decreased             | 8        | 29          | 42       | 49          | 18       | 31          |
| The same level        | 20       | 37          | 36       | 33          | 44       | 56          |
| Increased             | 71       | 34          | 22       | 18          | 38       | 13          |
| Sum per cent          | 99       | 100         | 100      | 100         | 100      | 100         |
| Number of respondents | 133      | 456         | 131      | 478         | 117      | 389         |

Note: The students come from University of Warsaw, Moscow State University and Södertörn University.

The students are also more optimistic when it comes to quality in journalism (Table 7). This is extremely clear in Poland: About two-thirds of the Polish journalists believe that quality is decreasing, but the students are much more optimistic – nearly half of them perceive increasing quality. The same difference is visible in Russia, where the students are also more optimistic. In Sweden the difference is quite small: both students and journalists are quite critical of a decreasing quality in journalism.

The question is whether the difference regarding opinions on quality in journalism in Poland and Russia reflects a generational gap, with different generations holding different views on what quality is. Analytic journalism might mean quality for the older generation, while young professionals might value other aspects of the content such as pictures, design/layout and speed. Another explanation might be different time perspectives – professionals have longer experience and can compare within a longer perspective. The difference in evaluation also shows that students have a distance to the profession and professional values; what is quality for students might not be the same for professionals.

**Table 8.** Opinions among students in journalism (2011) and journalists (2012) on how quality in journalism has developed in the past 5-10 years in their country (per cent)

|                       | Poland   |             | Russia   |             | Sweden   |             |
|-----------------------|----------|-------------|----------|-------------|----------|-------------|
|                       | Students | Journalists | Students | Journalists | Students | Journalists |
| Decreased             | 24       | 68          | 28       | 50          | 40       | 46          |
| The same level        | 28       | 20          | 38       | 32          | 44       | 32          |
| Increased             | 48       | 12          | 34       | 18          | 16       | 23          |
| Sum per cent          | 100      | 100         | 100      | 100         | 100      | 100         |
| Number of respondents | 131      | 456         | 136      | 475         | 124      | 425         |

Note: The students comes from University of Warsaw, Moscow State University and Södertörn University.

## Distance to the profession and mobility

The differences in the perception of press freedom and quality indicate a distance between the education and the profession, especially in Poland. Other results from the two surveys also show clear differences in the relationship between journalism education and the profession in the three countries. These differences are not related to opinions and attitudes, but are on more of a systemic level in the role of journalism education in the three countries.

In *Poland* only 40 per cent of the journalists have an academic journalism education, and this figure is only a bit higher among those under 35 years old. Many journalists have an academic education in general, but a professional journalism education is obviously not regarded as necessary within the media companies. This is also reflected among the students: only half are fairly certain or sure they want to work as journalists after graduation. Only 25 per cent are sure to get a job in journalism, and many look for alternative jobs in PR and communication (Stigbrand & Nygren, 2013).

In *Russia*, the relationship between education and the profession is closer. Among journalists, 75 per cent have an academic degree in journalism, and among journalists under 35 this figure is even higher. Among the students, two-thirds are sure or fairly sure they want to work as journalists after graduating, and 43 per cent already have a job or are sure they will get one. But the survey among journalists also shows a large degree of mobility – 25 per cent of the journalists expect to be working in area other than journalism within five years. Professionals in Russia are much younger than in Poland and Sweden, with 69 per cent under 35 years old. This group is more mobile, and as we have seen in figures on relations to other fields, they are also more open to PR/communication/politics. Russian researchers talk about journalism as a “social lift” for young Russians (Pasti et al., 2012). This shows that the borders around the profession are lower in Russia, with a greater degree of mobility offering young Russian journalists many options for the future. It also explains the lower degree of detachment among Russian students; there is no need for professional borders when the future labor market is integrated between the fields of journalism, PR/communication and politics.

In *Sweden*, the relationship between academic journalism education and the industry is also quite close. 55 per cent of the journalists have an academic degree in journalism, and among the group under 35 years old this figure is higher. This shows that employers today often prefer young journalists with an academic degree in journalism, which is also reflected among the students: 76 per cent says they are completely or fairly certain they want to work as journalists. Surveys among ex-students show that a majority of them get a job as a journalist. Two years after graduating, two of three former journalism students from Södertörn University were working as journalists full or part time. But these surveys also show a labor market with high barriers to entry, many temporary jobs, and many young journalists leaving the profession after some years (Nygren, 2012).



**Table 9.** Education degree among journalists (2012) and attitudes among journalism students towards their professional future (2011) (per cent)

|                                                                            | Poland | Russia | Sweden |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| Per cent of journalists with higher education                              | 89     | 96     | 90     |
| Per cent of journalists with academic journalism degree                    | 40     | 75     | 55     |
| Per cent of journalists under 35 with academic journalism degree           | 44     | 75     | 70     |
| Number of respondents                                                      | 472    | 500    | 495    |
| Per cent of journalism students certain they will work as journalists      | 53     | 69     | 76     |
| Per cent of journalism students sure they will get a job (or already have) | 25     | 43     | 30     |
| Number of respondents                                                      | 144    | 134    | 149    |

These differences in the relationship between journalism education and the profession are important to bear in mind when analyzing attitudes among students and professionals. With a close relationship it is more likely that there will be similar attitudes in both groups, and the role of education in socializing the students into the profession is significant. But looking back at the ideals regarding professional roles of journalists, it is also obvious that a close relationship between education and profession is not the only factor: in Poland the differences in ideals between students and professionals are much less than in Russia, where there is a strong position for education in the profession (see Table 3).

It is still an open question whether (and in that case, how) education influences professional ideals among journalists. Some factors that might have influence are, for example, the social recruitment of new journalists, educational profiles in the journalism departments, and ideologies among staff at universities' journalism departments. It is also a question of the size of the gap between ideals and reality, which becomes visible when all professional educations encounter the labor market.

## Some conclusions

The purpose of this chapter is to study the relationship between academic journalism education and the profession in different media systems. The results show both similarities and differences connected to the media system and national context.

The first question was whether there are any differences between journalism students and professionals regarding professional values and the position of the profession. The general answer to this is yes – there are some differences in values and attitudes in all three countries. Professionals put more emphasis on neutrality and professional detachment, drawing more clear borders around the profession in relation to other fields. Students are more open to other fields both in general, and

for their own professional work. Students also place more importance on activist ideals; they want to influence and take part in society more than simply guarding their professional autonomy.

This is a general pattern observed in all three countries. Another general pattern is visible in the factor analysis: the same dimensions of professional values are found among both students and journalists. There are differences in the strength in some key values like neutrality and activist ideals between the two groups, but the patterns are the same nonetheless.

Earlier research has discussed the possibility for journalism education to create more critical journalists rather than simply workers for “the news factory” (Philips, 2005). If this were the case in the three countries, students would have a more critical attitude than professionals, who are accustomed to the daily demands of the media industry. But the results offer no evidence of this; on the contrary, students are less focused on the critical role of journalism and much less critical regarding quality in journalism and the development of press freedom. Students are also less clear on the borders of the profession, and less focused on critical integrity. If the ambition of academic journalism education is to produce journalists with a more critical attitude than usual within the profession, the education is failing in this aspect in all three countries.

The second question concerned the role of education in the socialization of future journalists into the profession. For a professional education this is an important dimension, and in general it seems as if the education largely transfers values and attitudes from the profession to students. But there are also limitations in this process, and the results indicate that important parts of professionalism (borders of the profession, detachment, and what a journalist can do) are still a matter of socialization in the newsroom. Professional journalists in all three countries emphasize professional integrity and neutrality more than students do. Perhaps this often tacit knowledge does not fit into the curricula but is better experienced in the newsrooms.

There are also clear differences between the three countries in the relationships between academic journalism education and the profession. In *Poland* journalism education is young; the department in Warsaw was founded as late as the 1970s, and a majority of Polish journalists have no journalism education. Among the students the professional focus is not clear, with half of them uncertain whether they even want to become journalists. This reveals a gap between education and the profession, and the role of education becomes less important for values and socialization. This also becomes clear in the low share of journalists with an academic journalism education.

*Russia* has a long tradition of journalism education, going back to the 1920s. It has literary roots, and carries the Russian tradition of an “*intelligentsia*” in close relation to power but also defending a degree of intellectual space (Trakhtenberg, 2009). Nearly all journalists have an academic journalism education, but mobility out of the profession is also high. Russia has the greatest differences between students and professionals concerning values and professional integrity, perhaps as a result of experiences among the professionals. One explanation for this may be large perceived

gaps between professional values and conditions in the daily work, reported in earlier research on Russian journalism (Nygren & Degtereva, 2012).

In *Sweden* journalism education is young; the first department founded in the 1960s and the department at Södertörn, which participated in the survey, was founded as recently as 1998. Sweden has a high share of journalists with an academic journalism education, and rather small differences concerning values and attitudes regarding professional integrity. This indicates a strong professional orientation in education. Still, there are differences showing that important parts of the socialization take place outside education, in the newsrooms.

The last question concerned the relationship between media systems: is academic journalism education bringing values and attitudes in various countries and media systems closer to each other, or are the differences transferred to new generations? The answer to this is more complicated: both yes and no. In general, the differences between dimensions of professional duties are less pronounced among students than professionals – students in all three countries are quite close in values related to “advocate of justice” while among professionals the difference is very clear. Also regarding other dimensions of professional duties, there are fewer differences among students than professionals. This might indicate a homogenization around some basic values in journalism among students in various media systems.

On the other hand, important national traits of the professional culture of journalism are clearly transferred to the students:

- In Poland, there are clear borders to politics among both students and journalists. In Russia, the attitudes are more tolerant in both groups, concerning both political influence in media companies and political activity for journalists.
- In Sweden there is very low tolerance in both groups regarding taking gifts and working with PR/communication. In Poland and Russia, 20-30 % in both groups can do this even if they define themselves as journalists.
- In Russia the watchdog tradition is quite weak among both students and journalists, while in Sweden this role is important in both groups.

It might come as no surprise that differences in professional journalistic cultures are transferred to the new generation through journalism education. But it raises the question of the extent to which education can be an “agent of change” for journalism, a way to raise standards and quality. These surveys give a picture of journalism education quite far from these critical new journalists envisioned by Philips (2005). Instead, they are less critical of what journalists define as decreasing quality in journalism and limited press freedom. However, they also have stronger motives to assume an activist role to change society (and perhaps journalism also?).

It is also far from the role of education in building the competences of professional journalists, analyzed by Donsbach (2014), who assigns professional education a key role in, for example, the development of professional norms as part of creating a

“knowledge profession”. Of course, professional values and ethics are an important part of any journalism education, including the three departments taking part in this survey (Stigbrand & Nygren, 2014). But the results show that important aspects of the socialization into professional norms and values are taking place in the newsrooms and workplaces. The degree of professional integrity seems to grow when students take the step into the profession, with the experiences of the professional journalist giving them a higher degree of detachment and sense of neutrality and not taking a stand.

There could also be other generational explanations behind the differences. It might be that values concerning professional ethics, integrity and the importance of detachment are changing between generations. These classical values have been important in the development of journalism, but it is not self-evident that they will prevail in the new net-based, interactive and commercial media ecology. This is a question for further research.

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## Perfect Profession

### *Swedish Journalism Students, Their Teachers, and Educational Goals*

Gunilla Hultén & Antonia Wiklund

#### Abstract

This study discusses how students taking their first year at three Swedish schools of journalism view their future professional roles. Furthermore, the ideals of the students are compared with the professional attitudes expressed by their teachers and the objectives described in the course syllabi of the three journalism programmes. Data were collected using a student survey, interviews with teachers and the syllabi of the basic courses given by the three schools of journalism. The professional role most students identified with was the Storyteller. However, the reality that many journalists face involves reduced creative opportunities in the newsroom. Instead, the swiftness of producing news within given timeframes is demanded. This may suggest that the ideal professional role of aspiring journalists is in conflict with the demands they are likely to meet when entering the job market. The study also indicates divides and conflicting positions between the students' and the educators' journalistic ideals, between teaching practices and the content of the syllabi, and between educational ideals and learning outcomes. The results suggest that both students and their teachers want to maintain high-quality professional standards and traditional core values of journalism.

**Keywords:** journalism education, professional ideals, learning outcomes, Bloom's taxonomy, survey, qualitative study, Sweden

## Introduction

In this chapter we set out to investigate how students in their first year at three Swedish schools of journalism view their future professional roles. Furthermore, we examine the professional attitudes expressed by their teachers and how they align with the objectives described in course syllabi. The study draws from the understanding of professional ideals as a shared value system, not only shaped within the field of journalism. It connects with the ways journalistic values are being perceived among students at a time when traditional notions of journalism are being challenged (Hovden et al., 2009; Hovden & Ottosen, in this volume; Sanders et al., 2008), and is positioned in the particular context of journalism education.

The three selected schools of journalism are all situated in Stockholm and have different profiles. Journalism, Media and Communication (JMK), a unit within Stockholm University, has a 25-year tradition of journalism education and research.<sup>1</sup> Södertörn University started its first journalism programme in 1998 and has mainly a profile featuring multimedia and interactive platforms. The education at the Poppius School of Journalism, offering shorter courses concentrating on practical training, is funded by student fees (see also Gardeström in this volume). The discussion in this chapter is structured around the following main strands: the students' perception of their journalistic ideals, the teachers' educational standards and teaching practices, the learning outcomes formulated in the course syllabi, and the relationship between these features. The study includes a survey with journalism students, in-depth interviews with journalism educators, and document analysis of the current syllabi of the two university programmes of journalism.<sup>2</sup> The interviews and documents were examined using the qualitative data analysis software Nvivo 10 in order to classify and compare the contents from the different sources. Finally, the students' responses regarding their preferred professional ideals were juxtaposed with the results from the interviews and document analysis.

The chapter starts by giving a brief background to Swedish journalism education in general and the legal requirements of higher education institutions. This section also includes a presentation of the three schools of journalism included in the study. Next, the results and analyses of the survey are addressed. Subsequently, the views of eight educators are introduced and their responses are compared to the educational goals expressed in the course syllabi. Among other things, the analyses indicate divides and conflicting positions between the students' and the educators' journalistic ideals, between teaching practices and the content of the syllabi, and between educational ideals and learning outcomes. In the concluding section of the chapter, we call attention to the implications of the analyses and discuss the provisions of an education to promote high-quality journalism and perfect the training of future journalists.

## Journalism education under pressure

The recent changes within the media industry have undoubtedly had profound implications on the journalistic professionalism (e.g. Deuze, 2005; Fenton, 2010; Nikunen, 2013), as well as on journalism education (e.g. Macdonald, 2006; Mensing, 2010; Mensing, 2011; Salaverría, 2011). Intensified market pressure, a concentration on cost reductions, and the expansion of multimedia platforms challenge the conditions of the journalistic profession and equally call for a need to once more rethink the training of future journalists.

At the turn of the century, convergence was the buzzword in the news media industry (see e.g. Deuze, 2004; Fagerjord, & Storsul, 2007; Singer, 2004). This convergence, new technologies, online and multi-channel publishing are elements of the restruc-



turing of journalism and, most importantly, were included in companies' strategies to survive in an increasingly competitive media market. Worldwide, Sweden included, the news industry is under severe financial pressure, with declining readership and advertising revenues resulting in staff cuts and budget reductions. The crisis of the news media industry has changed the conditions of news reporting, placed pressure on the journalism profession, and affected the professional identity.

The rapid transformation of the media industry has equally put journalism programmes under competing and often conflicting pressures. On the one hand the journalism schools are subject to industry demands for practical training that fits their needs, while on the other hand they need to meet the requirements of the institutions offering the journalism programmes (cf. Macdonald, 2006; Ottosen, 2004; Terzis, 2009). The liberal model of journalism education has mainly concentrated on the reproduction of the existing labour force and working patterns. Meanwhile, academia and educators make their own claims concerning professionalism and autonomy, causing tension between the industry and journalism education (Bromley, 2009: 29). In the Scandinavian countries, the guiding principle of higher journalism education is an integration of academic courses and journalistic practical applications (Weibull, 2009: 76). The tension between the two aspects is thus embedded in the educational systems.

In Sweden all academic education, including that of journalism, is mainly governed by the Higher Education Act [Högskolelagen] and the Higher Education Ordinance [Högskoleförordningen]. It is the Swedish Higher Education Authority [Universitetskanslersämbetet] that scrutinizes the higher education institutions to ensure that their operations comply with the laws and statutes. In this scrutiny, the requirements stated in the course syllabi take a central position; they are the binding legal documents for both the university in question and the students. In the evaluation process, special emphasis is placed on the learning outcomes. These are defined as: "statements of what a learner is expected to know, understand and/or be able to do at the end of a period of learning" (*A Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area*, 2005: 29). At Stockholm University and Södertörn University these are translated into three headings that must be included in course syllabi, namely: *Knowledge and understanding*, *Skills and abilities*, and *Judgement and approach*. These concur with Benjamin Bloom's taxonomy of educational activities, which differentiates between *Knowledge*, *Skills* and *Attitude* (Bloom, 1956). Learning outcome statements are characterized by the use of active verbs expressing knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation, etc. Equally, these are key words in the analysis of the institutions' syllabi and interviews with the educators.

In Stockholm, higher journalism education is offered at two universities, Stockholm University and Södertörn University. *The Bachelor's Programme in Journalism* at Stockholm University is a three-year education, comprising 180 credits in journalism. At the time of this study the first year of training consisted of the mainly theory-oriented courses Journalism Studies I and II, followed by the skills-oriented courses Journalistic

Production and Application I and II during the second year. In their last year of studies the students undertake a 16-week internship, and present a bachelor's thesis.<sup>3</sup> The information on the programme's homepage states that it provides students with the knowledge and skills to work as journalists. In addition, it says the programme offers an environment where "the critical perspective and the practical skills meet and new knowledge arises" (Institutionen för mediestudier, Journalistik, 2014).

The bachelor's programmes *Journalism and Multimedia* and *Journalism with Social Studies* at Södertörn University comprise 180 credits, including 90 credits in journalism studies. The first year consists of the courses Journalism A and Journalism B. The two programmes are described as being customized and designed for the media companies' demand for journalists (Södertörns högskola, Journalistik, 2014). The programme *Journalism and Multimedia* combines journalism and media technology, and declares that it allows students "to be attractive to many media companies and for different types of tasks" (Södertörns högskola, Journalistik och multimedia, 2014). The programme *Journalism with Social Studies* joins journalism with studies in one of seven social fields: Economics, Ethnology, History, History of Ideas, Political Science, Religious Studies or Sociology. In their last year of studies the students take Journalism C, which includes the completion of a bachelor's thesis.

The Poppius School of Journalism, a fee-funded, private school that has been in operation since 1947, offers part-time courses in practical journalism. The education underscores the journalistic craft and places less stress on literature studies and the theoretical aspects of journalism. The basic course includes items in news writing, news values, interviewing, ethics, web journalism and layout. On the webpage the school says: "We believe the best way to learn is by doing, discussing, and getting feedback, practical advice and suggestions from the teachers" (Poppius, Grundkurs i praktisk journalistik, 2014).

## Professional ideals of the students

The survey study was conducted in April 2014 in order to explore how students perceive their future profession. The questionnaire was personally distributed to first-year students taking a basic journalism course at the three programmes: the unit for Journalism, Media and Communication at Stockholm University, the unit for Journalism and Economics at Södertörn University, and the Poppius School of Journalism. The survey was conducted during class hours, and at the time of the study the students were at the end of their basic courses.

The tenets for Daniel Hallin and Paolo Mancini's democratic corporatist model, in which Sweden is included, have undergone substantial changes in the past ten years (Hallin & Mancini, 2004; see also the introduction in this volume). With this transition in mind, Nordic media scholars have explored and monitored the motivation, aspirations and professional ideals of Nordic journalism students since 2005 (Hovden

et al., 2009; see also Hovden & Ottosen, in this volume). The results of this research offer opportunities to position the results of our study in a wider context.

A total of 100 students responded to the 11-question survey drawing on seven of the ideal types presented by Gunnar Nygren, namely the *Educator*, *Storyteller*, *Investigative Journalist*, *Profile*, *Content Provider*, *Expert* and *Multimedia Journalist* (Nygren, 2008: 146-149). These were converted into seven statements that the students were asked to rate on a scale from 1 to 5, with 5 corresponding to “fully agree”, and 1 to “completely disagree”. The statements were:

1. *The Educator*: You believe your main task is to inform the public and explain complex events in an educational way.
2. *The Storyteller*: You believe the aesthetic narration is as important as the journalistic content.
3. *The Investigative Journalist*: You want to enter a subject more deeply and examine a phenomenon for a longer time to be able to make exposures.
4. *The Profile*: You want to comment on media content and let your name be part of the media company’s brand.
5. *The Content Provider*: You want to produce content based on material from news agencies and other media at a high production pace.
6. *The Expert*: You want to specialize in a subject area and work for a niche publication.
7. *The Multimedia Journalist*: You want to work with several different media and produce material for several different platforms at a high production pace.

Of the respondents, 22 were students at Stockholm University, 61 at Södertörn University, and 17 at the Poppius School of Journalism. Two-thirds of the students were women, and one-third men. Nearly one of every four students had previous editorial experience (see Table 1).

**Table 1.** Respondents in the student survey in Stockholm, 2014 (number)

|                           | Stockholm<br>University | Södertörn<br>University | Poppius | Total |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|---------|-------|
| Women                     | 13                      | 36                      | 15      | 64    |
| Men                       | 9                       | 22                      | 2       | 33    |
| All                       | 22                      | 61                      | 17      | 100   |
| With editorial experience | 6                       | 29                      | 3       | 38    |

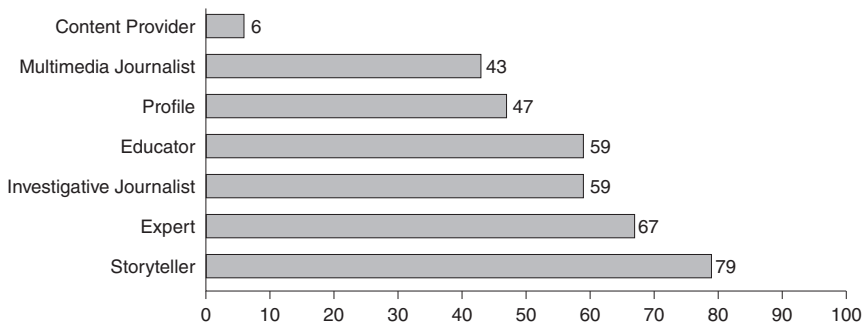
*Note:* Three respondents did not give their gender.

The total sample for this study was all 121 students registered for the basic courses at each of the three schools of journalism. At the time the questionnaire was distributed,

20 students were missing and one student received the survey but chose not to complete it. The survey's overall response rate was thus 83 per cent, which must be considered high. There is an internal failure in two of the survey questions: one concerns the professional type *Educator*, whereby one respondent left the question unanswered; the second relates to the respondent's gender, whereby three respondents did not answer.

The results indicate that the professional role most students identified with is the *Storyteller*. Nearly 80 per cent fully agreed or mostly agreed with the statement "You believe the aesthetic narration is as important as the journalistic content". The professional role that seemed to be the least appealing was that of the *Content Provider* (see Figure 1).

**Figure 1.** Students' adherence to seven ideal types, Stockholm, 2014 (per cent)



Note: The figure shows those who fully agree and agree in essence.

Of all respondents, 60 per cent completely disagreed or disagreed with the statement "You want to produce content based on material from news agencies and other media at a high production pace". However, the reality that many journalists face is reduced creative opportunities in the newsroom. Instead, the swiftness of producing news within given time frames is demanded (Nygren, 2008: 67-68). This may suggest that the ideal professional role of aspiring journalists is in conflict with the demands they are likely to meet when entering the job market.

**Table 2.** Students' adherence to the seven ideal types, Stockholm, 2014 (mean and std)

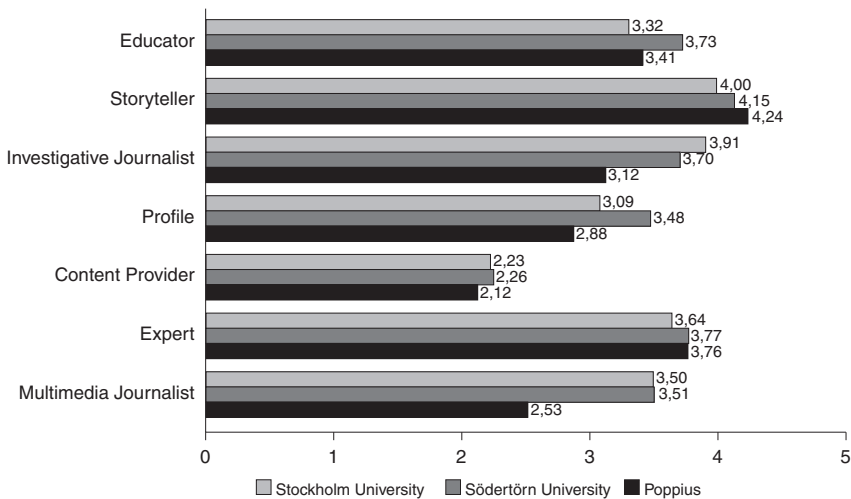
|                          | Mean | Std |
|--------------------------|------|-----|
| Storyteller              | 4.1  | 0.9 |
| Investigative Journalist | 3.7  | 1.3 |
| Expert                   | 3.7  | 1.0 |
| Educator                 | 3.6  | 1.0 |
| Profile                  | 3.3  | 1.0 |
| Multimedia Journalist    | 3.3  | 1.0 |
| Content Provider         | 2.2  | 0.9 |

Note: N=100, except for Educator where one respondent did not give an answer. The scale ranges between 1 (completely disagree) and 5 (fully agree).

The highest ranked role, the *Storyteller*, attained a mean of 4.1, while the mean value of the *Content Provider* was 2.2. The low standard deviation of these two ideal types implies that the respondents provided similar answers and had consistent views on these ideal types. The second- and third-ranked professional roles, the *Expert* and the *Investigative Journalist*, showed a higher standard deviation, implying that the students gave scattered responses (Table 2).

Overall, the students from the three different programmes generally had similar views on their future professional roles. There are, however, minor differences worth considering. The *Storyteller* was preferred by all students, with the strongest support amid those at the Poppius School of Journalism. Respondents from Poppius were also those who most strongly rejected the ideal type of the *Content Provider*. As shown in Figure 2 the *Investigative Journalist* had the highest ranking, with a mean of 3.9, among the respondents from Stockholm University, closely followed by students at Södertörn University. The *Investigative Journalist* was rated the lowest by the students from Poppius. The highest average values of the professional roles the *Expert*, the *Profile* and the *Educator* were found among respondents from Södertörn University. As Hovden and Ottosen noted in their study, students at older universities with more focus on theory studies tend to adhere more to the investigative ideal than those at more vocational-oriented schools (see Hovden & Ottosen, in this volume). This could help explain the strong support for this ideal among the students at Stockholm University.

**Figure 2.** Students' adherence to the seven ideal types by school of journalism, Stockholm, 2014 (mean)



Note: Number of respondents is for Stockholm 22, for Södertörn 61 and for Poppius 17. The scale ranges between 1 (completely disagree) and 5 (fully agree).

The survey also showed some differences between women and men regarding their preferred professional ideals. Men graded all ideal types higher than the women did,

except for the *Educator* and the *Storyteller*, which had a somewhat higher mean amid the women. Among the men the *Expert*, followed by the *Investigative Journalist*, was ranked the highest. These findings are supported by results among Nordic journalism students (see Hovden & Ottosen, in this volume).

### Previous professional experience

One question in the survey concerned the respondents' previous experience of journalism. The results reveal that there are some minor differences in the responses between the students who had editorial experience and those who did not. The students who had no experience of journalism seemed more prone to work as the *Storyteller* or the *Investigative Journalist*, representing the traditional journalistic ideals of telling and investigating. The students who had previously worked for, or had been interns at, an editorial office gave a higher mean value for the professional roles of the *Profile* and the *Multimedia Journalist*. In contrast, the *f*-value – which measures the strength of the relationship dimension – shows a weak connection between the students who lack experience and the ideal of the *Investigative Journalist*, and a moderate connection to the *Storyteller*. The statistical connection between the students with experience and their preferred ideal types of the *Multimedia Journalist* and the *Profile* may be considered relatively strong, both with an *f*-value over 3.3.

This study shows that the respondents who had previous editorial experience identified with the *Multimedia Journalist* and the *Profile* to a greater extent than those who had no such experience. These students would seem better prepared to face the future reality of journalism. Students without experience seemed to rank the professional roles of the *Investigative Journalist* and the *Storyteller* highest, but these differences are very small. This outcome concurs with the results of previous studies among Nordic journalism students. Students who had previously practised or worked at an editorial office seemed more willing and able to identify with the real demands of journalism, and valued speed and efficiency as important qualities of a journalist higher than students those without previous work experience did (Hovden et al., 2009: 162).

There are a variety of theories concerning where and when the professionalization and socialization of a journalist take place (e.g. Breed, 1955; Schudson, 2003; Zelizer, 2004). Studies have found journalism education to be only one influence among many on journalists' professional views (Asp, 2007; Shoemaker & Reese, 1996). The results of this survey indicate that the students strongly embrace established journalistic ideals during their education. This would indicate a professionalization process during the students' time in school, where they as aspiring journalists commit to ideals shared by professionals. Donica Mensing notes that with a strong emphasis in education on practical applications and internships, students are socialized into the profession early on (Mensing, 2010: 515). However, the common traits among the students who had previous experience of journalism might indicate the socialization into the profes-

sion takes place during or even before the training, but that the editorial reality later becomes the instance in which the identity is again redefined. Journalism education may be part of the socialization into the profession, but students undergo a secondary socialization process once they enter the newsroom (Hanusch, 2013: 2). In addition, in their report Sanders et al. (2008) show that students, before they begin an education in journalism, share understandings of journalism's roles and practices. They conclude that: "The effects of these cultural understandings of journalism, together with real-life experience of the media, may in fact be far more powerful in shaping attitudes and aspirations of future journalists than journalism education" (Sanders et al., 2008: 137).

The survey also included two statements regarding the students' ambitions for the future. They were asked if they believed they would work within the media industry, but not necessarily with journalism, and if they saw themselves working as journalists in five years' time. No statistically significant differences could be measured in the answers to the first statement; but in rating the second statement respondents from Södertörn University gave a significantly higher mean, at 4.3, than those from Stockholm University (3.6) and the Poppius School of Journalism (average 2.9). Some factors should be considered when interpreting the results. The students at the Poppius School of Journalism seem to have a higher average age, and often already have a job outside journalism when entering the training. The programme at Södertörn University profiles itself as customized and designed for media companies' demand for journalists, which might affect the students' aspirations. An additional factor could be that the students at Södertörn University, according to application statistics, are on average younger than those in the other programmes. These students have the bulk of their education ahead of them, and might hold a more optimistic view of their future profession than their more experienced peers. An additional factor might be the gender distribution: a majority of the students were women. Earlier studies have shown that female students are more likely to continue their education after finishing journalism studies (Hovden, 2010: 127). This could be of significance when the students gauge their future expectations.

### The teachers' attitudes and educational objectives

The survey among the students was followed up with eight in-depth semi-structured interviews with senior journalism educators at the three programmes. The interviews concentrated on three overarching subjects: the goals and practices of the teaching, professional ideals, and the implementation regarding the objectives expressed in the course syllabi. The analyses of the results draw on research concerning the current main challenges for journalists and professors of journalism (Bhuiyan, 2010; Kuban, 2014; Nikunen, 2013; Nygren, 2008; Salaverría, 2011), on professional ideals of journalist students (Hovden et al., 2009; Hovden & Ottosen, in this volume; Sanders et al., 2008) and on Benjamin Bloom's taxonomy of learning (Bloom, 1956).

The sampling aimed at reflecting different types of teaching experiences at the three schools of journalism, including female and male educators, covering both the theoretical and practical aspects of the training. An additional requirement was that the educators should have had at least five years of teaching experience (see Table 3). Three of the teachers were employed at Stockholm University, three at Södertörn University and two at the Poppius School of Journalism. The interviews were conducted in May 2014 by Gunilla Hultén, who was working at the same department as three of the interviewees. Although full anonymity of the respondents was guaranteed, this fact may have affected the answers and must therefore be considered a potential methodological weakness.

Six of the interviews were done at the respondents' workplace, and two at other locations. The interviews were digitally recorded and lasted 30 to 40 minutes. They were transcribed in their entirety, using a denaturalized method. In writing up the results, the analysis process aimed at discerning and organizing the emerging patterns and themes in the respondents' answers (McCracken, 1988). These were categorized, coded and analysed using the software Nvivo 10.

**Table 3.** Teacher interviews, Stockholm, 2014

| Respondent | Female | Male | Years as educator | Main field of teaching |
|------------|--------|------|-------------------|------------------------|
| R 1        | x      |      | 13                | Theory                 |
| R 2        | x      |      | 12                | Theory                 |
| R 3        |        | x    | 14                | Practice               |
| R 4        | x      |      | 6                 | Practice               |
| R 5        |        | x    | 13                | Theory/practice        |
| R 6        |        | x    | 26                | Theory                 |
| R 7        | x      |      | 5                 | Practice               |
| R 8        | x      |      | 11                | Practice               |

Out of the eight teachers, five were former or current practitioners themselves. The analyses of the interviews have focused on manifestations of the interviewees' own ideas of what types of knowledge, skills and values their students should possess and comprehend. The next phase of the analysis was to investigate the extent to which these ideas align with the educational requirements and goals formulated in the syllabi. In analysing the interviews, Benjamin Bloom's taxonomy (1956) of educational activities has served as a point of departure. Bloom differentiated between three domains of learning, often referred to as *Knowledge*, *Skills* and *Attitude*. The categories can be understood as goals of the learning process; that is, after a learning episode, the learner should have acquired new knowledge, skills, and/or attitudes. *Knowledge* includes the recollection, description, comprehension, and analysis of data or information. *Skills*, in the setting of this study, refer to the practical and operational application of knowledge to certain situations, such as adequate identification, selection, action and organization in the journalistic production process. *Attitude* adheres to the reception



and response to phenomena, such as self-reflection, commitment to ethical practices, and the comparing, relating, and synthesizing of values.

### *Journalistic ideals*

Swedish journalists have long expressed strong support for the investigative role of journalism (Wiik, 2007: 79). This view is shared by the interviewed educators. When asked about what professional journalistic ideals they wanted to promote in their education, six out of eight gave answers corresponding to the ideal of the *Investigative Journalist* in the student survey. A total of three teachers mentioned storytelling, but only one gave this feature the top ranking. One considered the educational ideal the most important, and one mentioned having expertise in a specific field as an ideal but not as the highest ranked. The importance of a scrutinizing and investigating journalism was summarized in this way by one respondent:

My ideal is still that journalism should be a kind of watchdog, defend democratic ideals, keep itself out of special interests, and be able to judge, verify, and describe conditions in society. (R5)

There was also a broad awareness that the investigative ideal is likely to clash with the reality once the journalist students find themselves in a newsroom. Respondent #2 explained this as follows:

On the one hand, I'd like to highlight the investigative and reflective reporter who has the opportunity to dig deeper, and who gets more space and more resources to describe the reality [...] That's an excellent type of journalism, I think, which is beneficial to all of us from a democratic perspective. [...] But I know the reality out there will be totally different. (R2)

One teacher mentioned that journalism education could be criticized for putting too much emphasis on investigative journalism, since this is a fairly small part of all journalism. The respondent (R5) continued: "We engage very little in entertainment, which is a big part of the media industry."

When elaborating on the journalistic professional ideals, two respondents stressed the diversity of good journalism. One (R6) described it as a large smorgasbord, with a varied mix of high and low. The other (R3) put it in this way: "Everything has its value. It can be easy and it can be heavy but the basis is that journalists are there to cover society as a service to the public." Half of the respondents had observed that many students' motivation was the storytelling. One commented on it in this way:

You notice that many of the students want to write in a more literary style, but we quickly knock those ideas out of them. Most students are content with this, because what they discover is that when you learn the basics of journalism you also become a better writer. (R3)

One teacher (R8), however, considered the aesthetic aspects of writing crucial to journalism, and found that the education placed too little weight on the more creative and artistic features of journalism:

Good journalism is not only about being able to construct a sentence, but to create a whole; being able to find a pace in the story, and a rhythm of the language. [...] Nobody listens to you if you can't tell your story in an appealing way. No one wants to read something that's boring. (R8)

The aim of this study was to discern themes, views, and experiences among the educators. Due to the small sample of eight respondents, no general conclusions can be drawn pertaining to differences or variation between the journalism programmes, male and female educators, or mostly theoretically or practically oriented teachers. One observation can be made, however: the educators who valued storytelling abilities were all female and were, or had been, journalists themselves.

### *Proper preparation*

The transition of the profession of journalism further stresses the need to explore what currently constitutes adequate preparation for undergraduate journalism students. As mentioned earlier, journalism programmes need to balance between the value and appreciation among employers on the one hand and the importance and obligation among the education institutions on the other. The educators expressed dispersed views on the extent to which journalism training should adapt to the industry's needs and demands, varying from being totally opposed to adaptation to regarding it as a necessity. One teacher explained:

To be quite frank I don't think we should adapt at all, really. We should maintain our ideals. [...] It's not our job to produce content providers that just fabricate profitable materials that work together well with ads. (R2)

By contrast, two teachers deemed it essential that the training consider what the industry demands, one argument being that the training has responsibilities to its students. Respondent #4 clarified: "To me it's not a negative thing to adjust to the industry. We must have successful students in a competitive labour market". Then again, most teachers agreed on the need to balance between the push from the industry and the autonomy of educational institutions. Respondent #1 summarized this standpoint as follows:

This is a problematic area because it has to do with our independence as an educational institution. We should be free to provide the kind of education we think is important and necessary, and that we can answer for. It's not our duty to not sit in the lap of the industry. On the other hand, it's important to have a dialogue with the employers in order to know what's sought after. (R1)

When asked what changes they considered essential in the present education, five of the teachers mentioned increased training in online and multimedia journalism:

It would probably be a good thing if the education were more web-oriented. It seems like this is the direction in which the general news journalism is moving, which is after all what our training is centred around. (R1)

Respondent #3 added: “Presently we’re moving towards more multimedia journalism. But I can’t say it’s a development I care for.” Two teachers cited a better balance between theory and practical applications as most important, and one focused on training in entrepreneurship as a necessary change for the future.

Two of the respondents commented on the inertia in the education system, making it difficult to keep pace with the rapid changes in the media industry. They therefore had adjusted the content of their courses to be more oriented towards web applications, interaction with the audience and new guiding principles for journalism, but these changes were not visible in the course syllabi. The educators were also asked to give their opinions on how the programme should best prepare students for their future profession. Clarifying follow-up questions concerned what the respondents considered important for the students to learn and understand.

The teachers’ responses were primarily skills-oriented, and entailed that the students needed to know “the basics of news writing”, “the basic skills to fit into the production”, “interview technique”, “research”, “how to write in a short, concise and appealing way”, and to be “questioning”. One teacher mentioned that it was necessary to give students “knowledge of publication software”, and one ranked “the theoretical understanding of journalism” the highest. These replies are partly in conflict with how teachers perceive their professional role. When stating what they primarily want to convey to students, the educators’ answers centred on critical thinking, judging capacities, self-reflection and ethical standards. One summarized this:

I’d say that critical and reflective thinking are my guidelines. This reflection and criticism would include your own position, the editorial office, and your own role and activities. That you can somehow maintain a distance from what you do, the mission you have, or think you have. (R1)

### *Educational ideals and goals*

As mentioned, higher education institutions are required to state learning outcomes using verbs expressing *Knowledge and understanding*, *Skills and abilities*, and *Judgement and approach*. In the following section, the verbs used in the syllabi at Stockholm University and Södertörn University will be scrutinized more closely and compared with the most important knowledge and skills mentioned by the educators. The verbs stating *Knowledge and understanding* clearly dominate the learning outcomes of the two universities. Stockholm University employed a total of 21 verbs to describe the learning outcomes. These were mentioned 56 times, and more than half of the references pertain

to knowledge factors. The most common verbs were *understand* and *describe*, which were referred to ten times each. A third of all cited verbs related to aspects concerning skills. Of all the references, eight were linked to the students' judgement capacities. Södertörn University displayed a different profile of the learning outcomes. A total of 22 verbs were employed 43 times, with 19 of the citations pertaining to knowledge features. The most common verb was *describe*, mentioned on nine occasions. A third of the cited verbs referred to skills, and nine out of all the mentions apply to *Judgement and approach*. To summarize, Stockholm University puts slightly more emphasis on knowledge than Södertörn University does, while Södertörn gives somewhat more importance to the students' judgement capacities than Stockholm does. However, this learning outcome has the least number of verbs cited at both universities.

Varying ideas emerged among the educators about what constitutes adequate knowledge and skills for journalism students wishing to pursue a career in this field. There was a general understanding that knowledge about the media system, media logic, the constitutional system, and how society works is essential to a future journalist. Two teachers mentioned journalism ethics and one media law, their arguments being that freedom of speech is the foundation of all journalism (R7). The teachers' understanding in this respect corresponds in essence to the core knowledge mentioned in the syllabi. Aspects mentioned in the learning outcomes but not brought up by the educators included the medialization of politics, the professionalization of journalism, knowledge regarding journalism research and gender issues.

## Concluding remarks

The journalism students and their teachers adhere to elements of journalistic ideology linked to the media's watchdog role. The educators gave the strongest support to investigative journalism, whereas the students ranked the ideal type of the *Storyteller* somewhat higher. However, the aesthetic and narrative aspects of journalism hold a weak position in the learning outcomes of the universities' syllabi; they are mentioned in two items in the learning outcomes at Södertörn University and in none in those at Stockholm University. The teachers share a deep concern about the transitions of journalism and the future for journalists. However, most of them see a need to adjust the journalism training to the recent changes in the industry, involving a move towards digital reporting.

The aspects concerning knowledge and understanding take a lead position in the stated learning outcomes in the syllabi at Stockholm and Södertörn Universities. Vocational skills of journalism are mentioned to a somewhat lesser extent. However, the educators tend to rank skills the highest when asked about the best preparation for students. They mention critical thinking, self-reflection, high ethical standards and good judgement as important characteristics of good journalism. These would be translated into *Attitude* according to Bloom's taxonomy, and to the compulsory

item *Judgement and approach* in the learning outcomes. These categories, however, are given limited attention in the course syllabi. On the other hand, it needs to be added that there are no clear-cut boundaries between the domains of knowledge, skills and judgement.

One interpretation of the results of the survey and of the interview study is that both students and their teachers want to maintain high-quality professional standards and traditional core values of journalism. In this sense, the journalism programmes play a conservative role (cf. Nygren, 2011: 219). The academic educators navigate between the need to adjust the training to a transforming media landscape and to meet the expectations of the students, and the obligation to comply with the requirements of the Swedish educational system. Several researchers have called for a realignment of journalism education, involving a community-centred focus (Deuze, 2006; Densing, 2010, 2011; Macdonald, 2007). Donica Mensing argues against an industry-centred journalism education and advocates new practices that would include an emphasis on citizen-oriented journalism, networking skills, and critical inquiry (Mensing, 2010: 513; Mensing, 2011: 18). She contends:

In other words, continuation of the status quo within journalism schools is increasingly untenable. Developing new models more appropriate to the needs of this age, as opposed to that of the media industries of the past, is a compelling obligation for journalism educators and scholars (Mensing, 2010: 516).

The two university programmes in this study are mainly industry-oriented, both offering their students long internships and stressing that they are training the journalists of tomorrow (Södertörns högskola, Journalistik 2014; Institutionen för mediastudier, Journalistik). The interviewed educators vocalized critical thinking and self-reflection as vital elements in the journalism education of the future. Following the reasoning of Deuze, these elements in the syllabi can have an impact on how journalist students see themselves in terms of their role perceptions (Deuze, 2006: 28). This study has a limited scope; thus further research would be required to establish how the design and content of course syllabi could help dissolve the perceived dichotomy between theory and practice, and thus perfect the training for both educators and students.

## Notes

1. The Department of Journalism, Media and Communication (JMK) at Stockholm University emanated from the School of Journalism in Stockholm, established in 1959. Since 2012, JMK has been a unit within the Department of Media Studies.
2. In this comparison, the course syllabi of the Poppius School of Journalism are not applicable since they are not under the scrutiny of the Higher Education Ordinance. The survey was conducted by Antonia Wiklund, and the study is presented in full in her bachelor's thesis *Berättare eller innehållsleverantörer: En studie om journaliststudens syn på sin framtida yrkesroll* [Storytellers or Content Providers: A Study of Journalism Students' Views of Their Future Profession], with Gunilla Hultén as supervisor. The other empirical parts of the study, the interviews and the document analysis, were carried out by Gunilla Hultén.

3. The Bachelor's Programme in Journalism at Stockholm University has been revised and a new curriculum was put into practice in the fall of 2015.

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## From Politics on Print to Online Entertainment?

### *Ideals and Aspirations of Danish Journalism Students 2005–2012*

Jannie Møller Hartley & Maria Bendix Olsen

#### Abstract

In this chapter, we examine the ideals and aspirations of future Danish journalists. By analysing survey data from 2005 to 2012, the chapter looks at hierarchies between different production platforms, different subject areas and different types of news organisations. To understand the survey data, we apply the concepts of capital and field, whereby the students can be seen as newcomers on the fringes of a field where constant struggles are taking place to define what “good journalism” is. Thus, producing television is not only a workplace as such, but can also be theoretically understood as a form of field capital that the students strive to achieve, which in the long run means they can position themselves as “good journalists”. The chapter concludes that for the Danish students, an ideal journalist seems to be one working at a national newspaper or in public service TV, doing accurate journalism with perspective, perhaps doing investigative journalism, and exposing problems in the establishment and with people in power – either in the role of a watchdog covering hard news or providing commentary in the form of analysis or by reporting from foreign countries as a correspondent. Little change can be observed in these ideals and aspirations over the years.

Keywords: journalism education, survey, ideals, field theory, platforms, gender, commercialization, Denmark

## Introduction

This chapter investigates ideals and aspirations among Danish journalism students by looking at how what we might label “hierarchies of production” have changed from 2005 to 2012. Studies shows that over time the web as a platform has increased its importance for the Danish news ecology, as a consequence opening up for more stories closer to the private sphere of the public, more entertainment and “news you can use” (Hartley, 2011). At the same time it can be argued that this development is questioning the strong publicist ideals present in the Democratic Corporatist Model (Hallin & Mancini, 2004), and it is likely to affect the future journalistic generation entering a media marked by economic pressure from decreases in both readership and advertising revenue. In this chapter we seek to examine what this means for the ideals

and aspirations of future journalists. We will focus on hierarchies between different production platforms, different subject areas and different types of news organizations. Additionally, we will ask how these ideals and aspirations have changed over time from 2005 to 2012 by looking at the preferred role of Danish journalism students and the possible shift from an idealistic watchdog to a cynical lapdog. In the following, we give an overview of the different parts of this chapter and the analytical concepts applied when exploring ideals and aspirations among Danish journalism students.

First, the chapter introduces the useful concepts in Pierre Bourdieu's field theory. Second, we give an overview of the Danish case. We describe how in the last ten years we have seen changes in platform strategies inside Danish media organizations. Overall we have seen a shift in focus from offline to online, in terms of both user behaviour and how many journalists are working with the online platforms. Then, the specificities of the Danish part of the survey will be given some consideration. We aim to put the survey results concerning the Danish journalism students into the perspective of the development of the Danish field of journalism as a whole, and include earlier studies of the Danish journalism field for comparison. In the third part of the article we present different results from the survey; as we will see, the ideals of the students are very similar to those of the educated journalists.

## Theoretical and empirical framework

The empirical results in this chapter is based on data from a survey of Danish journalism students as part of the larger Hovdabrekka survey (see more in chapter 3). The number of respondents varied between 1,400 and 1,500 for the three years studied, and the response rate was around 40 per cent for the three journalism schools Roskilde University, the University of Southern Denmark and the School of Journalism in Aarhus.

Studying journalism students is a promising object of study, because, as Hovden (2008) points out, they are influenced relatively little by journalistic work (Hovden, 2008: 84). So rather than studying the logics of practice within an existing field, this study aims to examine the "*becoming* part of a field" as well as the internalization of certain dominating and dominated ideals and aspirations, and thus the positioning strategies of the journalism students during the time they are entering a field and acquiring a journalistic habitus. In contrast to Hovden's work (2008 and 2013), we will not look at their dispositions and thus their habitus – the relation between their social background and what they aspire to – but will instead focus on which forms of specializations they value over others. It is thus mainly the concept of capital that will be valuable in this analysis, and it becomes a question of a shared logic, *illusio*, and how the forms of what we label *forms of editorial capital* might or might not have changed over a period of seven years (from 2005-2012).

Ida Willig (before Schultz, 2005), who has studied the Danish journalistic field, argues for the concept forms of *editorial capital* as a useful concept to supplement that

of journalistic capital (Schultz, 2005: 96-97). Journalistic capital can be understood as the field-specific capital, and editorial capital entails different forms of field capital, which might or might not be converted into symbolic capital in the journalistic field, if it is recognized by the agents in the field as worth pursuing, and which together influences the position of the individual journalist in the field. Thus, individual journalists might have different positions according to the amounts of the different forms of capital, and Willig suggests that some of these different dimensions of capital are education, professional experience, the position in the media organization, the editorial area, rewards, employment conditions and so on (Schultz, 2005: 96-97), and according to Willig these dimensions can theoretically be defined as “different dimensions of *editorial capital*” (Schultz, 2005: 97). These are forms of capital that define the editorial autonomy and thus different forms of journalistic habitus (positions and positioning in the field) (Schultz, 2005: 99). In another study of online journalists (Hartley, 2011), it is argued that the media platform you work for (which is similar to the “position in the media organizations” that Willig mentions, however a bit more specific) is related to certain forms of capital; hence we can speak of a form of *online capital* (Hartley, 2011: 369). For example, Hartley’s research shows that being interactive with audiences and being able to use multimedia elements constitute a form of editorial capital in the subfield of online journalism; but whereas online journalists value the journalistic field as a whole (e.g. in-depth reporting and access to many sources), finding themselves in the dominated part of the field, print reporters with the time and skills to conduct, for example, investigative reporting are fighting to maintain these genres and skills as “good journalism” and thus conserve the field as it is (ibid: 361).

Following this theoretical argument, this article argues that the self-perception, ideals and aspirations of journalism students are linked to some well-known journalistic themes: knowledge and expertise, sources, technical skills, research, and content itself – specializations that in a field perspective can be seen as forms of editorial capital in a field of publicist<sup>1</sup> news production and the dominant hierarchies of production. As students they are just starting to grasp these hierarchies of production. The survey cannot tell us of their positions in the field as a whole, but what it can do is provide knowledge of what they aspire to acquire, and thus the attractive positions in the field related to autonomy and heteronomy. Our focus is on journalism students as a collective, and changes in their common ground of ideals. However, attaining a new position within a field (being a newcomer to the field) may not be entirely separated from other social identities as they merge into unique habituses; the students might have other professional identities from previous jobs or other forms of education.

The aspirations and ideals of journalism students can be seen as a set of shared but simultaneously opposed forms of logic that, when applied to practice, determine and enable the students’ room for manoeuvring. This chapter will explore how these shared forms of logic(s) have changed over time. Journalism students navigate among these contrasting forms of interest and means of self-perception, trying to position themselves as what they themselves regard as “proper journalists”. Journalism train-

ing programmes function as strong symbolic bankers, in the sense that they admit entrance to the field and “use journalist courses to reconstruct and re-establish the doxa” (Melin-Higgins, 1996). Journalism programmes have furthermore been extremely relevant in establishing and legitimating professional autonomy (Hulthén, 2001; Windahl, 1975). Thus, studying journalism students is a useful way of looking at the Danish journalistic field as a whole.

## The Danish case

A common feature in the Nordic countries has been the recent growth of new, competing programmes, which the existing schools have accepted only reluctantly. A discussion about the need for research connected to professional education was initiated in the early 90s. Even in Denmark, where the professional school DJH [Danish School of Journalism] in Aarhus was long the only journalism programme, there are now three different ones. The school of journalism in Aarhus started in 1946 as a course at Aarhus University, but is and has been a craft-orientated school with long internships (lasting a year to a year and a half). The first university-based degrees in journalism were established in 1997 and 1998 at the University of Southern Denmark and Roskilde University. Both universities offer internships lasting a year, which is quite long compared to other Nordic countries. One could argue that the long period of internship – and therefore also the socialization at work in the media – could eliminate the differences in the studies so that students are more alike when they finish the internship.

Like in many other European countries, the Danish field of journalism is also seeing an emerging academic ideal and a change from “on the job skill training” to more “communication orientated university based media studies” (Gaunt in Schultz 2005). This ideal exists side by side with the existing ideal of journalism as a craft, and the change towards academic journalism in Denmark is still not a very dominant ideal because of the tendency in the university programmes to put equal emphasis on “on the job training” (Schultz, 2007).

In the following presentation of the results of the survey, we have divided the analysis into three parts, or levels of editorial capitals. The first section deals with the specific media platform; second, we look at ideal areas of expertise when it comes to the content of the journalistic production; and third, we compare the ideal and valued methods amongst the Danish students. On all three levels we compare the data from 2005, 2008 and 2012.<sup>2</sup>

## Media darlings – ideal media platforms

What is the students’ first choice for their future job? The data from 2005-2012 show that newspapers and television are the dominating choices when Danish students are

asked about their first choice for their future job.<sup>3</sup> But the wish to work for a national newspaper in fact dropped from 58 per cent in 2005 to 37 in 2008 and 28 in 2012. However, this decline does not mean that more students would like to work with the web platform; instead, more journalism students want to work for national television, and magazines are also increasingly popular. Less than 1 per cent of the Danish students would like to work for an online newspaper<sup>4</sup> as their first choice in 2005, and in 2012 2 per cent want to work for an online site. As second choice, just under 4 per cent of the students prefer an online newspaper as their future workplace (2012), and as a third choice only around 7 per cent of the students are hoping for a future online. If we look at magazines and the production of television for the web, it is interesting that these two categories have become increasingly popular over the years. In Denmark we have seen an increase in magazines online, especially an increased focus on long-read formats and multimedia, which is part of the explanation for why these platforms are increasing in popularity. In 2005 only 1 per cent had magazine as first choice for their future job, while in 2012 this number had increased to more than 12 per cent.

However, the steady popularity of print as a choice indicates, in a field perspective, that we can talk of a *print capital*, which is rather dominant amongst the journalism students even before they enter the field. Hence, different platforms seem to be associated with different amounts of capital, which is not necessarily linked to the number of viewers or readers (economic capital). In this light, it is likely that since subject areas associated with economic capital are increasingly recognized and valued among newcomers to the field, this might be explained by the commercialization of the field of journalism in general, as steady readership has declined over the years and thus fewer jobs are available for the students to choose from (see also Wiik (2010) for an analysis of the commercialization of the Swedish field of journalism). Here it is useful to look at Hovden and Ottosen's (2014) analysis of Nordic journalism students (2014), as they suggest that the Danish field is somewhat more commercial than in the other Nordic countries, and that roles connected to what Hovden labels the recreational ideal in journalism might thus be stronger in Denmark. Overall, Hovden's analysis of the data of Nordic journalism students shows an opposition between an investigative ideal and a recreational ideal vertically in the Nordic journalistic field, and between an intervention vs. objectivity horizontal axis in the field (Hovden & Ottosen, 2013: 9). This might rub off on the status of the different platforms, with those connected to recreational ideals (like television and online platforms) receiving increasing support and those connected to the ideal of the watchdog declining in popularity.

The same applies when you explore the questions about specializing – the students prefer to specialize in newspaper and TV<sup>5</sup>; see Table 1. Equally, when choosing a role model they often choose journalists from national newspapers or national public service television – and the same tendency shows when they are asked to choose the best media organization. With regard to specialization, this echoes the above: whereas 22 per cent wanted to specialize in television in 2005, this number had increased to 33 per cent in 2012. More students also wish to specialize in radio, an increase from 12 per

cent in 2005 to 26 in 2012. However, fewer want to specialize in national newspapers, a drop from 61 per cent in 2005 to 42 in 2012. The question about specializing in online journalism was not asked until 2012, but that year 30 per cent wanted to do so. However, in 2005 18 per cent wanted to specialize in multimedia journalism and in 2008 28 per cent wanted to do so; thus it seems that those who previously wanted to become multimedia journalists had moved to online journalism as a preferred specialization in 2012, and if we add multimedia and online as categories we see a slight increase in the popularity of this type of journalism – from 18 per cent in 2005 to 34 in 2012.

34 per cent say they would like to specialize in online and multimedia journalism – is that surprisingly few or many? This question is interesting in a time when the media is moving towards more and more online news, and it can be argued that journalism students are part of the so-called digital natives (Prensky, 2001) or the Net Generation (Jones, Ramanau, Cross, & Healing, 2010). On the one hand you can argue that the journalism students see online as “normal” or even as the only platform, and it is therefore natural and a must to produce journalism for an online platform – and thus specialization is not necessary or even something you can simply deselect. Therefore, it is *only* 34 per cent who choose to specialize in online and multimedia journalism. On the other hand, you can argue that the print capital is still so dominant that it is surprising that *so many* choose online for their specialization.

**Table 1.** Journalism students' wish for specialization in Denmark, 2005, 2008 and 2012 (per cent)

|                            | 2005 | 2008 | 2012 |
|----------------------------|------|------|------|
| TV                         | 23   | 32   | 33   |
| Radio                      | 12   | 18   | 26   |
| Web/Multimedia             | 18   | 28   | 4*   |
| Online                     | -    | -    | 30   |
| Photo                      | 1    | 9    | 29   |
| Printed newspaper          | 61   | 48   | 42   |
| No wish for specialization | 22   | 18   | 1    |
| Number of respondents (N)  | 160  | 854  | 659  |

*Note:* The question was *Which of these would you like to specialize in for your future career?* More than one category could be chosen. \*In 2012 multimedia/online was divided into two categories: multimedia and online.

## Society and conflict vs. entertainment and consumer: 1-0

Although the students do not yet work in a newsroom, they certainly know what kind of topics and subjects they want to work with. The survey data show that interests are largely the same when you look at the numbers over the years – but there are some changes during the research period. And looking at gender, some interesting differences occur.

When asked what they find “very interesting” or “somewhat interesting” to work with as a journalist, it is clear that the students have a strong interest in traditional

“hard news” (Tuchman, 1972) topics that focus on traditional power (politics internal affairs and money) and issues in the society/world from both a national and global perspective. Internal affairs and politics comprise the most popular subject, with the interest increasing:<sup>6</sup> 2005 95 per cent, 2008 81 per cent, and 2012 84 per cent (see Table 2). Commerce/economy also commands a regular interest, although it decreased significantly from 2005 to 2008 and had then increased again in 2012. For economy/business the figures were: 2005 43 per cent, 2008 26 per cent, and 2012 35 per cent. In this period the financial crisis had been on the agenda (both politically and in the media) worldwide, which may have had a consequence on the students’ increasing interest from 2008 to 2012. At the same time, it is clear that they have a huge interest in global issues: between 70 and 76 per cent indicated that they find the editorial area of “international conflicts” interesting (see Table 2). It is worth noting that during the whole research period Denmark has been militarily involved in a number of wars and war zones, e.g. Afghanistan (2002), Iraq (2003) and Libya (2011), which may explain some of this great interest.

These topics are consistent with the more general and overall journalistic ideals which includes, e.g., “(...) keeping other social elites ‘in check’ and facilitating public debate on important issues for the general good of society” (Hovden, 2008, p. 164). Skovsgaard et al. also argue that Danish journalists strongly support a public service obligation and a role of watchdog, critically scrutinizing societal issues (Skovsgaard et al., 2012 in Skovsgaard, 2014). And the areas the students find interesting are not only “hard”; certain more “soft news” topics also find their way onto the list of popular editorial topics – including, for example, culture, religion and multicultural issues (see Table 2).

**Table 2.** Journalism students’ interest in working with different topics in Denmark, 2005, 2008 and 2012 (per cent)

|                               | 2005 | 2008 | 2012 |
|-------------------------------|------|------|------|
| Internal affairs and politics | 95   | 81   | 84   |
| Commerce and economy          | 43   | 26   | 35   |
| Health/family                 | 20   | 24   | 23   |
| Sport                         | 40   | 33   | 31   |
| Entertainment                 | 48   | 45   | 38   |
| Culture                       | 69   | 71   | 69   |
| Popular science               | 39   | 45   | 47   |
| Accidents and disasters       | 25   | 33   | 21   |
| Crime                         | 53   | 54   | 38   |
| Personal finance/consumer     | 42   | 38   | 32   |
| International conflicts       | 76   | 70   | 71   |
| Religion                      | 66   | 64   | 61   |
| Multicultural subjects        | 72   | 62   | 66   |
| Number of respondents (N)     | 153  | 778  | 614  |

*Note:* The question was: Listed below are some journalistic topics. To what degree would you be interested in working with each one of these topics? The table shows the percentage of students who find the topics “very interesting” or “somewhat interesting”.

Although the future journalist will be expected to work on all platforms (Hovden & Ottosen, 2013, p. 2) and the Danish media are increasingly focusing on web and on-line journalism (Hartley, 2011), the students do not have a strong wish to work with what has been identified in earlier studies (Hartley, 2012) as “classic web topics” like consumption, entertainment and sport. It is worth noting that these topics contain important gender differences.

Looking at consumption, the interest overall decreased, and the percentage of students saying they find this topic “somewhat uninteresting” or “very uninteresting” increased (we will call it *not interested* in the following) during the period. Interest in consumer news dropped from 42 per cent in 2005 to 32 in 2012. This is interesting, as this period has seen Danish newsrooms increasing their focus on “news you can use” and consumption (From, 2007; Hjarvard, 1999; Schultz, 2007), subject areas that are closely related to advertisement and that can therefore be seen as part of the commercialization of the field. The same pattern can be noted in the entertainment category – the interest is decreasing, though gossip news about celebrities is increasing in most Danish news media today (Kabel & Skovbjerg, 2009; Sparre & Kabel, 2001). In 2005, 48 per cent find entertainment very interesting or somewhat interesting, and 40 per cent find sport very interesting. In 2012, 38 per cent find entertainment interesting and 31 per cent find sport interesting.

There is also a considerable decline in the last period, when you look at the interest in “crime” – a subject that plays a great role in online journalism (Hartley, 2012): In 2005, 53 per cent of the students find crime interesting as an editorial area, while in 2012 only 38 per cent do. Hence, there seems to be a gap between the increasing focus on exactly crime and sport in media organizations today (also as a consequence of a “click culture” (Hartley, 2011) and what students find interesting. The students might find themselves somewhat schizophrenic when entering the newsrooms to work as journalists, and learn that preferred editorial areas are even further from their wishes today than in 2005. In a field perspective, this suggests a stronger opposition between the economic pole and the cultural capital pole in the field, and it seems that the more the media focus on popular culture, crime and sport, the less these editorial areas are valued amongst students.

### Women = health and family. Men = sport

Interesting differences can be observed when you look at the answers in a gender perspective, which echoes other studies that show a strong gendering of the hierarchy within the journalistic field (See for example Hovden, 2008, p. 101). The patterns and gendered hierarchies are seen in Hovden’s study on Norwegian journalism students (Hovden, 2008), as we see that women are more attracted to the traditional “soft news” subjects like health, relationship, consumer and multicultural affairs compared to the men, who want to work with general news journalism, sport, and economy and



commerce more than the women do (Hovden, 2008). This pattern/trend also has historical roots (Djerf-Pierre, 2007). In Djerf-Pierre's study of the field of journalism in Sweden, she points to the fact that female journalists historically started out writing about homemaking, parenting and relationships, which had low status – and later subjects like school, education, housing, health and consumer affairs became female areas – all of them labelled “soft news”, which carries a somewhat lower status (Djerf-Pierre, 2007). On the other hand, men have dominated the areas that convey high status: Politics, economy, world affairs and other “hard news” like sports, business and domestic politics (Ibid). Djerf-Pierre emphasizes that the reason there are more women covering “soft news” has been a “(...) consequence of both gendered hiring policies and woman journalists’ own preferences” (Djerf-Pierre, 2007). On top of this, Hovden's research shows that students’ social habitus also affects their personal interest – and that the social habitus often reflects traditional gender roles (Hovden, 2008). He states: “The mismatch between the initial taste of their habitus and the journalistic habitus, that is, the taste for the most prestigious forms of journalism, is much stronger for the female students, and demands a greater degree of adjustment for the acquirement of journalistic capital and prestige” (Hovden, 2008).

So where are the gender differences in the Danish case?<sup>7</sup> (See Table 3.) The female students are clearly more interested in consumer topics, with 44 per cent finding them “very interesting” or “somewhat interesting”, while for the men this figure is only 29 per cent. Health/family is also popular amongst women (34 per cent), while just 8 per cent of the men find it an interesting editorial topic. The picture is turned around when you look at who is interested in sport: 51 per cent of the male students but only 20 per cent of the female students signify that they find this topic interesting.

**Table 3.** Gender differences in interest in editorial topics among journalism students' in Denmark, 2005, 2008 and 2012 (per cent, average for all years)

|                           | Female | Male |
|---------------------------|--------|------|
| Consumer                  | 44     | 29   |
| Health                    | 34     | 8    |
| Sport                     | 20     | 51   |
| Economy                   | 28     | 42   |
| Entertainment             | 44     | 44   |
| Number of respondents (N) | 819    | 719  |

*Note:* The table shows those who are very interested and somewhat interested.

When you look at the editorial area of economy, the pattern repeats itself: 42 per cent of men are interested in this editorial area, against 28 per cent of the women. Surprisingly, the gender differences disappear when you look at entertainment: here the men and women share an interest, with 44 per cent of both groups interested. In the last part of the analysis, we will look at how these topics also seem to be linked to certain preferred skills and journalistic methods.

### Ideal skills: Curious watchdog rather than effective entertainer

Overall, the data suggest that for journalism students in Denmark it is more important to be a profound and curious journalist than to be fast and, effective and to have knowledge about what topics the audiences want. Thus, it is no surprise that the students often do not find entertainment and more commercial areas such as sport and crime interesting topics to write about, as we saw above. For all three years around 70 per cent of the students consider curiosity a very important skill to have as a journalist, while only 15 per cent of them regard efficiency and speed as very important skills (see Table 4). Some of the answers can also partly explain why online does not seem to be a popular platform for future specialization amongst the newcomers to the field. Thus, the ability to be thorough and precise is a valued skill (54 per cent find it very important), and we saw above that speed, which has so far been a high priority for online sites (Hartley, 2011), is much less important to the students. Because most of the journalism students have not yet worked in a newsroom, their answers can also show that they have not experienced that speed and efficiency in the newsroom are regarded as rather important (Hartley, 2011) – and therefore they probably do not find it very important unless it is stressed in the teaching they receive.

Very few of the students (5 per cent on average) find it very important to know what sells (and what the audience wants), and around 17 per cent have pointed to “entertaining people” as a very important skill (see Table 4). We can also see that only 6 per cent on average consider it their future responsibility that the media organization they work for does well financially.

In support of the watchdog ideal, being a critic of injustice in society (37 per cent on average) and investigating people in power (53 per cent on average) are high on the list, indicating the strong investigative ideals and methods among the students already before entering the field. Historically, it is interesting that the opposition between the investigative and the recreational ideals, also when it comes to preferred methods and skills, is increasing and the watchdog ideal is growing stronger. However, what we might label the informative ideal is equally strong – an average of 63 per cent of the students find it very important to “explain complicated events in simple ways” (see Table 4).

Equally, the list of role models in Denmark indicates some important ideals. The list includes a great number of reporters, and the range is highly diverse when you look at, for example, gender, platform and type of journalist. Yet there is a small group of journalists who are mentioned often. They are reporters with different beats – mainly foreign correspondents, but also a few political reporters and general reporters – but what they have in common is that they all work with explaining complex issues or interpreting current situations. This finding is interesting, as one might have expected to find “the investigative reporter” who, for example, exposes abuse of power. Willig describes this ideal in her research, where she concludes that from 1985 to 2004 the most prestigious journalistic award in Denmark (Cavling-prisen) primarily went to journalists who had exposed things such as abuse of power (Schultz, 2006: 217). This

**Table 4.** Opinion about important skills and roles among journalism students in Denmark, 2005, 2008 and 2012 (per cent)

|                                                               | 2005 | 2008 | 2012 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|------|
| Curiosity                                                     | 71   | 71   | 65   |
| Speed and efficiency                                          | 11   | 19   | 16   |
| Thoroughness and precision                                    | 56   | 49   | 58   |
| A feeling for language                                        | 62   | 54   | 56   |
| Knowledge about society                                       | 52   | 44   | 49   |
| Knowing what sells                                            | 9    | 4    | 3    |
| Entertain the audience/readers                                | 22   | 16   | 13   |
| Responsible for the financial well-being of the media company | 7    | 5    | 6    |
| Explain complicated events in simple ways                     | 77   | 57   | 56   |
| Criticism of injustice in society                             | 45   | 36   | 34   |
| Investigate people in power                                   | 55   | 49   | 54   |
| Number of respondents (N)                                     | 140  | 720  | 532  |

*Note:* Table 4 consists of responses to two different questions in the survey. The question for the first six items was Below are listed some personal qualities which some people consider important for journalists. How important do you think these are for a good journalist? (Variety of response options). The table shows the percentage of those answering "very important" about selected qualities/skills during the three years. The questions for the five last items was Here are some claims regarding the journalist's role in society. What is your opinion about each one of these? (Variety of response options). The table shows the percentage of those answering "agree completely" about selected roles during the three years.

indicates that students have gotten their knowledge of journalists merely "from the screen" or from reading papers, rather than internal knowledge from the field of what "award-winning" journalism is. One might also have expected to find "the iconic writer at the serious newspaper" at the top of the list of role models, as we saw that both the preferred platform and the ideal methods and subject areas would suggest this. But this is not the case (at least not only).

The survey shows that one of the typical Danish journalist role models for students is (still) an interpretive/informative TV journalist (as we have seen, this is also the case in other Nordic countries (Willig, Zilliacus-Tikkanen, Ottosen, Hovden, & Bjørnsen, 2009), as many of the role models mentioned by the students work on television, often in debate programmes or more analytical in-depth programmes (such as Clement Kjærsgaard, Martin Krasnik, Anders Agger or Kurt Strand). The other television personalities we see mentioned are correspondents, such as Ulla Therkelsen, Mette Fugl, and more younger correspondents like Puk Damsgaard and Simi Jan; but newspaper correspondents such as Poul Høi from *Berlingske* and Olav Hergel from *Politiken* are also popular. Poul Høi also has a more interpretative role, providing commentary on matters in the US, rather than pure informative, neutral news coverage. This somehow indicates some kind of return to the intermediary ideal that Willig asserts was dominant from 1945 to 1964 (Schultz, 2006: 215) or, as stated above, that the journalism students have not internalized the investigative ideals they will encounter when entering the field as working journalists.

From the perspective of Bourdieu's analysis of the power of television (Bourdieu, 1998 [1996]), this answer is not surprising – journalism, in general, has a specific power to consecrate certain people, issues, etc. TV, in particular, exercises a strong symbolic power of consecration, which helps explain why Danish students mention interpretive/informative TV journalists as role models, even though their motivations indicate more varied interests in different roles (investigative, writing, etc.) and even though most students (still) dream of working at a national newspaper as their first choice.

## Concluding discussion

Summing up, the survey data show that for the Danish students an ideal journalist seems to be one working at a national newspaper or in public service TV, doing accurate journalism with perspective, perhaps doing investigative journalism, exposing problems in the establishment and with people in power – either in the role of a watchdog covering hard news or providing commentary, either in the form of analysis or reporting from foreign countries as a correspondent. The survey data have given us answers about the ideals of the Danish students and how these have changed over time. We can – within the field perspective and as a further development of Shultz's argument on dimensions of editorial capital as decisive for the autonomy of the individual journalist – theoretically interpret and translate this into an oppositional understanding of the dimensions of capital. Some platforms, beats and skills are clearly more important and valued than others for and by a higher proportion of the students – they are dominant. The fact that they are dominant means that they can be read as differences in high and low amounts of symbolic capital between the different platforms, beats and skills.

The three-part analysis above, of ideal platforms, editorial topics and ideal methods and skills of journalism students, shows that we see that much the same ideals are dominant in the field over time. The different levels or dimensions of editorial capital are summarized in Table 5 below.

**Table 5.** Summary of dominating and dominated dimensions of symbolic capital among journalism students in Denmark, 2005-2012

| Editorial levels                          | Platform                    | Subject area/<br>special desk              | Methods and skills                                                           |
|-------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Dominating<br/>(+symbolic capital)</b> | TV<br>Print                 | Political issues<br>International conflict | Curiosity<br>Investigating people in<br>power<br>Being a critic of injustice |
| <b>Dominated<br/>(-symbolic capital)</b>  | Online<br>Special magazines | Sport<br>Health<br>Crime<br>Consumption    | Entertaining<br>Making money<br>Efficiency and speed                         |

*Note:* The table shows the platforms, subject areas and skills that have the highest interest amongst students (+symbolic capital) and those that are valued less (- symbolic capital).

We cannot say whether this means that these are consistent with the field of journalism as whole, but can only use the data from the students to look at what they aspire to. The position and popularity of a single media organization amongst the students seem to be effected by a number of complex capital combinations and thus, for example, which platform they publish on, what areas they mainly cover, and what methods and skills they prioritize.

And by applying the concepts of capital and field, whereby the students can be seen as newcomers on the fringes of a field where constant struggles are taking place to define what “good journalism” is, we can theoretically and empirically understand why some platforms, subject areas and methods and skills are considered more important than others by the students in the survey. Thus, producing television is not only a workplace as such but can also be theoretically understood as a form of field capital that the students strive to achieve, which in the long run means they can position themselves as “good journalists” with a high amount of field-specific journalistic capital, as they work with a media platform which is recognized and valued by the field agents as a whole. And if a journalist works with politics in print using an investigative method, he/she is likely to have more editorial autonomy and power to define that these are skills and beats worth pursuing – as they can be translated into or exchanged for symbolic capital. On the opposite side, working with sport and consumption news online, journalists have to struggle to have this recognized as “good” journalism – the dimensions of editorial capital are low in symbolic capital, but to further their position in the field they could combine this with working with investigative methods, uncovering, for example, corruption in FIFA. In Denmark, we have recently experienced sports journalists being nominated for journalistic awards, with a series of articles that uncovered doping at fitness centres and Denmark as a high-profile country for selling steroids online.

Television as a platform might have an extra star in the students’ books because of the visibility factor; they simply see and recognize television journalists as a consequence of the increased popularity of television in households.

Looking at this historically, we have also seen how some ideals are highly persistent over time on all three levels, and that the fact that the ideals are so strong amongst what we, from a field perspective, can see as the newcomers in a specific field is perhaps exactly because they are newcomers. One can argue that they have not yet formed their own perspective or taken part in the struggle to define “good” journalism – they have only a student habitus – on which to base their ideals and aspirations. And exactly because they are entering a field, it is likely that they will aspire to and mention already existing ideals, in their struggle to learn a practice and become accepted as part of the journalistic field. But this student habitus – as is clear from the results of this survey – is by no means a blank piece of paper. Already before enrolling, the students have thought about why they want to study journalism and perhaps become a journalist, and these thoughts are equally shaped by the position of the field of journalism in the overall field of power. This poses an interesting paradox or dilemma for the journalism

schools, as it is here that students slowly form the apprentice habitus and come closer to the field they aspire to become part of.

This leads to the question of what the journalism schools should focus on. Educating students in light of the traditional ideals and keeping these ideals alive (strengthening the dominant forms of capital)? Or placing more focus on the reality and practice in the newsroom and training them in the trends that the media business demands, and thus try to encourage a recognition of economic capital in the field? Is it the journalism school's job to make sure that the gap between the ideals and "the real world out there" does not become so great that the students are left disillusioned and confused? Or can the school, via training in critical thinking about the structures of the journalistic field, aspire to changes in the field – and are these changes something to strive for or even possible to bring about?

## There are changes

From a Bourdieuan perspective, the research clearly shows some structural rigidity when it comes to the journalism students' ideals in the journalistic field. Although they are not even part of the field yet, they have quite traditional ideals as regards their subjects of interest. The Danish students are socialized as journalists long before they enter the newsroom, which is also a central point in Hovden's study of Norwegian journalism students (Hovden, 2008): "(...) many of the key elements of a journalistic praxis in Bourdieu's sense are pre- and extra-journalistic, acquired outside and before applied to journalism" (Hovden, 2008). This is a different approach to the socialization process than research often takes (Hovden, 2008). Hovden also refers to the classical Warren Breed study from 1955, in which the approach is that the students first become socialized during their time in the newsroom (Breed, 1955). However, Breed writes: "Yet all but the newest staffers know what policy is" (Breed, 1955). And as this research indicates, the editors in the newsrooms – in some ways – can be prepared for new journalists who already know (some of) the policies.

Bourdieu suggests that social fields have a strong inertia in the field (Bourdieu, 1984, 1996; Brook, 2013), but interestingly the data presented here reveal some changes, at least in the Danish case. On a platform level (see Table 2), the data suggest that an increased interest in specializing in multimedia and online journalism is at least one area where we see changes – indicating some future changes in the field. However, the data show changes in ideals and preferences, but this does not mean that when students enter the field they actually choose to work online. It is likely that when 30 per cent do consider specializing in online journalism, some might actually follow up on this aspiration. In any case, it seems hard to avoid, as many of the internships in Denmark involve at least six months on the online platform.

In this article we have looked at ideals and aspirations of Danish journalism students. In this context, it is important to remember that these are only ideals – this

survey data do not tell us what the students actually start working with when they have earned their degrees. However, regarding ideals from a field perspective, the survey data tell us a great deal about the shared logic of practice and *doxa* in a given field, and it is likely that newcomers like journalism students might have even stronger ideals as they attempt to enter the field, and that they might modify these ideals somewhat once they have become part of the field. However, what we have seen in this analysis is that the students' ideals are very similar to some well-known ideals in journalism – ideals that have probably formed why they chose to study journalism in the first place. But we know far too little about how this knowledge is shaped and obtained even before they start a course in journalism.

## Notes

1. In the Danish context, *publicist* as a concept refers to media production, which might be labelled “private public service”. A foundation with a board manages the news organization, which produces news within a public service ethics, and independent of the financial side of the newspaper organization.
2. It would be interesting to compare the responses from students from the three schools to see whether there are any differences between RUC, DJH and SDU, but we have chosen not to do so because the number of respondents from each school is too small. In the analysis we treat the journalism students as one group.
3. The question was: If you are going to work as a journalist in the future, where would you prefer to work? The respondent could choose between types of workplace (e.g. national newspaper, local newspaper, etc.)
4. In 2005 and 2008 the students were asked if they wanted a multimedia platform as their future workplace. In 2012 this was changed to “Would you like to work for an online platform?”
5. The question is: In your future career as a journalist, do you want to specialize in a particular medium? (One tick or more). In 2005 and 2008 they can choose between: Radio, newspaper, multimedia/online, photo and “no, I do not want to specialize in one certain medium. In 2012 the multimedia/online is divided into two categories: multimedia and online.
6. According to Hovden and Ottosen, the Danish students' interest is decreasing when it comes to most of the themes (Hovden & Ottosen, 2013, p. 20).
7. The annual figures are added so that all percentages in this section are the average of the three years. The overall view shows clear gender differences, but looking at both women and men there are changes from year to year; see Table 3.

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## Finnish Journalism Students

### *Stable Professional Ideals and Growing Critique of Practice*

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#### Abstract

The chapter examines Finnish students' motives for studying journalism and their perceptions about the profession. Motives and perceptions are understood as being a part of the professionalisation process of future journalists. Changes in students' perceptions over time are discussed in the framework of the change of Finnish journalistic culture from a high modern to a liquid modern culture. Finnish journalism students' views on journalism reflect the high modern ideals of journalism, as well as the ongoing change in Finnish media and journalism practice. Students think that a good journalist presents news in an objective way and criticises injustice in society. At the same time, the motives for studying journalism reflect individually-oriented motives and a wish to be able to work creatively. In a comparison between the Nordic countries, Finnish students rely more on the ideals of neutral reporting and professional autonomy of journalism. The study does not indicate that the liquid modern ideals of entertaining and serving the audience as customers are perceived as being central by the students. However, their views tell about the changing context of journalism. Finnish journalism students increasingly feel that a journalist should be responsible for the financial well-being of the media company.

Keywords: journalism education, professionalism, professional identity, journalistic values, journalistic culture, Finland

## Introduction

This chapter examines Finnish journalism students' motives for studying journalism and their perceptions about journalism as a profession. Motives and perceptions are understood as a part of the professionalization process of future journalists. Journalists' professionalization process is described in the academic literature as, among other things, a distinctly ideological development, as the emerging ideology served to continuously refine and reproduce a consensus about who was a "real" journalist as well as what (parts of) news media at any time would be considered examples of "real" or "good" journalism. As Deuze (2005) puts it, these evaluations shift subtly over time yet always serve to maintain the dominant sense of what journalism is and should be.

The current evolution towards participatory communication and media culture, as well as towards market- and audience-oriented news media and journalism, among other things, makes the questions of professional ideals, ideology and the professional skill of future journalists central because the journalistic norms and practices connected to them can in many ways be seen as standing in contrast to those of modern journalism.

Our chapter starts with a discussion of Finnish journalism culture and professional journalists' self-understanding about the central values of their profession. Our discussion touches the ideals and practices of modern journalism – public service, objectivity, autonomy and ethics – and their evolution in the context of Finnish media culture. We then present the Finnish journalism schools involved in the Hovdabrekka study, and describe the group of respondents, the Finnish journalism students, in general terms.

In our analysis we focus on the questions in the questionnaire that concern journalism students' reasons for choosing journalism, their priorities in different aspects of journalistic competence, and their perceptions about the roles of journalists in society. We focus on these questions because we believe they are central to the discussion of journalists' professionalization process and help capture and illustrate possible changes in students' perceptions about the central values of "good" journalism and the practices of "good" journalists.

Changes in students' perceptions over time are discussed in the framework of the change of journalistic ideals from a high modern to a liquid modern culture in a country of Democratic Corporatist journalism, where professional ideals have traditionally gained a strong foothold (Kantola, 2013; Hallin & Mancini 2004). We also examine Finnish journalists' motives and self-understanding regarding the profession in relation to the changes in Finnish media business and journalism culture, as well as in relation to the changes in professional journalists' notions of the ideals and practices of "good" journalism. Furthermore, to outline the specific Finnish profile in journalism and journalism education, we compare results with those from a study with similar aims concerning journalism students in Sweden, Russia, Poland, Estonia and Finland (Stigbrand, & Nygren, 2013).

## Changing Finnish news media and journalism

Newspapers have been the paradigmatic institutions within which the professional culture of Finnish journalism has emerged. Even with the diffusion of professional practices of journalism, the identity of journalists has espoused a modernist ethos, including the right and obligation to criticize the elite and to independently set the news agenda. However, in the media-saturated, digital and globalized consumer culture, newspapers and mainstream news media in general face challenges and problems that call for a re-evaluation of professional cultures of journalism. Finnish media companies live with growing economic pressures, and are attempting to rejuvenate their operations during this transformation of the whole media sector. Fewer subscribers,

lower income from advertisement, and growing demand for profit in media companies have brought tightening budgets and decreased human resources for the newsrooms. Problems achieving gains in digital revenue form one of the major current challenges.

Market and audience are important key words in today's journalistic development work within Finnish media companies. The reason for the audience and market orientation is the fear that if the media do not please people by offering them interesting stories on various platforms and forms, their position in people's everyday lives, saturated by the entertainment media, will further weaken (Hujanen 2008, 2014). This has become a serious concern even in countries with well-established printed media, such as Finland. Audience and market orientation has included a growing interest by the news media in market-oriented audience research, directing attention to the interests, desires and lifestyles of target groups and advertisers.

Audience orientation, the use of market research tools and the power shifts in media companies both reflect and have led to an increase in the influence of media owners and advertisers in defining the practice of journalism. As a whole, it has become increasingly important for the Finnish news media to serve their readers, listeners and viewers in multiple roles: as consumers, consumer citizens, and politically active citizens. From the viewpoint of the tasks of mainstream journalism and journalists, this shift means that besides informing, empowering and supporting public debate, the task of entertaining is considered important. Kantola (2011) has described the change in Finland as a development from high modern journalism towards liquid journalism. A liquid modern journalist is flexible, producing content that appeals to both common sense and emotions, and combines the tasks of information transmission, storytelling, raising discussion, entertaining, and even startling the reader.

In the context of constant changes and innovation projects, novel audience-oriented news policies and new management cultures have been introduced into Finnish news media. Organizational changes have challenged individually defined journalistic autonomy in many ways. The role of news management in planning, leading and supervising the journalistic work process has grown alongside the organizational and structural changes (Koljonen, 2013).

As regards the evolution of the news policies, newspapers, for example, have rewritten their policies to set citizen-based and/or audience-oriented journalism as their key aim. The importance of elite opinions and expertise has been questioned with reference to the need to explain political issues through stories drawn from people's everyday lives – through their voices and faces. As part of this development, Finnish dailies have carried out projects inspired by public journalism (Ahva, 2010). This challenges the professional idea of journalism as an autonomous mediating public process between the political elite and citizens. According to public journalism, journalists should perceive their audiences as citizens who compose *publics* (Rosen, 1991) and possess the legitimacy to participate in the political processes. Journalists, rather than being independent from publics, have thus tried to become genuine resources for people in their participation and deliberation.

During recent years, the notions of audience participation and user-generated content have become focal ingredients in the innovation work at Finnish media houses' and in the reinvention of the notion of "good" journalism. The "notion" of participation or the participatory ideal of journalism is often discussed in academic literature in relation to the ideal of objectivity and autonomy. The objectivity norm claims that journalists are impartial, neutral and fair, and thus credible providers of information (Deuze, 2005: 446-447). In this ideal, journalists are defined as truth-seeking media workers, aiming at factual, accurate, balanced and fair reporting (Tuchman, 1978). Besides objectivity, the modern ideals of autonomy and ethics support the requirement of dispassionate and impersonal journalism, with an outsider and matter-of-fact position and perspective. The ideal of autonomy presupposes that journalism is independent of economic, political or other outside efforts of influence. Ethics refers to the idea of journalists having a specific sense of ethics, validity and legitimacy.

The types of participatory news in the mainstream news media and the attitudes of professional journalists towards audience material have been studied in Finland and elsewhere, focusing on how professional journalists assess and incorporate audience material in their perceptions and practices (e.g. Singer, 2007; Heinonen, 2011; Hujanen 2013). While journalists have perceived contacts to and with the audience as good for journalism, they have found the participatory culture to be particularly unsettling to the professional paradigm of journalism (Heinonen, 2011). Ten years ago, Finnish journalists expressed a worry of losing autonomy and a problem in seeing value in the content produced by citizens (Ahva, 2012: 798), and this perception seems to be deeply rooted in Finnish journalists' professional identity. To date, a majority of professional journalists have not regarded citizen contribution as "real" or "proper" journalism (Heinonen & Domingo, 2009: 70; Örnebring, 2013).

Even though there is no formal qualification or education requirement for the journalism profession in Finland, expertise and knowledge of the principles of journalism have been perceived by journalists as the qualification for the profession. Following this, content produced in line with the modern journalistic ideals and practices of journalism is perceived by Finnish journalists as trustworthy, of high quality and unbiased. Content produced outside the newsroom and by readers is perceived by many practicing journalists as problematic: in principle unreliable, subjective, and biased. Because of this, audience participation must be managed and controlled. In this way, Finnish journalists' negotiation regarding journalistic ideals and practices has until recently reflected the modern ideal of objective and autonomous journalism (Hujanen, 2013).

## Finnish journalism education programs

The journalism education programs in Finland are located at three universities and a few polytechnics. Journalism education is offered at the Master's level in the Finnish language at two universities, the University of Tampere and the University of Jyväskylä.

Journalism education in the Swedish language is offered at the Swedish School of Social Science (SSSS) at the University of Helsinki. Polytechnics in Helsinki (Haaga-Helia), Turku (the Turku University of Applied Sciences) and Oulu (the Oulu University of Applied Sciences) also have journalism programs. All journalism programs have an intake of new students every year, with a yearly intake of journalism students of 80 in Tampere, 20 in Jyväskylä, 20 in Helsinki and 30 in Turku.

The School of Communication, Media and Theatre (CMT) at the University of Tampere (formerly the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication at the Faculty of Social Sciences) is the oldest and largest journalism education program in Finland. The first courses started in the 1920s at the Civic College (Yhteiskunnallinen korkeakoulu) in Helsinki, which became the School of Social Science in 1930. Later it moved to Tampere and became the University of Tampere, and started offering an academic and a vocational journalism program in 1966. Today, instead of two separate programs, the School of Communication, Media and Theatre at the University of Tampere offers degree programs in journalism studies, media education, media culture, speech communication, theater and drama studies, as well as theater work for nearly 900 undergraduate students, 550 of them majoring in journalism. Taken as a major subject, journalism and mass communication offers teaching leading to Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctor's degrees. Most students earn a Master's degree in journalism studies or photojournalism.

At the Department of Communication at the University of Jyväskylä, a journalism education program started in 1987. The program is situated in Jyväskylä at the Faculty of Humanities. Journalism is the major subject in the Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts degrees, and the studies also prepare students for postgraduate studies in Journalism. At the University of Jyväskylä, most students admitted to the program earn a Master's degree with journalism as their major subject.

Journalism courses started at SSSS in 1962, and a full program of journalism began being offered in 1966. Journalism can be studied as a major subject at the Bachelor's level. The program offers the main academic journalism education within the Swedish-speaking community in Finland. The aim of the program is to teach students professional journalistic skills as well as familiarize them with the Swedish-language news media in Finland. After completing their Bachelor's degree, SSSS students can continue their studies within the University of Helsinki without a separate entrance exam in the subject of Media and communication at the Department of Social Research, within the Faculty of Social Science.

The Turku University of Applied Sciences started its journalism training in 2011, and offers a major in journalism at the Bachelor's level. Before this it was possible to study journalism at the Diaconia University of Applied Sciences in Turku, which started its journalism education in 1999.

As academic disciplines, the university-level journalism programs in Finland introduce students to journalism and media, communication and journalism research. The focus of the studies is on both the theory and the practice of journalism. This entails

not only professional but also societal and cultural knowledge, and an educational path aiming at a scientific education. On the one hand, journalist training imparts up-to-date knowledge and skills for working in various media (the press, radio, television, and net media), and on the other, studies provide students with the basic skills they need for an academic career.

The aim of the journalism programs is that students will learn to continually observe and analyze phenomena and events in society. The studies aim at enhancing students' ability to understand the position and importance of the media in society and to critically scrutinize the working methods of the media, as well as the position of journalism in society. Critical inquiry is one of the leading principles in journalism programs, referring to an analytical way of approaching events and processes. The studies aim at providing students with means to analyze the journalistic working process and its products: a guiding principle is that journalists must be able to critically seek, evaluate and process information, and present it to the public in an intelligible and interesting form. The programs examine the role and functions of media in society, the legislation and the ethics of journalism, the relationship between the media and their audience, and the historical development and present structure of the media system in Finland and elsewhere.

At the Turku University of Applied Sciences, the education in the media degree program's Journalism specialization area aims at giving students skills and knowledge in journalism and at enabling them to achieve further professional development and entrepreneurship. During the course of their studies, students make connections with professional life through research and development projects. The specialization in journalism aims at educating versatile professionals to give them what they need for working life. The focus of the education is on the journalistic competences needed in order to work in a multimedia environment – to combine the methods of expression that are typical of different media in a multimedia environment. In organizational communication, students familiarize themselves with the work of communication and publicist professions.

Hallin and Mancini (2004) have described the Nordic countries as very similar, as "Democratic Corporatist" media systems, characterized by high newspaper circulation, strong professionalization and state intervention. According to Ami Lönnroth (1997) in a study on European journalism schools, the Nordic schools were in many ways similar to the other European journalism education programs. Members of the European Journalism Training Association shared many features; they included many practical elements, trained for all types of media, favored teachers with a background in the field, and included internships in their programs. The period since 1997 has been an era of further academic integration for the Nordic schools. Today, the former independent journalism programs are parts of universities. Typical of the university programs in Finland today is that both professors and university lecturers have doctoral degrees, often combined with at least some practical experience.

## The respondents

For the first two Hovdabrekka surveys in 2005 and 2008, students from the University of Tampere, the University of Jyväskylä and the University of Helsinki (SSSS) participated. In 2012, the University of Applied Arts in Turku joined the project. A total of 4,665 students at 30 schools from five countries have taken part in the survey, with a response rate of 51 per cent. The total number of Finnish students participating in the Hovdabrekka survey in 2005, 2008 and 2012 is about 500. Looking at the results, it is important to bear in mind that the samples are small. National differences should not be overrated, as there is considerable variation within the countries as well. In a recent article Hovden (2014) discusses the overall methodological issues, such as the transnational equivalence of concepts and contexts in surveys, comparative samples and “whole-nation bias”. We agree with this, and try to be cautious in our interpretations.

The proportion of female students is greater in Finland than in the other Nordic countries, and has grown since the introduction of the survey study, whereas the proportion has been rather stable in Sweden and Norway, and has slightly decreased in Denmark (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Share of female respondents in the Nordic countries, 2005, 2008 and 2012 (per cent)

|         | 2005 | 2008 | 2012 |
|---------|------|------|------|
| Finland | 56   | 71   | 81   |
| Sweden  | 64   | 65   | 62   |
| Norway  | 57   | 60   | 64   |
| Denmark | 58   | 52   | 52   |
| Iceland | -    | -    | 67   |

Source: Hovden (2014: 650)

In Finland and Sweden a third of the students came from the country’s capital, while the regional diversion is greater in Norway and Denmark. Typical of Finnish students was that they reported both parents having a great interest in culture, especially literature and theater, to a considerably greater extent than their Nordic peers. Most of the students were satisfied with their studies, and chose journalism as their first priority. The dominant preferred future workplace for Finnish students was previously a national newspaper (49 per cent in 2005) or local newspaper (18 per cent in 2005), but this tendency has clearly declined (national paper 21 per cent and local paper 8 per cent in 2012), whereas the interest in magazines has grown (from 1.9 per cent 2005 to 22 per cent 2012). The reported preferred workplace reflects the situation on the market, where the big daily newspapers are having economic difficulties.

## Finnish students' opinions on subjects in the education, and personal qualities

In all surveys, Finnish journalism students have rated the training of source criticism and journalistic genres as well as language and spelling skills as the most important subject areas that should be included in the journalism curriculum. An average of about 84 per cent of all Hovdabrekka Finnish respondents regarded "source criticism" as very important, while 81 per cent claimed this for "journalistic genres" and 72 per cent for "language and spelling skills". "Academic methods" and "media history" were among the least valued subject areas that journalism schools should teach.

The students' evaluations of essential subject areas of learning were greatly attached to the journalistic production process. The fact that research-related areas of learning such as "academic methods" and "media history" were less prioritized may partly reflect the traditional division at journalism schools between "practice" and "theory". Studies in journalism were associated with the practical goal of becoming a professional journalist. Consequently, only 21 per cent of Finnish students, compared with 28 per cent of Norwegian and 45 per cent of Swedish students, declared high agreement with the statement that their studies were too theoretically oriented. A majority of 65 per cent of students on average fully or partly agreed that they had learned more about the journalistic practice during their internship period than dur-

**Table 2.** Journalism students' opinion about important personal journalist qualities in Finland, 2005, 2008 and 2012 (per cent)

|                                        | 2005 | 2008 | 2012 | Total |
|----------------------------------------|------|------|------|-------|
| Curiosity                              | 66   | 72   | 79   | 74    |
| Good expression and formulation skills | 75   | 79   | 68   | 74    |
| Thoroughness and precision             | 68   | 70   | 75   | 72    |
| Knowledge about society                | 72   | 70   | 60   | 66    |
| Sense of justice                       | 72   | 62   | 57   | 61    |
| Creativity                             | 47   | 40   | 30   | 37    |
| Efficiency                             | 30   | 38   | 32   | 35    |
| Empathy for individuals                | 32   | 24   | 23   | 25    |
| Broad life experience                  | 17   | 23   | 27   | 24    |
| Political neutrality                   | 23   | 23   | 21   | 22    |
| Rudeness                               | 13   | 16   | 14   | 15    |
| Knowing what sells                     | 2    | 5    | 11   | 7     |
| Charming personality                   | 6    | 6    | 5    | 6     |
| Close relationship to sources          | 4    | 3    | 4    | 3     |
| Respect for authorities                | 13   | 1    | 2    | 3     |
| Number of respondents                  | 63   | 245  | 189  | 497   |

*Note:* The scale ranges in five steps from very important, to not important at all. The table shows the percentage of very important.



ing their studies at the university. Students regarded studies in journalism as serving the purpose of allowing them to establish a close relationship with the journalistic practice and professional identity.

When asked about the most important personal qualities of a journalist, Finnish journalism students cited curiosity and linguistic expression, followed by thoroughness and knowledge about society.

The least important personal qualities of a journalist were regarded as those that are not compatible with the basic journalistic ideals of neutrality, impartiality and balance, such as “knowing what sells”, “charming personality”, and the journalist’s “close relationship to sources”. Additionally, students also considered the role of journalism as a critical force in society, which is reflected in the least cited quality of “respect for authorities”.

### Finnish students’ motives for choosing journalism

The main motives for choosing to study journalism seemed to be very stable among the Finnish respondents. All three years, over 90 per cent chose the motives “working with interesting themes”, “a varied and lively occupation” and “meeting interesting people”. Very high scores were also given to “job with much freedom and independence” and “being creative”. The factors with very low response rates also seem to be stable; the possibility to become famous attracts only 3, 6 and 3 per cent, respectively. Motives slightly on the rise are “helping individuals” and “explain complicated matters”.

Stigbrand and Nygren (2013) have compared journalism programs in Sweden, Russia, Poland, Estonia and Finland. The top five motives for becoming a journalist were the same for all five programs: encountering interesting subjects, creative work, meeting interesting people, having an independent job, and experiencing the pleasure of writing. The greatest difference was related to fame and wealth, salary, high status, and becoming well known, which were stronger in Moscow and Warsaw than in Södertörn and Jyväskylä (ibid, 98). The motives were combined and reduced to three dimensions, which showed high correlations for groups of motives: social reform, money and status, and self-expression. The dimension of social reform included promoting freedom and democracy, fighting injustice, being a watchdog, and maintaining public debate. The dimension of money and status incorporated the elements of acquiring a high salary and status, as well as becoming well-known. The dimension of self-expression referred to working with interesting subjects and people, travelling, and having a creative job.

The dimension of self-expression was strongest in all countries. The dimension of money and status came second for Moscow and Warsaw, whereas the social dimension came second in the other three programs (Södertörn, Jyväskylä, Tartu) (ibid, 99). The Finnish students in the Hovdabrekka surveys also prefer motives related to self-expression; they value the social dimension, placing issues related to money and status last, like the students from Södertörn, Jyväskylä and Tartu in Stigbrand and Nygren’s (2013) study.

**Table 3.** Motives for choosing journalism as occupation among journalism students in Finland, 2005, 2008 and 2012 (per cent)

|                                        | 2005 | 2008 | 2012 | Total |
|----------------------------------------|------|------|------|-------|
| Working with interesting themes        | 100  | 97   | 97   | 97    |
| A varied and lively occupation         | 97   | 97   | 96   | 96    |
| Meeting interesting people             | 92   | 90   | 93   | 91    |
| Being creative                         | 85   | 91   | 92   | 91    |
| Job with much freedom and independence | 79   | 86   | 79   | 82    |
| Wishing to inform                      | 77   | 82   | 83   | 82    |
| Taking part in the debate in society   | 69   | 86   | 75   | 80    |
| Explaining complicated matters         | 55   | 73   | 72   | 71    |
| Fighting injustice                     | 60   | 75   | 72   | 72    |
| Identity as journalist attractive      | 48   | 51   | 60   | 54    |
| Helping individuals                    | 44   | 67   | 57   | 60    |
| Scrutinizing those in power            | 55   | 56   | 57   | 56    |
| Safe employment                        | 47   | 37   | 38   | 39    |
| High status job                        | 31   | 31   | 38   | 34    |
| Good salary                            | 27   | 21   | 28   | 24    |
| Becoming famous                        | 3    | 6    | 3    | 4     |
| Joy of writing                         | 69   | 73   | *    | (46)  |
| Number of respondents                  | 63   | 245  | 189  | 497   |

*Note:* The table shows the percentage of respondents choosing each item on the list.

\* = not included in the questionnaire 2012.

### Finnish journalism students' perceptions of the journalist's role in society

The ideal of journalism as public service is central and very much alive in Finnish journalism students' understanding of the journalism profession. In their perceptions, the role of journalism as a fourth estate was strongly present in all the years studied (2005, 2008, and 2012). Almost all students regarded it as a central task: 98 per cent of the respondents agreed completely or to some extent that a journalist should investigate people in powerful positions in society. In this regard, there were no changes during the course of the study. Likewise, for Finnish journalism students it was important that journalists explain complicated events to people in simple ways: 98 per cent of the respondents agreed completely or to some extent that this role is central for journalists.

Finnish journalism students' perceptions reflect the ideal of public service also in the sense that almost all of them regarded it as a central role of the journalist to embrace active societal criticism and act as a counterforce to inequality: 98 per cent of the respondents agreed completely or almost completely that a journalist should be

critical of injustice in society. There were also other societal roles Finnish journalism students perceived as important. The idea that it is the journalist's task to engage people in public debate was perceived as central. In all, 94 per cent of the respondents agreed completely or almost completely that a journalist should promote a public debate in which everyone has the opportunity to participate.

Furthermore, almost all (93 per cent) students saw that the journalist's role in fostering ideas is important. The journalist's task to stimulate new ideas and thoughts was perceived even more as an important task towards the end of the research period. In 2012, a total of 95 per cent of the respondents agreed completely or almost completely that a journalist should promote a public debate in which everyone has the opportunity to participate; this percentage was 88 seven years earlier (2005).

However, simultaneously, the ideal of objectivity was also strongly present in journalism students' understanding of their profession, with a growing percentage during the research period from 78 (2005) to 96 (2012). This means that almost all journalism students who answered the questionnaire agreed completely or almost completely that a journalist should present news in an objective way. At the same time, just as many students disagreed completely or almost completely that a journalist should be someone who can disregard all other interests in society. The percentage of students who agreed completely or almost completely with this claim was 77.

Only a minority (a third of the respondents) felt that a journalist should be responsible for the financial well-being of the media company he/she worked for. Noteworthy, however, is that this percentage had grown, from 20 per cent in 2005 to 39 in 2012.

### Finnish journalism students' views on Finnish journalists' work practices

When it comes to ethics, Finnish journalism students' opinions about Finnish journalists' work practices and code of ethics varied. Almost a third of the students saw it as a very accurate description of Finnish journalism that journalists explain the underlying causes of things that are happening. A fifth of the students saw it as a very accurate description that journalists highlight issues people would not otherwise know about. A fifth of the students saw it as a very accurate description of the Finnish journalism practice that journalists are good at protecting their sources. However, during the course of the research project this percentage had shrunk from 30 to 15.

When answers to the above-mentioned claims about Finnish journalism and journalism practice in which students perceived claims as somewhat accurate descriptions are also taken into account, the picture of their perceptions remains somewhat similar. A clear majority (86 per cent) of the students perceived it as a very or somewhat accurate description that journalists explain the underlying causes of things that are happening. A majority of the students seem to believe that journalists cover issues about which people would not otherwise get information: 70 per cent of the students

saw it as a very or somewhat accurate description that journalists highlight issues that people would not otherwise know about.

There seems to be a trend that the students increasingly feel that journalists dramatize events: 76 per cent saw this as a very or somewhat accurate description. While 61 per cent of the students thought this way in 2005, in 2012 74 per cent were of the opinion that this was a very or somewhat accurate description of Finnish journalism practice and code of ethics. A majority of the students seem to feel that journalists protect their sources quite well: 70 per cent saw it as a very accurate description of the Finnish journalism practice that journalists are good at protecting their sources.

While Finnish journalism students on the one hand seem to see Finnish journalism practice as serving the public interest, on the other hand they tend to question the Finnish journalism practice. About half of the students saw it as a very or somewhat accurate description of journalism practice in Finland that journalists often act out of self-interest when pursuing news. There seemed to be a rise in this kind of perception: which the percentage was 41 in 2005, it had risen to 61 by 2012. About half of the respondents also felt it was a very or somewhat accurate description that journalists are often prejudiced. During the course of the research, this percentage had risen from 32 to 48.

## Reflections

Finnish journalism students' views on journalism greatly reflect the high modern ideals of journalism. However, they also reflect the ongoing change in Finnish media, journalism and journalistic practices. Almost all Finnish journalism students who answered the questionnaire agreed completely or almost completely that a journalist should present news in an objective way. Finnish journalism students' perceptions thus reflect the traditional ideal of public service in the sense that almost all the students in the studies regarded it as a central role of the journalist to be a critic of injustice in society. The idea that it is the journalist's task to engage people in public debate was also perceived as central.

At the same time, the main motives for choosing to study journalism reflect more individually oriented motives and a wish to be able to work creatively. The motives mentioned included "working with interesting themes", "a varied and lively occupation" and "meeting interesting people". Very high scores were also given for "a job with much freedom and independence" and "being creative". Individually oriented motives go hand-in-hand with the fact that the Finnish journalism students rated the training of source criticism and journalistic genres as well as language and spelling skills as the most important subject areas that should be included in the journalism curriculum. The learning goals concerning journalistic competences are largely defined by the journalistic working process, placing the individual at the center.

Expectations regarding the traditional role of the journalist as a watchdog, criticizing power and catalyzing debate, and the relatively individual motives for choosing

the occupation in order to express themselves and have an interesting job, may also indicate a potential conflict in how the Finnish journalism students see the role of journalism in society. In this era of liquid journalism, young generations of journalists increasingly face insecurities in their employment and discontinuities in their career path, reflected in an increased interest in self-promotion and the need for personal branding among journalism students (Lehtonen, 2013). The liquid ethos in journalism is heightened by the cultural mode of late modernity that emphasizes the individual life-politics, and by the ramifications of technological development, especially in the networked online communication in which individual profiling, reputation management and networking have become central dimensions.

Nevertheless, in a comparison between the Nordic countries, Finnish students still appear to more closely represent the ideal types of neutral reporting and professional autonomy of the Democratist Corporatist journalism model. In Nordic journalism students' views on professionalism, Hovden and colleagues (Hovden & Ottosen, 2013, Hovden, 2014) identified the opposite dimensions of participatory versus neutral ideals, and the opposite of investigative ideals versus recreational ideals. Keeping all the earlier mentioned reservations in mind, the study showed that Danish students are closer than the others to recreation, whereas the others upheld traditional ideals. Whereas Norwegian students stressed participatory ideals and Swedish students were more oriented towards investigative ideals, students from Finland (and Iceland) emphasized objectivity and neutrality.

The strong emphasis on the ideal of objective journalism among Finnish students can be explained, at least partially, with the fact that the respondents were mainly in their first year of studies, in which the focus is on news journalism. Not only do academic curricula stress news adoption during the first year; the adoption of standardized norms of an occupation is also typically seen as a necessary condition in the initial phase of socialization into a profession. One could also assume that the anticipated change of the journalistic ethos is not yet as visible in the Finnish journalistic practice as it is in the other countries under study. However, one could expect that in line with the development of their professional identity, Finnish journalism students would increasingly start putting more stress on participatory journalism ideals, given that newsrooms are increasingly embracing them as a central part of their news policy (Hujanen, 2014) and public journalism projects are familiar to several newsrooms.

Even though the ideal of objectivity is central for Finnish journalism students, at the same time the results indicate that the students in practice question the possibility for objective journalism and journalism serving the public interest. Namely, about half of the students saw it as an accurate description of journalism practice in Finland that journalists often act out of self-interest when pursuing news. The students also increasingly feel that journalists dramatize events. When discussing the results, it is also important to understand the limits of the study. Even though the Finnish journalism students highlighted the ideal-typical values of neutral reporting and professional

autonomy, everyday news work may easily differ from this. In other words, it is not possible to draw a parallel between the ideals and the practices of journalism.

The study does not indicate that the liquid modern ideals of entertaining and serving the audience as customers were perceived as central by the Finnish journalism students. Because of this, it is difficult to argue that students' perceptions fully represent the ideals and practices of liquid journalism. However, students' views as a whole tell us about the changing context of journalism and of working as a journalist. The fact that Finnish media companies are living with growing economic pressures, tightening budgets and decreased human resources for the newsrooms could also be seen in the students' understanding of the profession and its practice. In 2012, nearly 40 per cent of the Finnish journalism students felt that a journalist should be responsible for the financial well-being of the media company they worked for; this percentage had grown from 20 to 39 in seven years (2005-2012).

This trend, together with tendencies of more market-oriented attitudes among journalism students in other Nordic countries, may point to a future development of the profession's self-understanding. In other words, it is likely that the transition from the high modernist ideals toward a liquid ethos in the professional culture of journalists will be more strongly reflected among Finnish journalism students and journalists in the future. The fact that the Finnish respondents in the Hovdabrekka study came from homes with more interest in culture than in other Nordic countries may explain why Finnish students have shown more resistance to the market orientation and cherished autonomously oriented ideals thus far.

There may also be internal differences, due to different institutional profiling between journalism schools. Interestingly, in his analysis on Nordic journalism students Hovden (2014) observed that the students from Helsinki had opinions closer to their Swedish, Norwegian and Danish peers than did the Finnish students from Tampere and Jyväskylä, reflecting differences between the Swedish and Finnish cultures in Finland. This difference may also reflect students' practices of using media. Swedish-speaking journalism students seem to actively follow the Nordic media, especially the Swedish media.

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# The Media Use of Future Journalists and How it Changes During Journalism Education

Ulrika Andersson

## Abstract

This chapter focuses on the media use of Nordic journalism students and how it changes during journalism education. Prior studies have shown that journalism students stress the desire to be part of society and the social debate is an important factor in terms of why they want to become journalists. The media in general, and the news media in particular, plays an important role in the process of reaching insight and knowledge about society and it is therefore reasonable to expect journalism students to show great interest in news media in terms of news consumers. Questions being researched in this chapter include determining the type of media forms that dominate the general media use of Nordic journalism students, their use of news media, and whether or not media consumption differs depending on how far the students are into their journalism education. The results indicate that journalism students are very much the same as their peers when it comes to media usage: they devote much of their leisure time to social media activities and television watching; also, they most often prefer online news media to printed news media. The latter result is particularly pronounced among students that are in the final phase of their education.

Key words: journalism education, media use, news consumption, printed media, online news, socialisation, Sweden

## Introduction

News media consumption has proven to be an important factor for people's overall knowledge about social issues and community development, regardless of professional background. Research indicates that the news media, especially printed newspapers, enhance people's political interest, knowledge and participation, as high-frequent users tend to have more knowledge about the society compared to low-frequent users (Strömbäck, Djerf-Pierre, & Shehata, 2013; Lauf, 2001; McLeod et al. 1999). The news media thus offers people opportunities to learn about the world, beyond the kinds of experiences that are provided within the immediate circle of family, friends, and colleagues/co-students.

When asked about the reasons why students from the Nordic countries want to become journalists, a large proportion have stressed that an important factor is the desire to be part of society and the social debate (Andersson, & Wadbring, 2015; Bjørnsen, Hovden, & Ottosen, 2007). Being an active part of society unconditionally requires insight and knowledge of what is going on in the near and more distant surroundings: insights that may come from personal experiences or one's professional network of sources, but also from the media. Given their pronounced interest in being an active part in society and in the social debate, it is reasonable to expect journalism students to show great interest in news media, in terms of news consumption. As they gradually approach their entrance into the profession, it is reasonable to believe that their interest in the news media may intensify during journalism education as a means of an increased need for knowledge about societal developments and events. Furthermore, the media may have an important function as a provider of insights regarding how professional journalism should be performed. Prior research has shown that journalism students are often eager to learn how to become media professionals, and therefore, quickly try to adapt to professional standards and practices (Jarlbrink, 2003; Furhoff, 1986). Taking part in different kinds of media could thus be an efficient way to learn the craftsmanship (e.g. different genres, how to write, and storytelling) and may, consequently, lead to intense media consumption. From this perspective, the potential alteration of future journalists' media use may thus be described as part of an ongoing socialisation process into the norms of professional journalism.

Most studies published about journalism students tend to focus on demographic structure, role perceptions, motives for wanting to become a journalist, and future job aspirations (e.g. Andersson, & Wadbring, 2015; Hovden, 2014; Mellado et al. 2012; Hopmann, Elmelund-Præstekær, & Levinsen, 2010; Hovden et al. 2009; Sanders et al. 2008; Bjørnsen, Hovden, & Ottosen, 2007; Delano, & Henningham 1995; Splichal, & Sparks, 1994), whereas few studies have focused on how journalism students choose to consume media in general and news media in particular. Considering their choice of future profession, it must be regarded as implicit that journalism students should have a great interest in the media *per se*. Yet being interested in professional journalism and journalistic work must, in reality, not necessarily be synonymous with having a high consumption of various kinds of media. The main reason is that the media consumption practices of these individuals are not only affected by their interest in journalism, but also – as for all other citizens – established through a combination of societal, media structural and individual factors (McQuail, 2010).

Given their emphasis on being an active part of society as media professionals, it is therefore relevant to study the media consumption of these future journalists and how it changes during journalism education. Such a study may provide important insight on whether the professional path itself is associated with high media consumption. Furthermore, media consumption in general and news consumption in particular among these future media professionals may reveal something about what the future priorities of the news media may look like. This chapter will therefore focus on questions such as

the kind of media forms that tend to dominate the general media use of Nordic journalism students, their use of the news media, and whether or not the media preferences of Nordic journalism students seem to differ between students who are in the beginning of their journalism training and students who are about to finish their training.

Before moving on to the analysis, I will first provide some background information on media systems and media consumption in the Nordic countries. Thereafter, I will focus on the methodology and the data, and then, I will present findings on the research questions about journalism students' media use. Finally, a summary will be provided at the end of the chapter.

### Same, same, but still different

#### – some words about media structure in the Nordic countries

Journalism researchers have often described the Nordic countries as having quite similar societies, political structures, and journalistic systems. Hallin and Mancini (2004), for example, place them in a distinct, close cluster inside of the Democratic Corporatist model, which is characterised by a history of high newspaper circulation, strong party-political press, state intervention and professionalisation. Due to recent changes in the media system, researchers have nevertheless come to claim that the Nordic countries are gradually moving towards the Liberal model of the Anglo-American world, which is characterised by a commercial information-oriented press and strong commercial broadcasting with strains of solid public service media (c.f. Wiik, 2014; Nord, 2008; Hallin, & Mancini, 2004: 252). While comparing media consumption among journalism students in the Nordic countries, the analysis thus provides both a between-system analysis, as five different countries are being compared, and a kind of within-system analysis, as there are many national similarities found between the countries (c.f. Welsh, 1974).

As noted above, the media consumption of citizens derives from a combination of societal, media structural and individual factors (McQuail, 2005), which is a situation that also applies to journalism students. Society sets the outer framework that, in the long term, influences the preconditions for media structures and individual habits. The media structure provides the concrete limits, such as accessible platforms, channels, and content, while individual features generally matter in the short term. In recent decades, some abundant changes have occurred, internationally as well as nationally, which have caused significant consequences for society in general, the media system, and the audience's use of media. Some of these changes have been due to technological developments and socio-economic changes; others have been tied to the deregulation of media markets and social institutions, as well as the globalisation of values (Napoli, 2011; Boczkowski, 2010; Mitchelstein, & Boczkowski, 2010; Papacharissi, 2010).

Two of the most significant features of this development have been the citizens' migration from offline to online media and the younger generations' decreased interest

in the printed news media (c.f. Wadbring, & Bergström, 2015; Papathanassopoulos et al. 2013; Westlund, & Weibull, 2013; Mooney, 2010; Elvestad, & Blekesaune, 2008). The Nordic newspaper trend has been obvious since the mid-1990s. The circulation per 1000 inhabitants has declined in all countries, and printed newspapers are indisputably reaching a smaller audience than before. However, the decreased use of printed newspapers has, in all Nordic countries except Sweden, been accompanied by a parallel rise in the use of online newspapers, thus moderating the general decline for newspapers (Nordicom, 2014a).

Despite the similarities in the media development in the Nordic countries, it should be said that there also are some considerable differences between the countries with regard to newspapers, as both Denmark and Iceland have less developed markets than their neighbours (Sundin, 2014). Recent changes in the Danish newspaper market have, for example, made some researchers draw the conclusion that, today, Denmark is more in line with the characteristics of the Liberal media model than the Democratic Corporatist model (c.f. Nord, 2008).

As for broadcast media, the monopolistic public service traditions were loosened when the deregulation of media systems and technological development allowed for the arrival of more dualistic broadcasting systems with competing license-financed public service channels and commercially-financed private channels during the 1980s and 1990s (Terzis, 2007). The general trend for most Nordic countries has been decreased consumption of public service TV channels, a change that has been particularly pronounced in Sweden (Nordicom, 2014b). The level of total consumption is very much the same in Denmark, Norway, Finland, and Sweden, while Iceland is distinguished from the other countries with a significantly higher share of daily TV consumers. Changes in the use of public service radio have been moderate in all five countries over the past decade, despite the competition from commercial actors and other media (Nordicom, 2014c). Public service radio clearly dominates daily radio consumption in Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Iceland, while private radio actors have a slight advantage over public service in Finland.

The most striking feature of the Nordic media market during past decades is the significant increase in daily Internet use. Within the past ten years, the daily use of Internet services has doubled in all five countries, with as many as 80-90 per cent of the adult populations being daily Internet users (Nordicom, 2014d). It should be said that the daily use of Internet services in the European Union in general is about 60 per cent, which means that the Nordic countries are characterised by very high internet penetration (Seybert, & Reinecke, 2013).

In sum, there are some country-specific differences found in the media structure between Nordic countries – disparities that inevitably also affect domestic media use. These differences are indeed important to take into consideration when one tries to explain the variations between Danish, Norwegian, Swedish, Finnish, and Icelandic journalism students' choices of media. Nevertheless, given the strong common characteristics of the Nordic media markets, such as solid public service media, high

Internet penetration, and relatively strong newspaper markets, such within-national factors must be regarded as less critical in the context of this study, namely, the media consumption of journalism students, and the changes in it during journalism training.

## Research design and data

The study draws empirical support from the Nordic Journalism Students survey, which was conducted in fall 2012. The survey targeted a population of 4,092 journalism students from 25 institutions at the Nordic schools of journalism in Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Iceland. A total number of 1 830 students responded to an online questionnaire, providing an average response rate of 45 per cent. The net response rate per country was: Denmark 42 per cent, Norway 60 per cent, Sweden 39 per cent, Finland 46 per cent, and Iceland 60 per cent (Hovden, 2014: 648-650). The questionnaire was translated into each of the five main Nordic languages, and it focused on questions about a wide range of topics, such as gender, age, and socio-economic background, as well as motives for wanting to become a journalist, perceptions of professional values and ethics, and media use.

In order to measure Nordic journalism students' media use, the respondents were asked to estimate how much time they devote to different kinds of media during an average week, for example, television, radio, newspapers, magazines, books, and social media. The question was worded "How many hours per week (approx.) do you spend on using the following media?" Furthermore, the students were asked to specify whether or not they consume media such as print and online newspapers, foreign news media, and domestic broadcasting news sites on a regular basis. These questions were worded "What printed newspapers do you read on a regular basis?" and "What online newspapers/general news sites do you read on a regular basis?" Each question contained a number of given newspapers or news sites that the respondents could select, as well as an open alternative where the respondents could type in the names of other newspapers/newspapers they commonly use. The measurements used in the forthcoming analysis are based on mean values, percentages, and bivariate correlations (Kendall's tau-c).

## General media consumption among journalism students

The Nordic media market has shifted over the past decades with the appearance of new actors and new conditions, for instance, online news services, free newspapers, and the deregulation of television and radio markets. Despite such changes, recent studies have shown that television still holds a strong position in peoples' everyday media use (c.f. Papathanassopoulos et al., 2013; Shehata, 2012; Risk, 2011; Schröder, 2010; Van Cauwenberge et al., 2010). This result is also essentially valid for Nordic

journalism students, in particular, for students residing in Denmark. As for students from Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Iceland, watching television is indeed highly important; however, it has been eclipsed by the use of social media (Table 1). On average, journalism students from the Nordic countries estimate that they spend about 9 to 13 hours per week on social media activities. The media life of Nordic journalism students is, thus, clearly dominated by media that provides students with gratifications such as information, distraction, and social interaction: a result that is valid for the media life of young adults in general (c.f. Bakardjieva, 2011; Van der Wurff, 2011; Rubin, 2009).

**Table 1.** Approximate numbers of hours spent on different media on a weekly basis among journalism students in the Nordic countries, 2012 (mean)

|                       | Denmark | Norway | Sweden | Finland | Iceland |
|-----------------------|---------|--------|--------|---------|---------|
| TV/Online TV          | 10,5    | 9,2    | 7,6    | 7,3     | 9,8     |
| Social media          | 9,0     | 11,6   | 10,1   | 11,2    | 13,1    |
| Online newspapers     | 5,2     | 6,4    | 4,9    | 3,8     | 8,9     |
| Radio/Online Radio    | 4,6     | 4,1    | 5,2    | 3,5     | 6,8     |
| Printed newspapers    | 2,8     | 2,3    | 3,1    | 3,5     | 2,7     |
| Online magazines      | 2,0     | 1,7    | 1,2    | 4,6     | 1,6     |
| Books                 | 2,0     | 2,1    | 3,1    | 2,5     | 4,8     |
| Printed magazines     | 1,5     | 1,5    | 1,7    | 1,5     | 1,1     |
| Total                 | 37,6    | 28,9   | 36,9   | 37,9    | 48,8    |
| Number of respondents | 547     | 461    | 251    | 169     | 57      |

*Note:* The survey question was: 'How many hours per week (approx.) do you spend on using the following media?' It should be mentioned that the total number of hours spent on media here only includes the kinds of media that are specified in the table, i.e. it is not a measure of the overall daily media consumption of journalism students.

Although the ranking of individual media forms is characterised by a relatively high degree of consistency regardless of national residence, there are indeed some country-specific differences found in how much time Nordic journalism students estimate that they devote to specific media. While students from Sweden and Finland state that they spend about 7 hours per week on watching TV, their equals in Denmark estimate their weekly dose of television consumption to be about 10 hours (Table 1). Differences are also found in how much time the students spend on online newspapers. In Finland, students estimate their temporal use of online newspapers to be around 4 hours a week, while students from Iceland state that they spend about 9 hours a week on reading online newspapers. In general, journalism students from Iceland seem to be spending more time on consuming media, compared to students from other Nordic countries. Yet when considering the rankings of the media forms in question, there is a high degree of conformity in how Nordic journalism students make their choices of media in an ever-growing media landscape.

It should be mentioned that research has shown that the augmented intertwining of everyday life and media consumption has made it more difficult for individuals to give an accurate representation of how much time they actually spend on different

kinds of media during an average day (c.f. Livingstone, 2013). New media technology, an ever growing access to media and content, and transforming media habits, in which the use of multiple media has increased heavily, have come to blur the boundaries of when the consumption of a particular medium actually begins or ends, and when the consumption of another medium really takes over (c.f. Livingstone, 2013; Papathanassopoulos et al. 2013; Rozukalne, 2012). The self-estimated time spent on different media during an average week should therefore not be interpreted in strict numbers: Rather, it should be seen as an indication of how the ranking between different media forms appears among Nordic journalism students.

### Journalism students prefer online news media

The following section focuses on the characteristics of Nordic journalism students' news media consumption, i.e. how students choose between different kinds of news media. The analysis deals with four types of news media organisations: morning papers, evening tabloids, foreign newspapers, and broadcasting. Furthermore, it deals with two types of platforms: printed news and online news.

Since the mid-1990s, the circulation of printed, paid for newspapers has been decreasing all over Europe, and almost every study that deals with newspaper consumption concludes that it is primarily the younger generations who have turned their backs on printed newspapers (Wadbring, & Bergström, 2015; Westlund, & Weibull, 2013; Bakker, & Sábada, 2010; Bergström, & Wadbring, 2010; Elvestad, & Blekesaune, 2008). Often, scholars chose to describe young adults as the net-generation or the digital-generation in order to accentuate how significant online news media and social media have become in the media lives of young adults (Bocca Artieri, 2011; Tapscott, 2008; Volkmer, 2006; Edmunds, & Turner, 2005).

This study reveals that about every fourth student in Norway, Sweden, and Finland claims to never use any kind of printed newspapers (Table 2). The highest number of non-readers is found in Denmark, while journalism students in Iceland are the least inclined to yield the printed paper. Clearly, journalism students have not abandoned printed newspapers to the same extent as the average young adult; however, given the fact that these students aspire to become part of the media industry, it may be considered somewhat remarkable that almost one fourth of all future journalists relate cautiously to the printed news media. Yet it should be said that a majority of all journalism students do frequently turn to printed newspapers. When broken down by category, morning papers are clearly the most attractive to the students, followed by evening tabloids. Only a handful of students claim to read a printed newspaper from a foreign country.

The most obvious tendency, though, in the regular news digest of journalism students is the dominance of online news media. This is especially significant regarding online newspapers. Only a small share of all students say that they never, or at least

very seldom, consume any kind of online newspaper (Table 2). Most of these non-online reading individuals also state that they never consume printed newspapers, which means that nearly one out of twenty future journalists could be described in terms of distinct newspaper-avoiders. Most students, however, do consume online newspapers at least two days a week or more.

**Table 2.** Non-use and regular use of print and online news media among journalism students in the Nordic countries, 2012 (per cent)

|                                  | Denmark | Norway | Sweden | Finland | Iceland |
|----------------------------------|---------|--------|--------|---------|---------|
| Non-users of printed newspapers  | 33      | 28     | 24     | 24      | 11      |
| <i>Regular use of:</i>           |         |        |        |         |         |
| Printed morning papers           | 59      | 61     | 70     | 75      | 88      |
| Printed evening tabloids         | 10      | 28     | 10     | 8       | -       |
| Printed foreign newspapers       | 2       | 2      | 2      | 2       | 4       |
| Non-users of online newspapers   | 4       | 2      | 6      | 5       | 2       |
| <i>Regular use of:</i>           |         |        |        |         |         |
| Online morning papers            | 87      | 89     | 80     | 84      | 97      |
| Online evening tabloids          | 50      | 87     | 65     | 58      | -       |
| Foreign news sites               | 19      | 12     | 12     | 20      | 14      |
| Domestic broadcasting news sites | 61      | 71     | 56     | 56      | 61      |
| Number of respondents            | 571     | 476    | 255    | 170     | 57      |

*Notes:* The survey questions were: 'What printed newspapers do you read on a regular basis?' and 'What online newspapers/general news sites do you read on a regular basis?' Domestic broadcasting news sites include DR.dk, TV2.dk, NRK.no, TV2.no, SR.se, SVT.se, YLE.fi, and RUV.is. Regularity was defined in the survey as reading a daily newspaper or an online newspaper/news site at least every third day.

In Norway, journalism students are just as likely to read online morning papers as online evening tabloids, while students in Denmark, Sweden, and Finland seemingly prefer the online editions of national or local morning papers over online evening tabloids. The regular online consumption of evening tabloids is, nevertheless, considerably higher among all students than the use of printed evening tabloids. A majority of Nordic journalism students also turn to domestic broadcasting news sites for news, information, and entertainment. Norwegian students are slightly more inclined to visit domestic online broadcast services on a regular basis, compared to students who reside in Denmark, Sweden, Finland, or Iceland.

About 10 to 20 per cent of the journalism students claim to use some kind of foreign news site at least twice a week. This particular question was followed by an open-ended option where the students were asked to specify what kind of international news sites they commonly visit. Common answers among Danish, Norwegian and Swedish journalism students are Aljazeera.com, CNN.com, and BBC.com, followed by online newspapers such as *The Guardian*, the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and the *Huffington Post*. Similar news services are also mentioned by Finnish journal-



ism students; however, these students tend to put greater emphasis on online news sites provided by other Nordic news firms, in particular, Swedish newspapers such as *Aftonbladet*, *Expressen*, *Dagens Nyheter*, and *Svenska Dagbladet*. This result is not very surprising, given the fact that some Finnish journalism students also speak Swedish.

In sum, there are some similarities, as well as differences, found in the use of printed and online news media among Nordic journalism students. The main tendency is that journalism students, regardless of residence, seemingly prefer online news media over printed news media. Yet the printed media still holds a strong position among journalism students. While young adults in most Nordic countries have more or less abandoned the printed news media (e.g. Wadbring, & Bergström, 2015), this is clearly not the case among journalism students.

Nevertheless, there are some differences between the Nordic journalism students. These are mainly concerned with strength in habits and the priority given to different kinds of online news media. The regular use of printed news media is, for example, somewhat less distinct in Denmark, compared to the other countries. Furthermore, online morning papers hold a stronger position than online evening tabloids among journalism students in Denmark, Sweden, and Finland, while Norwegian students differ, as they give as high a priority to online evening tabloids as to online morning papers. These differences are most probably explained by differences in the individual media systems found in each country.

Whether or not this media consumption is mainly oriented towards hard news or is more focused on soft news is not revealed by the study. Most journalism students, however, state that they are interested in working with politics and social issues, international issues, multiculturalism, and culture and entertainment. It is, therefore, reasonable to believe that their media consumption is, at least to some extent, oriented towards these subjects.

### Do media preferences differ during different stages in journalism education?

This final part of the study focuses on if, and how, journalism students' use of the news media differs, depending on how far they have come through their educational years. The underlying expectation is that news consumption is somewhat modified and intensified among those students that have become increasingly socialised into the standards of professional journalism. The analysis that follows below deals with journalism students based on how far they have proceeded in their education. All students have been divided into three groups: first semester, second to fourth semesters, and fifth to ninth semesters. The results from all three groups are presented in the table below. Yet the main focus is on first-semester students and students from the fifth to ninth semesters. Due to the low number of respondents from Iceland, these students have been removed from the upcoming analysis.

When comparing the media use of students who have newly begun their journalism education and students who are in the final stages of their education, it is possible to detect a certain movement from offline to online news media during education, or rather, the importance of online news media seemingly increases to even higher levels among senior students. Starting with Danish journalism students, there are statistically significant differences found in the regular consumption of printed morning papers (tau-c -.10\*) and online evening tabloids (tau-c .14\*), where the former appears to decrease in importance among senior students, while the latter increases (Table 3). The movement towards increased use of online news media is particularly pronounced among Norwegian students, as the regular use of online morning papers (tau-c .09\*\*), online evening tabloids (tau-c .12\*\*), and domestic broadcasting news sites (tau-c .13\*\*) is higher among senior students. These students also seem to read printed morning papers to a higher extent than first-semester students, although this difference does not appear to be statistically significant.

**Table 3.** Regular use of news media at different stages in journalism education among journalism students in the Nordic countries, 2012 (per cent)

|                                  | Denmark      |               |               | Norway       |               |               | Sweden       |               |               | Finland      |               |               |
|----------------------------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|
|                                  | 1st semester | 2-4 semesters | 5-9 semesters | 1st semester | 2-4 semesters | 5-9 semesters | 1st semester | 2-4 semesters | 5-9 semesters | 1st semester | 2-4 semesters | 5-9 semesters |
| <b>Printed news media</b>        |              |               |               |              |               |               |              |               |               |              |               |               |
| Morning papers                   | 69           | 59            | 56            | 56           | 62            | 65            | 62           | 79            | 68            | 79           | 64            | 80            |
| Evening tabloids                 | 9            | 10            | 9             | 26           | 30            | 28            | 8            | 9             | 14            | 0            | 13            | 9             |
| Foreign newspapers               | 2            | 2             | 2             | 2            | 2             | 2             | 1            | 2             | 2             | 5            | 0             | 0             |
| <b>Online news media</b>         |              |               |               |              |               |               |              |               |               |              |               |               |
| Morning papers                   | 82           | 88            | 87            | 85           | 88            | 95            | 72           | 84            | 86            | 81           | 82            | 87            |
| Evening tabloids                 | 37           | 48            | 55            | 83           | 84            | 95            | 63           | 61            | 77            | 53           | 66            | 52            |
| Foreign news sites               | 14           | 20            | 21            | 17           | 12            | 8             | 15           | 11            | 11            | 29           | 11            | 19            |
| Domestic broadcasting news sites | 52           | 66            | 61            | 65           | 70            | 79            | 45           | 43            | 54            | 40           | 64            | 63            |
| Number of respondents            | 91           | 244           | 230           | 163          | 191           | 119           | 96           | 103           | 56            | 58           | 56            | 54            |

*Notes:* The measure of association is Kendall's tau-c. The following associations have been found: DENMARK – morning papers -.08\*, online evening tabloids .12\*\*; NORWAY – online morning papers .08\*\*, online evening tabloids .09\*, foreign news sites -.08\*, domestic broadcasting news sites .11\*; SWEDEN – online morning papers .12\*, online evening tabloids .10\*; FINLAND – printed evening tabloid .09\*, domestic broadcasting news sites .20\*.

When 2-4 semester students are excluded from the analysis, the following associations are found between junior and senior students: DENMARK – printed morning papers -.10\*, online evening tabloids .14\*\*; NORWAY – online morning papers .09\*\*, online evening tabloids .12\*\*, foreign news site -.09\*, domestic broadcasting news sites .13\*; SWEDEN – online morning papers .13\*, online evening tabloids .13\*; FINLAND – printed evening tabloids .09\*, domestic broadcasting news sites .23\*\*.

\*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01

The increased use of online morning papers (tau-c .13\*) and online evening tabloids (tau-c .13\*) is also characteristic of differences found between students who have newly begun and those who are about to finish their Swedish journalism education. Moreover, in Finland, there is an obvious difference in how often first-semester and senior students chose to visit the domestic broadcasting news site (tau-c .23\*\*).

It should be said that this particular study does not compare changes on an individual level, but rather, changes on an aggregated level, i.e. groups of first-year students are compared to groups of students who are about to finish their journalism training. The above-stated changes are therefore not real changes within a specific group, but rather, an indicator of how important different kinds of media seemingly are to journalism students at different stages of their journalism training. Clearly, online news media are more important to students who are about to finish their education, compared to those who have recently entered journalism training, at least when considering the level of regular media use.

## Conclusions

In focusing on the media use of Nordic journalism students, this paper has researched the extent to which these future media professionals consume media in general, the kinds of news media they seem to prefer, as well as the extent to which their media use seems to differ, depending on how far they have come through their journalism training.

The results indicate that journalism students are very much the same as their peers when it comes to media usage. First, they devote much of their time to social media activities and television watching. Second, they seemingly prefer online news media above printed news media. Nevertheless, there are some distinct differences in the intensity of future journalists' media use, meaning that they consume printed and online newspapers to a higher extent than the average young adult media user (see, for example, Wadbring, & Bergström, 2015; Bergström, & Wadbring, 2010). There are also some national differences found within the group of Nordic journalism students, but they are within a general pattern of similarity.

The fact that journalism students chose online news media over printed news media is particularly significant among those students that are in the final phase of their education. Clearly, more experienced journalism students tend to rely on online media for news updates, information, and amusements to a higher extent than students who recently have started their education towards becoming professional journalists. The analysis therefore suggests that there may be some kind of transformation that occurs during journalism training that has implications for the media habits of future journalists.

Whether this is an actual outcome of a socialisation process in which online media is given priority at schools of journalism, or whether it has more practical undertones, in the sense that soon-to-be professionals perceive it as more convenient to turn to online media, rather than print media, cannot be answered by the current survey. Neither does the study reveal the extent to which the media use of Nordic journalism students is oriented towards hard news or towards soft news, although their interest in working with different kinds of areas clearly indicates an interest in politics and

social issues, as well as culture and entertainment. A deeper understanding of these questions will, among other things, require more information on the conditions surrounding journalism programs at the individual institutions. Also, the media use of journalism students needs to be understood as a part of more general social dispositions, as such factors may influence how individuals' media habits evolve during their years in education.

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## More Mobile, More Flexible

### *Students' Device Ownership and Cross-Media News Consumption, and Their Pedagogical Implications*

Erik Eliasson & Maarit Jaakkola

#### Abstract

This chapter examines how journalism education institutions could adapt their teaching by building upon students' media habits. We will take a look at how students' habits regarding the use of news media on different platforms can form a starting point for developing cross-media pedagogy. Based on the results of an online survey examining journalism students' cross-media uses of news media in two Nordic countries, Sweden (N=162) and Finland (N=167), which are compared using national media use averages, we first outline the special characteristics of journalism students' media reception. We discovered that journalism students are more active consumers of news on different platforms compared to the average use among those their age. Students are also far more active online prosumers compared to the Swedish average in their age group. Furthermore, the results of the survey point to the fact that journalism students have a wide set of technological equipment at their disposal, which journalism education can build upon.

Keywords: journalism education, students' media uses, news literacy, cross-media, mobile media, Finland

#### Introduction

This chapter examines how journalism education institutions could adapt their teaching by building upon students' media habits. We will take a look at how students' use habits of news media on different platforms can form a starting point for developing cross-media pedagogy. Based on the results of an online survey examining journalism students' cross-media uses of news media in two Nordic countries, Sweden (N=162) and Finland (N=167), which we compare with national media use averages, we first outline the special characteristics of journalism students' media reception. We discovered that journalism students are more active consumers of news on different platforms than the average among those their age. Students are also far more active online prosumers than the Swedish average in their age group. Furthermore, the results of the survey point to the fact that journalism students have a wide set of technological equipment at their disposal, which journalism education can build upon.

Journalism education institutions are currently encountering significant challenges to keep up with the new digital landscape formed by the technological and sociocultural development of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In reconfiguring curricula, institutions need to determine a vision of upcoming technological development and evolvments of audience behaviour in order to form an idea of the future professional skills needed for a journalist. Students, whose general news reading habits in the Nordic countries are described earlier in this book (see Andersson), to some extent represent audiences of their generation. In this chapter we want to discuss what meaning students' habits of cross-media use can have for pedagogical solutions in journalism education. We intend to examine how journalism education as a form of formal learning could benefit from students' informal learning behaviour.

Several documented practical experiences from journalism training beyond the Nordic context suggest that journalism students are not active readers of newspapers (Sherman, 2014; Rogers, 2010; Tift, 2005; Jeffres, & Atkin, 1996; Spear, 1988). Surveys point out that, in line with decreasing reading rates in the entire population or in the younger age groups, students' newspaper reading activity, particularly when it comes to printed newspapers, has decreased in the past two decades (Becker et al. 2012; Knight, 2009). In the Nordic countries, however, the newspaper reading culture has traditionally been strong, which suggests that the news media continue to play a central role in students' media behaviour.

With an aim to study students' news consumption in the Nordic context, we conducted a survey among journalism students at two universities in Sweden and Finland. The objective of the survey was to find out what kinds of media, particularly traditional news media, future journalists consume on different platforms. We expected the findings to pave the way for rethinking the role of news consumption in journalism education, in an era in which journalism schools are reconsidering their curricula in terms of the proportion of printed and digital content as well as renewing the methods of teaching and learning. Based on findings of the survey, we will present some exemplary cases of how journalism education could develop student-led pedagogy informed by students' media behaviour.

## Making the media use pedagogically relevant

Journalistic skills are adopted in a mutual process of reception and production of media content (see also Diddi, & LaRose, 2006; Tandoc, 2014). The reception of media content is thus closely interconnected to the development of production skills, and active consumption of the media is important for future practitioners of journalism for many reasons.

First, regular reception contributes to informal learning and the accumulation of tacit knowledge about the presentation forms and functions of journalism. This knowledge, acquired in the position of receiver, can be utilized as a resource for



adopting the producer role (Hanna, & Sanders, 2007, 2012). In the Poynter Institute's recent survey on the future core skills of journalistic practitioners (Finberg, & Lauren, 2014), accuracy, curiosity and good news judgement scored among the top skills of journalism educators and media professionals; and in the Hovdabrekka studies<sup>1</sup> they were rated high by Nordic students as well. In order to act as a journalist, an individual needs to develop understanding about the journalistic pattern of recognizing events as newsworthy. These competencies are typically developed through a gradual socialization into the profession.

Secondly, following the media adds to an individual's knowledge about current events in society. Knowledge about current events also holds high relevance among journalists, and is considered a 21st-century "core skill" by American journalism educators and practitioners (Finberg, & Lauren, 2014: 21). Following the media helps students place new information into a framework of previous knowledge and thus recognize what is worth covering. News consumption marks a central issue in journalism education as the concept of journalism is fundamentally based on the idea of delivering topical issues, and the academic curricula of journalism schools are still largely based on the idea of news writing.

Thirdly, by establishing a firm individual long-term relationship with the media, future practitioners form a basis for their future professional activity that will inevitably involve a regular, selective reception of media content to react upon. It could be upheld that a future journalistic practitioner's media intake should encompass a large and versatile amount of different forms of journalism and different technological applications.

Nevertheless, as use of the news media is typically ritualistic, a large amount of time spent with the media does not necessarily transfer into journalistic competence. Neither does an active monitoring of news automatically turn into critical skills of content selection and filtration, because the uses of media can be of a highly affirmative nature instead of entailing being actively critical with a pursuit of alternative sources. Therefore, the experiences gained by the students in everyday encounters with the journalistic media can be transformed into a fruitful resource for journalism education only if these experiences are actively exploited by the educators.

To make the learners' media use pedagogically relevant, we will ask three questions: 1) Which devices do students have at their disposal to access media content? 2) How much time per day do they spend in consuming the news media? 3) How is the consumption time divided over different platforms? Thereafter, we will discuss what kinds of conclusions regarding the journalism pedagogy can be drawn from these behavioural characteristics. Journalism education may benefit from the technological resources and sociocultural reading patterns students have gained in the role of media consumer.

## Data and method

The survey was conducted at the University of Gothenburg (N=162), Sweden, and the University of Tampere (N=167), Finland. Both the Department of Journalism, Media and Communication (JMG) in Gothenburg<sup>2</sup> and the School of Communication, Media and Theatre (CMT) in Tampere<sup>3</sup> offer journalism education with profession-oriented study objectives. The University of Gothenburg has provided journalism education since 1967, and offers bachelor's and master's programmes in journalism to an approximate total of 250 students. The University of Tampere, established in 1925, is the oldest journalism education institution in the Nordic countries and offers bachelor's and master's programmes in journalism to approximately 550 students. These two countries were selected for study not only for practical reasons (as the authors' employers), but also because they form a solid basis for comparison as they adhere to appropriately similar journalistic cultures, thus potentially even more widely reflecting the characteristics of media usage among journalism students in Democratic Corporatist media systems (Hallin, & Mancini, 2004). Additionally, the journalism education institutions in Gothenburg and Tampere have similar profiles as educators of future hands-on professionals.

The questionnaire was compiled in the students' native languages, Swedish and Finnish,<sup>4</sup> and was sent to 246 Swedish and 503 Finnish journalism students majoring in journalism. The questionnaire included questions concerning the ownership of technical equipment, the reading of morning newspapers and evening tabloids, and the use of the Internet, particularly digital content reception and production. To enable comparability with the population nationwide, the questionnaire was constructed with questions retrieved from the Swedish *Media Barometer*. The questions were formulated based on what the respondents had done the previous day, so the day of responding was considered to be a typical working day.

The questionnaire was sent on May 8, 2014 and was kept accessible online for 12 days (May 8-20). After two reminders, we had received a total of 329 replies; this gave a response rate of 66 per cent in Sweden and 33 per cent in Finland.<sup>5</sup> There can be several reasons for the difference in response rate, e.g. the size of the institutions and the subsequent teacher-student relationship. The average completion time for the entire questionnaire was approximately four minutes. In this chapter we discuss only a part of the questionnaire, targeting subject matters relevant in this context.

Focusing on only two Nordic countries, the survey does not offer a representative overview of all Nordic journalism students, let alone European ones. To outline the specifics of journalism students with possible national differences, we will compare the results with media statistics that provide data on the national populations, mainly using the *Media Barometer*. Additionally, the media statistics compiled by Statistics Finland were used. However, the Finnish statistics were not wholly compatible with the Swedish *Media Barometer*; information on the ownership of certain equipment and media usage, discussed above, had not been collected in the Finnish instance.

The respondents to the survey included students studying toward a Bachelor's or Master's degree in journalism. The main characteristics of the respondents in both countries are summarized in Table 1. The respondents were divided into three age groups, 15-24, 25-44 and 44-65 years, which corresponds to the age groups applied in the *Media Barometer*.<sup>6</sup> However, no students in the Swedish population belonged to the third group. Among the Swedish respondents 52 per cent were females and 48 per cent males, whereas the corresponding rates in Finland were 77 and 23 per cent. This corresponds approximately to the distribution of gender among all students at the institutions. The respondents' year of study was distributed along terms 1-6 (Sweden) or academic years 1-5 (Finland).<sup>7</sup>

**Table 1.** Characteristics of the survey respondents in Sweden and Finland, 2014 (per cent)

|                                      | Sweden | Finland |
|--------------------------------------|--------|---------|
| <b>Gender</b>                        |        |         |
| Female                               | 52     | 77      |
| Male                                 | 48     | 24      |
| <b>Age</b>                           |        |         |
| 15-24                                | 46     | 51      |
| 25-44                                | 54     | 46      |
| 46-65                                | -      | 3       |
| <b>Journalistic work experience</b>  | 39     | 18      |
| < 4 months                           | 31     | 27      |
| 4 months – 1 year                    | 18     | 19      |
| 1-2 years                            | 5      | 24      |
| > 2 years                            | 7      | 12      |
| <b>Length of study (terms/years)</b> |        |         |
| Swe Other studies / Fin Year 1       |        | 18      |
| Swe Term 1                           | 16     |         |
| Swe Term 2 / Fin Year 2              | 20     | 20      |
| Swe Term 3                           | 17     |         |
| Swe Term 4 / Fin Year 3              | 14     | 13      |
| Term 5                               | 11     |         |
| Swe Term 6 / Fin Year 4              | 11     | 14      |
| Fin Year 5                           |        | 35      |
| Number of respondents                | 162    | 167     |

Although the respondents were assured of their anonymity and confidentiality of their replies, surveys typically run the risk of a social desirability bias (Berger. 2000, 192). As following the media is part of their future job, journalism students apparently encounter increased pressure regarding monitoring the media. Students may give answers reflecting what they believe is expected of them and how they would like to see themselves in the respondent role, rather than being entirely honest, which would cause a “good student bias” in the responses. Therefore, asking what the respondents did the previous day can be expected to lead to more truthful replies than an assessment of one’s “typical” media use. This day may have been an atypical

day in an individual respondent's life, but this is expected to be levelled out in the greater population.

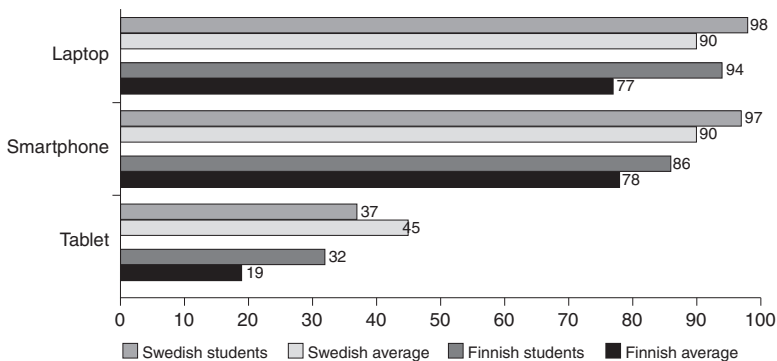
## Results

### *Ownership of technological equipment*

Traditionally, journalism schools have been expected to provide students with the technology needed for carrying out tasks and exercises in their studies. The new mobile technology provides a diversity of educational possibilities through students' own portable devices, which are constantly connected, personalized, and easily customizable. It is important for the educator to know what kind of technological equipment is available among the students.

The survey indicates that the students were far from underequipped, as shown in Figure 1. The differences between the two countries were also relatively minor. Almost every Swedish (98 per cent) and Finnish (94 per cent) student owned a laptop computer, which is slightly more than the Swedish average in the respective age group (90 per cent, *Nordicom-Sveriges Mediebarometer* 2013). In Finland, 77 per cent of households among 15-74-year-olds had a laptop at their disposal in 2013 (*Statistics Finland* 2013a, *Consumer Barometer* 2013).

**Figure 1.** Students' ownership of technological equipment in Sweden and Finland, 2014 (per cent)



*Note:* National average in Finland refers to the corresponding age group except for laptop and tablet, which refers to the total population. Number of student respondents in Sweden is 162 and in Finland 167, and for the population in Sweden 246 and in Finland 503.

*Source:* Nordicom-Sveriges Mediebarometer 2013, 2014, for Sweden, and Reuters 2014 for Finland.

Though relatively expensive, smartphones were also very common among the students. However, there was a significant difference in smartphone ownership between Swedish (97 per cent) and Finnish (86 per cent) students. This difference corresponds to the countries' average ownership of smartphones (Sweden = 90 per cent, *Nordicom-*

*Sveriges Mediebarometer 2013*, Finland = approx. 78 per cent per cent, *Statistics Finland 2013b*). It is more common among journalism students to own a smartphone than the national average.

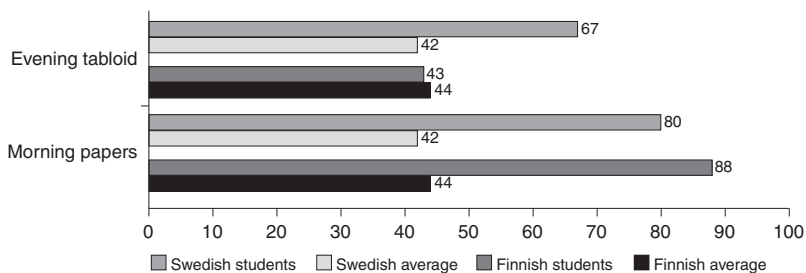
Tablets were less frequent but not uncommon among the students, with approximately one out of three owning a tablet (Sweden = 37 per cent, Finland = 32 per cent). This ownership rate is in fact lower than the Swedish average in the corresponding age group (45 per cent, *Nordicom-Sveriges Mediebarometer 2013*). In Finland, 19 per cent of households (age group 15-74) owned a tablet in May 2013 (*Consumer Barometer 2013*).

### *Cross-platform reading of news*

The survey also included questions concerning media consumption on different platforms. First, we were interested in differences in reading morning newspapers and evening tabloids. Secondly, we wanted to explore the reading habits on different platforms from a cross-media perspective. By printed papers (referred to below as “print”), we mean morning papers and evening tabloids distributed in print. Online papers (referred to below as “web”) are browser-based web versions of the news media. Mobile applications (referred to below as “app”) are contents accessed with hand-held devices such as smartphones and tablets.

Both the Swedish and the Finnish students are keen readers of morning papers. As shown in Figure 2, a total of 80 per cent of the Swedish and 88 per cent of Finnish students claimed they had read one or more morning paper(s) (web or paper) the previous day. This is a notably higher figure than the average in the corresponding age group in Sweden (42 per cent, *Nordicom-Sveriges Mediebarometer 2013*) and in Finland (44 per cent, Reuters 2014, encompassing all “print papers” in the whole population).

**Figure 2.** The reading of morning papers and evening tabloids on all platforms in Sweden and Finland, 2014 (per cent)



*Note:* National average in Finland refers to the corresponding age group except for laptop and tablet, which refers to the total population. Number of student respondents in Sweden is 162 and in Finland 167, and for the population in Sweden 246 and in Finland 503.

*Source:* Nordicom-Sveriges Mediebarometer 2013, 2014, for Sweden, and Reuters 2014 for Finland.

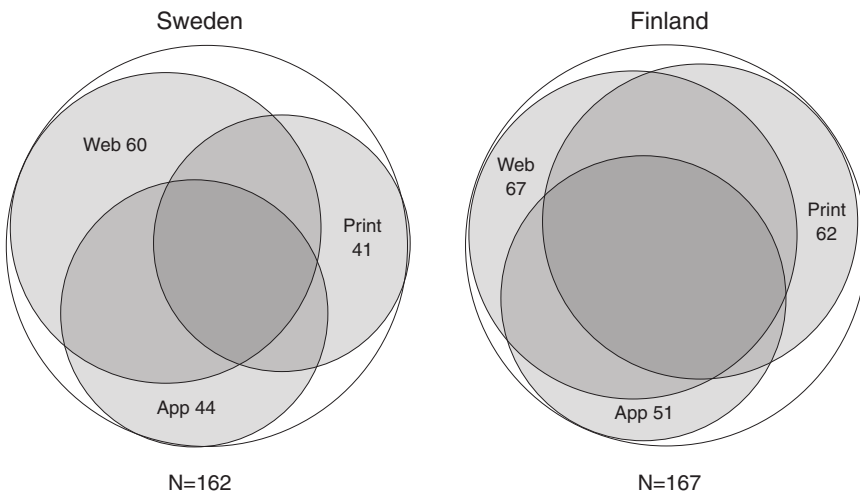
Furthermore, one morning paper is not enough for most of the students. A total of 46 per cent of the Swedish students and 49 per cent of the Finnish students had read two or more morning papers the preceding day. Some students seem to have an almost insatiable appetite for news – six per cent of the Swedish students and seven per cent of the Finnish students claim to have read four or more morning papers the preceding day.

In Sweden there are two major tabloids, *Aftonbladet* and *Expressen*. Their Finnish counterparts are *Iltalehti* and *Ilta-Sanomat*. Figure 2 indicates that the evening tabloid news is less popular among our students than the morning papers: 69 per cent of the Swedish students claimed to have read evening tabloid news the preceding day while merely 43 per cent of the Finnish students did.

Figure 3 shows how the consumption of news is distributed across different platforms. The printed version of the morning paper is still popular among the students (both the Finnish and the Swedish students have access to most printed morning papers, provided by the school), while the accessibility of the web version and phone or tablet version makes these a natural choice as well. Among those who had read a morning paper the preceding day, 41 per cent (Sweden) and 62 per cent (Finland) had read it on printed matter. No less than 60 per cent (Sweden) and 67 per cent (Finland) had visited the web version of a morning paper, while 44 per cent (Sweden) and 51 per cent (Finland) had read the phone or tablet app version.

There is a notable difference here from the Swedish average: of the students, 60 per cent (Sweden) and 70 per cent (Finland) (total) had read a morning paper on the web the preceding day, compared to only 13 per cent of the Swedish average in the corresponding age group (*Nordicom-Sveriges Mediebarometer 2013*).

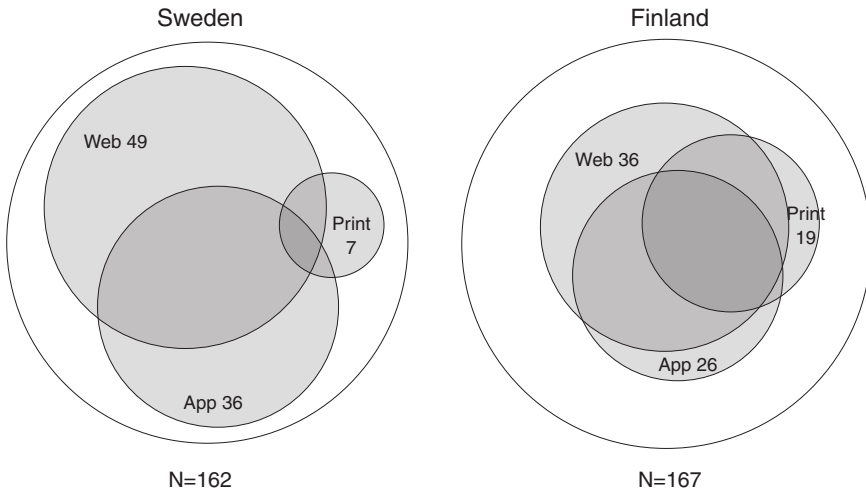
**Figure 3.** Readership of morning papers on different platforms among students in Sweden and Finland, 2014 (per cent)



Note: For specification, see Appendix.

Figure 4 presents the distribution of the consumption of evening tabloids on different platforms. The printed evening tabloid is definitely more read among the Finnish students, at 19 per cent, compared to the Swedish students at seven per cent. This is probably because the Finnish journalism school provides its students with printed tabloids in the students' newsroom whereas the Swedish one does not.

**Figure 4.** Readership of evening tabloids on different platforms among students in Sweden and Finland, 2014 (per cent)



Note: For specification, see Appendix.

## Discussion

The results of the survey indicate that Swedish and Finnish journalism students are more active and versatile in media consumption than those in their age group in general. Journalism students probably differ from the general population in their news consumption because of the availability of resources provided by the university: access to the Internet, a wide everyday availability of national and local newspapers, and sources provided by the library. It is likely that individuals with the study prospects of media and journalism are likely to be active consumers of media content. By the same token, the consumption of journalistic products means that the students are becoming accustomed to their future production environment and evidently regard monitoring the media as a process of preparing themselves for the job market. However, while the prevalent public discourse on students' media behaviour elsewhere rather points to journalism students not being active in reading newspapers, the results found for Swedish and Finnish students suggest that this is not the case in the Nordic countries.

The survey results show that students of all years possess a high range of technological equipment. As 96 per cent on average own laptops and 92 per cent smart-

phones, both of which can be easily carried, journalism education institutions no longer need to acquire an exhaustive set of technological resources of their own. The user-friendly and free-of-charge tools of the social media can serve students and educators in the establishment of individually appropriate, processual and collaborative working methods. As a consequence, the journalistic working process can be assisted, students' questions can be answered, information can be sought, and exercises can be conducted wherever the students are, independent of the physical constraints of the news- or classroom.

When looking at students' cross-media behaviour, it seems that many follow the same news on three different platforms: the printed paper, the browser-based online magazine, and the mobile content. This may imply that they actively follow and compare contents on different channels. What is also important is that nearly half of the students declared they had read two or more morning papers, which points to a tendency toward comparative reading. By cross-reading different contents, students may gain a wider picture of the topical issues, which helps them see differences in the framings of different media. They may also learn to distinguish between different presentation forms and develop news judgement skills for different channels. Nevertheless, as readers, students do not necessarily make a conscious distinction between different technical platforms and their forms of presentation.

Decisions concerning the availability of different (material) resources, often regarded as minor and non-pedagogical, driven by merely administrative processes, may have a major impact on future journalists' media habits. This is seen in the survey as differences in Swedish students' high interest in podcasts and Finnish students' active reading of evening tabloids. The access to different media enabled by the journalism school may have a great impact on specialization and the development of professional identity. Decisions concerning, for example, whether to acquire access to international media may significantly contribute to students' knowledge about the international media and their reading habits concerning international media supply, in both printed and digital form.

## Pedagogical implications

Journalism schools and teachers make important decisions that affect the degree to which students' experiences and routines as readers are utilized in journalism education. Considering the results above, we can draw the following conclusions about the pedagogy in journalism education to develop it toward a more student- or recipient-led perspective, i.e. to build upon the resource that the students' existing media habits and device ownership provide:

1. Once students show a high ownership of mobile devices, pedagogy can build upon their own hand-held equipment (the BYOD principle).



2. Once students are active receivers of news on different platforms, pedagogy can actively draw on their cross-media competence to support reflection on reception, which can lead into better understanding the distinguishing features of each platform to benefit the development of professional production skills (the reflexivity principle).
3. To put into practice the cross-media understanding, journalism curricula regarding the teaching of journalistic practice should foster distinctions between different platforms while promoting cross-media production (the converged media pedagogy perspective).

To suggest ways of putting these principles into practice we will next briefly address these statements, offering exemplary cases from the universities. The cases are descriptions of exercises applied at both universities under study.

**The BYOD principle.** Journalism educators can increasingly rely on the BYOD (“bring your own device”) principle, which means that educational online activities are carried out with student-owned devices. Journalism education institutions do not need to invest in costly hard- and software, as teachers can be considered free to construct exercises based on the students’ own equipment, without the fear of producing inequality among the students. Institutions are able to make investments in their ICT infrastructure more selectively, and teachers are able to realize exercises beyond the classroom. While today’s standardized file formats and communication protocols allow a higher degree of interchangeability than ever before, the variety in standards, operating systems and applications may present challenges in learning; teaching and learning should, then, be detached from the adoption of a specific task within a single application and more focus placed on learning general functions and adapting general principles. The BYOD principle thus emphasizes the students’ own problem-solving skills and represents a new paradigm of learning: it is more important to learn how to learn than to learn pre-selected and pre-defined tasks.

Example 1: The recurring major editorial exercise at JMG, called the News Week, includes a special element – the daily “2 pm Live” – based on the use of a student’s personal smartphone. Every day during the News Week, at 2 p.m., a window appears on the front page of the student online magazine. This window’s content is streamed live from the student’s smartphone, somewhere in the city, and is filled with whatever happens in front of that smartphone. It may be a press conference, an art exhibition, a “guess-where-I-am” contest, or an interview. One never knows what to expect on “2 pm Live”, which makes it a popular event every day of the News Week. The streaming service utilized is Bambuser, which provides apps for different smartphone platforms.

Example 2: The teacher’s use of standardized formats and browser-based applications makes it possible to assign exercises during weekends and holiday periods, such as Christmas break. An exercise at JMG that focuses on headlines is based on an interactive PDF document that makes use of Adobe Reader, a free application pre-

installed in virtually every modern computer, regardless of the operating system. The document contains scanned newspaper articles with headlines replaced by text fields, where the student can write a headline in the appropriate text size.

As applications and file storage are transferred from computers to “the Cloud” as open-source software has developed, in many cases, into industry standard, it is a fair assumption that more and more schoolwork will move from the school computers to the students’ own equipment. In the long run this will be beneficial to the school as well as the student, and should be supported by teachers and the IT structure for a quicker process. Of course, because the school cannot totally hand over the responsibility to the students, a small number of computers must still be accessible for the occasional student with no equipment of her own, and for the highly specialized software of the trade, such as InDesign, Avid and SPSS.

*The reflexivity principle.* Journalism courses can take advantage of students’ active role as cross-media receivers by making media reception a more visible area of inquiry through supporting reflection on individual experiences. As consumers of news on different platforms, students intuitively develop a competence that can be utilized in identifying different modes and forms of storytelling on different platforms. Students’ news judgement skills can be pedagogically fostered and enhanced through planning exercises for which an active monitoring of news events on different platforms is necessary. This way the reception of media content, which in informal settings is typically less structured and conscious, can be harnessed for purposes of professional learning. By verbalizing their experiences in the role of media consumer, students have the possibility to become more aware of their own consumption habits. However, personal reflection requires additional commitment from students, who may not always be willing to verbalize their experiences on the side of journalistic work which also comprises the verbalization of ideas. Therefore, a potential challenge lies in combining accountable reflection with journalistic practice.

Example: To support reflection on their habitual use of the media, students at CMT are given the task of keeping a personal blog where they regularly report on daily issues in the press. To frame and focus this reflection, they are regularly given delimited exercises in which they are encouraged to examine their material from a specific angle. One exercise involves gathering all articles on a specific topic in print, online and mobile versions, and comparing the news values applied on different platforms. Through systematic comparison and analysis the intuitive assumptions of a reader become externalized, i.e. verbalized, and the students become more conscious of them so that, in the next stage, they are more ready to apply them to a news event in the role of journalist. The monitoring blog can also be combined with a journalistic portfolio to make visible both the reception and production of journalism.

*The converged media pedagogy principle.* In journalism schools there is a long tradition of the teaching of publishing being divided into separate courses: print journalism,

television journalism, radio journalism. This division used to be a functional and rational way of dealing with the three major media used for journalistic publishing. Today, however, the media landscape is more complex, as the concept of media itself has become blurred and is rather hard to define. Today's journalism education attempts to be cross-medial, blurring the boundaries between different platforms; not least because of online reporting, which transgresses each of the medium-specific courses. Pedagogically, cross-media pedagogy should not conflate all platforms into one but rather treat them as different channels with their own distinguishing features and challenges. Each channel can be considered to form a relationship with the other, even if the focus lies on a particular medium. In other words, a print course includes an online dimension with a web magazine with multimedia storytelling, a radio course encompasses writing and editing online, and a television course incorporates elements of writing as well.

Example: If a video clip was called for in the News Week online magazine at JMG, the students currently taking the television course had to produce it, i.e. grab one of the professional video cameras, shoot the event, edit it in Avid Pro, and finally convert it to web size and quality using other software. This would typically take three to four hours. Today, a clear distinction can be made between broadcast and web television. The reporter is expected not only to bring a still camera to the event, but furthermore to make use of the camera's video possibilities (which are extensive in modern SLR cameras). It is also possible for the reporter to use her own smartphone, which in most cases delivers sufficient quality for the web clips. Using non-expensive consumer-oriented software, the editing and conversion procedure is now reduced to typically 15 minutes. This comes naturally to the students who, thanks to their extensive reading of online magazines, have recognized this distinction between broadcast and web television. They understand that while quality is the main focus in broadcast news, speed is imperative in news clips for immediate online publishing.

## Conclusion

Future journalists' relationship with the media forms the basis of the professionalism they will nurture and develop when they enter the professional field. Therefore, the students' relationship with the media, or their "media diet", should not be regarded as a matter of private consumption but rather taken into a more prominent field of inquiry and reflection in journalism education. Since the field of journalism and mass communication is becoming increasingly diverse and boundaries between different forms of mass communication are growing blurred, the roles of consumer and producer become more interconnected. At the same time, as there will be a more powerful blending of public or professional and private roles of communication, journalism students and educators could benefit from taking the students' individual media habits as a starting point for learning and teaching activities. This is important in a situation

in which journalism students need to make decisions about how to specialize and the basis on which to build their professional identities.

With help from the survey findings, using three principles we demonstrated how students' media ownership, active readership and cross-media behaviour can be taken into account in journalism education. Leaning on the BYOD principle, the encouragement of reflection and a convergence of media journalism education can be reconfigured, set more in tandem with students' media behaviour. In all, students' media consumption patterns form an area of inquiry that could be more systematically researched in and by journalism education institutions. By regularly gathering both quantitative and qualitative data on students' media equipment and habits, journalism education institutions could contribute to our general knowledge about future communication professionals' preparedness for digital environments. This kind of information would raise educators' awareness about possibilities for technically carrying out exercises, and about the technical competencies potentially existing among the students. It could also help instructors to improve the quality of education and allow a more diverse set of various forms of learning, such as collaborative and self-determined acquisition of professional skills.

## Notes

1. The Hovdabrekka project is an initiative by Nordic researchers to conduct a survey including Danish, Finnish, Icelandic, Norwegian and Swedish journalism students (see e.g. Hovden et al. 2009). The survey has been conducted in 2005, 2008 and 2012. For more information, see <http://hovdabrekka.wordpress.com>.
2. See <http://www.jmg.gu.se/english>.
3. See <http://www.uta.fi/cmt/en/index.html>.
4. For questionnaire and results in Swedish, see [http://www.eeutbildning.se/Swe\\_Report.pdf](http://www.eeutbildning.se/Swe_Report.pdf) and [http://www.eeutbildning.se/Fin\\_report.pdf](http://www.eeutbildning.se/Fin_report.pdf). For questionnaire and results in Finnish, see <http://www.eeutbildning.se/fragor-fi.pdf> and <http://www.eeutbildning.se/fragor.pdf>.
5. The response rate for Tampere is low, and thus less representative of all students. Furthermore, due to a longer total time of study the Finnish respondents constitute a more heterogeneous group in terms of age and professional experience (see Note 7). Of the Finnish respondents 51 per cent had studied one to three years, which corresponds to the Swedish respondents (terms 1–6).
6. The *Media Barometer* basically uses six age groups in the interval of 15–64 years, but results are sometimes presented with merged categories (15–24, 25–34, 35–44). We have mathematically compensated for differences in populations in the various age groups. The *Media Barometer* is an annual survey produced since 1979 by Nordicom, the knowledge centre in the field of media and communication research, located at the University of Gothenburg. It provides serial data on the access to and use of different media types, based on telephone interviews with a random sample of the population aged nine to 79 years.
7. According to the common practice in the countries under study, the Swedish students' study time was counted in number of terms (*termin*) and the Finnish students' study time in number of academic years (*lukuvuosi*). Swedish students acquire their Master's Degree in Journalism in 8 terms (total of 4 years: 2 terms of general academic studies plus 6 terms of studies in journalism) and Finnish students in 5 years (3 years for the Bachelor's degree plus 2 years for the Master's).

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## Appendix

### Readership of morning papers and evening tabloids on different platforms among students in Sweden and Finland, 2014 (per cent)

|                       | Morning papers   |                  | Evening tabloids |                  |
|-----------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
|                       | Swedish students | Finnish students | Swedish students | Finnish students |
| Total readership      | 80               | 88               | 67               | 43               |
| Web + print + app     | 15               | 31               | 1                | 11               |
| Web + print           | 24               | 47               | 2                | 15               |
| Web + app             | 31               | 43               | 21               | 22               |
| Print + app           | 20               | 36               | 2                | 13               |
| Total web             | 60               | 67               | 49               | 36               |
| Total print           | 41               | 62               | 7                | 19               |
| Total app             | 44               | 51               | 36               | 26               |
| Only web              | 19               | 8                | 26               | 10               |
| Only print            | 12               | 10               | 3                | 2                |
| Only app              | 7                | 3                | 15               | 2                |
| Number of respondents | 162              | 167              | 162              | 167              |

### III. MEETING THE CHALLENGES





## The Gap

### *J-School Syllabus Meets the Market*

Arne H. Krumsvik

#### Abstract

From a market-oriented point of view, J-schools should produce candidates with classic communications skills, able to take on any role in the news factory of the future. Classes on globalisation and press history should be replaced with training in platform-independent news production. However, in the development of a J-school syllabus, these demands from the market meet normative ambitions for a development of the profession of journalism.

Key words: journalism education, market orientation, scenario planning, competences, teamwork, freelance, Norway

## Introduction

The market demands critical journalists with good communication skills. But journalism schools (hereafter *J-schools*) do a better job on competences regarded as less important to recruiters, such as genre- and medium-specific knowledge, and the role of the journalist in society.

This basic contradiction is visible in a case study of a market-oriented approach to developing a J-school syllabus in a Norwegian context. Senior news executives responsible for recruiting new candidates from J-schools were asked to rate the importance (in relation to recruitment) of competences outlined in the Bachelor of Journalism syllabus at the Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Sciences (HiOA), and rate their general impression of the performance of HiOA candidates in these competences. They were also asked to identify critical competences not mentioned in the Bachelor of Journalism syllabus.

Two scenarios for the future of news production were developed based on the interviews: (1) news work will be teamwork, and (2) fewer journalists will be employed full time; more use of freelancers.

From a market-oriented strategic point of view, the J-school should focus on the competences regarded as important for the market in which their candidates are not meeting expectations. In the HiOA case this would entail going back to basics, pro-

ducing candidates with classic communications skills, able to take on any role in the news factory of the future. And classes on globalization and press history should be replaced with training in platform-independent news production. However, in the development of a J-school syllabus, these demands from the market meet normative ambitions for a development of the profession of journalism.

This chapter will identify the gap in a Norwegian context, and reflect on its consequences for J-school syllabus development.

Internationally, a similar debate has been underway for over 20 years on the need for reform in journalism education. Dennis (1984) argued that the rapid pace of technological change “will push journalism/mass communication schools away from industry-oriented sequence programs and toward a more generic mass communication study”. Medsker (1996) saw this wind of change – promoting the removal of journalism as a separate academic discipline and merging it into communication courses – as being in conflict with the vision of journalism education, and recommended hiring more professionals as teachers.

Reese (1999) warned about embracing the perceived needs of the industry and argued that for journalism to preserve its value, the field must “[model] an intellectually independent integration of theory and practice, supporting not just a media labor pyramid, but also a press-literate public”. He urged for an “educational commitment to the professionalism of scholarship, as opposed to the more conventional view of media ‘professionalism’ in the academy increasingly promoted by the media industry” (Reese & Cohen, 2000). Adams (2001) argued for a more “careful articulation between core journalism subjects and cognate academic disciplines”.

A recent debate on how to save the profession in light of the structural and economic changes in the industry follows the same dichotomy of professional training versus critical analysis of journalism’s role in society (MacDonald, 2006). While media systems and journalistic cultures may differ widely, Deuze (2006) found the changes and challenges facing journalism education around the world to be largely similar: An on-going debate on the combination of practical and contextual training.

## Theoretical framework and method: scenario planning

The starting point of this case study was a request from the Advisory Board of the Department of Journalism and Media Studies at HiOA, asking for a presentation of possible scenarios based on insights from key stakeholders in the media industries. This paved the way for the first market analysis conducted by this J-school after 47 years of operation.

Scenario planning is a systematic method for imagining possible futures. Schoemaker (1995) argues that scenario planning differs from other planning methods, such as contingency planning, sensitivity analysis, and computer simulations. While contingency planning examines only one uncertainty and presents a base case and an

exception or contingency, scenarios explore the joint impact of various uncertainties, which stand side by side as equals. Sensitivity analysis examines the effect of a change in one variable, keeping all other variables constant, while scenarios change several variables at a time without keeping others constant, hence trying to capture the new states that will develop after major shocks or deviations in key variables. Scenarios are also more than just the output of a complex simulation model, as they attempt to identify patterns and clusters among the millions of possible outcomes a computer simulation might generate:

They often include elements that were not or cannot be formally modelled, such as new regulations, value shifts, or innovations. Hence, scenarios go beyond objective analyses to include subjective interpretations. (Schoemaker, 1995)

The first step in developing scenarios is to *define the scope*. The time frame of this analysis corresponds with the HiOA strategic plan aiming at the year 2020. Bachelor of Journalism candidates are defined as the products offered to the market, and the market is identified as traditional Norwegian news media institutions, i.e. national, local and niche newspapers, and national public service broadcasting. The unstructured concerns and anxieties of the Dept. of Journalism and Media Studies Advisory Board were used as a starting point for the scenario planning process. This included concerns about social media not being part of the syllabus.

The second step is to *identify the major stakeholders*. The Head of Department and the Advisory Board have the power to propose changes in the syllabus. These issues will affect students, and the faculty can influence them. Editors in charge of recruiting were defined as representatives of the customers.

The third step is to *identify basic trends*. Based on three main drivers for change, i.e. the *digitization* (Deuze, 2004; Ottosen, & Krumsvik, 2012), *globalization* (Doyle, 2002), and *commercialization* (McManus, 1994) of media, four basic trends were identified: (1) technological – more and more mobile platforms; (2) political – towards a liberal media system (Hallin & Mancini, 2004); (3) economic – fewer and larger owners (Krumsvik, Skogerbø, & Storsul, 2013); and (4) user behaviour – the role of social media (Ihlebak, & Krumsvik, 2014; Krumsvik, 2012a). These trends were discussed thoroughly and agreed upon by stakeholders and informants.

Step four is to *identify key uncertainties*. Statements describing future situations based on the identified trends were formulated, and scored by the informants. Statements with high variance on scores represent key uncertainties. Once we identified the *trends* and *uncertainties*, we had the main ingredients for step five: *scenario construction*.

In a qualitative interview study, semi-structured interviews were conducted individually in person with a strategic sample of seven senior news executives responsible for the recruitment of new candidates from J-schools in the spring of 2012.

## Findings

The scores given to statements describing future situations based on the identified trends found the statements “more content collaboration within media groups”, “journalists will work more in teams”, and “fewer employed journalists, more freelancers” to be the *most likely outcomes* (*high mean score, low variance*). The *least likely outcomes* (*low mean score*) are situations in which “the majority of journalists are outside the journalist union (NJ)” and “joint press ethics rules disappear”.

Key *uncertainties* (*high variance*) were the questions of “platform-independent production vs. tailoring”, and “more revenue will come from new rather than old media” (Table 1). The informants also disagreed on the statements about “higher demands on earnings from the owners”, and “requirement of college degree to become a journalist”.

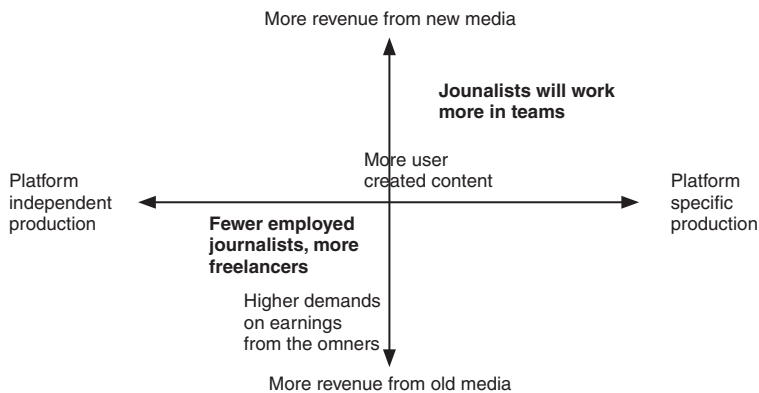
**Table 1.** Key uncertainties for trend identification on the journalism market

| Question                                                         | Min                         | Max                      |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Platform-independent production vs. platform-specific production | 2<br>(platform-independent) | 5<br>(platform-specific) |
| More revenue will come from new rather than old media            | 1<br>(old)                  | 6<br>(new)               |

*Note:* Scores given to statements describing future situations based on identified trends (N=7).

Based on correlation between the key uncertainties and more likely outcomes, a compass for scenario planning can be created (Figure 1).

**Figure 1.** Compass for scenario planning



*Note:* Based on scores given to statements describing future situations based on identified trends. The compass is based on the key uncertainties (*with high variance*; see also Table 1), and the correlations of other identified likely outcomes are visualized.

In addition to rating the statements describing possible future situations, the informants were asked to rate and argue for the importance (in relation to recruitment) of

competences outlined in the Bachelor of Journalism syllabus at HiOA (Table 2), and rate their general impression of the performance of HiOA candidates in these competences (Table 3). They were also asked to identify critical competences not mentioned in the Bachelor of Journalism syllabus.

**Table 2.** Rating of competences relevant for recruiting journalists up to 2020

| Ranking | Competences                                                               | Rating of skills (Mean) |
|---------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1       | Be critical regarding sources and structures of power                     | 5.4                     |
| 2       | Communicate information in an accurate, precise and vivid language        | 5.3                     |
|         | Updated on current affairs                                                | 5.3                     |
| 4       | Using social media as a journalistic tool                                 | 5.0                     |
|         | Presenting material on various media platforms                            | 5.0                     |
| 6       | Take responsibility for professional role                                 | 4.6                     |
| 7       | Reflect critically on media and journalism's role in society              | 4.3                     |
| 8       | Understanding genre                                                       | 4.0                     |
| 9       | Specialist in one medium                                                  | 3.7                     |
| 10      | Minorities                                                                | 3.6                     |
| 11      | Innovation and creativity                                                 | 3.4                     |
|         | Working as a journalist in an internationalized and multicultural society | 3.4                     |
|         | Convey information that is tailored to target groups                      | 3.4                     |
| 14      | Freedom of expression                                                     | 3.1                     |
| 15      | Equality                                                                  | 2.7                     |
| 16      | Knowledge about press history                                             | 1.9                     |

*Note:* Skills mainly from HiOA 2012 syllabus. Ranking of skills based on the informants' average rating of importance. 6=Very important; 1=Not important (N=7).

The informants rated classic journalism skills the highest (i.e. *'Be critical regarding sources and structures of power'*, *'Communicate information in an accurate, precise and vivid language'*, and *'Updated on current affairs'*), while the role of journalists in society (i.e. *'Working as a journalist in an internationalized and multicultural society'*) received a lower score, with *'Knowledge about press history'* at the bottom of the list (Table 2).

While the skills *'Communicate information in an accurate, precise and vivid language'* (Table 3, #14) and *'Be critical regarding sources and structures of power'* (Table 3, #11) were regarded as very important, the candidates did not perform to the standards expected by the media executives. On the other hand, *'Using social media as a journalistic tool'* (Table 3, #1) was rated as both important and performed, even if it was not explicitly mentioned in the syllabus. *'Working as a journalist in an internationalized and multicultural society'* (Table 3, #6) also received an approved score in performance, but was not seen as the most important skill.

**Table 3.** Rating of HiOA candidates (vs. rating of competences)

| Ranking of candidates | Competences                                                               | Rating of candidates (Mean) | Rating of skills (Mean) |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1                     | Using social media as a journalistic tool                                 | 1.00                        | 5.0                     |
|                       | Understanding genre                                                       | 1.00                        | 4.0                     |
| 3                     | Updated on current affairs                                                | .75                         | 5.3                     |
|                       | Specialist in one medium                                                  | .75                         | 3.7                     |
| 5                     | Reflect critically on media and journalism's role in society              | .71                         | 4.3                     |
| 6                     | Minorities                                                                | .67                         | 3.6                     |
|                       | Working as a journalist in an internationalized and multicultural society | .67                         | 3.4                     |
|                       | Presenting material on various media platforms                            | .67                         | 5.0                     |
| 9                     | Take responsibility for professional role                                 | .60                         | 4.6                     |
| 10                    | Equality                                                                  | .50                         | 2.7                     |
| 11                    | Be critical regarding sources and structures of power                     | .33                         | 5.4                     |
| 12                    | Convey information that is tailored to target groups                      | .25                         | 3.4                     |
| 13                    | Innovation and creativity                                                 | .20                         | 3.4                     |
| 14                    | Freedom of expression                                                     | .0                          | 3.1                     |
|                       | Knowledge about press history                                             | .0                          | 1.9                     |
|                       | Communicate information in an accurate, precise and vivid language        | .0                          | 5.3                     |

*Note:* Skills mainly from HiOA 2012 syllabus. Ranking of skills based on the informants' average rating of candidates. 1=Strong; 0=Weak (Compare to rating of importance: 6=Very important; 1=Not important. See also Table 2). See Figure 2 for an illustration of key findings.

*Other relevant competences identified by the informants, not covered explicitly in the syllabus*

- Knowledge about the media business (value chain)
- Technical knowledge (both publication platforms and tools for computer-assisted journalism)
- Able to analyse Big Data and complex issues
- Languages
- Knowledge of access to public records
- Able to build one's own network of sources
- Burning soul (a wish to change the world)

Based on the compass outlined in Figure 1 and the evaluation of competences, two initial scenario themes might be derived – (1) teamwork and (2) freelance (Table 4) – each with new skills to be learned by future journalists:

**Table 4.** Possible future situations in relation to the initial scenario themes

|             | <b>1. Teamwork</b>                                                                                                                                                   | <b>2. Freelance</b>                                                                                                                                                    |
|-------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Assumptions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Tailor-made news for each channel</li> <li>– New media financing journalism</li> <li>– More user-created content</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Multiple channel distribution</li> <li>– Old media financing journalism</li> <li>– Owners demanding higher profits</li> </ul> |
| New skills  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Teamwork</li> </ul>                                                                                                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Platform-independent news production</li> <li>– Entrepreneurship</li> </ul>                                                   |

*Note:* Describing possible future situations, not mutually exclusive. See also Figure 1.

## Discussion

In Norway we might expect to find indications of a move from a Democratic Corporatist system towards a Liberal model, driven by a digitization and commercialization of news media, and the professionalization of journalism (Hallin & Mancini, 2004). However, analysis of recent issues surrounding the revision of Norwegian media policy reveals a continuous high degree of state intervention through regulation and subsidies. While both journalists and media institutions demonstrate a high degree of professionalization, key policy measures are still grounded in the era of the political press (Krumsvik, 2013). This is supported by the finding in this case, with the informants finding typical characteristics of the liberal model, such as a diminishing role of both journalist unions and institutionalized press ethics, to be “least likely” outcomes.

The “most likely” outcomes of (1) more content collaboration within media groups, (2) more teamwork in journalism, and (3) fewer employed journalists and more freelancers indicate increased commercialization. The key uncertainties (Table 1) are also partly related to the business of media, i.e. the question of whether new or old media will fund journalism in the future (see also Krumsvik, 2012b). This is the issue with the highest variance among the respondents.

The other main uncertainty is related directly to the production and distribution of journalism, i.e. multiple channel distribution vs. tailoring, the former rating slightly higher than the latter (Table 2).

The new skills of teamwork (Scenario 1), platform-independent news production, and entrepreneurship (Scenario 2) identified in this analysis were not explicitly mentioned by the informants. However, several of them highlighted the need for knowledge about the business mechanisms of the news industries. It is important to note that the informants were asked to identify skills in the situation in which they would be hiring new talent. In a scenario in which more of the workforce would be

independent freelancers, new skills not recognized by representatives of traditional institutions will be needed.

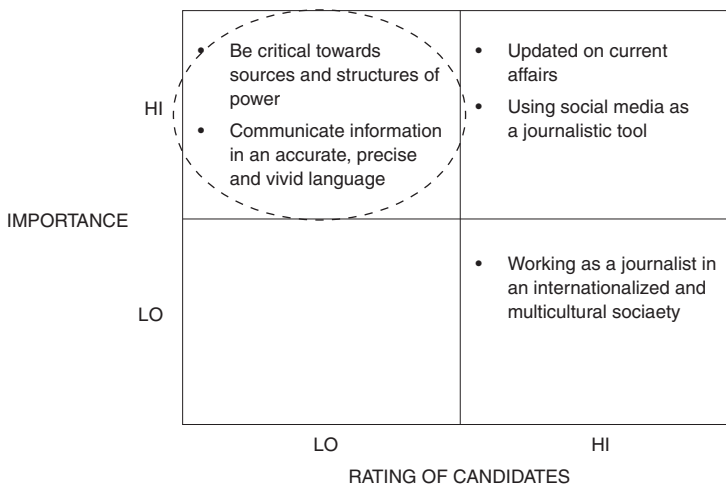
In the case of HiOA, the J-school needs to decide whether to educate news workers with competences needed to succeed in both scenarios. Hence, the discussion on the role of entrepreneurship in J-school education needs to address whether journalism education should prepare news workers for a professional life beyond employment at the traditional news institutions.

From a market-oriented strategic point of view, the J-school should also focus on competences regarded as important for the market, as their candidates are not meeting expectations (see Figure 2). The skills '*Communicate information in an accurate, precise and vivid language*' (Table 3, #14) and '*Be critical regarding sources and structures of power*' (Table 3, #11) were regarded as very important, but the candidates did not perform to the standards expected by the media executives.

A hypothesis that social media needs to be part of the syllabus was not strengthened by this analysis. It was rated as both important and performed, even if it was not explicitly mentioned in the syllabus (Table 3, #1). Classes on globalization and press history could also be given less emphasis.

This would entail going back to basics, entailing producing candidates with classic communications skills, able to take on any role in the news factory of the future. However, in the development of a J-school syllabus, these demands from the market meet normative ambitions for a development of the profession of journalism (Deuze, 2006; MacDonald, 2006).

**Figure 2.** Strategic focus: journalism skills with high importance and low evaluation score on competence



Note: Illustration of key findings presented in Table 3.



**Table 5.** The informants

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|                                                                    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Editor-in-Chief, local newspaper (owned by A-pressen)              |
| Editor-in-Chief, local newspaper (owned by Edda Media/Mecom)       |
| Editor-in-Chief, regional newspaper                                |
| Executive News Editor, national newspaper                          |
| Head of Department, national public service broadcaster            |
| Senior News Editor, commercial national public service broadcaster |
| Senior Editor, niche newspaper                                     |

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Note: 4 male, 3 female

These findings were presented to the internal stakeholders at HiOA (i.e., Advisory Board, students and staff) in the spring of 2012. While relevance for the media industries was considered a key variable in strategic development, very high numbers of applicants to the J-school did not create any imminent sense of urgency to make radical changes to the syllabus based on this market-oriented approach. It was also concluded that the educational institution should play a role as a normative corrective to the market, hence continuing to prioritize the public service aspect of journalism in the combination of practical and contextual training.

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## Women Train In – and Out of – Journalism

Hege Lamark

### Abstract

Training in journalism has long been regarded as a route to achieving a better gender balance in the profession. Given this view, this chapter reflect on the considerable dropout rates among women, many of whom leave journalism after just a few years on the job. In Norway, far more women enter journalism via training than via “writing their way in”, as men are often said to do. However, in a study of 500 journalists trained in Bodø between 1989 and 2008, we found that women, once trained, leave journalism before they begin. While women have long been in the majority among journalism students, it is men who are in the majority when it comes to beginning work as a journalist after qualifying. In other words, most of those who remain in editorial positions are men, and the gender gap is increasing over time. Women and men respond differently when invited to evaluate statements concerning journalism as a job. Using these data as a starting point, I will discuss dropout rates among female journalists as a challenge faced by journalism training programmes.

Keywords: journalism education, gender gaps, career, dropouts, female journalists, leaking pipeline, Norway

### Introduction

A generation ago, there was a great lack of educated journalists in Norway; only 15 per cent of journalists had an academic education. The remaining percentage “wrote their way in” to their occupation, which for a long time was the most common route of recruitment (Lorentzen, & Høyer, 1976). The Northern Norwegian editorial offices had even lower levels of education compared to the rest of the country. Furthermore, these newsrooms were considerably male-dominated. At the average Northern Norwegian editorial office, 90 per cent of journalists were male and only a minority of the staff had an education above a final upper secondary degree<sup>1</sup>.

Beginning in the 1980s the demand for education in journalism was increasing, at the same time as education in journalism became an ever more common entry point to a career in the media (Ottosen, 2000, 2004). The industry experienced an alarming discrepancy between educational needs and access to admission within the

public system of education. While this was a national problem, the need for educated journalists was especially pronounced in Northern Norway.

Education in journalism in Northern Norway was established in 1987, after strong commitment by local and central press environments. The desire for more women at Northern Norwegian editorial offices was one of the arguments used to draw out this new form of education in Bodø. The Norwegian Union of Journalists (NJ) emphasized the aspects of equal opportunity in their referral to the Norwegian Church and Education Committee:

The share of women positioned in editorial offices in Northern Norwegian newspapers is still substantially lower than the average share of women among NJ's members. Far more women find employment by means of education than that of "writing their way in", as men often do. An education within media in this region of the country will, therefore, most likely provide an increase in the share of females.<sup>2</sup>

The argument made by the journalist trade organization is both interesting and recognizable from other debates concerning the lack of recruitment of women in various instances (Henningsen, & Højgaard, 2002). NJ's statement provides a portrait of the relationship between the educational system and editorial offices almost as a pipeline: if only enough is led through one end, then enough will find its way out the other end. Such a perception is common within academia. The low share of women among researchers is most commonly explained by the level of recruitment, and it is assumed that the problem will be solved over time because the level of female recruitment is rising (Henningsen, 2003: 26). An opposite point of view, on the other hand, claims that there are no grounds for such optimism. The share of women found among researchers is not increasing in proportion to the increase in the share of females graduating from universities with Bachelor's degrees. This perspective argues that the pipeline is leaking, and thus that women are falling out of the system in larger quantities than men are on all levels pertaining to scientific careers. In this way, we find relatively fewer women the further up we follow the academic system (Henningsen, & Højgaard, 2002).

How, then, has the pipeline functioned between journalism education and editorial offices, where the need for more female journalists has been emphasized for some time? This is what we will continue to investigate.

The same year NJ wrote their statement, the share of female participants in the organization reached 25 per cent<sup>3</sup>. The daily press in Northern Norway had fewer women, yet the differences between the northern and southern parts of the county were likely not as profound as previously thought. NJ argued in favor of affirmative action in the admission of students for the new branch of education in Bodø, because "only one in ten journalists is a woman in this region of the country". The organization's own statistics on income do not, however, support the claim concerning a "substantially lower share of women" at Northern Norwegian editorial offices. Statistics on income in 1987, which include journalists at 21 Northern Norwegian newspapers, reveal a

share of women of 19 per cent at Northern Norwegian editorial offices, compared to 25 per cent nationwide.<sup>4</sup>

The Work Research Institute (AFI) has studied work environments among employees at daily newspapers since 1979, and a gender gap in this field has been a significant theme in this research. During the preliminary work for one of AFI's reports (Sørensen, Seierstad, & Grimsmo, 2005), the now deceased Bjørg Aase Sørensen wrote a memo summarizing “equal opportunity between the sexes as evidenced in material over the past three decades” (Sørensen, undated). The way she saw it, most notable were the years just after the turn of the millennia when media reached a magical limit of 40 per cent of women among editorial employees. Since the 1970s, a comparative figure of 40/60 between women and men was considered to be a just and reasonable distribution in achieving a balance in gender within the press.

Northern Norwegian editorial offices have also approximated this magical limit, although the share of women here is lower than the nationwide average. NJ has four local teams in Northern Norway, where women currently constitute 39 per cent of participants, compared to 43 per cent nationwide (2013). The gap between north and south is therefore just as large today as it was 25 years ago, when the journalism program in Bodø admitted its very first students.

In the first two years of student groups, men outnumbered women, yet if we glance at the past two decades as a whole, women comprise over half (56 per cent) of all graduates in journalism. This coincides with the general “feminization” of higher education during the same period (Aamodt, & Stølen, 2003; Roalsø, 2010: 339). The share of women among Bodø students is somewhat lower than within other Nordic journalism programs. This is exemplified in a study on Nordic journalism programs (Hovdabrekka, 2008), which found that the share of women is highest in Finland (71 per cent) and lowest in Denmark (48 per cent). Norwegian programs average 60 per cent women. The paradox here is that even though Norway has more female graduates with degrees in journalism than men, a trend that has lasted several years, there are still more men working at editorial offices than women<sup>5</sup>. In this way, “the leaking pipeline” can be seen as an accurate illustration of the situation in the Norwegian press.

It is difficult to determine what impact the journalism program has had with regard to why we find more women working at Northern Norwegian editorial offices today than in the past. This chapter does not, therefore, concern editorial offices, but rather the working life of those who had completed their degrees in journalism in Northern Norway during the first 20 years after the program itself was established. Other research has shown that highly educated women and men develop different careers, and that these differences increase over the span of their working career (Arnesen, 2010). I would like to investigate whether we can find similar gender gaps among those who have completed their journalism education in Northern Norway.

## Success in working life?

Succeeding in working life is far from an unambiguous term at Norwegian editorial offices. Within the field of media there is a broad spectrum of businesses, spread out geographically, with editorial offices of various sizes and consisting of an increasing variation in job titles, which itself signifies a field of work undergoing great change (Sørensen et al. 2005: 20). Editorial employees work under different conditions, and surely also have different views of what constitutes status and what the meaning of success in working life is. One of the more ambiguous myths is that “journalism can provide many opportunities, as long as you ‘jump off’ at the right time” (Børtnes, & Grønsund, 1981). Therefore, we cannot simply determine factors of success by counting the number of journalism graduates who receive – and hold on to – an editorial job. This is nonetheless an obvious tool of measurement used by institutions that educate journalists.

The overall point of providing an education in journalism is primarily viewed as providing the qualifications to work at editorial offices. Most people will view it as a sign of quality for an educational institution if many of its students find employment as journalists after completing their studies. If this number is low, one can question whether the education is relevant to the industry’s and society’s need for qualified employment.

Bjørnsen, Hovden, and Ottosen (2007) use the term “high factor of success” in their analysis of data on where journalism students find themselves after graduation. The factors of success mentioned are relevant work directly after graduation, employment as a journalist, and steady employment. NIFU’s research concerning the situation in the job market pertaining to various groups of new graduates also defines relevant fulltime employment as “an indicator of success, seen from a community economic perspective as well as for the individual” (Arnesen et al. 2012: 25).

On the other hand, Gunnar Nygren (2012: 34) reminds us that full-time, permanent employment only existed during a fairly short period in the history of industrialism. His studies of the Swedish labour market show that changes in journalistic work – e.g. the way various forms of casual and part-time work have become much more common – tends to follow general trends in the national labour market. Studies of drop-outs among Swedish journalists also reveal that more women than men are leaving journalism. “Too uncertain employment” comes on top of the list of reasons for their job change (Nygren, 2012: 27).

## Survey with a high response rate

The chapter builds on gathering data on around 500 people who received their journalism education at Bodø University College<sup>6</sup> during the 20-year period from its establishment in 1997. The survey includes the first 20 year groups, as well as the year group graduating in the spring of 2008. These students received their journalism

degrees *before* the financial crisis hit Norwegian business media, the majority of them completing a two-year program in journalism. Beginning in 2003 it became possible to complete a three-year Bachelor's degree in journalism, although until 2007 students could choose between a two- and three-year degree.

The data were collected through a phone survey during the period of March 2008 to March 2009. All the graduates were located and contacted, and a surprisingly high number (98 per cent) of them agreed to participate in a structured phone interview, starting with a questionnaire. These participants received questions regarding where they had come from prior to enrolling at Bodø, where they have later resided, and what jobs they have had at various time periods since graduation (after 6 months, 1 year, 3 years, 5 years and 10 years). Finally, they were asked to state whether they agree or disagree with various statements concerning journalism as an occupation.

A descending rate of reply in other studies conducted with Norwegian journalism students has generated uncertainty with regard to results. One example of this is Bjørnsen, Hovden, and Ottosen (2007), who studied students from Oslo and Volda during the period 2001–2004. In this study, a large number of participants within a specific year group said they had become employed as journalists just after their studies. These researchers are uncertain whether this is to be interpreted as an indication of a healthy job market for this particular year group, or an expression of an uneven selection, as a consequence of a low reply rate. They suspect that possibly only “the more successful individuals replied to the questionnaire” (ibid: 68).

The research on Bodø is more geared towards investigating journalists' career after graduation. The material is also more comprehensive, including every year group graduating from 1989 to 2008. Since the percentage of feedback is just under 100, there is no need for concern regarding uneven selection. This makes the data highly reliable.

## Many became journalists

The data material opens doors to an extensive analysis of the work life of the informants. A primary finding – which does not concern gender – is that students educated in Bodø find work as journalists more often than those with a journalism education from Oslo and Volda. In order to compare my figures with findings from the Hovdabrekka project<sup>7</sup>, here I will look exclusively at students who found work just after finishing their journalism studies. Those who continued to study are not included in this calculation of the share of those who found relevant employment. After graduating in 2001, 75 per cent of Oslo/Volda students became employed at an editorial office, while the corresponding figure for Bodø students in the same year group was 91 per cent. The average figure for all 20 year groups at Bodø is also high. Of all graduates, 87 per cent found journalist jobs or other editorial positions just after graduating.

There is no doubt that a substantial number of Bodø journalism graduates found relevant employment after their relatively short period of education; this also applies

when compared to NIFU's candidate survey among new graduates with a Master's degree (Wiers-Jenssen et al. 2014). In this context it is more relevant to make comparisons with the more professional-oriented programs, such as those within teaching or health care and social studies, where, with resemblance to the education in journalism, there is a strong connection between the education and which parts of the job market it is aimed towards. Researchers from NIFU discovered that 68 per cent of all graduates with a teaching degree worked at a school and that 72 per cent of all graduates with an education in health care and social studies worked within health care and social services (ibid: 59).

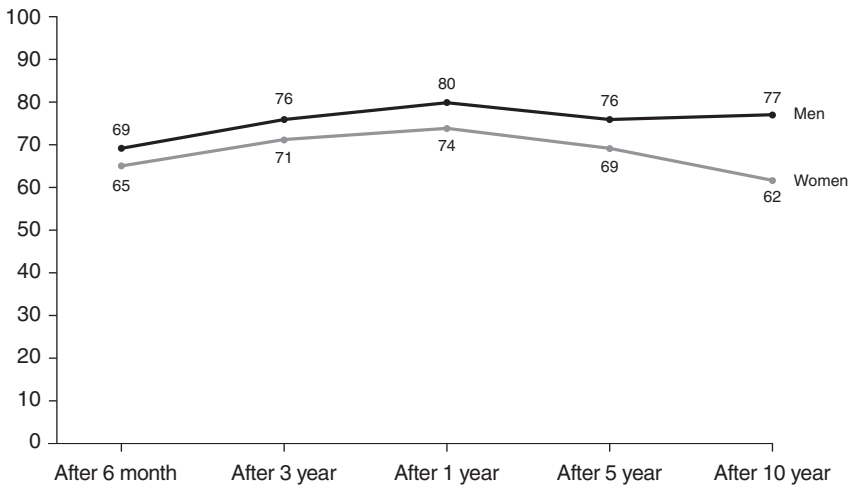
The following pages will describe those who found editorial employment in percentages pertaining to all graduates from Bodø, which will naturally reveal lower percentages compared to the calculations above. I believe this method of calculation addresses a question journalism programs have been confronted with from the industry's point of view, for as long as there have been journalism students in Norway: "Do they actually become journalists?" The statement can be interpreted as an expression of academic skepticism, strongly questioned among journalists after WWII. Ottosen refers to a questionnaire among retirees in NJ and the Norwegian Association of Editors, who were asked if "it was possible to learn journalism in the same way as other professions" (Ottosen, 2004: 28). Only 19 per cent replied that this was "absolutely possible". This attitude can be viewed as an occupational philosophy, yet it might just as much be viewed as a defense strategy by those lacking higher education themselves.

Those who initiated a new, Northern Norwegian journalist branch of education had ambitious expectations for its establishment in 1987. I personally recall intense discussions during the program's first year concerning whether or not it was possible to "become a journalist" as a student entering with no experience in journalism<sup>8</sup>. Many were also skeptical about the notion of whether or not it was right to recruit so many students from other parts of the country, since one of the goals was to secure journalistic competencies for Northern Norway. These questions resurfaced with enhanced attention when the program celebrated its 20-year anniversary in 2007, and this in itself was a significant driving force behind the study presented in this chapter.

When the questionnaire was complete, it was revealed that 55 per cent of women and 69 per cent of men reported being employed at an editorial office. These are average figures for all informants, from new graduates to those who received their journalism education 20 years earlier. Figure 1 shows the establishment of gender gaps already in the transition from studies to working life. I would like to remind the reader that women constitute a majority among students in virtually all year groups. Six months after graduation, we still find 4 per cent more men than women employed as journalists. The first years after graduation we find the gender gaps to be considerably stable, although they increase substantially when five to ten years have passed since subjects completed their education in journalism. Men continue editorial work to the same extent as earlier in their career, while we see a pronounced decrease in females positioned at editorial offices. During the shift of the decade, this difference increased to 15 per cent.



**Figure 1.** Relative share of women and men with an editorial job at different points in time since earning their journalism degree, Bodø (per cent of all graduates between 1989 and 2009)



Note: The total number of respondents is 503.

Figure 1 shows that fewer women than men work as journalists after completing their education in journalism. A relevant question to ask is whether this tendency is the same regardless of when these subjects attended a journalism program. To examine possible changes over time, in this analysis I have categorized the 20 year groups based on year of graduation.

- **The Pioneers (1989-1995)** attended the journalism program when it was new and partly incomplete, yet simultaneously strongly characterized by a pioneering spirit and enthusiasm on both the student and teaching levels.
- **Middle Year Group (1996-2002)** were admitted according to regulations set by the Norwegian educational regulatory authority, known as Samordna Opptak. The university college no longer specified local admission requirements, with an aim of ensuring a diverse composition of year groups.
- **The Newcomers (2003-2008)** were admitted in compliance with new governmental rules of precedence for higher education. In this group, 40-50 per cent of students received admission directly after upper secondary school. Applications to the journalism program, which were record-high during the entire 20-year period, declined somewhat after the shift of the millennia.

By comparing the careers of women and men within these three groups, I can examine whether gender gaps vary from period to period. For instance, did more male students “become journalists” during the first years? It is a common perception that journalism was previously primarily male-dominated and that the position has now evened

out with regard to gender. Based on the pipeline theory, this would mean that the problem of deficient recruitment of women would be solved by itself, since the share of women admitted is rising (Henningsen, 2003). However, the data do not support such a situational description. I find a thorough majority of male journalists among Pioneers and Newcomers, implying that more men became active journalists during both the 1990s as well as 2003 and beyond.

With regard to the Middle Year Group, the gender gaps are less apparent when one considers the first period after graduation. In this group, more women than men had acquired editorial jobs within the first year after graduation (this being the years just before and after the change of the millennia). This tendency temporarily reversed when three years had passed since graduation; and after ten years, the gender gap had increased by as much as 25 per cent in disfavor of women. Here, 55 per cent of women and 80 per cent of men in the Middle Year Group were employed at an editorial office.

It is easier to explain the change for the Middle Year Group subjects as accompanying a fluctuating job market – from the boom in the beginning of the 90s to the start of the financial crisis ten years later. The Middle Year Group students began their working life during a period of tense market conditions and a considerable decrease in general employment (Arnesen, 2011: 10). Nonetheless, we see that the discovery of fewer women with degrees in journalism compared to men employed as journalists also applies to them. The leaking pipeline seems to be an appropriate illustration of the situation since the establishment of journalism as an education.

## Where do women and men work?

The Hovdabrekka project has shown that the majority of Norwegian journalism students dream of getting a job in television or at a national newspaper. This reality appears to be otherwise for Bodø students when they enter the job market. Table 1 shows all informants who had an editorial job when the survey was conducted, divided according to type of editorial office and confirms that Bodø students primarily work for local newspapers. The second largest group works within radio/television; the majority were employed at NRK's district offices. "Other editorial offices" include magazines, scientific press, newscasts and pure website editorials.

Table 1 also shows that the previous figure hides interesting gender gaps. Men definitely work more often for local newspapers, while women are distributed more equally between radio/television and local newspapers.

Table 1 shows the workplace for everyone employed at an editorial office when the survey was conducted; in other words, both those who had just graduated and those who graduated 20 years earlier. The gender gaps between women and men become clearer when we take a closer look at the various time stages of the informants' working careers, and at the type of editorial office where they worked during this time (Table 2).

**Table 1.** Existing workplace among female and male Bodø journalism students, graduated between 1989 and 2008 (per cent)

|                              | <b>Total</b> | <b>Women</b> | <b>Men</b> |
|------------------------------|--------------|--------------|------------|
| Local newspapers             | 32           | 29           | 35         |
| Radio/television             | 26           | 30           | 21         |
| National/regional newspapers | 20           | 16           | 23         |
| Other editorial offices      | 22           | 24           | 20         |
| Sum per cent                 | 100          | 99           | 99         |
| Number of respondents        | 295          | 148          | 147        |

**Table 2.** Existing workplace among female and male Bodø journalism students, graduated between 1989 and 2008, at different points in time after graduation (per cent)

|                              | <b>After 6 months</b> |     | <b>After 3 years</b> |     | <b>After 5 years</b> |     | <b>After 10 years</b> |     |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|-----|----------------------|-----|----------------------|-----|-----------------------|-----|
|                              | Women                 | Men | Women                | Men | Women                | Men | Women                 | Men |
| Local newspapers             | 57                    | 53  | 43                   | 44  | 37                   | 39  | 30                    | 34  |
| Radio/TV                     | 23                    | 21  | 25                   | 20  | 27                   | 18  | 24                    | 21  |
| National/regional newspapers | 11                    | 15  | 15                   | 20  | 27                   | 18  | 21                    | 24  |
| Other editorial offices      | 9                     | 12  | 17                   | 16  | 21                   | 23  | 25                    | 21  |
| Sum per cent                 | 100                   | 101 | 100                  | 100 | 100                  | 100 | 100                   | 100 |
| Number of respondents        | 177                   | 150 | 162                  | 142 | 123                  | 104 | 67                    | 62  |

Table 2 clearly shows that local newspapers are the most common employers of journalism graduates of both genders, most likely because this is where we find the best access to positions available. At the same time, local newspapers are the ones that “lose” the majority of educated journalists, particularly many women, as time passes. As the table shows, this gradual decrease takes place just after graduation. While far beyond half of all graduates work for local newspapers, only a third of them remain ten years later. This reduction is notably larger among women than that of men.

The table otherwise confirms that women are more often employed in radio/television and that the radio/television share remains quite stable. Just as many Bodø journalists work in radio/television six months after graduation as ten years after. Regardless of the time period, the women are responsible for maintaining this average, since most of them work at radio/television editorial offices.

This revelation gives us reason to question whether radio/television is a type of workplace that satisfies female preferences more than, for example, local newspapers. This question creates a need for qualitative observational and interview studies for various types of editorial offices.

## Difficult to compare with other occupations

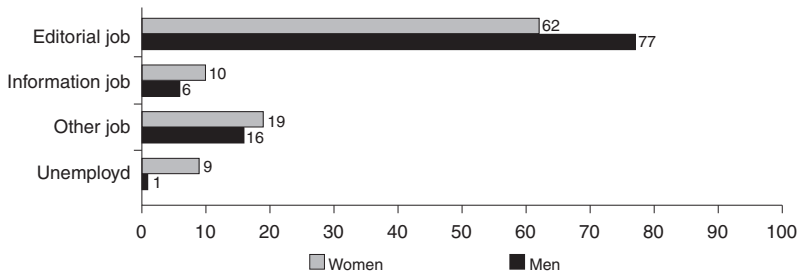
We have seen that women and men with an education in journalism obtain different careers, and that these differences increase throughout their working career. The question arises as to what extent this can be explained with the subject of journalism and conditions surrounding editorial offices, or whether it is a result of more general gender gaps among Norwegian employers. For example, do corresponding numbers of succession take place among highly educated women in other occupations? The lack of comparable statistics makes it difficult to give a clear answer to this question. The National Statistics Agency has little or no overview of the relation between education and workplace, or statistics on job switches or dropouts throughout people's working life. Neither is such information provided by annual surveys conducted by NIFU among candidates from universities or colleges regarding how they adapt to the job market. In these surveys informants answer questions six months after graduation, while NIFU does not collect data concerning informants' working life after this point.

We must instead content ourselves with looking at specific year groups, comparing those educated in journalism with those who earned their Master's degree six months ago. Researchers found few gaps between women and men among these groups (Arnesen, 2010: 29). The pattern is virtually identical with the data concerning educated journalists who graduated from Bodø in the spring of 2000: about 80 per cent of women *and* men had an editorial job within six months of graduating. Yet, as previously shown in this chapter, even among the Middle Year Groups (1996-2002), a considerable gender gap emerged three years after graduation, and ten years later only 55 per cent of these women had editorial employment, compared to 80 per cent of the men. Compared to others with a Master's degree, this brings us no closer to an answer as to whether or not similar reductions take place among highly educated women in regard to other occupations.

## In what direction are women going?

I have reviewed old myths concerning journalism, which can lead to any outcome as long as one jumps off at the right time. My data offer no defined answer as to what women do when they are no longer working as journalists. A comparison between women and men ten years after earning a degree in journalism (Figure 2) shows that slightly more women than men work with information during this time period, while others have found employment outside the press. The most obvious difference between the sexes is that more women were without a job: 9 per cent of women found themselves outside the workforce when the survey was conducted, compared to only 1 per cent of men.

**Figure 2.** Where women and men worked ten years after completing their journalism education from Bodø, graduated between 1989 and 2008 (per cent)



Note: Number of respondents is 106 women and 81 men.

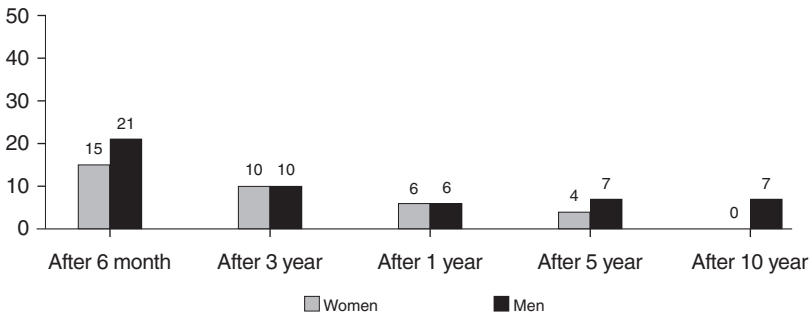
There is a surprisingly large gender gap among those who are unemployed, a difference of eight percentage points, and the explanation for this is not related to ordinary maternity leave. During the study, those who were actively employed but on parental leave were registered in the job category they had taken leave from, either an editorial job or another type of job. One can still perceive that the delegation of childcare responsibilities contributes to keeping more women outside the workforce, even though this perception cannot be directly read from the data. Most women (6 per cent) reported continuing their education ten years after graduating with a journalism degree, while the other 3 per cent were without a job for other reasons. Women's educational preferences seem to be an important factor in understanding the succession of female journalists, even among those who worked at editorial offices for several years. This same tendency was discovered in two succession studies conducted among journalists who left their occupation in the 1980s: while the majority of men wanted to find employment elsewhere, a great share of women sought higher education (Perez, & Sørensen 1982, Himle, & Kvam, 1981).

### Educational paradox

Figure 3 shows that women are more prone to continue their studies after earning a journalism degree.

Gender gaps are particularly obvious during the first period after earning a journalism degree, but after five and ten years we also find a clear majority of women enrolled in education. However, this does not amount to many people in the total scheme of things. Education alone cannot explain why so many women quit working as journalists. Yet, it is nonetheless striking that studies seem to draw more women than men away from editorial offices. Female Norwegian journalists have in fact “always” been better educated than their male colleagues (Roalsø, 2010: 339). By the turn of the millennia, 25 per cent of women in NJ had an education in journalism, compared to 14 per cent of men<sup>9</sup> In addition, more women than men had other higher education

**Figure 3.** Share of women and men who continued studying at different points in time after graduating in journalism, Bodø journalism students, graduated between 1989 and 2009 (per cent)



Note: Number of respondents is 503.

from a university/university college level. This is not all that surprising today, since the share of women in Norwegian society with a higher education has risen more than the share of men in recent years. Prior to the turn of the millennia, however, the situation was exactly the opposite: Norway had far more educated men than women. At Norwegian editorial offices, though, women have nonetheless had more education as far back as the 1970s<sup>10</sup>.

“Not only do women have more education, they also believe education to be important to a greater extent”, stated professor Bjørg Aase Sørensen in a note (Sørensen, undated). As a researcher at the Work Research Institute (AFI) she engaged herself in working environments, charting employees in the Norwegian daily press from 1979 until her death in 2010. Findings from the AFI survey in 2002 support the academic skepticism I mentioned earlier in this chapter. Here, a great majority of journalists claimed to be completely or partially in favor of the notion that “education is not as important as personal ability in getting the job done”; yet there are still fewer women (58 per cent) than men (70 per cent) who agree to such a claim. Sørensen interpreted the answers from the perspective of more dominant differences in opinion between the sexes in terms of education, pointing out that many qualities remain over time and that this is definitely the case when speaking of “education gaps/gender gaps”. One aspect in particular is the well documented difference in women’s and men’s actual level of education. Just as interesting, according to Sørensen, were the differences in attitude towards education displayed by women and men. She noticed this already during her work with the very first survey (Bermann et al. 1981). Researchers talked to women who desired and expressed interest in leading positions and positions in specific subject areas, yet did not receive such positions. Later, they displayed a collective paradox of sorts: They were more educated and had more relevant education, but nonetheless concluded that they needed more education in order to succeed with their application. We interpreted this as women having a need to hold on to a kind of rule-of-justice system.<sup>11</sup>

Later surveys also revealed differences between men and women in several areas, describing how they experienced their working situation. Women more frequently reported issues such as time pressure, cooperation problems, conflicts and unbalanced work tasks. Sørensen interpreted this as an expression of how women integrate their experiences in other ways than men do. “In reality it seems as if the total picture is, in fact, not that different from the one from 1981, meaning that women still do not feel completely accepted, yet they themselves believe they are handling their situation” (Sørensen, undated, 5).

Women feeling “not entirely accepted” at editorial offices could be a key point in understanding the mechanisms governing “the leaking pipeline” and, therefore, also “women’s delayed march” into Norwegian media (Roalsø, 2010: 339). Change in the direction of a more balanced representation of gender is characterized in the history of Norwegian press as a decelerated revelation. We recognize the pipeline metaphor in the discussion concerning the relationship between journalism education and editorial office:

Within the eight journalist educations offered in Norway, women have outnumbered men for quite some time, something that is changing the composition of this occupational group – if those who complete their education begin to work as journalists (Eide, 2010: 351).

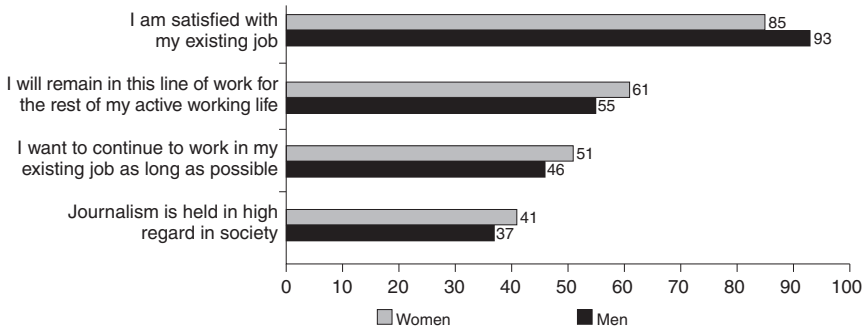
The study conducted with 500 journalists educated in Bodø during the period 1989–2008 shows that the pipeline leading from the journalism education to an editorial office is leaking at several points. Although more women are entering from one end – as journalism students – more female journalists do not necessarily come out the other end – at editorial offices. Gender gaps in the data material invite a more qualitative approximation of the mechanism at play in this process. There are no simple explanations for why women educated as journalists end up in other places than editorial offices; neither are there explanations for why women *become* journalists and then later leave their positions more than men do. Clarifying gender gaps in education and occupation requires extensive observational and interview studies, combined with general studies regarding market adaptation, branch of education and gender.

### Journalists are more positive

In the last section of this chapter I will suggest some possible problem statements, concerning informant interpretations of assertions regarding journalism as a vocation. Replies from this part of the study revealed some interesting differences. A reoccurring characteristic shows that those currently employed as journalists are more positive in their assessments compared to informants employed in other branches of work. Journalists are both more content with their positions and more determined to keep this vocation in the future. This coincides perfectly with other research that shows

that journalists are generally more pleased with their job, even when it is perceived as stressful and exhausting. It is no coincidence that earlier studies concerning Norwegian journalists are published with titles such as “I’ve never had more fun – yet I am very tired” (Skard 1984) and “The ideal job until the cramps set in” (Sørensen et al. 1993). Figure 4 shows replies from subjects who had an editorial job when they replied to the survey.

**Figure 4.** Opinions about journalism among women and men employed at an editorial office, Bodø journalism students, graduated between 1989 and 2009 (per cent)



*Note:* Number of respondents is 309. The scale ranges between 1 (completely agree) and 5 (completely disagree) and the figure show those who agree and partially agree.

Nearly nine out of ten of those employed at an editorial office replied that they were very satisfied with their existing job. A higher percentage of men (91 per cent) than women (83 per cent) were among those satisfied. Here, my findings differ from NJ's latest working environment survey, in which women and men replied more or less equally to questions concerning their future prospects as a journalist (Grismo, & Heen, 2013).

We see that journalists are satisfied with their work; yet will they remain at their workplace? Not necessarily. Far fewer agree with the statement “I will remain in this line of work for the rest of my active working life”. While most men are satisfied with their job, most women replied positively concerning remaining in their position as long as possible. This finding comes as a surprise, considering the data showing that women actually leave their career in journalism more often than men do.

While the previous statement concerns keeping their existing job, the third statement concerns the attitude towards the job they currently possess: “I want to continue to work in my existing job as long as possible”. Less than half of those asked wish to remain in their current job. This is slightly less than those who wish to remain in the same occupation throughout their life. Men are somewhat more geared towards switching their workplace than women are, despite the fact that women are less content with their existing job, as we saw earlier.

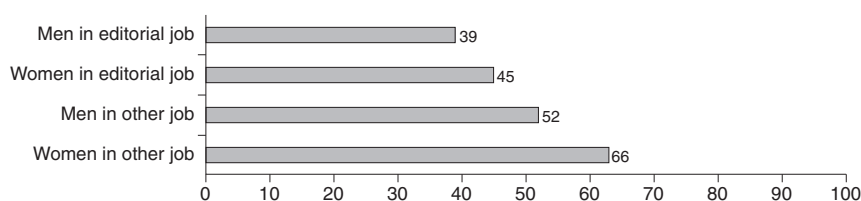
Less than half of the informants agree with the statement “Journalism is held in high regard in society”, although more women (41 per cent) than men (37 per cent)



support this claim. During the interviews, this question gave rise to several informal comments that this view strongly depends on where a person works – and who is asking. While journalists encounter both admiration and contempt, less often are they met with indifference. Several participants emphasized that although journalists are a heavily observed occupational group, the people they encounter are highly concerned with their work. Several women reported experiencing a high level of esteem due to their line of work.

The assertions in Figure 5 disclosed a clear tendency: replies vary with the participant's occupation, and journalists reply more positively than others. This pattern dissolves if the same question applies to their children: "I would like my son or daughter to become a journalist."

**Figure 5.** Share of women and men employed at an editorial office or in other jobs who would like their children to become a journalist, Bodø journalism students, graduated between 1989 and 2009 (per cent)



Note: Number of respondents is 503. The scale ranges between 1 (completely agree) and 5 (completely disagree) and the figure show those who agree and partially agree.

The replies still depend on the informant's type of job, but now the pattern has reversed. As Figure 5 shows, most non-journalists agree with the statement. Furthermore, there is a clear difference between the sexes in attitudes regarding their child's choice of occupation. More women than men would prefer that their offspring choose a career as a journalist. Women with degrees in journalism who themselves have a different line of work are the most positive towards this thought. Women employed in editorial office positions agree less, although they are more in favor of this than their male colleagues, who are more negative towards the notion of inheriting such an occupation.

How can we make sense of this finding, which can be perceived as a paradox? Journalists are quite positive concerning their own job and occupation. For the most part, they want to stay at their workplace and keep their occupation throughout their life. Yet, when the question no longer concerns themselves but rather their own existing and/or future children, journalism as an occupation receives less support from journalists – especially the men.

The reason for this is probably more complex, with many individual variations. Some likely blame it on stress and workload, while others may be influenced by what can be perceived as useful occupations in society, or whether their children "have what it takes". In today's Norwegian society, there is a strong norm that children should

choose their own line of work. Many participants (17 per cent) replied “I don’t know” or “Neither agree nor disagree” to the question in Figure 5, several of them mentioning precisely a child’s right to choose his/her own occupation as the reason for their answer. However, we must assume that this norm is just as common among journalists as non-journalists. It therefore does not explain why the participating journalists are so appalled at the thought of their own children becoming journalists. Remarks from participants suggest what lies behind their reasoning. Many expressed a form of disillusion: “I told them yesterday: there’s too much stress”, sighed one of the journalists who answered “Neither agree nor disagree” to the question. “I usually tell my daughter that work is very exciting, although the workload is way too intense”, said a father who had just begun studying again after many years of employment in several editorial office positions. A third person had just earned a new degree and changed his occupation after working nearly ten years as a journalist. He would not be pleased if his children chose a career in journalism: “As it is today? I think not!” Other comments followed the same reasoning: “Considering the direction it’s taking, no”. “I would’ve been supportive ten years ago, but now I’m less certain.” “If the question concerned becoming a *good* journalist, I would’ve agreed *completely*.”

Among the women who were more positive towards the thought of a son or daughter becoming a journalist, one commented that it “would be great” if the job were passed down a generation. Another felt the question was difficult to answer, but all things considered, she would be pleased if her children became journalists: “Although mostly because I like journalists as individuals. Playful, free, yet not too health-minded”. A woman who herself had gone straight from journalism studies to a teaching job replied, with a giggle: “Yes, I’d like that, but I might be a bit envious”.

Perhaps we have here an explanation for why non-journalists are more positive towards their children choosing to become journalists. Everyone who answered this survey has themselves chosen to study journalism; it has more likely represented something positive to most of them, even if they changed their occupation at some later point in time. Qualitative studies are needed to shed light on reasons for such career choices. For others, it was never a question of choice but rather something they felt compelled to do. For instance, one participant said “There was a genuine mourning process when I left journalism”.

### Journalism’s gender-based population

“Are there special characteristics pertaining to journalism as an occupation that make it foremost practiced by men?”, asked Torild Skard (1984) in her introduction to her study regarding female journalists in rural areas. In those days, women were a clear minority in a pronounced male occupation. Their presence was described as “very complicated”, not only because there were few of them but also because the interplay between women and men could be tiresome: “A journalist’s social environment var-

ies, but it is unusual for women to experience a sense of community at the workplace which translates into active support and help during work” (ibid: 71).

After comparative figures between women and men passed the magical limit of 40/60, the discussion regarding gender as a factor of editorial office culture or recruitment of talent has dwindled. It is easy to take gender equality for granted, especially when the share of female chief editors is just below 30 per cent.<sup>12</sup> A majority of women among students who have applied for – and completed – degrees in journalism can support the notion that the Norwegian media field has reached its goals of gender equality. The study presented in this chapter, on the other hand, shows that considerably more women than men with degrees in journalism are directed away from journalism, both before and after their editorial career, and after they have worked a few years as journalists. Without exclusion mechanisms related to gender, Norwegian editorial offices should in reality be dominated by highly educated women, since this group has represented the majority of those enrolled at educational institutions for just as long as journalism as an education has existed in Norway. Not every journalism student desires – or is equipped for – work at an editorial office. However, we also cannot take for granted that the most gifted students “continue” from education to editorial office; it could also be a case of gender-based outcast of talents in several places found along the pipeline from education to working life.

Researchers who have studied gender in academia were astounded by “how far inside the academic organizations’ complex systems one can reach, when one’s task is to find gender ramifications” (Højgaard, & Søndergaard, 2003: 11). This area will not likely appear any easier for upcoming researchers who choose to study what we could call journalism’s gender-based population. The succession among women should nonetheless interest and challenge everyone involved in journalistic education who is concerned with providing students with realistic expectations regarding everyday life at an editorial office. Can we perceive a situation in which female students are poorly prepared for what awaits them after graduation? If so, what impact could this have on educational environments? What characterizes educational culture in this branch of academia? How has the composition of teachers, guest lecturers and curricular authors developed since the last time someone paid attention to journalistic education (Vartdal, & Roppen, 2001)? These researchers discovered that while two out of three journalism students were women, only a fifth of teachers – and even fewer guest teachers – were women. Women were also scarcely represented in curricula.

Future researchers will not face a lack of exciting problem statements, and few will seriously claim that programs in journalism must “account for a wasted number” of graduating women.

## Notes

1. Letter from September 15 1986 from the Norwegian Union of Journalists (NJ) to Høgskolesenteret i Nordland, concerning education in journalism and media in Northern Norway.
2. Letter from April 18 1986, from the Norwegian Union of Journalists (NJ).
3. NJ's statistics on members, referenced in the report from the National Board 2007-2009.
4. Average annual salary per October 1 1987, for journalists at the various newspapers, magazines and trade journals, by gender. The Norwegian Union of Journalists' statistics on salaries.
5. See overview in the Norwegian Union of Journalists ([www.nj.no](http://www.nj.no)) and the Norwegian Association of Editors ([www.nored.no](http://www.nored.no)).
6. From January 1 2011: The University of Nordland.
7. <http://hovdabrekka.wordpress.com>
8. I was hired in 1989 as a project manager for the education in journalism in Northern Norway, and am today employed as a professor at the same institution.
9. NJ's statistics on members.
10. NJ's statistics on journalists at the various newspapers, magazines and trade journals, by gender and highest completed level of education, 1974-77.
11. Email to the author June 9 2009.
12. Norwegian Association of Editors 2013.

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## Burdens of Representation

### *Recruitment and Attitudes towards Journalism among Journalism Students with Ethnic Minority Backgrounds*

Gunn Bjørnsen & Anders Graver Knudsen

#### Abstract

This chapter addresses issues related to students and young journalists with minority backgrounds and their entrance into the journalistic profession. Described as a “burden of representation”, young journalists with such backgrounds meet expectations that they should represent minorities and that they should show a special interest in issues and topics concerning minorities. These expectations may be perceived as a constraint and can come from the institutions of journalism studies and newsrooms, as well as from family, friends and diaspora groups. The backdrop for this analysis involves initiatives taken by Norwegian journalism schools to recruit more journalists with ethnic minority backgrounds. Drawing on empirical data from in-depth interviews and quantitative data material, the findings suggest that these students experience several conflicting types of role expectations, including being a role model for recruiting more people with minority backgrounds to the profession and pressures from diaspora groups to be “their” journalist and help counter generally negative journalistic presentations of minorities. Such role expectations are typically experienced very strongly by newly educated journalists and journalism students, but seem to become somewhat reduced and/or easier to handle with increased experience and age.

**Keywords:** journalism education, media representations, ethnic minority students, role models, affirmative action, role expectations, Norway

## Introduction

This chapter addresses issues related to students and young journalists with minority backgrounds, and their recruitment to and socialization into the journalistic profession. In the past decade, both scholars of journalism studies and people within the profession have called attention to the importance of recruiting journalists with minority backgrounds. The democratic principle that the journalism profession should mirror society demographically is far from being fulfilled. Currently, there is still a clear underrepresentation of journalists with ethnic (and other) minority backgrounds, both within the profession and as students of journalism (Bjørnsen, 2011).

Diversity in the journalistic population is believed to have an impact on what issues are brought to public attention and what perspectives become visible in the public debate, as well as on the experience of inclusion for different groups in society (Floberghagen, 2009; Graf, 2011). These ideas may lead to expectations that young journalists with a minority background will and/or should represent minorities, and that they should show a special interest in issues and topics concerning minorities and diaspora groups. These expectations can come from the institutions of journalism studies and newsrooms as well as family, friends and diaspora groups. Described as a “burden of representation” (Cottle, 2000), these expectations may be perceived as a constraint on minority journalists and journalism students. Individuals are likely to find it difficult to transgress such role expectations. This burden may take many shapes and forms for the individual person, from meeting these expectations with acceptance, to feelings of pressure, to taking on certain roles, or to a total disregard for these types of expectations.

The ambition of this chapter is to examine how students with ethnic minority backgrounds communicate their attitudes to and experiences with the journalistic profession. How do students and young journalists with ethnic minority backgrounds experience the possible burden(s) of representation? What motivates them, and how do they understand and define their role as future journalists? The backdrop for this analysis is a description of steps taken by journalism schools to recruit more journalists with ethnic minority backgrounds, taking as a particular case the minority quota intake system of the journalism program at the University College in Oslo and Akershus (HiOA). The students’ own experiences of being “quota students” will also be discussed.

We also have a normative aim with this chapter: we hope that documenting the recruitment and experiences of journalism students with minority backgrounds may contribute to the institutions of journalism education and media institutions maintaining and strengthening the focus on increased recruitment. Simultaneously, the burdens of expectations may be eased.

## Reflecting and representing

Coexistence between different minorities and the majority society has always been a part of the reality in the Nordic countries. The treatment of the Sami, the Jews and the Traveller people, for instance, has a long and problematic history in Norway. The first labor immigrants arrived at the end of the 1960s, and brought a new dimension to this coexistence. Minorities in journalism are consequently not a new theme, either for the journalistic profession or the institutions for journalism studies (Eide, & Simonsen, 2009). The representations of minorities in the media have undergone many changes during this time, but problem-oriented journalism still characterizes this field in Norwegian journalism (Fjeldstad, & Lindstad, 2005). In 2009, the Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDi) published its annual report with a special section on the representation of minorities in the Norwegian press. A quantitative content analysis shows that stories



concerning immigrants and/or minorities far more often have a problem-oriented than resource-oriented focus, and that people with a minority background are seldom used as sources for information in journalistic texts (IMDi 2009, pp 35). A point is made of the fact that many in the majority population have little or no contact with people of minority background (*ibid*, pp 18), and therefore lean on the media representations of integration and immigration when forming their opinions in these matters. Several studies show the same tendency in other countries, for example Denmark. Ethnic minorities are underrepresented as sources and there is also a one-sided and negative overrepresentation of Muslims in Danish media (Schøtt, & Stenum, 2014; Horsti, 2008). This issue has probably become especially controversial in Denmark due to the case there involving the cartoons depicting the Prophet Mohammed. In Finnish media, Russians and Estonians are the most negatively represented groups (Horsti, 2008).

An argument for using a quota system is that with more minority journalists in the media, perspectives and descriptions might change, and thus create a more nuanced and differentiated journalistic coverage (Bjørnsen, 2011). However, when new journalists start their work, they arrive at editorial offices with already established structures. These can be expressed or silent but are often firmly adhered to, a sort of culture that “sits in the walls” (Siapera, 2010; Benson, 2013, & Breed, 1955). What is considered news, what priorities are made, and what angles stories are presented from can be deeply rooted and difficult to change. Nevertheless, such structures are not set in stone, and there will always be a mutual influence between editorial practice and the individuals who work there.

Journalism students with minority backgrounds, as mentioned, are likely to experience a kind of pressure or paradox in relation to their future work, namely being viewed as representatives of their “group” or “community” instead of media professionals (Wilson, 2000; Mikkelsen, 2009). Wilson describes this with a quotation from African-American journalists discussing this paradox: “Are we journalists who happen to be black, or are we black journalists?” (*ibid* p. 97). The same was expressed by Norway’s first news anchor with Pakistani background, Mah-Rukh Ali in 2005: ‘Yes, I have minority background, I am a Muslim and a woman. But first and foremost I am a journalist’. This latent burden of representation (Cottle, 2000) can lead to expectations of following the values and practices of the editorial office, all the while there is an expectancy of a special interest in stories on the multicultural society or minorities. This burden can be reinforced through similar expectations from minority groups. An example of this is an expectation that these journalists act as a voice for certain interests, or that they actively work to challenge established journalistic practices that often have a negative focus on minorities (Siapera, 2010).

### A note on methodology

The chapter draws on empirical data from in-depth interviews with current and former journalism students with ethnic minority backgrounds. This qualitative material is

supplemented with quantitative data material based on several surveys of journalism students at all journalism schools in the Nordic countries.

Eight semi-structured in-depth interviews have been conducted with students with ethnic minority backgrounds, six interviews with students who entered the program through the minority quota and two with former journalism students with minority backgrounds who entered the program through the ordinary intake. Aged 21-37 years, four are women and four are men, and they have backgrounds from countries in Asia and Africa. The students' anonymity has been striven for through not mentioning names, country of origin or workplace.<sup>1</sup>

The quantitative data material is based on surveys of students at Nordic journalism schools conducted in the autumn of 2012<sup>2</sup>. This is the third time the survey has been conducted at a Nordic level. The survey was sent to all students at 25 Nordic journalism schools. A total of 1,830 students in Denmark, Sweden, Iceland, Finland and Norway responded. This gives a response rate of 45 per cent. The response rate varies between the different countries and between the institutions.

In this chapter, the survey results have been processed into "non-Nordic" and "Nordic" categories. We have created the non-Nordic/ethnic minority category based on a relatively narrow criterion: that the respondents themselves and/or *both* their parents were born in Asia, Africa, South America or "the former Eastern Europe". The number of respondents in the non-Nordic category is nine in both Sweden and Denmark, 22 in Norway, and none in Finland and Iceland. The countries of origin are Asia, Africa and South America. Even though we have only used the 2012 survey, we have also checked results from earlier surveys. They confirm the results here, and thus strengthen the findings.

While the categorization into Nordic and non-Nordic is useful for our purpose, it is obviously problematic. It would be inaccurate to assume that differences in responses are solely related to differences in ethnic background, and as a starting point it must be expected that differences in responses are likely to be as great within a single category as between the categories. Both this and the fact that the actual numbers of respondents in this category (a total of 40) are very low are limitations in this study. The results must thus be interpreted with this in mind.

By conducting this kind of categorization we are also in danger of falling into the so-called "minority trap" in migration research, possibly contributing to confirming and reinforcing the very differences and stereotypes we want to challenge (Eide, & Nikunen, 2011).

When we say "Nordic" in this chapter, it in fact means "Scandinavian". That there are no students with a multicultural background (nb: who answered the survey and defined as narrowly as here) in Finland and Iceland obviously reflects the fact that both nations have a short history of labor and refugee immigration.

Additional data material comes from studies of documents regarding the process of establishing and evaluating the quota system and basis of figures from the student database (FS) at HiOA.

## Recruitment of ethnic minorities

Multicultural initiatives within mainstream media have received only limited academic attention (Horsti, 2008: 284). A report on the subject of the recruitment of students with a minority background to the different Nordic journalism programs initiated by the Nordic Journalist Centre (Bjørnsen, 2003a) showed that even if intentions were good and there was a will to recruit more students, there were few actual plans or measures to promote such recruitment within the different institutions. The report concluded that in many ways the educational institutions were dragging behind the development in the media industry, and that several editorial offices wanted more journalists with a minority background than the educational institutions had to offer.

There have been numerous initiatives in the industry in all Nordic countries, typically connected to policies and actual programming within the public broadcasting system (NRK, DR, SVT), which has a legal obligation to reflect all of society and support equality (Hultén, 2009). One such example is the Norwegian public broadcaster NRK's project FleRe, which since 2007 has offered internships to journalists with a minority background. Though criticized by some for creating a "B team" of journalists and for being unjust<sup>3</sup>, the project has increased the number of journalists with a minority background working for NRK (Bjørnsen, 2012).

Even though nine out of ten Swedish media organizations agreed that diversity in the workplace is valuable and has a positive effect on the company (Hultén, 2009), Camauër found that journalists with a minority background often experience a gap between the rhetoric (policy statements) and the actual practice in many of these initiatives (Horsti, 2008: 284) (See also Hultén, 2009). There is great confidence among journalists and minorities as well as educators that projects aimed at increasing the number of minorities studying journalism and working as journalists in the mainstream media present the best solution to the lack of diversity (Horsti, 2008: 285). In a study conducted on media workers with a Swedish background, Camauër (2011) found that many of the respondents placed the responsibility for the diversity work with managers at different levels when it came to recruitment, but that this work was marked by a clear lack of continuity and that progress was slow (*ibid* p. 43). Responsibility for diversity in *media content*, on the other hand, was often placed with the individual journalist, indicating that a diverse newsroom concerning personal backgrounds is believed to create journalism that is more diverse. In the same study, the slight increase in journalists with a minority background was given multiple explanations, one of which concerned the fact that there are now more qualified journalists with a minority background who have been trained at Swedish journalism schools.

There are signs that these tendencies prevail, and the recruitment of journalists with a minority background generally continues to be slow. Considering the current crisis for the media economy in all the Nordic countries, diversity programs for recruitment may face difficult times ahead. At the same time, these journalists are regarded, by many editors and media organizations, as highly valuable employees (Eide & Simonsen,

2009; Hulten, 2009). The multicultural competence these journalists possess makes them attractive in the media market, as well as in the search for new possible markets. There is no indication that they have any greater difficulties finding employment than do journalists with a majority background (Mikkelsen, 2009).

The previously mentioned study on the recruitment of ethnic minorities to Nordic journalism schools (Bjørnsen, 2003a) has not been repeated since 2002. We thus do not have fresh complete numbers on how the present situation is. However, the Nordic student surveys give some indications. Keeping in mind the possibility of skew response rates, we find that not much has happened with the multicultural recruitment during the last decade. In the Nordic journalism student survey in 2012 the (actual) number of students reporting being, or having both parents, foreign-born was 1 per cent in Denmark, 3 per cent in Sweden and 4 per cent in Norway. The relatively “high” number in Norway must be understood as a result of the quota described here.

### The quota system – a problematic instrument

Norway has a long tradition of moderate fixing of quotas as a tool for promoting women's possibilities in politics, education and the job market. In recent years, there have also been trials of moderate fixing of quotas for immigrants with non-Western backgrounds, mainly for positions in government and public entities (Jensen, & Orupabo, 2010). Such measures arise from the realization that structural hurdles make it harder for certain groups to succeed in society. These hurdles either do not disappear by themselves, or it is established that the erosion of these structural imbalances is moving too slowly. The challenge is to place individuals with different backgrounds and experiences into a category based on a number of common features. To be considered part of a generalized quota, who is to be categorized and grouped, based on what criteria? Whether it is even possible to define someone as “in” and others not, and whether the differentiation is stigmatizing either for those considered to be in or those left out, are important questions that always arise, no matter how good the intentions are behind this type of classification (Weldon, 2008).

The background to the establishment of the minority quota system at HiOA in 2006 was the decision to take steps to increase the number of students with multicultural backgrounds at a conference for journalism schools in Norway in 1997. At the time, journalism education was among the studies with the fewest students with minority backgrounds, and the main argument was that the recruitment of journalism students should reflect the new composition of the population. After a period of inactivity, a committee was established in 2004 to improve the recruitment of students with multicultural backgrounds. The program in Oslo took the responsibility for this due to the large number of people with a minority background in the capital. Their recommendation was to earmark student places in addition to the ordinary number, and that applicants with multicultural backgrounds should be given extra points in the

intake. A short time after the recommendations were made, the HiOA board made a statement to the Ministry of Education regarding new regulations in the intake system. In this, the board recommended reducing the practice quota and establishing a quota of five student places for applicants with ethnic minority backgrounds.

Every year, except 2007 and 2013, the quota has been filled, as shown in the table below. The low numbers for 2007 and 2013 mean that some of those who were accepted did not start their studies after all, and were not replaced. The number of applicants during the nine years the quota has existed has varied from 37 (in 2007 and 2008) to 20 (in 2013).

**Table 1.** Applicants and students accepted into the program through the minority quota, Oslo and Akershus University College, 2006-2015 (number)

|      | Qualified applicants | Attended |
|------|----------------------|----------|
| 2006 | 27                   | 5        |
| 2007 | 37                   | 3        |
| 2008 | 37                   | 6        |
| 2009 | 28                   | 5        |
| 2010 | 26                   | 5        |
| 2011 | 25                   | 5        |
| 2012 | 26                   | 8        |
| 2013 | 20                   | 2        |
| 2014 | 24                   | 5        |
| 2015 | 15                   | 5        |

For various reasons, the implementation of the minority quota at the journalism department generated reactions and criticism among both school staff and journalists with minority backgrounds themselves (Fogt & Østrem, 2009). The criteria to apply through the quota were: "Documentation from Norwegian authorities showing that one or both parents were born in a non-Western country (Asia including Turkey, Africa or Latin-America)".<sup>4</sup> This excluded Eastern Europe (report HiO 2011). The exclusion of certain geographical areas (Norway's largest immigrant group at the moment originates from Poland) has led to an imbalance as to which minority communities are given the possibility to apply based on the quota. Another criticism of the quota is that the only parameter used to determine acceptance is ethnicity. It has also been claimed that it may construct a sort of "A and B team" among students. However, it is not disclosed to either students or teachers the quota from which a student has been accepted. One question that arises from this is whether all minority students will be "suspected" of having been accepted through the minority quota, and thus come to be (or are likely to be) viewed differently than the majority students.

A final and important aspect of the minority quota is the degree to which it contributes to a continued thinking of "us" on the inside and "them" on the outside (Eide, & Simonsen, 2007). As soon as "minority" and "ethnicity" become factors to

be considered, the focus is likely to remain on these characteristics (Bjørnsen, 2003a). If the goal is a society where everyone has equal opportunities, a focus on ethnicity as having importance and being a determining factor will reinforce its significance.

### Equal and different – from the students' point of view

So what do the “quota students” themselves say? Firstly, they all express concern, wanting to underline that the minority quota does not make it easy to gain admittance to the journalism program, even though they have been qualified through it:

I don't think it's because minority language students aren't good enough. But those (with a minority background) who get sixes (As) and stuff don't apply to journalism. They apply to medicine or (...) So if you want more minority language journalists, then I feel it's a good tool. You separate the best from the rest fairly quickly, it's not like the semi-bad ones are being accepted either. (Student E, age 36)

Most students consider it important that it is difficult to gain admittance to their field of study. Even though, as mentioned, the quota through which one gains entry is not disclosed, one still has to actively apply through the minority quota. They stress that the minority quota does not allow less qualified people to be accepted to the journalism program.

Many consider the greatest challenge to be that the quota is not well known; several explain that they discovered it as they were about to apply through the regular admission. One respondent believes many people do not apply to journalism because they do not believe they have a chance of being accepted. If the quota were more well known, more youngsters with multicultural backgrounds would apply to the journalism program.

One notes that the name of the quota itself (“minority quota”) can appear stigmatizing: “What about those born in Norway, who feel Norwegian? They might think ‘why do I have to be accepted through a minority quota when I'm Norwegian?’ This can be stigmatizing for them”. This respondent communicates that people born and raised in Norway should be distinguished from those who have immigrated, and that the quota should be renamed.

All the respondents who themselves were admitted to HiOA through the quota are positive to it, and most of them regard it as a very important initiative. Considering that they have all actively applied through this quota, this might not be very surprising. But they are also predominantly highly positive to quota systems in general. One advantage they mention is that it is a fair system:

I think it's a fair quota. You should get an opportunity. Especially those who don't have exactly that grade average (regular admission). But they do it the right way, so that you have to have a certain average, but the admission is made a little easier. (Student A, age 25)

The quota does not appear to be experienced as stigmatizing or very problematic to the students who have gained admission through it. But it is important to note that the university college does not disclose who has been admitted through the minority quota and who has not. This is likely a contributing factor to why these students express that they do not feel like they are studying under special conditions and are not considered different from the other students.

That the “minority students” are “ordinary students” is also largely confirmed through the student surveys. The main exception, however, is their social background. While journalism students have generally become less “elitist” in recent years (Bjørnsen, Hovden, & Ottosen, 2015), the minority students seem to come from more privileged families, based on their parents’ level of education. In Sweden and Denmark, twice as many of the minority students’ fathers have a master’s degree, and in Norway, the level of education is also higher. When it comes to age and gender, the background is more similar, with slightly older minority students in Sweden and Denmark.

### The status of the profession

In the interviews for this study, three paradoxes or types of external pressure stand out, and can be viewed in correlation with the role associated with being a journalism student with a minority background. The first is the choice of studying journalism itself. In an uncertain job market within a profession that is of low status in many minority communities, this is a tough choice for many. Another challenge for those not born in Norway is language. There are strict language requirements for performing well as a journalist, and for those who are not native speakers of Norwegian, this often leads to more work and greater struggles with tasks during their studies. The third paradox is the fact that there are few journalists with minority backgrounds. The visibility this creates can make these journalists extra noticeable. They can be viewed as role models to other people of minority background with ambitions to become journalists, and they can be regarded as symbols of successful (or unsuccessful) attempts to increase the share of minority journalists at editorial offices or universities. This noticeability can make these journalists more vulnerable to the fear of making mistakes, and more susceptible to criticism, than other journalists.

The fact that there are few journalists of minority backgrounds also affects how the choice to study journalism is interpreted by the respondent’s family and social environment. It has been documented that journalism is not considered a good career choice in many minority communities, even though the status of the profession seem to be changing somewhat (Jensen, 2000; Mikkelsen, 2009). One informant described the status of journalism in the parents’ country of origin as journalists being viewed as “rats” and held in very low regard. The societies in many of the countries of origin have a poorly developed democratic culture, and the media are often regarded as being run by government entities and/or as untrue or unreliable. This is true for most



of the countries from which the respondents in this study hail. Another element is the dangers associated with being a journalist in many countries, and the notion that it is an unsafe and vulnerable profession. Minorities are often considered to be well represented in professions like medicine, nursing, engineering and other science-based careers, while the humanities has been of less interest (Jensen, 2000).

There are differing experiences among the respondents in this study regarding how their choice to study journalism was received by their families and friends. Most encountered negative reactions or bewilderment, while only one received an exclusively positive response from both friends and family. Several respondents were met with the question of whether journalism was something one needs to study at all, in the sense that a journalist is seen as something you can “just become”. Specifically immediate family members, often parents, expressed worry over this choice. One respondent explained it like this:

It was viewed as the wrong choice. (...) Anyone (...) can become a journalist, and you don't have to spend any time studying it. Now that I'm studying to be a teacher, on the other hand, a lot of people say “well done”. (Student C, age 27)

Another aspect of journalism that makes it a problematic career choice is the possibility for steady employment and a career. Several of the respondents mention the uncertain job market for journalists as a source of insecurity about their choice, and this worry is not milder with their family and friends. News stories in the period after the financial crisis about declining incomes, decrease in circulation and fewer regular employees did not go unnoticed. An increasingly tough job market becomes even more problematic with the uncertainty of not being an ethnic Norwegian and of the chances of being accepted at editorial offices. One of the respondents explains how his parents' generation and their experiences from their careers also make up a factor here. He believes many have toiled in low paid jobs, or have not found employment matching their qualifications. Due to this, they often find it imperative that their children get a higher education, which will guarantee them steady, good jobs (Jensen, 2000).

Meanwhile, some factors indicate certain changes. Firstly, several noticeable and highly profiled journalists with minority backgrounds have emerged within different Norwegian media outlets. They are being noticed, and are contributing to increasing the status of the journalism profession. Multiple respondents mention that minority journalists are read and followed closely by “their own groups”. Even though these journalists are not necessarily focused on minority issues, it is considered positive that people succeed in the media industry. One of the respondents, who is also an established journalist, explains:

When people see what I'm working with, what I create, and what it means to me and others, I can sense a change in people's perception, at least towards me personally. (Student E, age 36)



They can also be a driving force in making Norwegian media more interesting and relevant to minorities. There exists an expressed mistrust and skepticism towards Norwegian media among many young people with multicultural backgrounds. This is due to both the way stories from their country of origin are presented and, more importantly, how minorities are presented and discussed in general (Eide, Knudsen, & Krøvel, 2014; Fogt, 2008). One component to this is that the status of the journalism profession is also changing in the respondents' country of origin.

Another point is that, even though most have encountered skepticism over their choice, they have also been met with acceptance once the choice is final. Multiple respondents say that their parents realize their children do not necessarily dream of becoming a doctor or an engineer, and thus accept their choice to go in another direction in life than what are traditionally considered to be safe, good professions:

Within my family I've received mostly positive reactions. Mom wanted me to become a doctor, lawyer or engineer. But she's seen throughout my growing up that it wasn't my path. (Student B, age 24)

There seems to be a shift occurring between generations regarding attitudes towards journalism and career choice. Several of the respondents emphasize that it is the parent generation who think in the ways described previously, and that responses from friends and people their own age are clearly different. This breach from their parent generation and their wishes and ambitions are considered brave and positive among friends and siblings:

I get pretty positive responses from people my own age, because I've dared to choose something different and something I'm keen on, not following the parent generation. It's a cool response to get. (Student B, age 24)

People with minority backgrounds succeeding in the media industry can break down the skepticism and distrust towards journalism. Expressed mistrust towards Norwegian media and skepticism about journalism as a career choice make the road ahead seem long. But the answers from the respondents in this study indicate that an elevation of the status of journalism can happen through a growth in noticeable journalists with minority backgrounds.

From the student surveys we see that the Nordic students with and without minority backgrounds are equally sure, or unsure, about whether they want to work as journalists in the future. Around a third in both groups express that they are very certain about having a future career in journalism. However, we do find interesting national differences. In Sweden and Denmark, the students with minority backgrounds are more certain about a future as working journalists than those in Norway. In general, the certainty has decreased in recent years: Nordic students expressed being more dedicated to the profession in 2005 than in 2012 (Bjørnsen, Hovden, & Ottosen, 2015).

**Table 2.** How certain Nordic and non-Nordic journalism students are that they want to work as a journalist in the future, 2012 (per cent)

|                       | Denmark |            | Sweden |            | Norway |            | Total  |            |
|-----------------------|---------|------------|--------|------------|--------|------------|--------|------------|
|                       | Nordic  | Non-Nordic | Nordic | Non-Nordic | Nordic | Non-Nordic | Nordic | Non-Nordic |
| Completely certain    | 28      | 44         | 36     | 50         | 28     | 14         | 28     | 28         |
| Quite certain         | 47      | 33         | 47     | 25         | 41     | 59         | 45     | 46         |
| Don't know            | 16      | 11         | 12     | 12         | 19     | 14         | 17     | 13         |
| Quite uncertain       | 7       | 0          | 4      | 12         | 8      | 9          | 7      | 8          |
| Completely uncertain  | 2       | 11         | 1      | 0          | 3      | 5          | 2      | 5          |
| Sum per cent          | 100     | 99         | 100    | 99         | 99     | 101        | 99     | 100        |
| Number of respondents | 738     | 9          | 288    | 9          | 515    | 22         | 1 790  | 40         |

*Note:* The total results for the "Nordic" category in the tables also include the Finnish and Icelandic students.

### Motivation for the profession

In light of the status of journalism, it is interesting to delve more deeply into what motivates the students to study journalism, and what ambitions they have. The StudData and Hovdabrekka surveys find creativity, joy of writing and social engagement to be some of the key driving forces behind people choosing to study journalism (Bjørnsen, Hovden, & Ottosen, 2007 and 2015). This coincides to some degree with the answers given by the respondents in this study. But while social engagement ranks lower than creativity and fondness for writing in the numbers from the StudData and Hovdabrekka surveys, this is the most important driving force for most of the respondents here.

**Table 3.** Motivation for Nordic and non-Nordic journalism students for entering the journalistic profession, 2012 (per cent)

|                                  | Denmark |            | Sweden |            | Norway |            | Total  |            |
|----------------------------------|---------|------------|--------|------------|--------|------------|--------|------------|
|                                  | Nordic  | Non-Nordic | Nordic | Non-Nordic | Nordic | Non-Nordic | Nordic | Non-Nordic |
| Help individuals                 | 11      | 22         | 28     | 56         | 32     | 45         | 22     | 42         |
| Participate in the public debate | 26      | 33         | 39     | 67         | 34     | 41         | 32     | 45         |
| Joy of communication             | 39      | 44         | 48     | 67         | 45     | 59         | 43     | 57         |
| Work against injustice           | 23      | 67         | 49     | 67         | 46     | 55         | 35     | 60         |
| Number of respondents            | 738     | 9          | 288    | 9          | 515    | 22         | 1 790  | 40         |

*Note:* The scale ranges between 1 (very important) to 5 (very unimportant). The table shows those who marked *very important*.

Several differences between the non-Nordic and Nordic students are found when it comes to motivation reasons. The non-Nordic students report being significantly more interested in contributing to the public debate, explaining complicated issues in society, and working against injustice. When it comes to “wanting to help individuals”, the score is almost twice as high as among the “regular” Nordic students.

The interviews strengthen this impression. The respondents are also concerned about being noticed in an otherwise homogeneous media landscape, and thereby being regarded as role models to others with minority backgrounds who wish to go into journalism. Not everyone wants to become a news reporter or change established journalistic practices at editorial offices, but everyone emphasizes that they want to contribute something new to the Norwegian media landscape. One of the respondents is interested in popular culture, and has ambitions to have his own talk show (this respondent has already worked in TV, and says his motivation is to tell people about things they have not heard of before). The same respondent explains that he feels the demands on him are not the same as for others, and that this affects how his performance is perceived:

People have it in the back of their heads. As a foreigner it's easier to impress people; they usually have lower expectations. So if you perform at about the same level as everyone else, you stand out. I think it's a bit strange (...) This is something I have inside me, that I don't have to perform very well to impress. It's there. It's a bit annoying when I think about it. (Student B, age 24)

One of the causes of the social engagement stems from a perceived negative representation in Norwegian media. Several of the respondents say that to change this trend it is important that minorities are allowed to represent and speak about themselves. One respondent puts it this way:

I've always liked writing; I wanted to become an author. I'm very interested in literature. In addition, I'm socially engaged. Because of this I wanted to become a journalist; I wanted to do something about society. Since I came to Norway there's been a great (negative) focus in the media on the community I'm originally from. I wanted to look at it more closely, what's the cause, what can I do (to make it) different. No matter what, it affects me. I become curious and engaged. And I want to do something about it. (Student C, age 27)

In the student surveys, we asked about the degree to which the students believe journalists contribute to confirming prejudices regarding ethnic minorities. The students who have minority backgrounds themselves expressed being very critical of the role of journalists in this respect. Four times as many of the non-Nordic students responded that they totally agreed with this statement (24 per cent versus 6 per cent of the Nordic students).

**Table 4.** Opinions among Nordic and non-Nordic journalism students about whether journalists contribute to confirming prejudices regarding ethnic minorities, 2012 (per cent)

|                        | Denmark |            | Sweden |            | Norway |            | Total  |            |
|------------------------|---------|------------|--------|------------|--------|------------|--------|------------|
|                        | Nordic  | Non-Nordic | Nordic | Non-Nordic | Nordic | Non-Nordic | Nordic | Non-Nordic |
| Totally agree          | 8       | 22         | 3      | 11         | 6      | 18         | 6      | 17         |
| Somewhat agree         | 34      | 44         | 26     | 33         | 25     | 24         | 26     | 31         |
| Neither agree/disagree | 30      | 22         | 31     | 11         | 38     | 47         | 33     | 31         |
| Somewhat disagree      | 16      | 11         | 22     | 33         | 16     | 6          | 21     | 14         |
| Totally disagree       | 12      | 0          | 17     | 11         | 15     | 6          | 15     | 6          |
| Sum per cent           | 100     | 99         | 99     | 99         | 100    | 101        | 101    | 99         |
| Number of respondents  | 738     | 9          | 288    | 9          | 515    | 22         | 1790   | 40         |

## The role of journalism

Implied in this thought is also an idea that an increased number of journalists with minority backgrounds will actually lead to a change in journalism – and that it is mainly up to these journalists themselves to make sure that changes occur:

Media is so powerful; I see it more now that I'm on the inside. How my angles on stories can set the agenda. If we get more minorities in, we'll get different perspectives in. At our editorial office an angle can be challenged before it goes to print, and I think that's important. (Student E, age 36)

The social engagement also points outwards. Many young people in Norwegian diaspora communities have a transnational use of media to keep themselves updated (Eide & Knudsen, 2013), and gather information about their country of origin or other international events outside Norwegian media. One of the respondents cares about how she can raise knowledge and awareness about areas of the world that currently get little coverage in the Norwegian press:

Many international media outlets focus on Africa; Norway's behind the pack. So I want to work as a journalist in Norway focusing on Africa. (...) In a way you know Africa in Norway through Norwegian charitable organizations. (You) need to become familiar with Africa in a different way. (Student D, age 32)

The idea of being a role model or example to others is mostly based on wanting more people with minority backgrounds to enter journalism. All the respondents care about this and consider it to be important. When they become visible and noticed, this will lead to more people following in their footsteps as time goes by. This creates a pressure on these students, in that what they do and write is often more noticed. Several of the respondents experience that they have already affected how others view working in the media:

I have to a certain extent become a role model. I've been working in TV as a music critic. Many admire that part, the appearing on TV part. It can be inspiring. And people continually choose more non-traditional professions. You didn't see that in my brother's generation, he's eight years older. (Student B, age 24)

That there is a correlation between the visibility of minority journalists and the status journalism has as a profession is evident to several of the respondents. But it is also about the work they actually do. One of the respondents ponders over the positive and negative aspects of her noticeability, and believes it means that she has to set high requirements on her own journalistic methods:

I've spoken to people, mostly girls, and they say "I'm going to become a journalist", like me. (...) The point is that this is something that takes time. It'll be time-consuming to establish journalism as a career choice. I feel like I have a bigger responsibility for what I write, what's published and what stories I make. I obviously don't want to scare away anyone else with how I have to work and my integrity (as a journalist). The reactions come very quickly. If I make a good (positive) story, I get a lot of positive feedback. But I also know that the day I make a critical story about something regarding Muslims, I'll be scolded. (...) The safer you become in your profession, and the more you prove that what you create is credible, and you don't compromise (the better it becomes). (...) I get a lot of feedback, both good and bad. (...) This is something I don't always appreciate, but this is how it's become. (Student E, age 36)

One of the respondents takes on a more activist attitude. She cares about building bridges between her ethnic community and society at large, but at the same time views herself as someone who has to correct the impression created in Norwegian media:

I, as a member of society, care about contributing something to society. Through journalism, when I as a journalist do what I believe in, then it's a major advantage for me. Considering my Muslim background, and as coming from (name of country of origin). Everyone needs someone to look up to or count on. (I can contribute) in a positive way and change things. It's about shortening the distance, and journalism is a tool for making the distance shorter. (Student C, age 27)

In many ways these students/journalists, possibly more than other journalists, value the importance of being considered credible and being people of good integrity in their work as journalists:

Maybe they'll pay more attention to what I do because they're skeptical (of me). And that I'm less credible. This is an experience from my internship. They always wanted to see what I was doing. I thought, okay, they don't think I know this. That's the way I felt. (Student D, age 32)

The pressure of representing their own community also makes credibility and integrity important:

In my community I'll face prejudices. I get negative responses for being a woman in the media, and speaking aloud in public. I just have to dive into it and see. (...) What also worries me is what kind of reactions I get from Muslims. Some will say "Yeah, a Muslim woman who can represent us". And some will be negative. (Student C, age 27)

In the student survey results, we find significant differences regarding the students' understanding of some aspects of the role of journalism in society. The non-Nordic students express that they see "defending weak individuals against injustice", "influencing public opinion" and "creating understanding between different groups of people" as much more important elements in the journalist role than their fellow students do. And when asked which journalistic topics they are most interested in, "multicultural students" rank "multicultural issues" twice as interesting than other students do (60 per cent vs 25 per cent saying they are very interested in the topic).

**Table 5.** Opinions among Nordic and non-Nordic journalism students on what a journalist should do, 2012 (per cent)

|                                               | Denmark |            | Sweden |            | Norway |            | Total  |            |
|-----------------------------------------------|---------|------------|--------|------------|--------|------------|--------|------------|
|                                               | Nordic  | Non-Nordic | Nordic | Non-Nordic | Nordic | Non-Nordic | Nordic | Non-Nordic |
| ...criticizes injustice                       | 34      | 44         | 49     | 44         | 46     | 63         | 44     | 54         |
| ...stimulates new thoughts & ideas            | 23      | 22         | 40     | 44         | 33     | 53         | 31     | 43         |
| ...investigates people in power               | 54      | 56         | 75     | 78         | 54     | 61         | 61     | 64         |
| ...promotes the public debate                 | 37      | 25         | 59     | 89         | 50     | 61         | 47     | 60         |
| ...influences the public opinion              | 23      | 44         | 24     | 44         | 17     | 39         | 19     | 42         |
| ...contributes to multicultural understanding | 23      | 22         | 36     | 44         | 27     | 56         | 28     | 44         |
| Number of respondents                         | 738     | 9          | 288    | 9          | 515    | 22         | 1790   | 40         |

*Note:* The scale ranges between 1 (agree completely) till 5 (completely disagree). The table shows those who marked *completely agree*.

**Table 6.** Interest in different journalistic topics among Nordic and non-Nordic journalism students, 2012 (per cent)

|                               | Denmark |            | Sweden |            | Norway |            | Total  |            |
|-------------------------------|---------|------------|--------|------------|--------|------------|--------|------------|
|                               | Nordic  | Non-Nordic | Nordic | Non-Nordic | Nordic | Non-Nordic | Nordic | Non-Nordic |
| Internal affairs and politics | 46      | 44         | 49     | 56         | 32     | 29         | 41     | 38         |
| Sport                         | 17      | 0          | 16     | 0          | 21     | 19         | 18     | 10         |
| Entertainment                 | 11      | 11         | 29     | 33         | 27     | 38         | 19     | 31         |
| International conflicts       | 34      | 44         | 34     | 56         | 27     | 45         | 31     | 48         |
| Religion                      | 24      | 22         | 16     | 33         | 12     | 14         | 17     | 21         |
| Multicultural issues          | 28      | 56         | 30     | 56         | 18     | 64         | 25     | 60         |
| Number of respondents         | 738     | 9          | 288    | 9          | 515    | 22         | 1790   | 40         |

*Note:* The scale ranges between 1 (very interested) to 5 (very uninterested). The table shows those who marked *very interested*.

## Summing up

Our study indicates several differences between minority and majority journalism students regarding their attitudes to the journalistic profession. The motivation for studying journalism, the preferences for journalistic topics, and the understanding of the role of journalists in society differ in various aspects between the two groups of students.

The minority students to a larger degree placed weight on what we can label the educating and social engagement ideals in journalism. That journalists should defend individuals struck by injustice and contribute to creating understanding between different people and cultures in society is seen as significantly more important among minority students. The role of journalists in critically investigating the authorities is seen as equally important by both student groups.

It is, however, important to stress the possible limitations in our survey data used as it is here, with the Nordic and non-Nordic categories. With a low number of students in the minority category, there is the possibility that our survey findings *may* only reflect individual and random variations.

Our findings suggest that journalism students with minority backgrounds may experience several different and conflicting types of role expectations both in their encounter with journalism education and in the newsroom. One is the expectation to be viewed as a role model, who through doing “well” will help recruit more people with minority backgrounds to the profession. This can lead to anxiety regarding making mistakes, and feelings of being more exposed than other young journalism students are. However, it can also be a motivating factor and an inspiration.

Another role dilemma is pressure from diaspora groups to not write negative stories connected to minority groups, and expectations to be “their” journalist and

help counter generally negative journalistic presentations of minorities in society. This dilemma can also appear in a reverse version: that the minority journalists are expected to be more critical of “their own” ethnic groups in their journalistic work.

A third finding indicates that the role expectations are experienced more strongly by newly educated journalists and journalism students. After a number of years of journalistic experience, the expectations seem to become somewhat reduced and/or easier to handle. It is difficult to establish the degree to which these challenges and contradicting role expectations can adequately be called “burdens” or not, and this will naturally have as many answers as we have informants.

We can also conclude that the quota system has generally worked well in recruiting more students, and that it is not perceived as stigmatizing by students recruited this way. It is, however, yet to be studied where these students actually become employed after their studies.

One can question whether the quota should introduce other criteria than those in place today to include the recruitment of students from, for example, Poland, and also, possibly, from other underrepresented groups. It is also relevant to question whether the quota has come to serve as a placating gesture, and become an obstacle to implementing other recruitment efforts. And what are the other Norwegian, and Nordic, journalism schools doing to fill the gap between the composition of future journalists and the population at large?

## Notes

1. The quotes from the different interviews are marked from “Student A” to “Student H” to indicate the interviewee.
2. The survey was also conducted at almost twenty Nordic journalism schools in 2005 and 2008. For more information, see Chapter 4 of this anthology.
3. Fagbladet Journalisten: *Flere b-journalister?* 1.11.2013. Url: <http://journalisten.no/2013/11/flere-b-journalister>
4. Samordna opptak: Kvoter til journalistutdanning. URL: <http://www.samordnaopptak.no/info/opptak/opptakskvoter/journalistikkvote.html>

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## Tackling Global Learning in Nordic Journalism Education

### *The Lasting Impact of a Field Trip*

Terje Skjerdal & Hans-Olav Hodøl

#### Abstract

The article discusses the footprint of global learning in journalism programmes in the Nordic countries, drawing a distinction between global awareness, global knowledge and global competence. Reviewing curricular profiles of the various journalism programmes offered in the five Nordic countries, the authors find that only a few programmes emphasise global competence as a key ingredient in their education, whereas most schools make no mention at all of global issues in the overall presentation of their study. The article continues by presenting a case study of global learning in Nordic journalism education, comprised of survey results among 347 Norwegian students who experienced a field trip to East Africa as part of their journalism degree. The survey indicates a lasting impact of the field trip in the respondents' later studies and career. The female students in particular cite the field trip as a turning point, which resulted in return trips to Africa as well as in a sharpening of their professional orientation in idealistic direction.

Keywords: journalism education, global learning, field trip, journalism students, East Africa, Norway

#### Introduction

Globalization has changed journalism profoundly (Boyd-Barrett, & Rantanen, 1998; Campbell, 2004; Hamelink, 2015), but it is less evident whether journalism education has followed suit. On the contrary, curricula are found to be inward-looking and ill-fitted for an increasingly globalized society. Illustratively, in an appeal for intercultural competence in journalism education at the turn of the century, Mark Deuze (2001) concluded that the typical journalism student in the Netherlands, the US and Australia would finish their education without ever having to reflect on intercultural communication or cross-cultural reporting. Similarly, speaking from Denmark, Hans-Henrik Holm (2002: 67) has bemoaned “the forgotten globalization of journalism education”.

It is not clear whether the situation is much better in the Nordic countries some 10-15 years later. Discussing journalism education in Sweden, Jöran Hök (2011) finds that globalization is rarely an issue in the curriculum, even on advanced level. This

tendency is affirmed in a review of how the different journalism programmes in the Nordic countries present themselves on the Internet<sup>1</sup>. Apart from mentioning customary (and mandatory) opportunities to study abroad, the programmes generally pay little attention to issues of global and intercultural relevance in their presentation. Instead, the focus is on journalistic skills confined by domestic frames, especially in the undergraduate programmes.

Nevertheless, there are exceptions. The University College of Oslo and Akershus in Norway has given the final year of its bachelor's programme in Journalism an international emphasis. All students are required to undertake 30 credits (ECTS) pertaining to globalization and international issues, on top of the regular opportunity to study abroad. Another unit known for its international orientation is the Danish School of Media and Journalism in Aarhus, where students can incorporate locally offered electives and full semesters taught in English as part of their BA degree. A few other schools offer organized study trips abroad, either to continental Europe or, less commonly, to destinations farther away such as Sub-Saharan Africa.

What is less discussed in the research literature is the effect different types of global learning have within the journalism programme. Global legitimacy is demanded in today's journalism education, but how might the area best be approached in the curriculum? What are the experiences of specific curricular activities pertaining to globalization, from a long-term as well as a short-term perspective? These are the main issues discussed in the present contribution. Cognizant that global learning is tackled in vastly different ways in Nordic journalism education (if treated at all), we do not aim at an all-embracing analysis but have rather chosen to go in depth concerning one particular activity, which has run for 15 years at NLA University College in Kristiansand, Norway. The activity, consisting of a four-week study trip to East Africa, has since 2000 brought more than 350 Norwegian journalism students to Kenya, Tanzania and Ethiopia to learn about media and journalism in a society very different from their own. A longitudinal survey indicates that the impact of the study trip is vast and lasting, illustrated by the finding that 29 per cent of the respondents have returned to Africa at a later stage, usually as a consequence of the study trip according to the respondents themselves. The positive impact resonates with experiences of similar activities elsewhere in the world. On the basis of the research results, we will argue for a reawakening of the organized international study trip as a valuable means for achieving global competence in journalism training.

## The anticipated rise of global learning in journalism education

Global learning – here understood as skills, knowledge and attitudes enabling the student to understand and analyse cultural difference and global systems (cf. Olson, Green & Hill, 2006, p. v) – occurs on different levels. The most elementary is global awareness, whereby the student recognizes that local society does not function in

isolation but is instead interdependent with outside influences. A secondary level is global knowledge, which engages in the systematic study of issues such as global communication, comparative politics and transnational organization. The most comprehensive form of global learning, however, occurs when the student attains global competence. This level not only demands an understanding of key mechanisms in the global community, but also presumes expertise whereby the global outlook has become an integrated part of the journalistic mindset.

Alongside skills in media convergence, global learning is often highlighted as a key competence area for tomorrow's journalists (Deuze, 2006; Franklin & Mensing, 2011; Gerodimos, 2013; Josephi, 2009). A single course in global reporting is not enough; the global emphasis should cut across the curriculum (Gerodimos, 2012; Goodman, 2014; Wasserman, 2010, 2011). To Peter Berglez (2011), learning global journalism is not about acquiring skills in foreign reporting but rather about letting the global consciousness inform any story, local or international. Although developments in journalism education often focus on skills, proponents of global learning tend to emphasize attitudes over and above skills and knowledge. "I hope that the students understand that they are not alone in the world," says a Russian journalism instructor (quoted in Stigbrand and Nygren, 2013: 79).

Various initiatives over the past two decades have underscored the need for international collaboration in journalism education. In our corner of the world, the European Journalism Training Association (EJTA, established in Brussels in 1990) gathers educators from 24 countries to encourage transnational exchange. The Nordic countries have been somewhat slow in joining EJTA; only 12 of their 22 journalism schools are members (October 2015). This is probably partly due to the Nordic countries' own educators' network, which fulfils some of the need for collaboration across national borders. It is nevertheless pertinent to note that global learning was left out of the first version of EJTA's educational platform, the Tartu Declaration, adopted in June 2006. It was only in the revised 2013 version that the ability to "link the local with the national and the global" was listed as one of 50 key competence areas for European journalism students<sup>2</sup>. Another initiative worthy of mention is UNESCO's Model Curricula for Journalism Education (2013). Both its original version in 2007 – especially designed for developing countries and emerging democracies – and the 2013 worldwide version include global journalism as a key competence. The model curricula built on the work of a former global network of journalism schools – JourNet – where Nordic scholarship provided vital input (Berger, 2010; Morgan, 2001). Specifically, the Nordic contribution to JourNet mostly came through the University of Tampere, Finland and veteran scholar Kaarle Nordenstreng, who has also contributed to a number of other north/south networks within journalism education and research. This illustrates that global emphasis is not necessarily a consequence of institutional priorities, but often comes as a result of individual engagement.

These initiatives notwithstanding, it is less certain whether the call for increased global learning in journalism education has paid off in actual classroom practice. On

the one hand, anecdotal evidence claims that an interest in the global is on the rise in journalism departments. For example, in South Africa, courses with an international focus are regarded as prestigious and attract many students (Rodny-Gumede, 2013). Also, an account from the UK claims that a growing number of journalism students express a desire to learn about global issues and want to travel abroad (Charles, 2013). Survey studies, on the other hand, point to less interest in global learning among both students and staff. A fairly comprehensive study involving 134 undergraduate journalism programmes in the US found that international journalism was poorly valued among the programme directors (Blom & Davenport, 2012). Likewise, students – in both the US and Europe – tend to be locally oriented. A cross-national survey of journalism students from Sweden, Finland, Estonia, Poland and Russia found that the majority – except in Russia – want to work in the national media rather than the local, regional or international media (Nygren & Stigbrand, 2014). The Hovdabrekka Project, surveying Nordic journalism students within a longitudinal perspective, finds a declining interest in global issues among tomorrow's journalists. The share of students who want to work with international conflicts has shown a steady decrease from 41 per cent (2005), to 34 (2008), and to 32 (2012). The interest in working with multicultural issues in the same period decreased from 28 to 26 per cent. Different reasons could be attributed to a reluctance to work with intercultural issues, one of which is the presumed difficulty today's journalism students have stepping outside their comfort zone to consider alternative perspectives (Brooks & Ward, 2007; Len-Ríos & Perry, 2009).

The reality in the Nordic countries is that global issues are treated sporadically and unevenly in the journalism programmes. Like in the Netherlands (Diekerhof, 2011), international courses are offered mainly on an advanced level, meaning that modules with global relevance mostly appear in postgraduate programmes (MA) and as such are left out of the professional journalism training, which primarily belongs to the undergraduate domain. This reverberates with experiences from the UK, where international journalism has emerged mainly on the postgraduate level. A fifth of the UK's journalism departments now boast courses related to international relations, though there is little agreement on what type of subject knowledge should be included in such courses (Li, 2013). In Norway, which is the focus of the current case study, journalism training is primarily geared at domestic needs and is taught in the Norwegian language.

A study concluded that, despite growing multicultural surroundings, there is only limited emphasis on intercultural issues in Norwegian journalism curricula (Økland, 2009; cf. Bjørnsen et al., 2009). International exposure is mainly secured through optional study-abroad semesters or by means of individual reporting assignments whereby it is not uncommon to travel abroad, especially in larger projects towards the end of the BA study. The organized international study trip is less common, especially if it involves travel outside of Western Europe. As such, NLA University College's study trip to East Africa is unusual, but it is not unique; other schools have related experience.

Volda University College in Norway offers organized study trips to India as part of a course in global reporting; the University of Tampere in Finland has had field trips to Zambia (Hujanen, 2009); the Danish School of Media and Journalism has organized field trips to various countries, including a recent visit to Ethiopia; and more. What is more unusual about NLA's study trip is its stability and reach, comprising 15 years of experience and counting more than 350 journalism students who have been to Africa as part of their journalism degree. Our aim in this study is therefore to go beyond immediate evaluation results and instead investigate the long-term effects of the study trip. The size of the student body who has gone on the excursion is such that quantitative data can be aggregated, providing a less common research approach in studies of out-of-the-classroom pedagogy, where limited qualitative analysis is the standard method.

## Method

The study uses a combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis. The principal material emanates from two survey studies, conducted in 2009 and 2014, which included all participants from previous years' study trips to East Africa, arranged by the Journalism and Media Department at NLA University College. While the 2009 survey involved 207 respondents, the 2014 survey attracted 232. Both surveys were conducted as online questionnaires, and included multiple choice questions meant for quantitative analysis as well as open-ended questions meant for qualitative analysis.

The chief motive for the study is to determine what impact the field trip has had on the students involved, professionally as well as personally. Needless to say, impact is difficult to measure. It can materialize on different levels; it can be immediate or emerge slowly; it can be visible or subconscious; it can be positive and negative at the same time; and so forth. Above all, impact is rarely one-dimensional. The impact of one event coincides with influences from other sources, resulting in a rather complex pattern of change in beliefs and behaviour, which in turn yields different outcomes for different people. At the end of the day, this implies that it is challenging to be conclusive about the impact of a field trip on those involved, individually as much as collectively. These limitations notwithstanding, we propose a study which at least to some extent can point to the long-term effect of a field trip. In order to achieve as representative a response as possible, we used a survey approach in which all previous field trip participants were sampled. In the 2009 collection, the cohort consisted of all participants from 2000 to 2008, totalling 252 students (response rate 82 per cent). In the second collection, which began in September 2014, we included all students in the 2009-13 field trips; however, we also engaged the 2000-08 students once again so as to be able to assess some of the effects from an even longer perspective. This gave a total cohort of 347 potential respondents for the latter survey, which is identical to the number of students who had participated in the field trip up to that point. The response rate in the latter survey came to 67 per cent.



The five-year interval between the two surveys implies that the respondents had different time spans since completing the field trip at the time they responded to the survey. Some responded to the survey less than a year after the trip, meaning that they had the excursion fresh in mind, while others had made the trip more than ten years ago. They were thus at different stages in their lives and had different preconditions for responding to certain questions, for example regarding how many times they have been back to Africa since the trip. This needs to be considered when interpreting the survey responses.

By and large, the 2009 and 2014 questionnaires were the same. The 2009 survey had 37 items while the 2014 survey was slightly trimmed, to 31 items. A majority of the items consisted of multiple choice questions or rated value statements, with additional open space questions to give the respondents a chance to saturate the picture using full sentences. The questions covered a variety of issues. Some were factually oriented and asked about the respondent's current work duties, whether he/she had been back to Africa lately, and so forth. Others were value-oriented, asking the respondent about his/her view about media coverage of Africa, whether the respondent foresaw that he/she would work with African affairs in the future, and so forth. All responses were anonymous. The survey is a standalone venture, and was not followed up with other data collection such as face-to-face interviews.

## The organized field trip to East Africa

NLA University College in Kristiansand, Norway (until 2013 the Gimlekollen School of Journalism and Communication) has organized international field trips for its journalism students since the mid-1980s. In the beginning years, the trip consisted of a mandatory week-long journey to strategic political bodies in Brussels and the surroundings, along the design of common field trips in European Journalism offered by various institutions around the continent (e.g. Grieves, 2011; Holm, 1997). However, in 2000 the field trip took a very different direction. Instead of focusing on European politics, the trip would go to East Africa, focusing on African media, culture and politics. The emergence of the study trip concurred with a growing emphasis on intercultural communication and north/south engagement at the School (cf. Jones, 2005).

The trip in November/December 2014 marked the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the excursion. During this period 361 students in their second year of study have travelled to East Africa on the organized field trip, each group consisting of an average of 25 students. The trip is not compulsory, although students who choose to stay at home in Norway must compensate with a local course in Global Journalism to fulfil the requirements for a BA in Journalism. The students who go to East Africa attend lectures at a local university in Nairobi, Kenya, meet local media people, visit international organizations in Nairobi (such as the UN Headquarters), and produce a media assignment involving local citizens. They also go beneath the surface of the modern city and visit



the Mathare slum, and go on a journey in Western Kenya where they stay in villages. Although Kenya is the main seat for the field trip, the excursion has also involved shorter visits to either Ethiopia or Tanzania. In total, the trip lasts four weeks, with the first three organized as a group excursion and the fourth usually organized by the students individually as they work on assignments, or take some days off. The trip takes place each year in November/December.

The pedagogic model for the field trip constitutes a combined lecture/excursion approach. Lectures are given by local instructors, many of whom are senior Kenyan media personalities. The excursions consist of a variety of visits to organizations, cultural sites and so forth. The objective is to give the Norwegian students a chance to meet people in their ordinary work setting or home environment. Since 2011, the field trip has been a joint venture with NLA's programme in Intercultural Communication, mixing journalism and communication students for most of the journey. This has meant that journalism students also get some acquaintance with the anthropological method as part of the course.

## Findings

One of the main issues we want to explore is the extent to which the students have found use from the field trip in their future studies or career. The response to this issue is overwhelmingly positive, more than two thirds says they have been able to apply knowledge from the field trip in later studies or work (Table 1). Just as interesting as the percentage are the respondents' narrative accounts in response to the question. One respondent writes:

I've been able to build further on the knowledge I gained. I took on a study in Development Studies. I'm about to work for a year in Tanzania with media and information. All the knowledge we got, for example about the media in Kenya, will be useful. (Participant, 2001 trip)<sup>3</sup>

**Table 1.** "Would you say you have been able to apply knowledge from the field trip in later studies or work?" (per cent)

|                       |     |
|-----------------------|-----|
| Yes                   | 70  |
| No                    | 12  |
| Not sure              | 18  |
| Sum per cent          | 100 |
| Number of respondents | 228 |

Several respondents emphasize that the learning is not limited to immediately applicable knowledge, but represents something more. One respondent who was still in the journalism programme at the time of responding writes:

I got a better comprehension of north/south issues, something I found useful for several stories I did in my internship. Then there are things which are not directly applicable but which have contributed to a more comprehensive view of the world, such as cultural competence, how diverse three countries in Africa might be, and the preconditions for the media in poor countries. I am positively sure I will have use for much of the knowledge and experiences from the field trip both in my professional career and privately. My will to travel hasn't decreased, and I WILL return to Africa to see more. I guarantee you. (Participant, 2008 trip)

This respondent is not the only one among the student travellers who wants to return to Africa<sup>4</sup>. A total of 67 per cent agree or fully agree with the claim "The field trip gave me a desire to return to Africa to learn more about the continent's challenges". What is more, the survey shows that many actually did return: 29 per cent state that they have been back to Africa since the field trip, which for most of them (79 per cent) was their first encounter with Africa. Most students who have revisited the continent have returned only once, but as many as 38 per cent have gone back twice or more.

### Why do they return?

There could be a variety of reasons as to why the students return to Africa after completing their studies. We thus asked them specifically about their motivation for going back. Many of them linked the new journey(s) to the trip they had made as journalism students (Table 2). This testifies to a high direct impact of the field trip in terms of future travel activity.

**Table 2.** "Would you say the previous field trip was a major incentive for returning to Africa?" (per cent)

|                       |     |
|-----------------------|-----|
| Yes                   | 30  |
| To some extent        | 29  |
| No                    | 41  |
| Sum per cent          | 100 |
| Number of respondents | 66  |

When asked about the direct reason for the new journeys, close to half of the trips (44 per cent) were identified as "work-related, more or less". In other words, there are combined purposes for travelling to Africa, and no motive stands out as the major reason for returning. People return to visit friends, conduct further studies, go on vacation, do work, and more. It is nevertheless striking to observe that many trips had a journalistic or media-related mission. Of the overall proportion who returned to Africa, 42 per cent inform that they did journalistic production as part of their new trip. A further 16 per cent did other media-related production, such as information or PR material.

The survey reveals that several of the former students have begun a career as freelance journalists, allowing them to pursue stories which truly interest them. For some this is the best way to nurture their interest in other cultures and peoples, which after all tends to be costly for ordinary media organizations because it involves travel and fieldwork. A participant in the 2005 trip shares that she returned to Africa three years later to tell the story of a refugee:

I made a documentary about a UN refugee from Congo who returns to his home city, Uvira, to start a library. The documentary is going to be broadcast on NRK [Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation].

For this student and others, the field trip may have functioned as an eye-opener on a new world, giving them courage to embark on productions which may otherwise have seemed unachievable.

Some of the students emerge as more interested in north/south issues than others. For a few, the field trip led to more than just a return trip to Africa, instead sparking a long-term engagement with the continent and its people. One student who ended up with a particular connection to Ethiopia has this to say about her later media production:

I wrote an article for [a regional Norwegian newspaper] on the International Women's Day, in which I interviewed an Ethiopian family. I've done information work for Norwegian Church Aid, in both Ethiopia and Kenya. I wrote an article for [a Norwegian national weekly newspaper]. I worked for the Ethiopian newspaper The Reporter for a month, and wrote articles for the magazine of the Ethiopian Media Women's Association. (Participant, 2006 trip)

The student ended up staying in Ethiopia for a year with the Norwegian Peace Corps ("Fredskorpset"), and upon returning to Norway wrote a great deal of stories about immigration and refugees for a Norwegian daily.

## Professional profile

The survey shows that many respondents continue to work in the media sector. A total of 47 per cent work for the media either as journalist or editor, or fill other functions in the media organization. Another 22 per cent work with information or communication, while 17 per cent are still students. We also wanted to identify whether a large proportion was engaged in global work, international development and similar activities, as the School has had a number of students expressing an interest in this area. However, only a modest 3 per cent had such engagement as their main occupation.

In terms of covering international news, about half of the respondents who work in the media engage in such activity at least once a month and 17 per cent work with

international issues on a daily basis. However, when asked about how often they produce stories concerning not just foreign news but specifically the developing world, the proportion is less, only 9 per cent work with these kind of stories at least weekly (Table 3). Based on this, it cannot be concluded that NLA's field trip has recruited a great number of journalists working on north/south issues. On the other hand, there are very few journalists in the Norwegian media as a whole who have this as their specialized beat; most reporters focus on domestic issues. Even so, almost a third of the respondents say they travel abroad at least once a year as part of their journalistic work. Their destination is usually Europe, but, as indicated above, a number of respondents have also been on work-related trips to Africa.

**Table 3.** "How often do you work with stories concerning third world development?" (per cent)

|                       |    |
|-----------------------|----|
| Daily                 | 1  |
| Weekly                | 8  |
| Monthly               | 20 |
| Less often            | 70 |
| Sum per cent          | 99 |
| Number of respondents | 84 |

### Was there any change in personal attitudes?

One of the expected outcomes of the field trip is that participants would be personally affected in one way or the other, and the survey responses indicate that changes in beliefs and attitudes do occur. To the claim "The field trip gave me a different view of Africa", 68 per cent replied "Agree" or "Fully agree". The narrative responses provide a wealth of examples of how the students had their stereotypes challenged. The mechanisms of poverty, for example, may be different than expected:

I'll never forget the excursion to the Nairobi slum. I initially wanted to stay out of it, because I thought we were going on a guided safari to look at people who were suffering. How wrong! The encounter with the slum gave us hope and a greater understanding of Africa as a whole, a realization of how complex poverty is. (Participant, 2006 trip)

After having returned to Norway, the participants generally express dissatisfaction with the mainstream media coverage of Africa. Only 1 per cent agree that the general coverage of Africa in the Norwegian media is fair. The respondents are particularly disappointed with the focus on war, upheaval and catastrophe. Interestingly, at the same time they claim that they more or less understand why the coverage is as it is (74 per cent), without necessarily defending it. This could point to a degree of critical-realistic reflection.

Perhaps somewhat surprisingly, far from all respondents would actively change the media coverage if given the chance. Only 30 per cent express that they want to contribute to a different media image of Africa, while the rest either disagree or have no strong opinion. This might come as a surprise, given that the same cohort is unhappy with the coverage; however, it could also mean that they realize the ethical limits and real-world constraints that come into play in actual media production.

The survey indicates that the field trip enhanced the participants' knowledge about and interest in Africa issues. A total of 44 per cent agree or fully agree that they stay more up to date on Africa today than before the field trip (41 per cent partly agree). This is perhaps only to be expected, as people tend to stay up to date on familiar situations. Interestingly, the results indicate that this effect is observed not only in the short term but carries on for years after the field trip.

## Gender differences

The overall perception of the impact of the study trip points in the same direction for men and women. At the same time, there appears to be a slight but noteworthy systematic difference, revealing a more idealistic attitude for the female participants. To the claim that one stays more up to date on Africa issues today than before, nearly half of the women agree/fully agree, compared with only 33 per cent of the men. Also a larger share of women say they would like to contribute to a different media image of Africa, that the field trip inspired them to return to Africa to learn more about the conditions for local people, that the study trip was a direct or indirect reason to return to Africa (Table 4).

**Table 4.** Share who agree (fully and partly) with different statements based on gender (per cent)

|                                                                                                       | Male | Female |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|--------|
| "I stay more updated on Africa now than before the field trip"                                        | 33   | 46     |
| "I would like to contribute to a different media image of Africa"                                     | 24   | 33     |
| "The field trip has inspired me to return to Africa to learn more about the local society and people" | 49   | 73     |
| "The field trip was a direct or indirect reason for returning to Africa"                              | 41   | 73     |
| Number of respondents                                                                                 | 96   | 136    |

These findings indicate that the female participants are more idealistic, more change-oriented and perhaps more personally engaged in the central themes of the field trip than the male participants are. In this regard, it is interesting to note that every year

the field trip attracts more women than men. Overall, about two-thirds of the participants have been women, while the predominance of women in the overall journalism programme is less (52 per cent women in recent years).

### Learning or adventure?

What is the basic stimulus for going on a field trip to East Africa – learning or adventure? The survey yields no clear answer to this question, except to indicate that both incentives are present. The instructors would like to believe that genuine learning stands out as the essential motivation, but for a great number of participants, the adventure or pleasure aspect emerges as equally important. This becomes clear when students stay up late at night, party and skip lectures, thereby expressing a lack of interest in the organized instruction. One year in particular, the “notorious” and oversized group of 2004 (43 students) became known among the staff as the most challenging group ever. The group had “free riders” who were not actually interested in the subject matter but only looked forward to landing on the beaches of Zanzibar in the final week. After this experience, the School introduced a limit of 30 participants per year. However, interestingly enough, the survey shows that the participants of the 2004 journey valued the trip as much as the other groups. Although the immediate feedback after the trip triggered negative responses from students who complained about the careless behaviour of fellow students, in retrospect the student group scores only marginally poorer on learning outcome factors than do the other groups. The 2004 group, like the others, highly appreciated the field trip and confirm that it has made an impact in their later career and studies.

Three of the survey questions prompted the students to indicate whether they were motivated to return to Africa for various reasons: to learn more about the local society and its challenges; to return as a tourist; and to bring family and friends to Africa. As expected, the vast majority were motivated to return for all three reasons. However, one reason, returning as a tourist, was highlighted as slightly more pervasive than the other two, ticked by 78 per cent of the respondents (learning more about the local society was valued the lowest of the three, but still scored 67 per cent). This is a realistic response. Students seek learning, but they also seek adventure and pleasure. Drawing a sharp distinction between different motivations emerges as an unworkable approach in the analysis. A sense of “enjoyment” at being on a field trip is part of the learning motivation. One could perhaps suggest that a profoundly felt personal enthusiasm of being there is the utmost precondition for high impact in the long run.

## Conclusion

There are many potential ways to tackle global learning in Nordic journalism education. It could be done practically or theoretically, comparatively or situationally, domestically or through excursions abroad. Despite an expressed concern that global issues and global exchange are important for future journalists, most programmes have not opted to highlight global journalism as a prioritized area in the study. Perhaps somewhat surprisingly, only a few programmes organize field trips to southern contexts. If such opportunities are given, they tend to be offered as individual field trips in which single students travel abroad for an independent journalistic project, alternatively in small groups.

This chapter has looked at another viable option, the organized field trip combining lectures, excursions and journalistic production in collaboration with partnership institutions in the south. Through a quantitative two-tiered survey (2009 and 2014), it was found that a high proportion of the students have been able to use knowledge and experiences from the field trip in their later studies and career; they admit that the stay in East Africa changed their perceptions about the African continent and its people; they express a desire to return to Africa; and so forth. Moreover, the fact that many of the students have actually returned to Africa (29 per cent), most of them citing the field trip as a reason for going back, strongly suggests lasting influence.

Previous studies of cross-cultural excursions in journalism training are rather united in their acclaim of the positive learning outcome. The organized study trip provides a unique ground for the cultivation of new ideas (Hujanen, 2009), stimulates concentrated learning (Duffield, 2008, 2014), challenges ethnocentricity (Duffy, 2012), and leads to life-altering experiences (Steeves, 2005). At the same time, it has been argued that single courses in globalization or opportunities to study abroad are not enough to prepare students for global citizenship (Goodman, 2014; Mitchell, 2013; Wasserman, 2011). This rationale is understandable, as specialized courses in global journalism could express a fragmented view of global reality. However, the issue could also be turned around. If there is a well-organized cross-cultural field trip opportunity in the journalism programme, it is likely to have a positive effect on the rest of the learning environment as well. It will automatically involve several staff members, provide a ground for international collaboration, augment research across borders, and generally create an atmosphere in which global learning becomes an inherent part of curriculum development.

## Notes

1. <http://nordiskjournalistutbildning.org/skolor-i-natverket/>
2. <http://ejta.eu/the-tartu-declaration/>
3. All quotes are translated from Norwegian to English.

4. The questionnaire defines Africa as “Sub-Saharan Africa”, so as to make a clear distinction from North Africa, which is a popular holiday destination for Norwegians.

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## Dialogues and Difficulties

### *Transnational Cooperation in Journalism Education*

Kristin Skare Orgeret

#### Abstract

The profession and pedagogy of journalism are both at a crossroads, and questions linked to how journalism education can best provide skills, knowledge and experiences that enable students to contribute positively to the industry are central. An increasingly globalised world demands global learning that enhances the development of critical skills and facilitates intercultural understanding, especially due to the fact that some of the major challenges of our times – climate change, global inequalities, migration, terrorism – cannot be fully solved or understood solely at a national level. The chapter proposes a closer look at what global learning in journalism through international cooperation may involve. Its findings do not support the idea that in the era of globalisation, a common professional approach to journalism overshadows different cultural worldviews and differences. Furthermore, the findings show that global learning may bring out important cultural differences and make the participants more aware of their own ethical heritage or values than they were before getting involved in the process of global learning. Such challenges to global learning are not often discussed in academic literature. The analysis here essentially suggests that if research within journalism education wants to explain intercultural communication in journalism education, it needs to broaden its horizons and adopt a multidisciplinary perspective.

**Keywords:** journalism education, journalistic values, global learning, intercultural understanding, Norway

## Introduction

At a time of transition for both the profession and the pedagogy of journalism, questions linked to how journalism education best provides skills, knowledge and experiences that enable students to work in the industry are crucial. An increasingly globalized world demands intercultural communication skills on both a global and, progressively, a local level. A global learning that enhances the development of critical skills and facilitates intercultural understanding is core, not least since some of the major challenges of our time – climate change, global inequalities, migration, terrorism – cannot be fully solved or understood solely at a national level. As a result, journal-

ism is increasingly becoming an international phenomenon with global networks, no longer able to operate solely within national or cultural borders (Löffelholz et al. 2008). Concurrently, more news media content becomes global, and it becomes harder to categorize news texts as either solely domestic or foreign news.

A great deal of academic work on global journalism training focuses on how journalism education is uniquely positioned to advance global awareness. This, as Gerodimos reminds us, may happen both directly amongst journalism students, and indirectly – through them – amongst the public at large (Gerodimos, 2013). Global learning is often defined as “the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that students acquire through a variety of experiences that enable them to understand world culture and events; analyse global systems; appreciate cultural differences, and apply this knowledge and appreciation to their lives as citizens and workers” (Olsen et al. 2009: 7). Peter Berglez (2013: 97) describes “global journalism” as first and foremost a *mode of communication*. He emphasizes that, despite the importance of technical means, what constitutes global journalism is an epistemological component: it is based on a global mode of thinking about society (cognition) and global language use (discourse). This chapter proposes a closer look at what global learning in journalism through international cooperation may involve. Its findings do not support the idea that in the era of globalization a common professional approach to journalism overshadows different cultural worldviews and differences.

Furthermore, the findings show that global learning may reveal important cultural differences and make participants more aware of their own ethical heritage or values than before they became involved in the process of global learning. Such challenges to global learning are seldom discussed in academic literature. The analysis here essentially suggests that if research within journalism education wants to explain intercultural communication in journalism education, it needs to broaden its horizons and adopt a multidisciplinary perspective. Such a perspective should include both the analysis of national political and social processes in the countries involved, and a deeper understanding of the dynamics of the professional approach to journalism in each single society involved.

## Methods

A central aim of this chapter is to discuss experiences from the oldest and largest journalism education in Norway, at the Department of Journalism and Media Studies (IJM) at Oslo and Akershus University College (HiOA), where global learning has been highlighted for many years. Whereas IJM includes global journalism perspectives at different levels of its BA and MA programmes, this study primarily focuses on an ongoing cooperation programme between IJM, the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication at Makerere University in Uganda, the University of Juba in South Sudan, and the College of Journalism and Mass Communication in Kathmandu, Nepal

(Norhed, 2013-2018). This project was selected because of its important geographical outreach; it includes partners from journalism educations on three different continents. Serving as a case in point, the cooperation project will illustrate some benefits and challenges involved with including global cooperation in journalism education.

To approach the question of what global learning in journalism may involve, a total of 31 journalist educators both in Oslo and at the partner institutions in the south (Uganda and Nepal) were asked to reflect upon questions related to the era of global learning and the connection to professional values. Twenty-two faculty members from Oslo answered a questionnaire with both open and closed questions at a seminar in January 2015, while a total of four educators from Nepal and five from Uganda answered a questionnaire and were interviewed in September 2014 and February 2015. Questions about how the educators see the role of journalism education in relation to preparing students for an increasingly globalized world are central. What do the educators see as the main advantages and challenges of creating interculturally adept journalists? How can journalism education best provide students with the context and skills they need to fulfil their role as global citizens and critical mediators between the local and the global? A core perspective in the discussions was the issue of conflicting values in transnational journalism education. As this is a relatively limited sample, the findings are used as illustrations opening for discussion rather than as “hard facts”.

### A common framework for journalism?

In global education, it becomes imperative to discuss whether it is possible to talk about a set of consistent global values that are core to the journalistic profession (see e.g. Krøvel, Orgeret, & Ytterstad, 2012). It is commonly argued that, since the birth of modern journalism in Europe in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, some standardized values have become central to the profession (Weaver, 1998; Deuze, 2005). According to Loo, “professional journalism across politico-cultural systems do share common inherent characteristics of news” because human “curiosity and demand for ‘news’ and information transcends culture and politics” (Loo, 2009: 169). Nevertheless, such professional ethics are not static but rather consist of dynamic frameworks of principles and values. Even though some researchers argue that certain values of journalism have universal application, there are legitimate differences in journalistic culture from one country to another that are of importance in issues of ethics and professional ideology (Park, & Curran, 2000; Hanitzsch, 2007; Hanitzsch, Hanusch et al. 2010).

Furthermore, a global-based curriculum is believed to be broader and more comprehensive than simply a number of specific courses with a global/transnational emphasis. According to Patwardhan et al. (2012), a global-based curriculum “focuses on ensuring that students are exposed to structured, first-hand intercultural and international experiences in the major with intentional, facilitated reflection and critical thinking components”. A global journalism approach would stress the need to learn about cultural

differences that play into the understanding of professional journalistic roles within different cultures worldwide (Berglez, 2013). Furthermore, comparing ideals and views of the profession transnationally may enhance our understanding of the national or local “doxa” as it is translated into professional ideals and values in journalism education.

Thomas Hanitzsch’s *Worlds of Journalism* study is interesting in the discussion of possibilities for a common framework for transnational education and research in journalism, as it regularly assesses journalists in 21 countries worldwide and their perceptions of their role in society and how they influence their own work (worldsofjournalism.org). Hanitzsch (2011) describes four journalistic archetypes based on professional values:

### *Populist Disseminator*

Journalists who pay the most attention to their audiences and accordingly are most likely to cover what their audiences consider “interesting news” in order to attract bigger numbers. Not very critical of government or elites. Yet does not intend to take on an active and participatory role in reporting.

### *Detached Watchdog*

Journalists who value both their seemingly contradictory roles as detached observer and watchdog over the political and business elite. They provide readers with interesting and important political information for financial and civic life purposes. Most opposed to supporting official policies.

### *Critical Change Agent*

Journalists critical of the government and the business elite, advocating for social change and work toward influencing public opinion and setting political agendas.

Of the four groups, these are most likely to push their audiences’ desires.

### *Opportunist Facilitator*

Journalists most likely to see themselves as constructive government partners in economic development and political transformation. Of the four groups, these are the least interested in detached observations, watchdog activities and political information and mobilization functions.

The *Worlds of Journalism* study finds that most Western countries view their main journalistic approach as that of the Detached Watchdog, while the Critical Change approach is particularly strong in the Middle East. According to the findings, the Opportunist Facilitator approach is popular in many developing, authoritarian and transitional countries, and Hanitzsch argues that the Populist Disseminator is “the only

truly global journalistic approach since it exists everywhere in the world” (Hanitzsch, 2011). Typologies like those used in the *Worlds of Journalism* study may be helpful tools for critically reflecting on values feeding into different professional approaches within journalism, and not least when developing transnational cooperation in journalism education. However, there is reason to be careful not to pigeonhole countries and media systems, as competing roles might very well exist simultaneously within a specific country and across different media outlets and journalistic genres. Furthermore, on an individual level there might be larger discrepancies as to what roles the journalists in a specific country adhere to than such general findings may give the impression of. There might be great differences between what the journalist educators see as their personal ideal role as a professional journalist and how they see the most practiced role of the profession in general in their country.

The *Worlds of Journalism* findings from Uganda in 2011 stated that 69 per cent of the professional journalists there were Opportunist Facilitators, 20 per cent Critical Change Agents, 8 per cent Popular Disseminators, and only 2 per cent Detached Watchdogs.<sup>1</sup> The Ugandan journalist educators in this sample expressed that they belonged to the two largest of the ideal professional roles presented above: some held the Opportunist Facilitator role as a personal ideal for their professional role, whereas others chose the role of the Critical Change Agent as an ideal professional role (2014 and 2015). When it came to which of the four roles they would say is most practiced in the day-to-day journalism in Uganda, it was argued that this would depend on the media in question; radio and television journalism would mostly practice the Populist Disseminator role and influential newspapers would be Critical Change Agents, while government/public media would be Opportunist Facilitators.

The Nepalese journalist educators stated that their own professional role was that of the Detached Watchdog, whereas they believed the most practiced role in their country was either that of the Populist Dissemination role or the Critical Change Agent. Of the 22 Norwegian educators, 64 per cent believed that the Detached Watchdog was closest to their journalistic ideal, while 18 per cent adhered to the Critical Change Agent role. When it came to which of the ideal forms governed most of the journalism in Norway today, 55 per cent of the Norwegian journalist educators argued that it was the Populist Disseminator, whereas 36 per cent believed it was the Detached Watchdog.

To further define the perceived ideal role of the professional journalist, the journalist educators were given three statements from which they could choose one that best represented their personal view:

- a) Journalists should always try to balance opposing views and should avoid expressing their own views.
- b) Journalists may express their own views, but in a cautious and balanced way.
- c) Journalists should make a stand in important ethical discussions.

Here, all the Nepalese educators and two of those in Uganda agreed that journalists should make a stand in important ethical discussions, whereas the other three Ugan-

dan journalism educators stated that journalists may express their own views, but in a cautious and balanced way. Several of the Norwegian educators stressed the need for genre differences in the media here, and one refused to use archetypes at all. Some 47 per cent believed journalists could express their own views in a cautious and balanced way and 33 per cent found that journalists should make a stand in important ethical discussions, whereas 19 per cent considered that journalists should balance opposing views and avoid expressing their own views.

Hence, the findings from this small selection of journalism educators illustrate that there might be greater variety on an individual level than the findings of larger studies such as *Worlds of Journalism* show. Interestingly, various combinations of one's own ideal professional role and attitudes towards journalists expressing their own views in journalism were found. The findings also illustrate that how questions linked to journalistic professional values are asked may lead to rather different findings; for instance, there is not necessarily any compliance between what the journalism educators see as their own ideal professional role and the one that is most practiced in day-to-day journalism in their home country. Researchers asking questions related to professional values should hence always emphasize whether they are discussing an ideal or a factual professional role. Also, the fact that there might be great differences between media outlets and journalistic genres within the same country should be taken into consideration.

### The objectivity ideal in journalism education

The objectivity ideal in journalism is often thought of as a Western export, and hence for some, its universal appeal is tainted by Eurocentrism (Hallin, & Mancini, 2004; Schudson, & Anderson, 2009; Wasserman, & Beer, 2009). It may be argued, however, that objectivity carries several meanings, including being responsible, balanced, reflective of public opinion, neutral, detached and truth-seeking (Knowlton, & Freeman, 2005; Harcup, 2009; Wahl-Jorgensen, & Hanitzsch, 2009). Even in the micro-sample of journalist educators from Uganda, Nepal and Norway referred to here, interesting differences were found when the informants were asked to define objectivity in journalism. The quotes from the interviews reflect a variety of different approaches to objectivity from one close to concepts of "neutrality" and "impartiality":

Objectivity means that a journalist writes a balanced story; giving all parties involved in the story the opportunity to present their views. It calls for neutrality and requires that a journalist is impartial in their reporting. (September 2014)

Another highlighted the need for "fairness":

Objectivity in journalism is about being fair to all parties involved in any given story. It is about removing individual biases of journalists from the stories they write. (September 2014)



Whereas yet another opened for the journalist to position him/herself:

Even when the journalist takes a stand on a matter, it should be after presenting all the options and providing a full context of the situation, so that he/she is not seen or thought to try to sway public opinion in a certain direction for selfish reasons. (September 2014)

One of the educators included a “guiding” approach in the definition of objectivity in journalism:

In my opinion, journalism communicates between common people and the government. It raises national issues and gives the floor to describing and analysing different issues. So, it should be fair, balanced and also capable of giving some suggestions to those concerned. (September 2014)

The need to include different interest groups in the reporting was also mentioned:

Objectivity for me is balancing the story by making the opinions inclusive. The stories should not be biased, and a journalist should not be biased and a journalist should not enforce stereotyping. (September 2014)

When asked how they defined objectivity in journalism, around a third of the Norwegian educators also highlighted the concept of “balance”. The need for the journalist to be critical in selecting sources and to include as many perspectives as possible was also repeatedly mentioned, while two of the Norwegian educators mentioned “searching for the truth” as important in the strive for objectivity and one mentioned the need to be transparent about one’s own role in the journalistic process. Among the Norwegian educators several emphasized that “objectivity does not exist” and some added that it was still useful as a (Utopian) ideal to strive for in one’s journalistic work, whereas one argued that it would “bungle a discussion” to use the concept (January 2015). The findings emphasize how the concept of objectivity may carry several meanings. Interestingly, diverging views on the question of journalist detachment became even more accentuated in discussions of issues in which colliding ethical issues were brought to the table.

### Experiences from transnational cooperation in journalism education

The journalism educators from Nepal, Uganda and Norway strongly agreed that there were many, and valuable, benefits from transnational cooperation in journalism education. A recurring argument was that it exposed journalism students and educators to different and new ways of looking at the profession, as it enabled them to share experiences, lessons and challenges from their varied settings and backgrounds. Furthermore, they emphasized how such cooperation offers exposure to different

debates they may not have come across as journalists in their own countries, and to the different dynamics of handling/writing about these issues with an open outlook.

The positive effects of hearing the opinion of outsiders about the practices in one's own country were also stressed. It was argued that transnational cooperation helps students and teachers look at a particular topic of journalism from different perspectives (interviews, September 2014 and January 2015). One of the educators from Uganda emphasized how transnational cooperation may help in "appreciating the diverse values that exist in journalism training in different parts of the world, how it could lead to sharing success stories in journalism training as well as linking local perspectives to international environments" (September 2014). Among the Norwegian educators, the aspects of both increased cultural understanding as well as supporting freedom of expression in countries where it does not exist or is weak today were highlighted as important outcomes, as was increasing students' and faculties' perspectives on international issues, and learning about other ways of approaching journalism in both teaching and research. An exchange of experiences, values and knowledge, as well as "expanding our horizons", was also mentioned by several. One respondent stressed the importance of gaining "knowledge about a critical but fundamental universalism". Some talked about solidarity, and how important it is for all students and faculty to be forced to look at their own culture and values from "outside". Through the interviews, it became clear that the educators agreed that transnational cooperation may equip trainers with knowledge of different local contexts that may later be transferred to students, who could then use this knowledge in their future work. The importance of discussing and disseminating awareness and values was also stressed across the national groups.

## When worldviews and values collide – the issue of homosexuality

A case in point in which conflicting values became very clear in the cooperation between journalism education institutions on three different continents involved the controversy over the acceptance of homosexuality. Norway, Nepal and Uganda have very different political and historical trajectories, and represent highly diverging views on homosexuality. This had consequences on both the discourse and the cognition of the cooperation.

### *In Norway*

Same-sex sexual activity has been legal since 1972 in Norway, and in recent decades the change toward a general acceptance of homosexuality has been tremendous in Norwegian society (Eide, 2014; Linstad, 2012). Norway is highly liberal in regard to LGBTI (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex) rights, and became the first

country in the world to enact an anti-discrimination law protecting homosexuals. Same-sex marriage and adoption by same-sex couples have been legal in the country since 2009. Although there were harsh discussions regarding whether the Church should wed homosexual couples, a great majority of Norwegians see it as a human right to openly follow one's sexual orientation.

### *In Nepal*

The Nepalese government legalized homosexuality in 2007 when the monarchy ended, and the government is currently looking into legalizing same-sex marriage. It is believed that the new Constitution, which is currently being drafted, will include protection for sexual minorities. Furthermore, Nepal became one of the world's first countries to officially recognize a *third gender* in citizenship documents, following a 2007 Supreme Court decision. Nepal has been providing more rights to gender and sexual minorities ever since this decision.

### *In Uganda*

The Uganda Anti-Homosexuality Act was signed into law by President Museveni just a few days before three Ugandan educators left for a nine-month PhD research stay in Oslo in February 2014 under the Norhed programme. The legislative proposal criminalized same-sex relations domestically, and further included provisions for Ugandans who engage in same-sex relations outside Uganda. It included penalties for individuals, companies, media organizations and non-governmental organizations that know of gay people or support LGBTI rights. Homosexual acts were already illegal in Uganda, but the bill would increase the penalty for those convicted to life in prison. Those found guilty of "aggravated homosexuality" – defined as such when one of the participants is a minor, HIV-positive, disabled or a "serial offender" – would face the death penalty. In August 2014 the law was declared null and void by the Ugandan Constitutional court on a legal technicality, as an insufficient number of MPs had been in attendance during the vote. During the four months the law was in place, 164 cases of violence against LGBTI persons were registered. People were thrown out of their homes, many stopped attending school, and several lost their jobs. In December 2014, leader of Sexual Minorities Uganda (SMUG) Frank Mugisha told the Norad conference in Oslo that violence against and the persecution of LGBTI persons had radically increased in Uganda. He explained that many had escaped or gone underground (December 11, 2014).

In addition to the strict law proposals, Uganda has one of the highest rates in the world of non-acceptance of homosexuality. Of Ugandan residents, 96 per cent believe that homosexuality is a way of life that should not be accepted, and in contrast to many other African countries, even among people with higher education the percentage of non-acceptance remains high (Pew Global Attitudes Project 2007). The disapproval of homosexuality is further entrenched in the official national memory, through the

celebration of Martyrs' Day (May 3) to honour the martyrs of Buganda who were killed for their Christian faith. Around 1885, the martyrs refused to offer sacrifices to the traditional gods and objected to King Mwanga's homosexual practices<sup>2</sup>. On the other hand, some would argue that this story may indicate that homosexuality is perhaps not as "un-African" as the current dominant discourse would argue.

### To cooperate or not to cooperate?

A great majority (68 per cent) of the Norwegian journalist educators interviewed were positive towards continued cooperation with Uganda despite the country's hostilities against homosexuals, as they agreed that "academic and journalistic cooperation could be an important platform for dialogue and possible change" (January 2015). Some 14 per cent felt that IJM should not cooperate with actors in countries not adhering to the UN's Declaration of Human Rights, and believed that that "all academic contact with Uganda should be cut short as a clear message to the Ugandan government". Another 14 per cent agreed that cooperation with Uganda was complicated due to the country's hostility towards homosexuals, but as the cooperation was now underway it should be continued. One respondent felt that a country's main attitude towards homosexuality should not have any impact whatsoever on academic and journalistic cooperation (January 2015).

It was hence widely believed that cooperation within the field of higher education, not least within journalism, could provide unique opportunities for dialogue and change. Several educators argued, however, that it should repeatedly be made clear to the Ugandan journalist educators that most Norwegians were horrified by the proposed anti-homosexuality legislation and the general hatred of homosexuals in Uganda (January 2015).

Shortly after their arrival in Oslo in March 2014, the journalism educators from Nepal and Uganda were invited to the screening of the Ugandan documentary film *Call Me Kuchu*, as part of a lecture course in "Human Rights and Journalism" for first-year BA students of journalism. One of the educators reacted strongly to the experience of a pressure to state one's view on the issue:

There should never be such a situation where learners or instructors are required to state their positions on the subject of homosexuality as a condition of important discussions in transnational exchange journalism education programmes. This would certainly breed conflict. (September 2014)

However, none of the visiting educators from the south believed that such diverging values could be a hindrance to the transnational exchange involving journalism students and educators:

Not at all; as long as homosexuality is not a prerequisite for participating in the activity. The challenge comes when developed countries impose homosexuality

on developing countries. As long as the agenda or topic of the cooperation is not homosexuality, it is not necessary to make homosexuality a big deal. We need to agree to disagree. (September 2014)

The (global journalism education) network is based on values of mutual respect and equality. The diverging values of partners mean that members must seek to understand and appreciate other partners' differing views. (September 2014)

Nevertheless, one of the journalism lecturers from the south stressed that the argument of religion was not a *carte blanche* granting the right to express animosity against homosexuals:

Homosexuality is not easily accepted in many developing countries, and the reason is mainly religious belief. But religious beliefs in one situation can be challenged by religious beliefs from another country. For example, Hinduism is positive regarding homosexuals, and the concept of homosexuality has existed since ancient time. (September 2014)

The fact that the Nepalese educators shared their experiences of the "third gender" with their colleagues from Uganda and Norway was seen as particularly valuable, as they were not part of what could be read as a "Western frame of understanding". Much of the pressure for both strict religious laws and LGBTI rights in Uganda has its origins in the West, and many argue that the topic of homosexuality is yet another ideological struggle that "the West" is fighting on African soil. Input from another "south partner" certainly had its own value, as it was not part of the old "patronizing discourse of the West".

### Combining standardized professional values with conflicting ethical values

Interestingly, diverging views on the question of journalist objectivity and detachment became much more accentuated when discussing an issue like homosexuality, whereby colliding ethical issues came to the forefront, compared to when the discussion was more "dryly" concerned with general issues of professional values in journalism. Through the interviews it became clear that several interviewees who had initially stated that "journalists may express their own views, but in a cautious and balanced way" believed that when it came to the issue of homosexuality it was important to "speak out", either from a religious or cultural perspective (speaking out against homosexuality) or from a democratic or human rights perspective (speaking out against violence against human rights). Some of the respondents who had initially argued that journalists should express their views "in a cautious and balanced way" later argued that statements about "the need to fight against phenomena perceived as alien to our culture and ethos as a people", as it was put in one of the daily Ugandan newspapers (20 February 2014), were considered legitimate in the endeavour to "reduce harm" to

Ugandan society (interviews, 2014/2015). This is yet a sturdy example of how introducing topics of real challenge to transnational cooperation in journalism education may capture interesting tensions that readymade surveys or more superficial discussions excluding issues of cultural value may ignore.

Questions linked to whether it was a responsible act to arrange for Norwegian journalism students and lecturers to visit a country where homosexuality is illegal, and whether homosexual students visiting Uganda should be advised to lie about their sexual preferences, also raised interesting discussions about the ethical obligation of educators to inform students about the situation. Most of the Norwegian educators believed it was acceptable to send a group of Norwegian students to Uganda, but that the students should be well informed in advance and advised to take security measures (January 2015). A few argued that it was not reasonable to send Norwegian students to Uganda in the current situation.

### Beyond dialogue?

Although dialogue is often and powerfully asserted as the solution in relation to both processes of democracy and in journalism itself (see for instance Strömbäck, 2005; Moe, 2008; Hornmoen, & Steensen, 2014), this chapter has exemplified processes of democratic exchange whereby dialogue does not necessarily entirely solve every contradiction between the parties. Furthermore, dialogue as such is not necessarily democratic; nor is it in itself better for democracy than a monologic mode of communication (Peters, 1999). Anna Roosvall argues that *solidarity* as a mode of communication better lives up to the allusions of “real dialogue”, and better meets the demands of democratic communication (2014).

Roosvall shows how the development of what she calls *solidaritarian modes* of communication contributes to the improvement of the methods and conditions of debate, discussion and persuasion, which is essential in society as well as in news communication (2014: 63). A solidaritarian mode of communication is signified as dialogic in form, in that it includes an exchange. At the same time it exceeds dialogue in that the exchange is to be equal or similar, and in that it includes an element of action specifically directed towards injustice. Thus it exceeds the idea of dialogue leading to peace and agreement, since it is not necessarily so that the mending of injustice will be agreed upon by everyone (2014: 63).

Roosvall argues that solidaritarian communication – unlike dialogue – is always democratic. According to her, a solidaritarian mode of communication could ensure democratic participation through responsibility and empathy, and thus enable democracy through exchange in not only deliberative but also agonistic forms (2014: 62). She argues that “mode” is an essential element in the suggested concept, as it encompasses *an attitude* in the way of speaking in and to the world. Adapting Roosvall’s solidaritarian mode to the discussion here could involve, in addition to a dialogue between the

cooperation partners, an element of action directed towards the injustice. Just who is to define what this action should be is challenging, as we can imagine that those who believe homosexuality is a human right and those who consider it wrong would have differing opinions on what the injustice in question is.

However, the point at which real change seemed to take place was when the educators from the south met with Norwegian people who were openly gay, and got to know them as “ordinary people”. It is a fact that in many societies where hostility against homosexuals is high there is also a general lack of awareness of what homosexuality *is*, and tendencies to confuse concepts such as paedophilia and homosexuality are frequent. Hence, the long-term value of actions, here in the sense of encounters with homosexuals who are also “good people”, should not be underestimated in terms of the potential for change. Here, the element of action in this cooperation could possibly be translated into working together with people from the other side of the abyss – be it homosexuals, or those against the right to be homosexual – across the difficult differences. Here we clearly see the potential for transnational cooperation to develop new attitudes in the way of “speaking in and to the world” (Roosvall, 2014: 62). To continuously work to improve the conditions of the debate, give both sides room and time to express their views, adopt a mode whereby listening becomes as important as arguing, and not least clarify what they mean by the different concepts central to the discussion, would certainly help to advance a more nuanced discussion about conflicting values in transnational journalism education and cooperation.

At the same time, the unfolding of social reality can only be explained through the continuous interplay of agents and structures, whereby structures are simultaneously the result of the human agency and a constraint on it (Archetti, 2012: 185). As Archetti further reminds us, if agency and structures always reflected each other, no change would ever occur. Change often lies in the slight disconnection between agency and structures, within the process of their dynamic unfolding over time: structures pose a constraint on individual action, but do not entirely determine it (Archetti, 2012: 185). From this perspective, in an attempt to explain the effects of international exchange on journalism faculty and students, change cannot be explained only through the impact of a new environment on social practice; all students and faculty involved in such an exchange will have to relate to their own original structures *and* the new ones of the exchange partners. Hence, it makes sense to recall Mark Deuze’s argument (2006: 26-27) that issues common to journalism education on a global level should always include an analysis and discussion of how the various ways to organize the training of journalists can be interconnected with developments in society at large. This understanding is based on the assumption that journalism cannot exist independent of community; it is a profession interacting with society in many – and not wholly unproblematic – ways, and should therefore be seen as influencing and operating under the influence of what happens in society (see also Kovach, & Rosenstiel, 2001).

## Constructive challenges

When researching journalism educators' ethical and professional values, introducing a concrete (disputed) topic may raise more nuanced and also more difficult discussions about both the professional role and ethical plight of journalists in general, and the professional values of journalism educators in particular. The findings of the small sample analysed here show that the central journalistic concept of objectivity turned out to be a highly polysemic term, with varying definitions across and within geographical regions. In addition, the journalism educators' take on the concept changed when the challenging topic of the (non-)acceptance of homosexuality was introduced into the debate. The professional approach most respondents had to the concept of objectivity, when discussed in a more neutral context, dwindled slightly as antagonism regarding the (non-)acceptance of homosexuality was discussed. Several journalism educators who had initially stated that "journalists may express their own views, but in a cautious and balanced way" turned out to hold that when it came to the issue of homosexuality it was important to make a clear stand; hence, the detachment of the journalist became less important as a value in itself.

It is commonly held that exposure through international cooperation and global journalism may reduce the structural problem of domesticating global issues in journalism (see e.g. Olausson, 2013). The primary findings from this small sample of global journalism educators participating in transnational cooperation show that some topics or areas may be highly contested and perhaps not possible to solve immediately simply through dialogue. However, such contested issues highlight differences in approaches to journalistic professional and ethical values, and may open up for some new perspectives in the discussion of how to renew journalism through education. Such discussions may also provide the first part of an answer to the call (from Harcup, 2011) for an exploration of the impact of globalization on journalism education.

As this chapter's example has illustrated, utterly diverging worldviews may present demanding challenges to global journalism education in terms of both discourse and understanding. However, these challenges within global journalism education may in turn be constructive and contribute to challenging participants to take part in improving the methods and conditions of "global journalism" as such. The element of action is inherent in the cooperation process itself, whereby working together across differences of all types is highlighted as a value and a prerequisite for creating a real democratic dialogue and understanding. As "the public" of global journalism will come to the media with less similar forms of experiences than the (somewhat) more homogenous national publics with more equal or similar understandings, the understandings from intercultural encounters may enhance the participants' knowledge and awareness in terms of developing new ways to reflect on the world, and to communicate with the public.



## Notes

1. (worldsofjournalism.org).
2. <http://www.ugandamission.net/aboutug/histimeline.html>

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## Becoming Journalists

### *From Engaged to Balanced or from Balanced to Engaged?*

Roy Krøvel

#### Abstract

This chapter aims at understanding the role of journalism education as students become journalists. It employs norms and values related to global warming as a case to analyse how journalism students understand and develop journalistic norms during and after the programme at HiOA. The article builds mainly on a survey of 471 respondents drawn from a variety of disciplines to compare and discuss similarities and differences in norms and values in and between groups. It finds that first-year students tend to have similar norms and values to those of the journalism educators. However, as the students grow through more experience, they gradually begin to show increasing similarities with professional journalists and fewer similarities with their teachers.

Keywords: journalism education, objectivity, norms, values, global warming, Norway

## Introduction

In this article, I use global warming as an issue to probe the social production of norms and values among journalism students and journalists in general. How do journalists become journalists? What is and should be the role of education? These seem to be questions that journalists and educators everywhere have been pondering over in recent years. In many countries, for instance Norway, journalism was traditionally seen as a trade, something to be learnt through years of practising it (Deuze, 2005; Hjeltnes, 2010; Ottosen, 2010). Over the last decades, however, education has come to play an increasingly important role. More journalists now have university degrees – and a growing number hold a degree in journalism.

This process has met with some resistance. In Norway, this simmering conflict of views has sometimes had the added ingredient of traditional left-right politics: conservatives have repeatedly accused “radical” teachers within the journalism programmes of being “elitists” and “leftists”, and of influencing students, implying that education plays a vital role in the development of political views, professional ideology and journalistic norms (see for instance Hustad, 2009; Lavik, 2009).

I believe that global warming (climate change) is a particularly good case for investigating and analysing how students of journalism understand and develop journalistic norms as they progress through the journalism programme, begin practising journalism, and gradually become members of the community of journalists. In this article I am particularly interested in understanding how teachers of journalism, students and journalists understand and employ what Boykoff calls first- and second-order norms (Boykoff, 2007; Boykoff & Boykoff, 2004, 2007). I focus on the norm Boykoff calls “balance”. Antilla explains the problem of mechanically employing this norm: “In order to provide balance while reporting on climate change, some journalists include rebuttals by experts who, often through think-tanks, are affiliated with the fossil fuel industry. (...). Regrettably, this creates the impression that scientific opinion is evenly divided or completely unsettled” (Antilla, 2005: 340).

Objectivity, often understood as “balance”, is criticized for being a myth that serves to further the power interests of the media itself (Schudson, & Anderson, 2009). Today, however, most textbooks underline that reporting unavoidably involves the critical evaluation of sources, interests, consequences, power relations etc. Such critical evaluation can seldom be executed within a framework of objectivity understood as “balance” (Harcup, 2009). However, there are nuances to the ways objectivity is understood as balance. It does not have to be “lazy” journalism, as Michael Ryan (2004) calls the practice of simply pitting two sources against each other without independent evaluation. The norm of balance can be an aid in, rather than an alternative to, truth-seeking (Olteidal, & Ytterstad, 2012).

In order to further discuss these issues, I proceed by asking the following research questions:

- What journalistic norms do journalism teachers express on global warming and climate change?
- How do the journalistic norms of journalism students concerning global warming and climate change develop over time?
- How do these developments relate to education, journalism practice and norms expressed by members of the community of journalists?
- What role can education be said to play in the development of journalistic norms?
- Finally, and most importantly, what does this imply for the role of journalism education in the construction of a precautionary public in order to respond to the challenge posed by global warming?

## Literature review

A substantial and growing body of literature deals with Norwegian journalism and climate change from various perspectives (Eide, & Kunelius, 2012; Hornmoen, 2011; Krøvel, 2011; Ytterstad, 2012). This study of culture, norms and values draws on this growing corpus of such studies within journalism research. The concern about and interest in cultures, norms and values of journalism are explored, for instance, in the Worlds of Journalism project (<http://www.worldsofjournalism.org/>). The Worlds of Journalism Study (WJS) was founded to “help journalism researchers and policy makers better understand worldviews and changes that are taking place in the professional orientations of journalists (...)”. Such research reflects a growing interest in the cultural aspects of journalism: being and working together, communicating, interacting, and practising journalism significantly affect how journalists think and feel about things. Journalism, of course, is to some extent a global discourse drawing on a shared set of ideas or perspectives. But there are also differences between “worlds” or cultures of journalism (Plaisance, Skewes, & Hanitzsch, 2012). Variations and differences are also likely to be found within a state, for instance Norway, and between different groups of journalists.

A number of authors have already discussed the role of education in journalism (for instance (Bjørnsen, Hovden, & Ottosen, 2009; Terzis, 2009)). In many places, journalism has historically been seen as something to be learnt by doing; one became a journalist by practising journalism. As Nygren notes in a different chapter, when students return to journalism schools after periods of internships they are “filled with tacit knowledge and values of the workplaces” (Nygren, 2014). In Norway, many are still not convinced that education at university level has a role to play in the development of journalists. I build on these debates in the analysis of the variations of norms among journalism educators and practising journalists, and how these differences are reflected in the development of norms among journalism students.

A particular concern is connected to the consequences of employing “balance”. Boykoff and others have shown that: “[A]dherence to the norm of balanced reporting leads to informationally biased coverage of global warming. This bias, hidden behind the veil of journalistic balance, creates both discursive and real political space for the US government to shirk responsibility and delay action regarding global warming” (Boykoff, & Boykoff, 2007).

A critical realist view of objectivity building on Bhaskar, Collier, Sawyer and Wright, in contrast, would reject conflating objectivity with balance. According to Wright, critical realism can be understood as a “way of describing the process of ‘knowing’ that acknowledges the reality of the thing known, as something other than the knower (hence ‘realism’), while also acknowledging that the only access we have to this reality lies along the spiraling path of appropriate dialogue or conversation between the knower and the thing known (hence ‘critical’)” (Wright quoted in Lynch, 2007, p. 6). From such a perspective, everything we say about the world is fallible, but not equally

fallible. A norm of “objectivity” should therefore include aspects like truth-seeking and fairness, and can therefore not be reduced to upholding a notion of “balance”.

## Methodology

This article/chapter draws on an online survey study of norms and values related to global warming, including a total of 471 respondents. The respondents are drawn from a variety of disciplines and groups: journalism (145 respondents), teachers and researchers of journalism (22 respondents), students of journalism (98 respondents), members of Concerned Scientists (77 respondents) and of science in general (excluding those already counted as members of Concerned Scientists = 108). A colleague is writing a separate article comparing the norms of the scientists and journalists, while this article focuses on the nexus of teachers, journalism students and journalists.<sup>1</sup>

The student respondents have been further divided into subgroups according to the number of years they have studied journalism. This allows us to compare between first-year students and those at a more advanced level. Such a comparison will guide us in the analysis of how norms change and develop as the education progresses over three years.

In addition, we have included a group of former students, most of whom now work as journalists on a more or less regular basis. They are therefore directly subjected to the influence of other journalists in the daily interaction at the newspaper or radio/television station where they work. We hope that comparing between students and former students will shed some light on the relationship between practising journalism and the process of “becoming a journalist”. We will also compare the students’ other relevant groups, primarily journalism educators, scientists and practising journalists.

The online survey included a total of 37 questions covering a broad range of topics in order to probe norms and values relevant to global warming and climate change issues. The survey also included ample space for comments relating to the questions. Most respondents used this space to provide detailed argumentation and background as to why they had answered as they had. For this article, the key questions were the following:

- The employment of the norm of objectivity or balance is probed in various questions from different perspectives, for instance (the respondents were given a number of different claims to agree or disagree with):
- The term “objectivity” has traditionally played a significant role for both scientists and journalists. Which of the following claims do you agree most with?
- Do you see any alternative to objectivity as an ideal?
- Which of the following claims on the development over the past 50 to 100 years do you agree most with?
- Given the uncertainties related to consequences of climate change, which of the following actions should be taken?

- What ambitions should define politics related to climate issues?

In addition, we included questions on the outcome of the United Nations Climate Change Conferences – particularly COP 15, held in Copenhagen, which drew significant media coverage in Norway. Questions related to objectivity and balance also play a significant part in the survey. For instance (again, the respondents were asked to choose between a number of statements):

- Would you consider participating or joining organizations or other activities dedicated to influencing politics on climate issues?
- To what extent do you view political activity as compatible with your role as a scientist or journalist?
- How should journalists cover the debate on climate change? Choose the statement which best represents your view.

There are a few methodological challenges that need to be mentioned: first, while we have many respondents from the group of journalists, the majority come from large corporations in the country's capital; there are relatively few respondents from the large segment of journalists living and working outside Oslo. Similarly, the group of teachers is small. However, the number of respondents constitutes 80 per cent of the staff at the Department of Journalism and Media Studies at Oslo and Akershus University College for Applied Sciences. The group of third-year students is also smaller than the other groups. These limitations must be considered when generalizations are made based on the results. Therefore, these smaller groups are used mainly for comparative purposes rather than generalization.

We also note a more general problem with probing and trying to measure norms and values in this manner: people often express norms and values as arguments or reflexions, employing an evaluative vocabulary which is impossible to translate directly and precisely into corresponding numbers along a scale. Comparison between groups of this type requires us to estimate averages, standard deviations and variations, employing statistical methodology. Evaluative statements must therefore be translated into numbers which can be handled with statistical methodologies. This process necessarily involves *reductionism*, as complex evaluations are reduced to a single expression in the form of a number on a scale.

## Results

In this article I will focus on a few particularly interesting and intriguing results.

First, I did find the norms expressed by journalism educators on global warming and climate change interesting. Of the educators, 55 per cent agree that “it is difficult to be objective, but we should still uphold the ideal of objectivity”. However, 35 per cent agree that “objectivity” should not be seen as an ideal. Only one teacher, less than

5 per cent, believes that climate change can be explained by natural causes alone. A great majority (86 per cent) agree that journalists covering climate change should focus on “the most probable consequences of climate change”. A small minority (9 per cent) would rather focus on communicating “uncertainty related to the science” of climate change.

The educators are divided evenly on the issue of engaging in public debate or becoming members of political organizations. Of the teachers, 50 per cent say no to such activity: “Our task is to inform, not to be involved in politics”. The other half of the respondents, however, are already members of such organizations or otherwise engage in the public debate on climate change. As we will see later, here the journalism educators are found to be significantly more open to such activity than the journalists. Perhaps surprisingly, only one educator (5 per cent) agrees that political activity of this type is unacceptable for a journalist. Another respondent prefers to distinguish between what a journalist does as a journalist and what he or she does “as a private citizen”. The majority (57 per cent) accept that political activity and journalism can be combined, but prefer that journalists avoid becoming leaders or “overly profiled” participants in the public debate. A third of educators see no problem with this: being a journalist is fully compatible with political activity.

As a group, the educators show some variations. While a minority seem to hold onto traditional norms like “detached” and “neutral”, the majority appears to be open to more activist or advocacy understandings of journalism.

The journalists, in contrast, are much less inclined to accept such activist or advocacy understandings of journalism. Almost half of them have studied journalism, most of them more than seven years ago. Similar to the journalism educators, the majority of the journalists (also 55 per cent) agree that objectivity is “difficult” but should still be regarded as an ideal. But while a substantial minority among the educators do not see objectivity as a suitable ideal for journalism, this position has few followers among the journalists. Three times as many of them (52 of 144 respondents to this particular question) defend objectivity as a “fine ideal”, or say that objectivity “should be an absolute requirement” for all journalists. When it comes to climate change, however, the journalists in this study are even more convinced of the connection between climate change and human activity (at a total of 96 per cent) than the educators are. The group of journalists is also very similar to the group of educators when it comes to what the focus should be in reporting on climate change in the media – 87 per cent prefer to focus on “the most likely consequences”. The journalists and educators have almost identical evaluations of global warming and climate change issues. However, they differ when it comes to the role of journalists: an overwhelming majority of journalists (87 per cent) say no to any activity aiming to influence climate change policies. “Our job is to inform”, according to this group. The majority also see being a journalist as incompatible with political activity (70 per cent), although quite a few in this group (30 per cent) distinguish between what a journalist does when working as a journalist and what he or she does “as a private person”.



Educators are significantly more likely than journalists to accept that journalists engage in political activity. The journalists use the comment field to make a number of interesting remarks. As I interpret them, many journalists see it as their task, as journalists, to make sure that all sides of the debate are represented; all views must be presented to the audience. This is sometimes followed by “so the audience can decide for themselves” or similar arguments. Implicitly, most of the respondents are saying that, yes, we do have an opinion on global warming and climate change; but also that showing this opinion would interfere with the obligation they feel to present the audience with “the full picture”. Journalists should therefore keep a certain distance, maintain a degree of neutrality, avoid becoming too involved or engaged, and make sure that a balanced view of the issue is presented.

It is reasonable to see this view as somehow related to the norm of objectivity found historically in the philosophy of science (Couvalis, 1997; Gillispie, 1960; Rosenberg, 2012). Robert K. Merton, for instance, proposed universalism and disinterestedness as ideals for science. According to Merton, universalism means that claims to truth are evaluated in terms of universal or impersonal criteria, and not on the basis of race, class, gender, religion, or nationality. Disinterestedness as an ideal means that scientists are rewarded for acting in ways that outwardly appear to be selfless (Merton, 1942). The norm of objectivity in journalism has its own history, of course, connected to technological advances (the telegraph), the development of a business and markets for journalism (the rise of news agencies and corporations, for instance) coupled with local developments, found for instance in the histories of the national broadcasting companies (Schudson, 2001). Still, we wanted to probe this possible link between norms in journalism and science, so we posed the same questions to an interdisciplinary group of scientists participating at the International Polar Year Science Conference in Oslo in 2010. This was part of a larger investigation on global warming and the role of science, which will be published in a separate article elsewhere. Here, we will only draw on a couple results in order to compare norms expressed by this group (scientists) and journalists.

Forty-two per cent regard objectivity as an absolute requirement for anyone working in their field of research. An additional 34 per cent of the respondents see objectivity as “difficult”, but still consider it an important ideal. The group of scientists are even more convinced than journalists of the causal relationship between human activity and climate change – only four express varying degrees of scepticism. These results indicate that the journalists, journalism educators and scientists in this study express broadly the same views on global warming and climate change. However, and in stark contrast to the journalists, 60 per cent of the scientists are already members of an organization that is engaged in politics. Only a minority (35 per cent) agree that the scientist’s job is to inform rather than to be engaged in politics, while 63 per cent say that political activity is fully compatible with being a scientist.

It therefore seems clear that the context and process that have produced the norms on objectivity in journalism are different from those in science. In journalism, the

context and process have produced a view with substantial influence that regards objectivity as balancing different views and allowing space for minority views. In the group of scientists here, in contrast, the majority argue for objectivity; but this is a form of objectivity that does not exclude political engagement. Merton proposed that “organized skepticism” should be included on the list of ideals in science. Organized skepticism means that all ideas must be tested and subjected to rigorous, structured community scrutiny (Merton, 1942). The scientists represented in this study use the comment field to underline the importance of constantly evaluating and making judgments concerning this process of scrutinizing existing knowledge. These judgments and evaluations will always have to build on what we know (horizon of knowledge (Gadamer, & Palmer, 2007)) in order to understand new information and develop new knowledge; therefore, they will always be subjective and fallible. Here, the dominating view among the group of scientists seems to be that objectivity is an ideal that requires scientists to scrutinize all ideas employing necessarily subjective horizons of knowledge. Perhaps this is what Wright meant by a “process of ‘knowing’ that acknowledges the reality of the thing known, as something other than the knower (...) while also acknowledging that the only access we have to this reality lies along the spiralling path of appropriate dialogue or conversation between the knower and the thing known (hence ‘critical’)” (Wright quoted in Lynch, 2007: 6).

### Journalism students from engaged to balanced

Ninety-eight students participated in the study, in addition to 64 former students. The students do express views on global warming and climate change that are very similar to those of the journalism educators, journalists and scientists. More than 96 per cent of the respondents in the group of students agree that human activity is one of the causes of climate change, and the vast majority say that decisive action should be taken to stop climate change. Overall, all groups in this study seem to show a similar pattern: a substantial majority see climate change as something that is actually happening, as caused at least in part by human activity, and as a real danger that should be taken seriously. No significant, systematic differences between the groups have been found. However, when it comes to the understanding of the role of journalism, science and objectivity, significant differences appear.

The typical first-year student can be described as an idealist, according to the responses in this study. They are not particularly concerned with upholding an ideal of objectivity – only two of 25 agree that this is a “fine ideal” while the majority see it as “difficult but important” (72 per cent) or reject it altogether (20 per cent). These responses are not very different from the pattern found among journalism educators, but are quite different from the group of journalists. The first-year students are mostly negative towards journalists engaging in political activity – 62 per cent say no: “Our task is to inform, not to be involved in politics”.

Thirty-nine students in their second year participated. Again, they see objectivity as “difficult but important” (77 per cent), while slightly fewer were inclined to reject it altogether (down to 12 per cent from 20 per cent among the first-year students). More students in their second year also disapprove of journalists becoming involved in politics or being members of political organizations (rising from 62 per cent among the first-year students to 77 per cent of those in their second year). Only 21 students in their third year responded to the survey but the results indicate a continuing trend, with 80 per cent saying that objectivity is difficult but important. In addition, 15 per cent now say that objectivity should be a requirement for all journalists. Again, a great majority are convinced that human activity is contributing to climate change; but an even greater majority than in the group of second-year students reject political activity (83 per cent).

A total of 64 former students took part in the study. Those answering that “objectivity is difficult but important” was smaller (60 per cent) than for all groups of students. A larger percentage (30 per cent) answered that objectivity is a “fine ideal” or should be an absolute requirement for all journalists. The responses from the former students indicate a trend that begins with the first-year students, continues throughout their journalism education, and remains after they have earned their Bachelor’s degree in journalism. This is particularly striking related to the question about political activity: 86 per cent of former students reject it. In journalism, in Norway at least, objectivity has become virtually synonymous with non-engagement.

**Table 1.** Percentage of respondents who would not consider becoming a member of an organization, or otherwise engaging in activities to influence politics, Norway, 2011 (per cent)

|                      |    |
|----------------------|----|
| Scientists           | 35 |
| Journalism educators | 50 |
| First-year students  | 62 |
| Second-year students | 77 |
| Third-year students  | 83 |
| Former students      | 86 |
| Journalists          | 87 |

We have thus found indications of a gradual development in views and norms among students and former students of journalism. They gradually become less inclined to accept membership in political organizations, and they gradually become more inclined to see objectivity as balance.

## Explanations and meanings

How do these developments relate to education, journalism practice and norms expressed by members of the community of journalists? From a critical realist perspective, phenomena in the real world always have multiple causes; we should thus

carefully avoid mono-causal explanations. What I have found, however, indicates that the journalism educators intend to stimulate a critical attitude which should help develop an understanding of objectivity that is not necessarily either neutral, detached, non-engaged or distant. However, from the responses I received from the journalists, I believe that the community of journalists wields a strong influence based on the particular understanding of objectivity as *balance*. This understanding of objectivity is interesting because it is so different from the norms of objectivity expressed by the vast majority of scientists in this study. The scientists underline the need to make judgments and evaluations, while the journalists tend to understand making such judgments and evaluations as “not our business”. Instead, many endorse the myth of “objectivity as balance”. “Objectivity as balance”, however, presupposes that a journalist is able to objectively define where the fulcrum or equilibrium is to be found, which cannot be done without evaluations and judgments. There is no getting around the problem of having to make judgments and evaluations – the difference seems rather to be the willingness, or lack of willingness, to be open and transparent about the evaluations and judgments necessarily involved in reporting on complex issues like climate change.

The findings further indicate that the group of students become gradually more comparable to the group of journalists as they grow more experienced. The students in this study begin practising journalism in an organized way as part of their education, after completing their first year of study. Our experience is that most of the students continue working as journalists the following two years of the Bachelor programme. They therefore gradually become more exposed to journalism praxis as their studies progress. The results indicate that practising journalism has a strong impact on the norms and values being developed.

This does not mean that education plays no role in the development of journalistic norms on global warming and climate change. However, it indicates that the influence asserted by other journalists in the community of journalists is significantly stronger. These findings resonate well with those presented by Nygren, who found that professionals put more emphasis on neutrality and detachment while students give activist ideals more importance (Nygren, 2014). However, while Nygren finds little evidence in his research to support the hypothesis that journalism education can contribute to creating more critical journalists (Phillips, 2005), this study could be interpreted as support for such a hypothesis. Professional experience seems to make students of journalism more critical towards hegemonic scientific views on global warming. However, agreement or engagement with hegemonic scientific views is not the same as views grounded in critical evaluations of current science. Instead, engagement with science seems to be replaced by a mechanical scepticism whereby journalist students often seek to employ “balance” to produce a non-criticizable and thus privileged position for themselves.

### Conclusion: And most importantly, what does this imply for the construction of a precautionary public in relation to global warming?

The findings in this article are caused by a number of processes, most of them found outside journalism education. One obvious, albeit perhaps slightly paradoxical and depressing, conclusion is that the schooling of the media industry seems to diminish the global warming pedagogy of teachers in journalism over time. On the face of it, it does not seem to matter much whether we do better as teachers in the construction of a precautionary approach amongst journalists.

Most of the aspiring journalists in this study are at a stage in their career at which they will have to cover a wide variety of news. They will be given little time to specialize or develop deep knowledge on any particular theme. I therefore believe they feel particularly vulnerable when they have to cover complex issues like global warming. Interviewing highly qualified “experts” is challenging for an inexperienced journalist. They are also more likely than more experienced journalists to be intimidated by the heated debate, and sometimes vicious attacks, they must endure from an organized and active group of Norwegian climate-change deniers. There are therefore many reasons why a young and inexperienced journalist should seek protection behind the norm of balance, employing a detached and distant language, avoiding openly making evaluations and judgments him- or herself. By criticizing a detached and distant language here, I am certainly not calling for journalists to let themselves be used as mouthpieces for either environmental groups or other interest groups. Instead, truth-seeking should be seen as a collective endeavour that must encompass transparency regarding the many necessary evaluations and choices inherently involved in producing journalism on complex issues such as climate change. Evaluating conflicting claims and making subjective judgments will always be an integral part of journalism. A detached and distant language works to cover up the many subjective judgments, and creates an illusion of balance.

Therefore, we must continue enquiring how journalism education can contribute to mitigate the negative effects of the development I have outlined here. Studies have shown that the employment of “objectivity as balance” has a detrimental effect on the media coverage of global warming and climate change (Boykoff, & Boykoff, 2004). It contributes to producing an unrealistic understanding of the uncertainty related to these issues. The norm of “balance” helps explain why so many climate-change deniers/skeptics continue to receive so much media attention despite producing so little reliable science.

From a philosophy of science perspective, the understanding of objectivity as “balance” is highly problematic, raising a number of problems related to the power relations between journalists and audience. For all these reasons, I believe that journalism education should engage students in critically reflecting on simplistic notions of objectivity.

If journalism education is to fulfil its obligation to produce future journalists capable of contributing to the production of valuable knowledge and an understanding of issues like global warming and climate change, it must give students enough confidence to be transparent and truthful about the evaluations and judgments necessarily involved in reporting on these issues. Schools of journalism would do well to educate at least a group of students with a deeper knowledge of nature, technology and science. They should also teach students enough philosophy of science to understand that, for most scientists, objectivity does not exclude engagement, subjective evaluation or judgment.

## Note

1. The investigation was done in close collaboration with my colleague Andreas Ytterstad (Oslo and Akershus University College for Applied Sciences). I would like to draw attention to two articles published by Ytterstad which build, at least in part, on results from this investigation (Ytterstad, 2014).

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## IV. MEETING THE FIELD



## Standardised News Providers or Creative Innovators?

### *A New Generation of Journalists Entering the Business*

Jenny Wiik

#### Abstract

The current turbulence in the news industry is followed by a generational shift in the journalistic profession – senior journalists being replaced by a younger generation, partly holding other ideals and motives. To many of them, internship is the first meeting with their future labour market. What are their main impressions of the career they are about to pursue? Given the state of flux of new business today, this paper addresses the questions of how intern students of Swedish newsrooms perceive the practice of professional journalism and how they position themselves in relation to this labour market. Empirical support is drawn from written observations made by approximately 80 students on a one-term internship in a master's degree programme in journalism at the University of Gothenburg. The fresh gazes of the students indeed reveal some troublesome developments in contemporary news media, especially regarding matters of professional autonomy, developments that journalism degrees need to acknowledge and adapt to. However, the results of the study also show the interns' self-confidence, creativity and skills to be important human capital for the news organisations to manage and care for.

Keywords: journalism education, journalistic practice, professionalism, trainee students, internship, qualitative method, Sweden

#### Introduction

It is well known that the news media field is in crisis. “Plummeting circulation, declining revenues, new technology, conglomerate ownership, and layoffs”, mainly in the newspaper industry (Reinardy, 2007: 968), have contributed to an increasingly tough working environment for journalists. Media organizations have not yet succeeded in reforming business models but are desperately seeking to adapt to the new fierce competition. Journalists find their terms of employment redefined and their work opportunities substantially reduced (McChesney, & Nichols, 2010). Besides the forceful reorganization characterizing the field, a shift of generations is also underway. Swedish journalists make up an aging community, with fewer members under 30 than over 60 (Wiik, 2015). Journalists born in the 1940s and 1950s are retiring, taking with them

their certain ideals and practices. Replacing them, the online generation is now entering the profession, and the journalistic field they face is, in many respects, completely different compared to the situation of their precursors.

To young journalists not yet established in the labour market, the situation is even more strained. A well-developed professional network is crucial, as is hands-on experience, which makes any kind of internship a valuable resource. The increasing importance of forms of capital other than merely objective skills and qualifications is central to the changing role of journalists – what does it mean to become a journalist today? To journalism educators, internship serves as a crucial connection to the business, this is a way to remain up to date and gain insight into current developments. But this insight could be enhanced by identifying intern students as a large group of research assistants, spreading over an increasingly broader spectrum of news suppliers. This chapter attempts to explore how young journalists perceive the occupation and their own role entering it. Empirical support is drawn from observations made by journalism intern students in the Master's programme at the University of Gothenburg, which have been collected within the frame of an individual essay assignment.

An additional aim of the chapter is, thus, to test and discuss the possibilities of using such observations of intern students as research material. The stories of the Master's students are analysed within the framework of professional theory, and the discussion will show how young journalists perceive their own role in relation to a trembling labour market, and what the stakeholders in journalism – such as journalism schools – can learn from these perceptions. The new generation of journalists will most certainly redefine the meaning of journalistic professionalism in many ways, and this chapter tries to capture some of these changes.

## The shrinking labour market of fast news

The difficult economic situations of many news companies entail a number of changing conditions for journalists in their work and identity creation. One of the more serious deteriorations is that the labour opportunities offered by legacy news media are shrinking with rapid haste. Broadcasting companies, both public service and private, have long operated according to a staffing model based on freelancers, independent production companies, and a creative use of the Employment Act (LAS) (e.g. Hallstedt, 2013). Since the 1990s, there have been repeated redundancies at national newspapers as well as smaller local dailies. An investigation of the regional market in the province of Skåne, for instance, revealed that cutbacks in staff over the years 2010–2013 had reduced the total workforce of journalists by a quarter (NewsØresund, 2013). In August 2014, a third of the journalist staff were made redundant after a merger of the local Skåne newspapers *Helsingborgs Dagblad* and *Sydsvenska Dagbladet* (Nesser, 2014). Larger national newspapers are moving in the same direction: in September, 2014, 70 staff members had to leave the tabloid *Expressen*, cutting the total staff by almost a fifth (Marklund,

2014). The situation is tough for the young, recently graduated journalist entering the field, and many witness an insecure existence, switching between different kinds of loose contracts and temporary positions. An additional trend in this development is the growing reliance of media houses on staffing companies. However, in a 2011 report the industrial organization Medieföretagen [The Media Companies] claims that Swedish news business is dominated by tenure posts and that only 4 per cent are hired via staffing companies, with 10 per cent of media company employees said to be holding some kind of short-term position (Medieföretagen, 2011). On the other hand, a survey from 2012 conducted by the Swedish Union of Journalists showed that a majority of reporters employed through staffing companies were unhappy with their conditions. The low status and limited autonomy negatively influenced their salaries, the ability to plan their everyday lives, and the freedom to perform their work. One of these journalists said “I see no future...the risk of being used and burnt out is way too obvious” (Lundquist, 2012).

In this complex and insecure environment, internship becomes increasingly valuable. Most Nordic journalism degrees offer some kind of internship during the programme. In some cases, such as in Sweden and Denmark, it is paid and long-term, while sometimes it is composed of shorter course units. Either way, the internship may be crucial in helping the new journalists get a foot into the business. In the Anglo-American sphere, unpaid internships have become the norm in many areas of work, a situation that has gradually emerged over the decades. According to NACE (National Association of Colleges and Employers), these make up nearly half the internships undertaken in America. “We presumed we were going to get paid”, said Lee Becker, a professor of journalism at the University of Georgia, who earned money during stints at the Kentucky Post and the Wichita Eagle-Beacon in the 1960s (The Economist, 2014). Thirty years later this situation had changed, with 57 per cent of American journalism students saying they could find a paid internship in 1997. By 2010, the figure had fallen to 34 per cent, where it has remained since. In Britain, the National Council for the Training of Journalists found that entrants to the profession had done an average of seven weeks of internship or work-shadowing, 92 per cent of it unpaid (ibid.). In these countries, the situation has led to a social restructuring of journalist recruits, as not all students can afford to work for free (McCrary, 2015; Perraudin, 2015). Nevertheless, internship is undoubtedly an important part of professional training – not only because of the network potential, but because some things cannot be read in books. However, for internship to make a valuable contribution to the journalism curriculum, it is necessary to contextualize it with other related courses and to understand the situation of the students out at their workplaces.

### A splitting journalistic collective

While the professionalization of journalism at an ideological level entails processes of the homogenization of the corps (Wiik, 2014), Östlund (2000) predicted that increasing

economic pressure and audience orientation within news production would cause a divergence in the professional role of journalists. The main development is forced by economic interests and promotes values such as entertainment, sensation and shallowness at the expense of explanation and in-depth information. Simultaneously, she argued, this leading trend is followed by a minor-scale counter trend of elite media and information-rich news reporting. A probable consequence of this is the separation of some journalists into a smaller group of elites creating their own trademarks. Ahlström (2008) sees this as part of an ongoing process of Americanization, whereby the sales pitch of high-profile journalists becomes increasingly important in the general star culture of news media. Journalists who do not become stars, on the other hand, are increasingly forced into a bureaucratized existence as cogs in the machinery. The professional collective is loosening in structure and developing new hierarchies. A separation into groups of upmarket and downmarket media may, therefore, lead to extensive difficulties in maintaining a common professional identity. It also tends to accentuate the focus on individual motives, as there is no longer a safe and predictable role to rely on (Witschge, & Nygren, 2009).

The British professor Gillian Ursell (2003) wrote several pieces on this development, focusing on the case of television production in the UK. The British broadcasting industry was deregulated at an early stage, gaining specific attention from the neoliberal efforts of the Thatcher government in the 1980s. This makes it an excellent example to study for anyone interested in the postmodern labour market and its consequences. Ursell claimed that the professional identity of journalists is a “resistant identity”, such that it changes and redefines the actual meaning of professionalism as the old ones fail in the news system. She reflects on the link between labour and product, arguing that “dumbing down” the workforce is bound to have some effect on news content. Despite the powerful ideology of journalism as a mainstay of liberal democracies, and the efforts of professionals to translate this ideology into practice, there is now substantial academic literature showing evidence that “the new and emergent regimes of production have led to compromises of what have hitherto been the goals and standards of journalism” (ibid.: 39). Ursell compared the neoliberal labour market for creative workers to a “seductive vampire”, which on the one hand involves disproportionate efforts of the individual, in terms of both time and energy, but on the other hand is attractive with coveted opportunities for a place within the elite – to become one of the few stars of the journalistic field. This causes a dualism of the market, with the majority of workers finding themselves in a relatively safe position at a media house but with the risk of falling out into the large pool of low-paid or unpaid newcomers and reporters made redundant. However, for journalists who happen to possess skills of high demand, there is an opportunity to make very good deals. These successful journalists are not numerically strong, but rather constitute the top of the pyramid and become commodities in their own right (Ursell, 2000). The seductiveness of the vampire comes not just from this tantalizing opportunity for fame, success and true professional freedom, but also from the fact that, to many, journalism is not just any

job – it can be “a labour of love” (Ursell, 2000: 821). Ursell explains: “Even under contemporary conditions of intense competition and pressure of costs, television production can be a type of work which allows for the exploration, expression and actualization of the sensual dimensions of subjectivity” (ibid.). Other research shows, however, that most journalists prefer traditional newsroom employment instead of being self-managed entrepreneurs (Cohen et al., 2014).

The subjective joys of expression and being “where the action is” are surely reasons why students keep applying to study journalism, despite the rather bleak job prospects. But the complexity of the journalistic labour market is bound to cause some friction for these students as they pursue their internships. By this point in their education, they have learned a great deal about the democratic ideals and functions of journalism, and now face the task of implementing these ideals in reality. The tension between ideals and practice in the journalistic profession is nothing new (McManus, 1994; Ekström, & Nohrstedt, 1996), but lately the power balance in this duality has shifted to the benefit of commercial and organizational demands (Westlund, 2011). As a result of this, professionally orientated ideals are increasingly being renegotiated and modified.

## Research design

This study is based on material consisting of texts written for a school assignment directed at intern students in the Master’s programme in journalism at the University of Gothenburg. This programme has long traditions, and the department is one of the most renowned in Sweden. The internship term is well established, and during this course the students spend four months working at various newsrooms nationwide. These newsrooms may serve the morning press, public service broadcasting, independent production companies, or lifestyle magazines or trade press; taken together, internships offer a cross-sectional insight into many aspects of the Swedish media field. The learning points of the course are for each individual to develop a deepened understanding of newsroom organization, working conditions and control, and to practise the skills they have acquired in progressive terms. Besides the practical training, students are also expected to read course literature and analyse their own observations of their internship on a theoretical basis. These observations will be used as the basis for analysis in this article.

### *The material*

Naturally, there are both pros and cons with this kind of material. One benefit is that these texts provide cross-sectional knowledge of the contemporary media market, which otherwise may be difficult to accomplish. The students thus become ambassadors for research, observing and analysing the state of the newsrooms where they are. This

renders rich and multifaceted material for any scholar curious about the current status of newsrooms as well as the generational shift of workers taking place in the business.

So what do the students represent? One potential difficulty with the material is that it is drawn from one type of journalism students: those studying at the University of Gothenburg. Admittedly, these students might differ slightly from those within some vocational programmes, but there is no reason to believe they should differ compared to other university programmes in Sweden. On the contrary, the journalistic body in Sweden is very homogeneous in social structure, such that most individuals are white, native, and come from academic or white-collar backgrounds (Wiik, 2010), a composition which is mirrored in the classes of the journalism programmes. There might be cultural differences between different universities, which could influence students' views. Similarly, perceived teacher expectations, as well as specific student-teacher relationships, could possibly have some influence. However, in this case, the teacher had no direct contact with the students until after the essays had been handed in.

The course literature included the book *New Media, Old News*, edited by Natalie Fenton (2010), with the addition of a current scientific article of the student's choice. The students were asked to read the literature and make observations about the internship with one of the book's themes in mind. The purpose of the assignment is to make the students take a step back and reflect over what they see around them in the industry, as they for natural reasons tend to become very absorbed in practical learning the rest of the time. Up to this point in time, the assignment has been completed by two classes of 45 students each. Not all students handed in the assignment, so in the end there were approximately 80 essays to analyse.

### *Methodology*

The student essays comprise excellent material for analysing the students' experiences during their internships, but how should they be approached methodologically? The operationalization follows a traditional model for qualitative content analysis, in which the first step is a broad reading in which I go through the material to discover central characteristics in the articulation of various themes (Mayring, 2000; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). These central themes partly originate from the course literature, for instance "online journalism" or "de-professionalization", and I have read the texts with these categories in mind. I have, however, prioritized an inductive approach to let the material speak for itself, thereby crystallizing categories as they appear in the texts. These inductively formulated categories are continuously revised as the analysis proceeds, subsuming old categories and creating new ones. Differences can be noted between semesters, as well as between different media types, as to what the students find most relevant to focus on during their internship experience. The variation in the observations is striking, comparing fast news media with magazines, as well as comparing commercial broadcasting with public service – confirming the overall heterogeneity of the news industry. In the initial exploration of this material, the



inductively derived categories have formed the fundamental basis for analysis, which is a broad mapping of the main themes forwarded by the students. The analysis is focused solely on the manifest content of the students' observations, and will not take into account language, metaphors, etc.

### Changing working conditions, blurred boundaries

A new kind of division of labour and polarization has emerged in the network society – between a highly skilled core workforce with reasonable autonomy, and another part of the workforce that is flexible, controlled and can be used if necessary. Work processes and professional structures are being redefined in network companies as certain jobs are upgraded and become more independent, while others are automated, devalued, low-skilled, and managed by low pay. Network companies are hiring a growing part of the workforce through subcontracting, employment agencies and agency staff – dispensable workers brought in when needed (Nygren, 2008). This development is recognized by the students, especially those working with fast news. The magazine market is structured in a different manner: interns at such organizations experience more generous time frames and less pressure to push the boundaries of their journalistic roles. Those working with magazine production generally seem to accept the commercial fundamentals of the activity, and the traditional conflict between a public service model and a commercial model (Croteau, & Hoynes, 2006) is less relevant here:

Now, I haven't got a whole lot of experience working as a journalist, but I was very surprised when I started my internship and there were so few working there, on the spot. There were two people writing most of the content, and the rest was done by freelancers. I guess it depends on the economy; it'll be cheaper hand picking those you want for each issue and moreover avoid the need to make room for them in the newsroom. I really see no problem in that arrangement; I think it works well for both editors and the reporters who work as freelancers. In addition, my newsroom keeps a new trainee each term who they pay a fraction of a salary, but who makes a lot of news.

However, the students doing their internships within legacy news media tend to be more critical of the direction of change when it comes to working conditions. Time-efficiency is often seen as the overarching goal, which disturbs many of the students. A student working at one of the leading national newspapers says:

Journalists need to be more productive and more cost-effective. An example of this is that the newsroom where I am has been divided into two different groups, one dealing with faster news for the site and one working on slower news that's more time-consuming and that's intended to be published in the newspaper. Going forward, these two groups will be merged and all journalists will help with everything. Efficiency above all.

It is furthermore recognized that the rationalizations of the organizations are often made at the cost of the employees. It is clear that news organizations are having serious problems establishing strategies for meeting current challenges; instead, there is an ambivalence between old and new business models which affects working conditions. The never-ceasing pressure to produce more news with fewer reporters is not free – each staff member is paying the price. An intern student at the commercial broadcasting company TV4 comments:

Similarly to the BBC, TV4 is now considering whether to continue investing in the previously proven solutions, maintaining the approach and quality they've had, or to be more creative in their ways of addressing the audience – which may result in poorer quality. So far, they're attempting to do both, which is draining the editorial staff. Simultaneously, they provide Instagram news, live feeds online and On Demand offerings through TV4Play, as well as trying to retain their position in the TV schedules as a solid and respectable news medium. These attempts coincide, however, with cuts in personnel, shutdowns of local newsrooms and more responsibility put on employees to increase productivity.

Journalism interns working in public service broadcasting describe a somewhat different situation. While these companies are ideologically being drawn into the constant quest for higher ratings, at the same time they are regulated and financed differently, which is seen by the interns as carrying some degree of freedom. One of them says:

The feeling that you sometimes become a 'production journalist' who only packages content for pre-made templates can sometimes arise, but there's also another side of SVT weighing up. It's the sense of a higher purpose which permeates the entire organization. As SVT has the luxury of not being directly dependent on maximizing their ratings and clicks, it allows room to hold on to ideals that are down-prioritized in other media formats. The public service feeling of making a product for people connects employees better than any editorial system at any time.

It is obvious that the structural changes of the market are accompanied by a discursive frame, influencing all sectors to a greater or lesser degree. Not even the public service companies are free from the discursive power of commercialization, although they clearly show a different kind of resistance than the private companies. The quote above illustrates the crucial importance of journalistic ideals guiding professionals in their everyday work. It is more a matter of meaning, or as the student says, having "a higher purpose" than merely making a living. Previous research shows that journalists working in newsrooms where professional ideals are entwined with organizational goals appreciate their work much more (Russo, 1998). The clash between professional ideals and practice often leads to conflicts of interest for the individual in times of downsizing. Save your own skin (and sell your soul), or stand up for your professional ideals?

Many new journalists of the younger generations will, however, probably not need to ponder this question very long. Their entrance into the labour market is conditioned

more on commercial terms than on professional, ideological ones. If they wish to pursue a career in media, they need to redefine what journalism is and can be. Exemplifying what comes out of such negotiations, for instance, are the emerging “content farms” or “content agencies”. These companies produce content that is custom-made for various commercial actors desiring journalistic content in relation to their other products. These workplaces have in fact crossed the fine line between journalism and PR, serving as pure advertising in the shape of journalism. This kind of marketing looks like journalism and differs from traditional advertising, with flashing banners and billboards. By creating added value for the reader, the purpose is to build strong contact leading to long-lasting relationships. The blurring of the journalistic role here is as evident as ever. It is difficult to imagine a journalism student taking on this kind of internship 15 or even ten years ago. However, the pressured labour market has led to a greater allowance and acceptance of journalists taking on different roles. Furthermore, the content agencies are in fact hired to do jobs for legacy news media. An intern student at the content provider Spoon explains:

For the most part, it concerns companies that want to build their marketing, but it's now also the case that Spoon has customers who are newspapers. Not that Spoon produces news material for the papers, but they're making the Göteborgsposten's weekend supplement as well as feature material for Svenska Dagbladet. It's because they want to reduce costs and increase efficiency. Papers can now avoid having employed staff for these specific parts and can gather the cost in one place. It's also likely that Spoon pays lower fees to freelancers than what newspapers with a 'good conscience' can do, as it places such a load on freelancers.

The new content agencies are even more slimmed down than the traditional media houses. The intern student at Spoon describes how the agency uses teams of three for each project – an editor, a designer and a customer relations manager. Text and photography are outsourced to freelancing journalists and photographers. This way, the production process is extremely rationalized and very few functions are kept in-house.

## A revaluation of the digital

An increasing number of journalists work with online journalism in some form (Nygren, & Wadbring, 2013). To young journalists, the move from platform specialization to a broader, more technically flexible role could be an advantage. This generation knows nothing other than the digital world of today, and has the potential to take on various technical tasks more effortlessly than their older colleagues. A student at a local SVT newsroom explains the generational dilemma:

The editorial board defends online efforts with its future publishing platforms and says that television broadcasting is on its way out, while the reporters believe that SVT exists to transmit just on TV and that it's useless to enter and compete with

the already established web news outlets. Nevertheless, this has been of personal advantage to me, given that my generation is a little quicker to learn various software programmes for web publishing, among other things, which means I already have a wider knowledge than many of the old foxes, who probably feel pretty frustrated when they have to come to me, the intern, to get help.

It is hence important to remember that the development towards temporary positions and replaceable media workers does not affect all young journalists the same. At the moment, those with skills and competencies in the area of online/mobile publishing or advanced research methods/data mining are gaining excellent positions in most organizational settings. While online publishing was initially regarded as an additional field to the “real” press and broadcasting production, the tables have now turned and the status of online journalists has increased in just a few years. Editors rarely have the skills or insight needed in the digital sphere, which makes such competencies extremely valuable, generating extensive individual autonomy for those who have them. This indicates a growing complexity of the age-status relationship in the journalistic field. Older age and longer work experience have previously been related to higher status, but may today sometimes be an impediment as renewal and innovation are becoming prime requirements. A student working with web publishing comments:

You pick up something from the morning meeting with the webmaster, or tell about your own idea, and then go ahead and do it. It's not controlled by the webmaster, but is rather only up for discussion to ensure that you don't do double work or do two similar things during the day. When the text is ready to publish, I do it myself, directly. Afterwards it can be edited to a lesser extent or moved around, but otherwise I handle the entire process myself as a reporter. The material to be submitted in the paper edition, however, is discussed a number of times with both the news editor and the managing editor before the process is complete. Already in the conceptual stage, the material is much more driven by management direction when it's supposed to end up in the newspaper.

However, not all young people automatically approach technology as this unproblematic. They may be highly skilled *users* of digital media, but this does not automatically mean they are good at programming or the application of different production devices. These are still skills that need to be learned, and most journalism programmes are lagging behind in this respect. Again, it is left to individual students to adopt the skills necessary to survive in the turbulent situation in the current media labour market.

## The de-professionalization of journalism

The course units preceding the internship are full of references to the journalistic role as a professional construct. The professional perspective on journalism is well established, and permeates most activities to certain degrees. However, in the past decade

there have been increasing indications of a reversed process – a de-professionalization of journalism. Limited autonomy, insecure working conditions, and less specialization are examples of developments that may explain the jagged status of journalism as a profession (Witschge, & Nygren, 2009). The observations by the interns often confirm this view, as they witness a degenerating business and appear worried about the developments. On the other hand, they hold the journalistic ideals in high regard and seem to be loyal to the current role definition and identity. While the reality of workplaces does sometimes agree with the young interns' self-image, often it does not. Many of them, however, do note that they have a somewhat easier time adapting to new situations than their senior colleagues do. A female intern working at a local newspaper says:

One can see clearly what is expected of you when you come in as new and green: in the future, a reporter should be able to shoot, report and edit – while being able to be a presenter, working for web publishing and run live via fast channels. These tasks are more or less obvious as an intern doesn't have the 'old' image of the production process. However, one must also understand and be able to take in the more seasoned employees' objections to some of the things that happen. For the first transition period, speed is set against quality.

A problem with the new, slimmed-down organizational forms is that ideological outliers tend to go first, as consensus within the team may be prioritized at the cost of a variation of views. The purpose is of course to rationalize the time spent on decisions, representing a natural step in managerial efforts to remove obstacles to efficiency (Enteman, 1993). While these processes help the organization run more smoothly, they also risk a loss of the alternative voices and ideas that could have served to revive journalism in a time of crisis. The extreme streamlining of some newsrooms causes disappointment among the students. A young man doing his internship at an independent production company comments on this situation:

I want to write, but I don't know where. My initial thought was to write about football, funny life stories, columns and so on. Funny texts, in my opinion. But it doesn't seem to be like that in the world of daily press. Newspaper language is limited, it may not be so vivid – it only tells the facts. Moreover, you usually get your news story pre-specified in a daily or evening newspaper, which means that one of my biggest assets and interests is lost – coming up with my own ideas and interesting topics. You usually hear this sad expression that 'a monkey could do that'. Things aren't really that bad, but the journalist role at a newspaper tends to be very mechanical and monotonous if you just have tasks assigned to you without any say in the matter.

The students jointly observe an existing ambivalence marking the industry; creative and driven people are desired, but often find themselves being used for simple, monotonous duties. They are expected to know a great deal about many things, but the hectic working environment at daily news outlets hinders the development of new

ideas. The younger generation may have some advantages in the computerization of news, but being young and digitally orientated is no guarantee for long-term appointments. There is more to it than that. You need to be flexible, multi-skilled and fast. Sadly, the adaptability of young people is often exploited by employers – hiring them for short-term projects or other temporary posts. A side effect of this strategy is that the somewhat older journalists, of childbearing age, are being excluded from this labour market as they have difficulty coping with such insecure working conditions (Svensson Glaser, & Westman, 2012). In summary, many of the journalism interns in the study express a pragmatic and perhaps disillusioned attitude when it comes to working in news media.

## Conclusions

This chapter set out to explore observations made by journalism interns and their impressions of their future careers. Images of current news media development, as depicted by the journalism interns, are worrying in many respects. The tough competition, ever-increasing speed, and insecure terms of employment could be intimidating to young journalists seeking employment in this occupation. Indeed, the intern students have no problem identifying the tough labour market, and approach this reality with varying attitudes. Some of them have already lost faith and now question their choice of career, while others are more confident and see their youth, freshness and certain set of skills as an advantage. These different views are likely to illustrate the split already seen in the professional collective. As Ursell (2003), Nygren (2008) and other scholars (e.g. Östlund, 2000) have predicted, the workforce is experiencing a clearly visible stratification whereby new skills and mindsets are determinant. The professional identity of journalism is being renegotiated, and will perhaps separate into several sub-identities (Nygren, & Wadbring, 2013). The de-professionalizing and proletarianization processes do not strike generally, but will have various effects within different groups of journalists. Previous research indicates that the youngest journalists are the most affected by the precarious working conditions and terms of employment. In this group, precariousness is followed by an increasingly liberal set of ideals (Wiik, 2014); transition processes function to accentuate the polarization of the journalistic profession. Although Swedish journalists still maintain a strong professional identity tied to public service ideals and accountability (Wiik, 2014), the indications in this study point to an increasingly strained situation for journalism in practice.

According to Castells (2000), post-modern identities are in a turbulent state, and various sub-identities are developing in response to new pressures. In relation to the labour market, however, Peetz (2010) argues that the individualization process should not be mistaken for the *individualization of attitudes* but should instead be regarded as an *individualization of the employment relationship*. He asserts that the discourse of individualism fits the “dominant, market-based view of society, in which all relation-

ships are transactional” (p. 394), but that this discourse does not always match what data tell us. The observations of the journalism intern students confirm his argument, and that the labour market for young journalists is highly individualized. In their texts, they rarely refer to aspects such as professional judgement and autonomy other than as unattainable ideals, which they indeed agree with. Instead, they seem preoccupied by the downward slope of the news business and its effects on their own situation. It is not all black, however: many students also claim to accept the challenge of reinvigorating the field and strive for journalistic ideals, albeit perhaps in new forms.

The polarization of the journalistic collective also calls for a new approach among journalism educators. Journalism schools can no longer hold onto the old notion of a coherent, professional collective in a constant process towards larger autonomy and status. Conditions for journalistic work are changing rapidly – some for the better and many for the worse. For any student wishing to make his or her way into a good position, one important attribute appears to be not only the fundamental flexibility of labour, but also a willingness to change – an interest in redefining the journalistic role. One student points out the emerging division of the workforce:

By recognizing that the profession is narrowing, and being prepared to cede some of its former journalistic duties to ‘media people’ and at the same time show that journalistic products offer something more than blogs and live TV from a tabloid, the journalistic profession can survive.

For those responsible for journalism programmes, this quote illustrates an important lesson to be learned. Although the basic ideals, skills and techniques are still relevant, in future they may be exercised by fewer professionals. Rewriting press material and shovelling it into computerized news systems does not require a university education. Journalism scholars and educators may or may not approve of this development, but must face a twofold task: to keep pace with developments in the industry, and to prepare students for this by avoiding too many nostalgic flashbacks in course literature and applications. This could mean, for instance, acknowledging the increasing variation of internship organizations and letting this colour the curriculum, but more so, on the other hand, taking an active part in re-evaluating and redefining the journalistic role in a democratically sustainable way. This important task cannot be entrusted to the market only. In this process, the internship needs to be focused. These courses and their participants may contribute a great deal of valuable knowledge, for instance in the areas of the skills needed at different workplaces: variety in journalistic role definitions, and the expansion and blurred boundaries of the actual workplaces included in the internship courses. Intern students thus constitute useful assets in the remaking of journalism education, and similarly, for research on the situation of new journalism graduates.



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## “Is This a Good News Story?”

### *Developing Professional Competence in the Newsroom*

Gitte Gravengaard & Lene Rimestad

#### Abstract

Journalism students experience a double professional socialisation as they are socialised within two different organisations when becoming professional practitioners: during their studies at a university or journalism school and at the media organisation where they do their internship. This dual, and sometimes conflicting or discrepant, socialisation is the focus of this chapter, as we discuss how the concept of news criteria, which students are taught at the educational organisations as they learn what “a good news story” is, corresponds to the reality they face as interns in the routinised practice in the newsroom. We generate and describe eight factors affecting journalists’ assessment of ideas for news stories, offering a more adequate description of what “a good news story” is in practice. Furthermore, we argue that the journalism education system, as well as media organisations, can benefit from implementing this model in the education of interns in order to facilitate efficient socialisation processes and support the transfer of knowledge.

**Keywords:** journalism education, socialization, news criteria, eight factors, double professional socialization, journalism interns, Denmark

## Introduction

When being socialized into the professional culture in the newsroom, the trainee needs to learn to become a competent member through an acquisition of a range of *practice-related skills* (for instance, how to develop an idea for “a good news story”) as well as through an acquisition of a complex set of values underlying these skills; that is, assimilating a professional identity of being a journalist (Cotter, 2010).

This chapter focuses on trainees’ internship period at media organizations, because this is where the actual newsroom socialization process starts (Cotter, 2010). In terms of organizational socialization (Field, & Coetzer, 2008), we can categorize the academic education preceding this period as the first phase in the socialization process: the *pre-encounter phase* (Fisher, 1986; Haski-Leventhal, & Bargal, 2008)<sup>1</sup>. During this phase, students learn about the trade via formal education (Scollon, & Scollon, 2001),

and practice the skills in a relatively neutral environment that is not market-driven in the same way as a media organization can be. Within the journalism programmes, students are introduced to a huge amount of explicit knowledge from lectures and textbooks. Here, they learn *about* practice.

The next phase, *the encounter phase* (Fisher, 1986; Haski-Leventhal, & Bargal, 2008), starts with the internship period at a given media organization. At this time, the journalism students encounter the media organization and its members, and as interns start learning *through* practice and gradually become more competent members of the professional culture in the newsroom. As trainees within the organization, they can now observe and experience the routinized practice (Giddens, 1984) there – and themselves become part of this practice. The third phase of the organizational socialization process, *the adaptation phase*, takes place when the interns settle in and adapt, and long-lasting changes occur (Allen, 2006; Bauer et al. 1994).

Throughout these different phases, one of the key competencies journalism students need is the ability to identify and develop ideas suitable for news stories (Gans, 1979; Bantz et al. 1980; Becker, & Vlad, 2009). This distinct competency is an important component of the scholastic curriculum taught as *news criteria* at the university, and an important skill to be learned in practice as an intern at a media organization. As an editor of a tabloid newspaper puts it in our research: “We demand from the interns that they create new ideas. We expect them to come up with stories”. In this way, editors assess interns – as well as experienced journalists (Gans, 1979) – by evaluating their ability to create suitable ideas for the media that employ them.

Being able to create “a good idea” demonstrates craft ethos (Cotter, 2010) and professional vision (Goodwin, 1994). As professions and organizations authorize certain knowledge practices (Abbott, 1988; Carr, 2010), they continually produce and reproduce the proper perception of important *objects of knowledge* (Goodwin, 1994) in the professional culture. Carr (2010) describes how professions have *coding systems* which create categorical distinctions, for instance the difference between “this is a news story” and “this is not a news story” (Gravengaard, 2010), and at the same time blur the discussions that took place when these categories were produced in the first place. The coding systems are constructed and maintained in the routinized practice in the newsroom, and it is through socialization processes in this community of practice that the newcomer acquires ways of speaking, behaving and thinking that define the professional practitioner (Heath, 2000; Wenger, 1998; Lave, & Wenger, 1991).

But how are journalist trainees socialized into knowing what this important professional object of knowledge – “a good news story” – contains? And how do the news values taught within the journalism programmes work in practice? These questions will be discussed in this chapter.

After this short introduction, we continue with a brief description of the data and method in our study of journalist interns. Then, based on socialization theories, we analyse how Danish journalism students learn, practice and reflect on the news criteria.

We describe how we identify eight factors affecting journalists' assessment of ideas for news stories in their routinized practice, and how these eight factors give a more adequate description of practice than the news criteria do.

## Data and method

This chapter is based on an ethnographic study of 12 Danish journalist interns, who we followed during their one-year trainee period. In Denmark, this period is preceded by 1½-2 years at the university or journalism school and is then followed by a period of time spent at the university or journalism school. The year-long apprenticeship is paid, with a monthly salary of \$2,700. The interns in this study worked for two national daily newspapers, two national tabloid newspapers, and two national Danish TV stations, respectively. The research design consisted of:

- Participant observations made over the course of a year, following each of the 12 interns for three full workdays. We made audio recording of meetings, interviews and other interactions.
- Semi-structured interviews with the trainees before, during and after their trainee period.
- Semi-structured interviews with the person responsible for the interns at each of the media organizations involved in the study.
- E-mail enquetes sent to the trainees three times during the internship period.

Taking its point of departure in insights from ethnomethodology (Edwards 1997; Garfinkel 1967), conversation analysis (Drew, & Heritage 1992; Antaki, 2001, 2011), linguistic anthropology (Duranti, 1997; Schieffelin, & Ochs, 1986), sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978, 1981), and learning theory (Lave, & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998), this study and this chapter conceptualize social interaction and discursive practices in the routinized practice as the primordial site for learning to take place, and therefore our microanalytical study of socialization processes very closely examines the novices' social interaction and their discursive practices in the newsroom.

By combining a detailed analysis of naturally occurring talk-in-interaction with ethnographic and contextual data, we have been able to explore the relationship between the micro-level of talk-in-interaction in the routinized practice and the wider social and institutional structures to which they contribute, thus offering a behind-the-scenes look at important elements of the intangible and blurred parts of the socialization process and of the construction of craft ethos and professional vision.

## Pre-encounter phase: Learning about news values

At the university or journalism school, journalism students learn how news values are used to make decisions about what ideas to construct and what ideas to include or exclude from a media product. This research tradition started with Galtung and Ruge's (1965) study of the foreign news coverage of crises in four Norwegian newspapers, in which they developed a list of 12 factors determining the *newsworthiness* of an event, and has since developed (for an overview see Brighton, & Foy, 2007; O'Neill, & Harcup, 2009).

In Danish journalism textbooks, it is primarily *the news criteria* (Meilby, 2001) that are described and taught to journalism students when they learn about "a good news story". These five criteria are termed and defined as:

- **Sensation** – the unusual, the unexpected, the spectacular
- **Conflict** – dispute between people, organizations, interests etc.
- **Identification** – proximity and relevance to the audience
- **Timeliness** – what has just happened, new information
- **Relevance** – importance to the public and to society

The news criteria are presented as a common point of departure for journalists' assessment of ideas for news stories. According to Meilby (2001), these criteria "are decisive when journalists assess events, ideas, framing, copy and stories". Besides Meilby, the criteria are presented as explanations of news work in a range of other Danish journalism textbooks, such as Olsson and Poulsen 1995; Kramhøft, 2000; Mogensen, 2000; Tverskov and Tverskov, 2004; Kabel, 2009 and others. As a consequence, this explanation for what affects news judgement is largely passed on to journalism students, and in this way it is a strongly institutionalized explanation of how practice in the newsroom really is, and of what constitutes "a good news story". In the Danish context a sixth news value, *exclusivity*, has also been pointed out by Schultz (2005), describing how the news media want stories that are exclusive, not shared by other media outlets.

However, the concept of pointing out news values and news criteria can be criticized. First of all, news values often tell more about *how* events have been covered in the news media than about *why* the event was chosen to be covered in the first place (Hartley 1982; Palmer, 2000). Secondly, because the concept of news values is so closely connected to *the event*, it is also very often closely connected to a perception of news work as selection, in which the journalist as a gatekeeper chooses between ideas for news stories already existing in the world around him (Gravengaard, 2012; O'Neill, & Harcup, 2009). As much previous research has shown, however, this is not the case (Tuchman 1973, 1978; Schlesinger 1978; Fishman, 1980; Schudson, 1989); furthermore, this is not how journalists themselves conceptualize news work (Gravengaard, 2012). Therefore, explanations taking their theoretical departure in the concept of

news values offer only a partial explanation of the selection process in the newsroom, as this chapter will also demonstrate.

The journalism students in our data were also presented with, e.g., Shoemaker and Reese's (1996) hierarchy-of-influences model during their education, but this was never a part of their explicit reflection-about-practice (Schön, 1983) when we talked to them.

### Pre-encounter phase: Reflecting on news values

Before the internship period started, we asked the 12 journalist trainees to describe what they thought was the most important news criteria for them and the media organization for which they were going to work. All of them pointed to the criteria taught within the journalism programme, the majority citing *relevance* as the most important. We also asked the students if they believed the news criteria could describe "a good news story" in the newsroom they were about to enter. A third of the interns said the news criteria were sufficient for describing this practice, while the other two-thirds stated that the criteria did not give an adequate description. When asked directly, all students had trouble pointing out what they felt was missing from the list of news criteria. Thus, in the pre-encounter phase we registered a sense among the students that the news criteria were "not enough", and many of them felt that there was more to this explanation. However, they expected the encounter phase to allow them to access the rest of the explanation.

### Encounter phase: Socialization and tacit expert knowledge

An organization's goal is to make its employees think and act in ways that are desirable to the organization. Through the process of socialization, journalist interns acquire knowledge and a repertoire of habits, values and norms that enables them to participate effectively and appropriately in the community of practice in the newsroom (Schieffelin, & Ochs, 1986; Heath, 2000; Garrett, & Baquedano-Lopez, 2002; Goodwin, 2003; Field, & Coetzer, 2008; Nielsen, 2010; Gravengaard, & Rimestad, 2011, 2014, 2015). They internalize the values and norms of the news organization, and learn about this community of practice – for instance, what does and does not constitute "a good news story" – via situated learning because of their legitimate peripheral participation in the routinized practice (Lave, & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998) where they can, for instance, monitor the acceptance and elimination of ideas for news stories (Donsbach, 2004; O'Neill, & Harcup, 2009; Gravengaard, & Rimestad, 2011).

Learning is fundamentally a social phenomenon situated *in* as well as made possible by social interaction (Schieffelin, & Ochs, 1986). Thus, learning takes place through the interns' interaction with more competent members, reaching the zone of *proximal development* (Vygotsky, 1981), and via the interns' self-guided engagement with the tasks at hand (Nguyen, 2012). The novices' recurrent participation in the routinized

practice allows them to encounter similar problems and tasks, which enables them to modify their behaviour and develop yet more effective ways in which to comply with these tasks: in this case, creating “a good news story”.

In the learning process, trained journalists and editors are important *socializing agents* (Feldman, 1994). However, these experienced professionals are also *intuitive experts* (Dreyfus, & Dreyfus, 1986) whose expert knowledge is based on a repertoire of experience and cognitively structured as intuition, and is therefore difficult to express verbally (Nonaka, & Takeuchi, 1995; Ettema, & Glasser, 1998, Perrin, 2013). As a consequence, this tacit professional knowledge about this particular culture and its professional norms, and about what constitutes “a good news story”, is passed on in tacit ways to newcomers (Gravengaard, & Rimestad, 2011, 2014, 2015). As Briggs (1986) underlines, professional expertise is transmitted through verbal interaction between master and apprentice, but also through the observation, internalization and imitation of patterned behaviours.

Within journalism research the socialization process is very often described as extremely important. At the same time, many scholars have pointed out that socializing processes are very difficult to trace as they are informal, diffuse and implicit (Preston, 2009; Harrison, 2006; Furhoff, 1986; Sigelman, 1973; Breed 1955). Donsbach (2004) emphasizes how socialization in the newsroom often consists of *persuasive processes* rather than forced compliance, with the organizational objectives in a subtle manner becoming a part of the intern's self-perception and becoming objects of knowledge through the everyday communication in the routinized practice. When asked about how he had learned about “a good news story”, an intern explained: “I don't know...I think...Perhaps through practicing thinking within the frames. But...I don't know. I also think it's somewhat self-evident what a good news story is... I don't really know how to explain it”.

### Encounter phase: “A good news story”

The experienced journalist *knows* what “a good news story” is (Bourdieu, 1998; Schultz, 2007; Gravengaard, 2008, 2010), but this knowledge is seldom articulated verbally during the routinized practices in the newsroom. One of the journalists in our research project stated: “A news story is a news story”. This statement strikes a note, often appearing in answers from journalists when asked to explain what actually makes “a good news story”. Journalists recognize a good news story when they see one (Epstein, 1973; Hall, 1973; Tuchman, 1973; Gans, 1979; Golding, & Elliott, 1979; Eide, 1992), but it is very difficult for them to articulate this knowledge because it is tacit expert knowledge closely connected to practice and hence difficult for professional practitioners to explicate (Polanyi, 1958; 1983; Schön, 1983; Dreyfus, & Dreyfus, 1986; Nonaka, & Takeuchi, 1995). This makes it difficult for journalist interns to get a grasp on the concept (Randall, 2000; Gravengaard, & Rimestad, 2015).



Especially in the newsrooms of newspapers, interns are expected to create their own ideas for new news stories. As one intern put it: "It's all they [the experienced journalists and the editors] ever talk about: how important it is to get a good idea." And another intern follows up: "If you don't have any ideas it's going to be a very long year of internship". Developing an idea is a complex matter, and with the above-described lack of explicated knowledge some interns can have a hard time constructing ideas that fit the wishes of the media organization (Rimestad, & Gravengaard, 2016). An intern describes: "I really don't know what a good idea is. When I present an idea, I feel like they can say 'It's very good'. But they can also just say 'It's really bad'".

In this case, knowing the news criteria is not enough, as one can easily have an idea for a news story that complies with all the news criteria but at the same time is very far from ending up as a news story. Another intern in the late encounter phase describes how she is gradually learning what "a good news story" is: "I'm on my way, so to speak, to understanding this (...) in the beginning it was very difficult. (...) but I feel I'm becoming quite good at getting it right sometimes". In the routinized practice in the newsroom, many other factors than just the news criteria explicitly and implicitly affect the assessment of an idea for a news story. The rest of this chapter will deal with how ideas for news stories are actually assessed.

### Encounter phase: Eight factors

From studying the professional practice in the newsrooms and analysing what was said and done, implied or presupposed every time a new idea for a news story was discussed, chosen, eliminated, put on standby etc., we performed an inductive categorization (Strauss & Corbin 1998) of all the elements we observed influencing the journalists' assessments of ideas. This resulted in the development of eight categories of overall factors influencing journalists' assessments of ideas for potential news stories. The list of factors is an elaboration, revision and readjustment of previous research (Gravengaard, 2008, 2010).

The eight factors are not to be seen as a list the journalist follows to thoroughly assess every single idea. On the contrary, these factors are a part of the experienced professional practitioners' expert knowledge that they intuitively access in the routinized practice in the newsroom. This is the complex tacit knowledge the interns have to learn in order to be able to become competent members of the community of practice. The eight factors influencing journalists' assessment of ideas for potential news stories are:

- The idea initiator
- The event
- The journalist
- The media product

- The media organization
- Other media
- The audience
- The sources

Two overall characteristics are important to underline. Firstly, the factors are closely connected and interdependent. They coexist, and are constantly active in the sense that elements from all factors can at any time be decisive for the journalist's assessment and selection or elimination of an idea for a news story. Secondly, there is what we call *the relative nature* of the factors – a feature closely connected to the movable threshold of news (Eide, 1992; Sand, & Helland, 1998). This means that the demands for an idea increase with the number of “good ideas” for news stories the media organization has on a particular day. Consequently, it is impossible to state simplistic and static rules for journalists' assessment of ideas for potential news stories.

### *Factor 1: The idea initiator*

For the journalists' assessment of ideas, it is of great importance *what* or *who* has triggered the idea – and how this has happened. In the analysis, we can distinguish between two types of ideas: those *internally initiated* and those *externally initiated*. Internally initiated ideas are those that the journalists perceive as initiated by someone within the media organization – the journalist, a colleague or the editor. Externally initiated ideas are brought to the journalists' attention by actors from outside the media organization – companies, organizations, politicians, PR agencies or others.

The journalists prefer to work on the internally initiated ideas, because they sometimes become the media's own exclusive stories. Here the journalists have the opportunity to work on their own ideas, which creates a feeling of being in charge. The externally initiated ideas are always looked upon by the journalists as cases in which actors from outside the media organization try to exert an influence on what particular news stories the journalists should cover. The journalists take pride in being able to evaluate the interests behind an external approach to determine whether they are “being used” or “in somebody's pocket”.

### *Factor 2: The event*

Journalists also assess the event that has led to the idea. Many of the elements constituting this second factor are similar to the news criteria, as the journalists consider whether the event is essential and important, and whether it is relevant, has consequences and perhaps contains a conflict. One of the most important factors in this assessment is that the event must be categorized as “new”. The journalists talk about “something new” in relation to several matters: 1) “New” as in “it's just happened”; 2) “New” – not just more of the same, but a development; 3) “New” as in “never heard about that before”; and 4) “New” compared to what the other media have already told.

Furthermore, the journalists have to be able to judge, validate and document a given idea. Otherwise, it will be eliminated.

### *Factor 3: The journalist*

Journalists prefer to cover stories about subjects that interest them. They hope to be “spurred on” by an idea and to be “surprised” and “inspired”, and describe their personal commitment to an idea as being very important to them when assessing the idea. They underline their personal involvement in their job by using words such as “interest”, “joy”, “anger”, “indignation”, “surprise”, “fascination” etc.

There are three basic underlying assumptions (Schein, 2004) regarding this priority of a journalist’s personal commitment to a news story:

1. Personal commitment to the idea is important for the journalist’s motivation and job satisfaction.
2. Personal interest will result in high-quality articles which will benefit the readers and thereby also the newspaper. It is a win-win-situation.
3. The journalist’s interest will also be of interest to the audience.

At the same time, many journalists are occupied with their own role in society. They consider what role a given news story might place them in, and if they are not interested in playing this particular role the idea is eliminated.

### *Factor 4: The media product*

Another factor affecting the assessment of ideas is the media product: how well does the idea for a news story fit in with the platform, genre or format? For instance, certain stories are more suitable for a weekend edition of a newspaper, and certain formats entail a demand for different types of news stories – for “the right mix of news stories” in the media product. It would not work to have five portraits in one section of a newspaper. The allocation of the resources available is governed by how “good” and important particular ideas are considered to be, but also with a consideration of the suitability of the idea, looking at genres, platform or format. One intern at a TV station learned how the question of whether one had “good pictures” could affect the assessment of an idea as she experienced that a story about fish dying because of algae was easier to televise than a story about a budgetary issue.

### *Factor 5: The media organization*

All the elements in this category are concerned with the conditioning framework for news production, conditions that are often static. Here the focus is on how an idea for a news story fits into this particular structure. The division of labour within the media organization, with editorial staff and journalists with their particular *beats*

that they cover, influences the journalists' assessment of ideas. Also, at a bureaucratic organization with an uneven distribution of power resources, the editors always have to approve of the journalists' ideas either via face-to-face conversation or at the editorial staff meeting.

The newspaper's editorial policy is seldom used as an explanation for the elimination of ideas. Still, the experienced journalists stated that they have a clear conception of which news stories are suited for their newspaper and which ones are not – not only when it comes to choice of topic and sources but also the quality of, for instance, the documentation.

The decision regarding the selection or elimination of ideas also depends on the editorial space for coverage, the amount of work the journalists can get done, and what the deadline allows time for.

### *Factor 6: Other media*

Journalists want to produce *new* news stories first, and prefer to work on their own ideas in order to do stories that no other media have. The ideal is the exclusive news story: the story that no one else has that day, but ideally will cover and follow up on the next day. If it is not possible to do an exclusive news story, journalists aim at having their own exclusive interview, their own exclusive framing, or other things the other media do not have. Therefore, it influences the journalists' assessments of ideas for news stories whether they have the idea to themselves or whether it is something several journalists know about.

It is an important goal for both the journalists and the media organization to distance themselves from other journalists and other media. For the individual journalist, this gives him the opportunity to demonstrate his competence, as exclusive stories result in acknowledgement from other journalists and editors. To the media organization, the unique news stories mean that the organization can stand out from other media organizations and show that it is faster and better than the others. The goal is to "set an agenda", which means doing a news story that all the other media feel they have to produce about as well.

Furthermore, the journalists argued that their own unique news stories are important in relation to the audience. At the same time, however, they express doubts as to whether the media audience notices these exclusive stories as they rarely read, see or listen to all news media products produced every day. Thus, one could call this an internal journalist competition (Schultz, 2005).

### *Factor 7: The audience*

Journalists want to shed light on and pass on knowledge about what they believe the audience ought to know. The aim is primarily to tell the audience what the journalists find to be the most important events in society on this particular day – important to the audience, and important to society as such.

The journalists in the study accentuated that their media organization addresses a major part of the population and that they therefore need their news stories to have a “broad appeal to the audience” and to interest many in the target group. An idea is typically eliminated if the journalist assesses that it is “too specific” or “too narrow” and is only interesting to a small group within the audience. Furthermore, the demand for proximity to the audience can cause the journalist to eliminate ideas concerning events happening too far away from the audience’s geographical location (see also Prakke 1969).

Also, it is the journalists’ ambition to cover stories that will have some kind of effect on the audience. They wish to “challenge” their audience, “provoke them” and “surprise them” – or preferably “cause reflection and debate” among the audience. At the same time, it is the journalists’ ambition to create interesting and captivating stories in order to hold the audience’s attention as well as attract new readers, viewers and listeners, and thereby augment the position of the media.

### *Factor 8: The sources*

Journalists need sources and case interviews for their news stories. These sources need to be reliable, available and interested in appearing in the media. If this is not the case, ideas can be eliminated as journalists are often reluctant to use anonymous sources.

Even if a journalist has a source who is willing to appear in the media, this is no guarantee that the idea will be selected. Perhaps the journalist considers the source untrustworthy, or perhaps only one party in a conflict will tell the journalist his version of “the truth”.

Sometimes certain sources approach the journalists “much too often”, and are therefore considered untrustworthy. The journalists are highly conscious of not “running errands for anyone” or “advertising for anybody”. They want to be independent.

When a journalist contacts a given source, he often has certain expectations as to what the source will say to him; if these expectations are not met, the idea can also be eliminated.

## **The adaptation phase: The eight factors and the news criteria**

This is the reality journalists and interns face when taking part in the routinized practice in the newsroom. These eight factors are simultaneously and constantly influencing journalists’ routinized assessment of ideas for potential news stories in a complex tangle of demands, requirements and personal wishes. And the interns learn about this by participating in the routinized practice in the newsroom. An intern described this process as follows: “I think it happens in the process where you’re a part of the everyday life. When you’ve participated in this everyday life for a long time, you figure it out. You learn about the routines and about what the editors want and what they don’t want.”

As Figure 1 displays, and as this study has shown, the news criteria described in the Danish journalistic textbooks do not offer an adequate description of the routinized assessment of ideas for news stories, as many important factors potentially influencing this process are not included in these criteria.

**Figure 1.** News criteria in education in relation to factors influencing journalists' assessment of ideas for potential news stories

| The news criteria | The eight factors      |
|-------------------|------------------------|
| Relevance         | The event              |
| Sensation         |                        |
| Actuality         |                        |
| Conflict          |                        |
| Identification    | The audience           |
|                   | The idea initiator     |
|                   | The journalist         |
|                   | The media product      |
|                   | The media organization |
| Exclusivity       | Other media            |
|                   | The sources            |

The factor “the event” contains several news criteria, all concerned with the actual event involved in an idea. ‘Relevance’, ‘sensation’, ‘actuality’ and ‘conflict’ are all concerned with the characteristics of a given event – or what characteristics a journalist can assign to a given event. Also, Factor 7, “the audience”, and the journalists’ aim to create news stories that interest the target group, is somewhat identical to the criterion “identification”.

However, the news criteria do not describe the importance of who initiates the idea. They do not reveal anything about the journalists prioritizing their personal interest and motivation; nor do they explain how the demands for a particular media product and format, as well as the media organization and the conditions for production, influence the journalists’ assessments of ideas. The criteria do not cover the priority of exclusivity in order to differentiate oneself from other journalists and other media organizations. And, finally, the criteria lack the demand that sources are reliable, not too controlling, and nuanced enough to allow the journalist to describe more than one side of a given situation. In addition to this, the criteria cannot account for the movable threshold of news or the relative nature of the demands posed by the journalists regarding ideas for news stories.

When journalism educators and journalists only use the news criteria to describe “the common point of departure for journalists’ news assessment” (Meilby, 2001) and “the characteristics that we know from experience make a story a good news story” (Kramhøft, 2000), several circumstances and factors also influencing the news assessment remain undescribed – and thereby unnoticed. The reproduction of the

news criteria as an explanation for why something becomes a news story and why something else does not upholds the mind-set that it is primarily the actual event that influences journalists' assessment of a given idea, because most of the news criteria concern the event. But, as the eight factors show, several other circumstances influence journalists' assessment of ideas.

## Conclusion

It displays expertise and professional vision when an intern is capable of developing and presenting an idea that his editor conceptualizes as a "good news story". Therefore, this is what the trainees saw as one of their main goals. During the year of apprenticeship, we noted a development in most of the trainees as they learned important parts of the tacit expert knowledge about what "a good news story" was in the newsroom, and hence became increasingly competent members of the community of practice (Gravengaard, & Rimestad, 2014). An intern described: "I felt a natural insecurity in the beginning (...) But now I have a better grasp of what "a good news story" is and of what works and what doesn't work". And another intern stated: "In the beginning I needed to understand: what does this newspaper want? But that seems like a long time ago now (...) Perhaps I've just changed".

This study reveals the deficiencies in teaching the news criteria in Danish journalism education as the only way of assessing an idea for a news story. One can easily create an idea for a news story that complies with all the news criteria but at the same time is very far from ending up as a news story, as practicalities such as time and other resources, personal opinion, or lack of trustworthy sources prevent it from being publishable.

The news criteria can be seen as abstract, idealistic criteria, and as a way to theoretically explain how to create "a good news story". These ideals can all be linked to characteristics pertaining to the event involved in the story. Furthermore, when it comes to explanations like those provided by researchers such as Shoemaker and Reese (1996) which were not used by either interns or veterans, we might suspect these of being too abstract and theoretical – and hence too far from the actual practice as experienced from the practitioners' perspective. In contrast, the eight factors are realistic and practical issues for explaining how the creation and selection processes take place at the concrete personal and interactional level in the newsroom, as they are connected to the situational, interactional practices.

Consequently, the eight factors can be used as a supplement to the news criteria in order to facilitate discussions about the complexity of the creation and selection of news. We have developed these factors to explicate the experienced professionals' tacit expert knowledge in the newsroom, and to unveil the complexity of news creation and selection. This list can be a valuable teaching tool for both journalism educators and experienced practitioners in the newsroom, as it unveils what are otherwise opaque structures (Hall, 1973) and are "in the walls" of the newsroom (Furhoff, 1986). Imple-

menting the concept of the eight factors can help facilitate a successful socialization process, making it easier to access this important professional knowledge for newcomers to the trade. Furthermore, it can also support interns in the aim to connect their learning experiences from the pre-encounter phase (journalism education) and the encounter phase (internship in the newsroom), making boundary crossing and knowledge transfer from one setting to another an easier task.

The detailed analysis of authentic and routinized practice presented in this chapter gave us the possibility to articulate a more nuanced insight into the routinized practice, as well as into an important object of knowledge: the “good news story”. The transformation of parts of the professional veterans’ tacit expert knowledge into voiced knowledge creates an opportunity for these practitioners to gain a more nuanced insight into their practice; and what is more, it makes it possible for them to discuss and reflect upon this knowledge and practice: is what they do in the routinized practice the most fruitful way to create competent members out of novices when it comes to creating “a good idea”? In this way, the analyses may concretize, broaden, detail and perhaps even correct the veterans’ professional stock of knowledge (Peräkylä, & Vehviläinen, 2003).

## Note

1. Similarly, if we were focusing on the education period at journalism school or university we would term the period before entering the educational system the *pre-encounter phase* and define the start of the education as the *encounter phase*.

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# Internal Practical Training as a Teaching Method for Journalist Students

Hilde Kristin Dahlstrøm

## Abstract

Internal practical training has been an essential pedagogical tool for training journalism students in Scandinavia. This article focuses on how students at NLA University College in Kristiansand experience the self-perception of competency as a result of these periods, as well as their knowledge about how the internal practice influences the teacher's role. A large number of students say they learn the most in these periods of practical training because they gain practical experience and get a realistic taste of a professional career. They highlight the guidance they receive from teachers along the way as the main explanation for this high achievement in learning outcome. The teachers say that during these periods, their traditional role of instructor is exchanged for that of supervisor. Theories of problem-based learning provide a good explanation for the success of internal practical training as a teaching method.

**Keywords:** journalism education, internal practical training, learning outcome, supervision, Norway

## Introduction

Society calls for education that integrates practical training, to best prepare students for the reality facing them in the workplace. The introduction of student-centered teaching methods is also one of the main intentions of the *Norwegian Quality Reform* [Kvalitetsreformen] (the Ministry of Education's information brochure about the Quality Reform). All providers of journalist education in Norway offer their students internal practical training, in addition to external internships at media houses. The amount of internal practical training varies from institution to institution; the University of Stavanger offers five weeks and the University of Bergen six weeks. Volda University College offers 13 weeks (plus eight optional weeks), Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Sciences and NLA University College offer 16 weeks, and the University of Nordland offers 17 weeks. The transition from a two-year program to a three-year journalism education has, to a certain degree, shifted the focus towards theoretical study. According to the study plans of the various journalism

programs, new courses included in the Bachelor program are often subjects that do not include practical training.

Many students experience that internal practice periods improve their self-perception of competency. A survey among second-year students at NLA University College (Dahlstrøm, 2012) shows that more than 70 per cent of students say they learned the most during practical training. Students explain this by saying they get a realistic taste of the profession, and that they get to do what they have learned in theory under the continuous supervision of a teacher. At their evaluation halfway through their studies, students often say “The practice has been the best and most instructive part!” Nevertheless, the provision of internal practical training is under constant pressure. This is mainly because it is very costly to implement, requiring both equipment and supervisors.

The aim of this article is to describe how students at NLA University College<sup>1</sup> experience the self-perception of competency in internal practice periods, and to examine the teachers’ experiences of using internal practical training as a teaching method. This article builds on quantitative surveys among students and qualitative interviews with teachers. Although the empirical data are related to journalism as a discipline, the theme can also be relevant for other forms of vocational education.

## Cognitive and socio-cultural tradition of knowledge

The idea that knowledge is shaped and reshaped through experience is central to the theory of experiential and problem-based learning (PBL). The slogan “learning by doing” is derived from the works of pragmatist John Dewey, one of the most famous representatives of the socio-cultural perspective on learning. Dewey argues that children and adults learn best through concrete action. In specific actions, problems needing to be solved occur, and in efforts to find solutions new sources of learning arise.

The characteristics of the problem-based study model are that: 1) learning and teaching are based on practice-oriented, authentic situations; 2) students receive close supervision, support and assistance from a supervisor; 3) learning activities follow a progression and structure; 4) students are responsible for managing their own learning and study activities; 5) teaching, curricula and progression have an interdisciplinary organization; and 6) the format provides the students with early contact with patients, users, or sources similar to situations found in the workplace. In this way, learning and the application of new knowledge take place at the same time, because learning occurs in situations in which knowledge is used (Pettersen, 2005b: 16-21).

Common reasons for utilizing empirical or PBL are *high learning outcome*, *lasting learning* and *proximity to the profession*. A study of PBL has looked at the effect of the method in terms of skills, cognitive skills, satisfaction and motivation among students. Regarding knowledge, the study did not show clearly defined differences. While PBL was significantly more effective in developing cognitive skills, the clearest

effect was on satisfaction and motivation. Research on learning shows that motivation, in-depth learning and willingness to engage in learning are key factors for the success of studies (ibid: 168ff). Kirsten Hofgaard Lycke believes the principles of learning grounded in cognitive and socio-cultural knowledge tradition offer good arguments for experiential learning:

Experiential learning provides the opportunity to activate prior knowledge, construct your own knowledge, the articulation and elaboration of knowledge, authenticity in learning tasks, socializing, and distributed knowledge in the learning situation (Lycke in Strømsø, Lycke and Lauvås (ed.) 2006: 157, my translation).

Handal and Lauvås (1999) emphasize that the benefit of learning this way is an expectation of acquiring sustainable knowledge and developing skills that are transferable to new situations.

## The community of practice

Many different factors and relationships are woven together to form a community of practice (Wenger, 1998) where learning will take place. Several of the supervisor's tasks are focused on getting this community of practice to function. Among other things, supervisors must ensure that everyone participates, help manage and resolve problems and conflicts, and help create a learning culture characterized by creative tension (Barrows, 1992). Different theorists concerned with the socio-cultural perspective emphasize the significance of the social community in the learning process differently.

Formulated learning outcomes and the form of assessment are considered to influence the community of practice. So will the framework, such as available resources, number of supervisors, technical equipment, the size of the student group, logistics and indoor climate.

Putting the student in focus, the learning experience requires that she must deal with a new role – that of the journalist. Sociology explains role as a set of ideas associated with a social status that defines its relationship with another position in a social system (Blackwell Dictionary of Sociology). Rune Ottosen explains the journalist role as a socially determined set of professional standards, ethical norms and patterns of behavior that over time creates a collective identity (Ottosen 2004:24). Gunn Bjørnsen, Jan Fredrik Hovden and Rune Ottosen have studied the role of journalist education in the socialization process of becoming a journalist. Students highlight their internship at media houses as the most significant part of their education (2007: 61).

Robert E. Gutsche Jr. studied the impact of early newsroom experience, and found that the experience of working on student media tended to define the entire college experience (Gutsche, 2011). He argues that early newsroom experience may contribute positively to students in their struggle to balance their career, personal and educational goals, as well as professional development. Students bring their own

expectations to the learning situation, which will influence the outcome. Sometimes they already have practical training, which could mean they may be motivated or lack motivation. Students will, to varying degrees, experience pressure both to deliver their work on time and to get a good grade. The student must also interact with many different people during the practice period: on the one hand, fellow student(s) who help, support, disrupt, demand, nag and flirt; and on the other, teachers who help, guide, encourage, demand, nag, criticize, praise, observe and assess. The student must also deal with a third group of people, journalistic sources. These can be positive, accessible and cooperative, but also acidic, critical and dissatisfied. The syllabus can provide technical and practical assistance as to how the student can best understand her/his role, and offer professional arguments to use in order to complete formal tasks.

### From teacher to supervisor

Roar C. Pettersen believes the teacher's role largely changes to that of supervisor when using the problem-based method for teaching (Pettersen, 2005a). Nielsen and Kvale use the concept of apprenticeship learning to describe this type of learning, which has four main features: *communities of practice*, *acquisition of professional identity*, *learning without formal instruction*, and *evaluation through practice*. By receiving feedback from a mentor along the way, the apprentice develops knowledge (Nielsen & Kvale, 1999: 240 ff).

Lycke also believes that experiential learning changes the role of the teacher, and highlights four new tasks: *practical organization*, *designing tasks*, *facilitation*, and *evaluation* (Lycke, 2006: 169 ff). Practical organization covers everything from assembling good groups to finding suitable premises for groups. The design of authentic tasks requires knowledge of the professional field, and is strongly related to formulating the learning objectives of the course, asking such questions as what the students should learn and how it is possible to organize a trustworthy "business" that often only operates for short periods. Facilitation is about helping the students in their cognitive processes, including building a bridge between theory and practice.

Handal and Lauvås see the supervisor's task as threefold: *to familiarize the students with the practical field*, *to provide help with studying practice by using theory*, and *to create a need for more theory* (Handal, & Lauvås, 2000: 27 ff). They stress that it is not possible to formulate precise requirements for "the perfect practitioner", as it is often impossible to formulate what the practitioners agree on in the professional community and, additionally, because there is often disagreement within the professional community about "the right way" (ibid: 314). This makes it even more important to know what you are doing and why.



## Method

The issue in this article is twofold, and aims to answer the following questions:

*How do students experience the attained learning outcomes in internal practice periods at the private NLA University College, and why? and How do teachers reflect upon their role as supervisors during internal practice?*

The data used to answer the first research question are essentially the results of three quantitative surveys among journalism students. All surveys were voluntary and anonymous.

- SPRING 2012: pilot survey about learning among 19 (of 21 total) second-year newspaper students during spring semester 2012.
- AUTUMN 2012: questionnaire among second-year journalism students after their five-week internal practice period (01.10.12-02.11.2012). The survey was conducted during week 44, and the response rate was 38 of 53 students. Of those responding, 15 specialized in print and online journalism while 23 specialized in radio and television. The gender balance was almost break-even: 20 women and 18 men.
- SPRING 2013: questionnaire about learning outcomes in practical periods among first-year students in practice (14.01.13-15.02.13). The response rate was 30 students. Of those responding, 15 specialized in print and online journalism while 15 specialized in radio and television. This is the most relevant survey, since it focuses specifically on students' thoughts about learning outcomes in internal practice. The study was implemented between 04.02.13 and 15.02.13.
- Student surveys were supplemented with qualitative, semi-structured interviews with all six staff teachers, who actively participated as mentors in internal practice (interviews conducted April 2013).

I have considered how being a teacher and supervisor myself might challenge my analysis. There might be blind spots, and it might be more difficult to maintain a critical distance, such that my prejudices might influence the research. At the same time, the inside role allows valuable insight, access and knowledge to ask the most relevant research questions. While external practice is not a part of this work, it is of course an interesting topic for further research on learning outcomes tied to internships.

## Experiencing major learning outcomes in practice

As early as their first week of studies, students at NLA University College are expected to work as journalists on an in-house news production. The program alternates between theoretical and practical periods, with the school transformed into a vibrant media house. Students relate to real-world sources, and in the second, third and fourth

internship periods produce news stories for Sørnett.no with online TV and radio, and the local newspaper Oddernes Avis. Along the way, they receive continuous guidance from their lecturers and experienced journalists from the field. In the fifth practice period (fourth semester), students are expected to work at an external media concern.

In a survey about learning outcomes (spring 2013), the students were asked to rank their self-perception of learning resulting from the application of different teaching methods (Table 1). Internal practice and individual feedback during practical training received the highest score, with 4.6 of 5 possible points. Study groups with other students, assignments during practice (e.g. a reflection paper) and lectures got the lowest score. The 2013 survey among first-year students reproduced the main results of the previous survey among second-year newspaper students (spring 2012).

**Table 1.** Students' assessment of learning outcomes of different forms of learning, Kristiansand, 2013 (mean)

| Teaching method                 | Working on newspaper/web | Working on radio/television | Total |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|-------|
| Lecture                         | 3.0                      | 3.3                         | 3.2   |
| Study group with other students | 2.6                      | 3.4                         | 3.0   |
| Reading by myself               | 4.0                      | 3.3                         | 3.7   |
| Internal practice               | 4.4                      | 4.7                         | 4.6   |
| Student work in practice        | 3.0                      | 3.1                         | 3.1   |
| Joint evaluations in practice   | 3.1                      | 4.4                         | 3.8   |
| Individual feedback in practice | 4.6                      | 4.6                         | 4.6   |
| Number of respondents           | 14                       | 15                          | 29    |

*Note:* The question posed was "Which of these teaching forms do you learn most from?". The scale ranges between 1-5 where 5 was best.

When the students (spring 2013) were asked to set a value from 1 to 5 (where 5 is best) on their self-perception of learning in their current internal practice period, the average assessment was 4. In reply to the question *why the learning outcome is as it is*, some answers recur. Students responded that, "You always learn best by doing things in practice", "It's a realistic taste of the profession I want to educate myself for", "I've put theory into practice and have learned techniques and methods to make journalistic stories" and "I learned a lot from guidance along the way". When asked what they could have done differently to achieve greater learning outcomes during the practice, students noted greater effort, better preparation and going to bed earlier. However, they also said the university college could help by offering more efficient transport to use on assignments. In the evaluation of a five-week internship for second-year students (autumn 2012), satisfied students responded positively that they had learned a great. Their explanations as to *why* reflect having gained more experience, the possibility to try out different roles, a sense of achievement, having received excellent guidance,

and a feeling of great unity in the newsroom. Most students said they now felt well prepared for practice in a real-life newsroom.

When the students were asked *what* they had learned (spring 2013), they primarily called attention to the development of their practical professional skills such as interviewing, writing a text, taking good pictures, filming, working with ideas, choosing point of view, and editing. In summarizing their experiences after a practice period in 2011, many newspaper students responded positively, exemplified in such statements as “I’ve learned a lot and developed as a journalist”, “I’ve learned a lot about layout and photo”, “I’ve become more efficient”, “I’ve learned to think news points from the start” and “I’ve become better at writing titles”. Newspaper and web students’ most common answers to the question of what they had learned after a year of studies (midway talk 2012) was “I’ve learned that journalism is about much more than just writing”, “I’ve learned how I can find ideas for articles” and “Thinking news points, title, lead and photo”. In addition, some students claimed they had “gained interest in more than just sports” and “learned about ethics”.

Students’ own evaluations of their attainment of learning outcomes seem to be related to three factors:

1. Learning is related to hands-on, real-life experience while doing it myself.
2. Learning depends on guidance along the way.
3. Learning is related to already known theory and earlier experiences.

Students experienced having learned a great deal, and said they got a better understanding of the profession as they were being drilled in the journalistic craft. There have been no systematic surveys among the media houses receiving students for external placement; nevertheless, in their informal feedback about the students they often say they are pleased with the students’ work. The students are often able to produce stories with good enough quality from their first day of practice. At the same time, the media houses report that some students lack the necessary understanding of society and curiosity to work well as a journalist. This is visible both in terms of finding their own stories and in their capability to ask their sources the most relevant questions. This might be related to the students’ feedback about understanding the profession. More and more often after internal practice periods, students say the journalist profession is something quite different than what they thought when they started studying it.

### Good guidance as success factor

The students highlighted guidance from teachers as the most important reason why they experienced that internal practice periods lead to deeper learning. Their explanations include “The guidance has been accurate, constructive and good”, “I’ve received both criticism and praise” and “The supervisors are available”.

When asked how the periods should be organized such that students learn as much as possible, they answered that they essentially want the supervision to continue unchanged. They said they learned the most from one-to-one guidance, and some students even wanted less guidance in plenary meetings and groups. Several students also pointed out that they wanted more positive feedback. Some of the first-year students found it confusing when facing different opinions, input and feedback from different supervisors. The supervisors had discussed this several times within their professional team, and concluded that it is essential that students be prepared for conflicting criticism before their internal practice starts; teachers are different, with different backgrounds and opinions, which also reflects the situation in “real working life”. There were also students who said they appreciated the different focus provided by the various supervisors. Generally, second-year students were more mature and accustomed to receiving varied feedback, and saw this as a resource.

### Common understanding of guidance

The traditional role of the teacher in front of a classroom looks quite different in internal practice periods. The ordinary distance between teacher and student is replaced by proximity, and the one-way communication in a traditional lecture is replaced by dialogue and conversation. The survey among the six teachers who organized and participated as supervisors in internal practice periods at NLA University College shows that among them there existed a common basic understanding of the supervisor role. At the same time, their responses show that supervisors have different ideas about how guidance should be practiced. The teachers agreed that the main idea is that *students are to try themselves*. Supervisors highlighted three goals for guidance: a) to help students understand the role of the journalist, b) to help students produce good journalistic products both technically and in content, and c) to motivate students.

Most supervisors responded that their main task was to help students produce good journalism – measured against the branch standard. However, they had different thoughts about how this should happen. One of them explained that “It’s about being patient, humble and carefully pushing them in the right direction. You should guide them, but not give them the recipe”. While some of the supervisors emphasized helping students link theory and practice, others placed more effort on noticing the individual student and giving praise and criticism. The supervisors also had different ideas about whether they should be proactive, take initiative and push forward, or whether their job was primarily to answer questions when students asked for help.

All the teachers expressed a desire to be the kind of coach who motivates and inspires students. For example, one respondent noted: “I want to motivate and inspire them for their further journalistic life; by showing both how tough the profession is and how fun it is”.

Several of the supervisors stressed that one of the best parts of being a supervisor is to see how the student develops, learns, understands and succeeds. The supervisors were close to the students during the practice, and several said they appreciated getting to know the students. One of the supervisors reflected that “This is the period when we’re the closest to the students. It’s fun to experience journalistic work through the students and seeing their enthusiasm”.

In the same way that the supervisors are different, so too are the students, experiencing supervisors in different ways and having different needs for guidance. “Some want straightforward constructive criticism – while others need more help to feel safe. For me it’s an ideal to provide guidance on an individual level”, said a supervisor. Several supervisors pointed out that the internal practice periods allow time to get to know each student, which makes it easier to adjust the feedback to each individual. The challenges come when a student does not want or seek guidance, or when a supervisor notices that the chemistry between student and teacher is not good. Reflecting over this, one of the supervisors explained: “I’ve thought a lot about how to give feedback, and how students receive feedback. You have to be sensitive, and that might be challenging. Am I better at guiding one kind of student than another?”

Several supervisors said they felt there was an ongoing professional practice conversation with the theme “How can we find new ways to develop ourselves so that the students reach the learning goals we have for internal practice?” This conversation may be about how to involve students more actively in the evaluations, linking the curriculum more closely to practice, or organizing things practically to create good conditions for learning. The question of which “method” supervisors should use was also part of the continuous conversation. All the teachers said their method in giving feedback was always to begin with something positive. “My aim is to always point out something that is good, and something that could be better”, said one of the supervisors. “You have to find the students’ strengths and interests and build on them”, said another.

Other methodological techniques focus on letting students try for themselves and not helping too much, involving the student group actively in evaluations, and helping the students use theory in practice. Several teachers had reflected on the extent to which they should “intervene” in the students’ work, especially when they observed the student doing something incorrectly. Should the supervisor let the student fail, or should he intervene and rescue him? Different teachers had different philosophies and responded in different ways. “I often choose to let the program fail, because I think the students learn a lot from it”, said one of the supervisors. Another said she would prefer to help as much as possible, as early as possible.

The teachers’ specific methods for guidance vary from being active – asking open questions that help the student find good answers herself – to primarily answering the questions the student asks. Several supervisors said that lack of time was the greatest threat to their ideal image of how they should give guidance. When there are many students who need help, it is easier to focus on what is wrong instead of starting with the positive, and to give quick answers rather than asking open questions. They also

said the most difficult part of being a supervisor was how to encounter the students who do not succeed. This could include unmotivated students, academically weak students, or students who for some reason decided to drop out.

### “Give me praise!”

In this article, we have seen that the students said they learn a great in internal practice periods. They explained this as the result of receiving good guidance, having their own experiences and getting a realistic taste of the profession. Theory on PBL highlights that learning occurs in situations in which knowledge is used. Problem-based methods seem to have the best effect on satisfaction and motivation (Pettersen 2005b). The surveys in this article confirm this. Students said they experienced real challenges, gained victories, took part in a good learning community, and received praise and therefore thrived and felt motivated. Nevertheless, they wanted to have more praise.

According to Petter Mathisen, *relational skills* are an important element of the supervisors' competence (lecture, Uniped course on Lesbos 2012). This is about understanding both how the supervisor is part of the learning situation, and how to “read” the student. Students highlighted individual supervision as the most important explanation for their self-perception of great learning. The teachers told that on several occasions they had discussed the pros and cons of giving individual versus collective feedback. Collective feedback was seen as more efficient, as they could effectively deal with issues relating to many students at once. However, students often complained that collective feedback was boring and not very motivating. When giving personal feedback the guidance could be “tailored”, but the most important advantage might be the supervisor's possibility to “see and affirm” the student. Praise and mastery were especially important when the student was new and insecure. A supervisor who was clear about expectations and norms would also help the student better fill her/his new role.

One advantage when doing internal practical training is that the teacher, to a certain degree, might influence the community of practice. Leslie-Jean Thornton (2011) has identified challenges facing students and educators during periods of internship. In a period of transition, as newsrooms shrink and evolve, he found poor morale among employees, long working hours and grim working environments. This is interesting, as we believe that the community of practice is important for achieving a good learning process.

Lene Rimestad and Gitte Gravengaard's article in this book also focuses on the socialization within two different organizations, at school and at a professional media house, as they discuss the process of implementing the news criteria.

## Developing tacit knowledge

In order to achieve not only motivation and satisfaction, but also a greater understanding of theory and reflection, it is important to link practice to theory. This is a key task in Handal and Lauvås' understanding of the supervisor's role. Instead of a teacher talking about the finished newspaper or program in front of the class, the students should be involved and challenged to reflect over practice in light of relevant theory. One way of doing this is by dividing the class into groups responsible for focusing on central theory using the newly completed newspaper or program as an example. The focus might be, for instance, on titles, photos, lead or viewpoint. Then, the students can find good examples and use theory to argue in a plenary session why these are such good examples. This might help them link practice to theory, and create a need among them to familiarize themselves with the curriculum. At the same time, this also results in students receiving more praise from fellow students. This might create a positive, motivating community of practice, and at the same time help in literally keeping them awake.

In the spring 2013 survey, first-year students were asked to rate the attainment of learning outcomes from different forms of teaching. They rated submissions (such as reflection assignments) with three of five possible points, thus rating this as the part of the practice that gave the lowest learning outcomes. This might be a coincidence, but it could also be a signal that reflection exercises are a better training method for more experienced students.

When students formulate what they learn in internal practice, they primarily focus on practical skills, but they also say that internal practice periods provide a better understanding of the profession. The learning outcome for the courses with internal practice is mainly the acquisition of practical skills. This is important in preparing the student for the profession. However, a university college must also provide the student with deeper knowledge and understanding.

Assessments and decisions often happen without the professional practitioner being able to explain why or how. Handal and Lauvås (2000) call this tacit knowledge, which is often difficult to formulate. In a survey of journalists' arguments concerning ethical decision-making, they often draw attention to "implied knowledge" and talk about following their "gut feeling". Components of this implicit knowledge can be culture and tradition, knowledge transfer, personal ethics and formulated ethical rules (Dahlstrøm, 2007).

Through the theoretical framework, students learn a language for articulating practical skills. Qualified professional practice is not about just doing the "right" things, but also knowing what you do and why. The essence of PBL is that knowledge is shaped and reshaped through experience. Acquisition of knowledge and application of knowledge happen in parallel. Theoretical knowledge is always in danger of being too abstract, but if you are familiar with situations in which knowledge is practiced, it might be easier both to be motivated to learn theory and to understand that

theory. A learning process that alternates between experience, theory and reflection helps students in developing good professional skills – and in developing their tacit knowledge. This knowledge is possibly becoming even more important as the media undergo significant transformation. Bob Franklin and Donica Mensing (2011) say:

Journalism educators who understand that changing conditions faced by students and work to adapt curriculum and training experiences to better respond to those conditions will provide a valuable service not only to their students but to the profession overall. (Franklin, & Mensing, 2011: 9)

## Conclusion

Students said they learned a great deal from internal practice periods, and got a realistic taste of the profession awaiting them. *Practical skills* were primarily highlighted as learning outcomes. The teachers' individual coaching was highlighted as the single most important explanation for *why*. Students also said that realistic practice, gaining experience, an inspiring community, and achievements were reasons why they learned so much. This way of learning is often called problem-based or experiential learning. Studies of the effects of PBL have shown that students score highly on satisfaction and motivation, both of which are essential for successful learning.

Teachers said they become supervisors during internal practice periods. Among the teachers at NLA University College, there exists a common basic understanding that students need to try things themselves. The teachers' goals can be summarized in three points: helping students understand the role of a journalist; developing technical skills; and providing motivation. The philosophical approach of several of the supervisors is to start their feedback by pointing out something the student has done well. This way, the student always gets both praise and constructive criticism. Giving praise is important in creating a good community of practice.

If experiential learning is to function optimally, it is important to relate the practical training to relevant theory. The survey among supervisors shows that it might be a challenge to build a bridge from practical training to theory. The students are often not motivated for theory, nor feel they are in need of it, because they get the help they need from their supervisor. However, to achieve tacit and enduring knowledge, a good mix of theory, practice and reflection is necessary. A good community of practice has this at its center.

## Note

1. There are about a hundred journalism students at NLA University College (former Mediehøgskolen), and about a fifth of the journalists in Norway are educated here. Students choose to specialize in either newspaper/web journalism or radio and television.



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# Developing Journalism Skills through Informal Feedback Training

Astrid Gynnild

## Abstract

This chapter introduces a new feedback tool for developing journalism skills. The tool increases the impact of productive communication in class and is easy to use. The approach is called peer-to-peer-informal feedback (PIF) and is based on systematic mini-interventions in class. The PIF tool was developed and tested over a period of five years and involved 180 journalism students at two Norwegian universities. The study indicates that developing feedback awareness and terminology helps students verbalize what is needed to improve the quality of their work. Thus, systematic training in informal feedback has proven the ability to enhance professional autonomy and selective trust among journalism students. The experiments in class were prompted by a previous study of feedback cycling of news professionals by the author and by David Kolb's theory of experiential learning. Focusing on human centred designs in journalism education is particularly important in a time of technological uncertainties.

**Keywords:** journalism education, feedback, self-monitoring, self-directed learning, teaching, entrepreneurship, technology, innovative mindset, autonomy, Norway

## Introduction

We just have to face it: Being flexible, critical, constructive, and ethically competent are not enough for students who aim for journalistic careers in a digital world. News reporters of tomorrow have to be prepared for careers filled with uncertainty. Thus, facilitating activities that foster entrepreneurship is an emerging trend in higher education. Well-known concepts such as self-monitoring (Snyder, 1974) self-authorship (Baxter-Magolda, & King, 2004; Kegan, 1994), and capacity for self-directed learning (Ellinger, 2004) are all ingredients in building an entrepreneurial and innovative mindset. In journalism, becoming an autonomous professional implies that individuals are trained in maneuvering physical and virtual chaos; journalists become experts in handling what they don't know. In reality, though, taking personal risks and learning how to face the unknown have since long been an integrated journalistic knowledge. It just hasn't been discussed very often.

Thus, an intriguing question is as follows: How do journalism students relate to implicit expectations of self-monitoring in journalism education? What do they need to escalate their individual learning curves? And how might the needs for individual and collective efforts be aligned in productive ways?

In this chapter, I will introduce a new teaching tool I have termed peer-to-peer informal feedback training (PIF). This feedback tool is integrated in the broader pedagogical paradigm of experiential learning and discussed in relation to its effect on journalism as a lifelong learning experience. Experiments with first year students during a period of five years indicate that PIF readily boosts students' learning and contributes to improve the learning climate in a class. PIF efficiently builds trust among students in otherwise competitive classroom settings, too. Students get direct experience with the effects of constructive feedback and how individual skills in receiving feedback impact productivity and learning even in large groups. However, it emerged from the study that applying PIF only works well when trust is established among members of the class.

Before explaining the basics of PIF, I will discuss some traits of feedback in professional journalism environments, to give an idea of the complexity of the issue. The next section is thus based on a grounded theory on creativity and productivity in news production in which feedback emerged to play a prominent role (Gynnild, 2006, 2007, 2009). Next, I will briefly introduce the principles of PIF as applied on journalism courses at the bachelor's level in two Norwegian universities. Finally, I will discuss strengths and weaknesses of this ongoing teaching experiment and how the PIF tool might be further developed and applied in higher education and in media organizations.

## Background

The initial interest for *informal feedback* as a tool for quality improvement in journalism was sparked while the author was working as a news professional in a large media organization. In my former career as a journalist and photo and desk editor, I was often struck by the effect of sudden comments, gestures, questions, and peer-to-peer support that I observed among colleagues. Anecdotal evidence suggests that informal feedback, no matter the form, is actually what keeps reporters motivated independent of other external conditions for work. In a previous production study, feedback was investigated as a particular communicative exchange process. The study, which was built on extensive data collected from Norwegian and international news organizations, indicated that feedback cycling – the switching between providing, receiving, and asking for feedback – is indeed a crucial skill to master for journalists. Feedback cycling is part of the constantly ongoing creativity in journalistic work processes (Gynnild, 2006, 2007, 2009). But its effects are often overlooked.

It emerged from the aforementioned study that productive media professionals are exceptionally good at synthesizing, evaluating, and making use of other people's

instant judgments and comments to improve their own work continually. Efficient and knowledgeable journalists typically switch between asking for and receiving feedback from a great number of people; family, friends, colleagues, editors, managers, and people from the audience. Moreover, productive reporters typically provide extensive feedback to others. And they do so in parallel with being their own best feed-backers.

When I started teaching journalism in higher education, I learned that just like professional journalists, journalism students crave much feedback on their work. The expectations of detailed feedback from superiors are particularly striking in practice-focused courses in which hands-on instruction plays a major role. According to anecdotal evidence of teachers, students ask for extended written feedback even when their work earn a grade of A.

Undoubtedly, relevant and constructive feedback is important at all stages of learning journalism. Students are ensured *formal feedback* through grading and other routine forms of evaluation. But paradoxically, the importance of informal feedback of creating a productive learning environment by basic human means has not got much attention in journalism research. Thus, the documented importance of informal feedback cycling among news professionals prompted a new research question: Could feedback training stimulate the learning curves of journalism students, too? Could foci on providing, receiving, and asking for informal feedback be helpful in journalism courses in higher education?

## Theory and method

The theory-practice approach of Scandinavian journalism programs is pedagogically grounded in a pragmatism paradigm. Ideas of progressive education (Dewey, 2010a, 2010b) and reflection in action (Schön, 1983) are at the core of these learning-by-doing approaches. The focus is on active, student-centered learning that involves concrete experience and reflective observation. Dewey's theories of inquiry and experience were further developed by Kurt Lewin and Carl Rogers, and summed up in Kolb's (1984) theory of experiential learning. Kolb's theorizing has influenced university teaching across disciplines and countries, but is in particular applicable to profession-oriented bachelor programs such as journalism.

According to Kolb's experiential theory, students learn from four different perspectives: 1) Directly experiencing the events, 2) Reflecting on these experiences, 3) Conceptualizing these experiences, and 4) Testing what they have learned by applying the new knowledge. These four perspectives constitute what is known as Kolb's learning cycle, a process that constantly repeats itself in many forms. But even with these four perspectives at hand, we might ask in what ways students actually manage to synthesize experience, reflections, conceptualizations, and subsequent experimentation? What tools are used to support these cognitive processes? And how can teachers help students learn how to learn experientially?

The theoretical grounding of this study is found in Kolb's experiential theory, my own theorizing on feedback cycling of news professionals (Gynnild, 2006), and in Kolb and Kolb's (2005) discussion on learning space. The methodological approach follows Kolb's learning cycle; feedback cycling was the tool tested within created learning spaces. I will use the rest of this section to explain and discuss aspects of the theories applied in this study.

Feedback issues have, at all times, been a hot topic in news organizations and in journalism education. When news reporters complain about lacking feedback, however, they typically think of *formal feedback*: structured, standard evaluation of individual news production provided by editors or other trusted authorities in the newsroom (Gynnild, 2006, 2007, 2009). Formal feedback typically refers to the judging of finished projects.

Anecdotal evidence indicates that journalism students, in contrast, are more concerned with getting qualified responses while working on a project. They expect, and need, hands-on feedback as a means of learning the basics of a journalism approach. Such instant commenting on students' work exemplifies the importance of informal feedback (Gynnild, 2006, 2007, 2009). Informal feedback is typically provided on the spot, and the content of such messages is usually contextualized more spontaneously. Formal feedback can be formative – provided as interventions during a work process, or summative – provided when a piece of work is completed, such as exams.

Novice journalists tend to be rather instrumental in their approach to learning; they typically want clear-cut recipes for doing journalism. Anecdotal evidence among teachers suggests that novice students display well-developed skills in reproducing material, but are less trained in the learning-by-doing approach inherent in Kolb's learning cycle. Searching for clear-cut answers is surely safer than experimenting with issues where the outcome of the work invested is uncertain.

Empirical data suggest that teachers are often worried about students' lack of practical experience with journalism; how should the doing of journalism best be taught to students who only know the profession by name? The challenge is double since the students academically tend to be top achievers – typically very good at problem *solving*, but less trained in problem *finding*. In summation, these issues point to a host of contradictory pedagogical challenges at the beginner level of journalism education. It adds to the complexity in that the steps in Kolb's learning cycle (experiencing, reflecting, conceptualizing, and testing) are intertwined and tend to overlap each other. Thus it might be difficult for teachers to know for sure where to start to ensure productive learning of journalism skills.

Following Kolb and his predecessors, the solution, obviously, lies not in the traditional lecturing view on learning, where "knowledge" is transferred from a teacher to the students. Rather, as pointed out by Hickox (2002), the emphasis on "getting the content out interferes with seeing the value of processes that involve reflection, discussion, critical thinking, and a slower pace to engage learners with course concepts" (p. 312). Through experiential learning and personalized teaching an implicit goal is

exactly to “teach students *how* to become self-initiating, self-directed learners” (p. 312). Thus, the initial aim of this project was to make students experience the value of feedback cycling in journalism work processes (Gynnild, 2006, 2007, 2009). The process of feedback cycling, grounded in empirical data, indicates that news professionals never seem to get enough feedback from their editors and managers. It emerged from the data that informal feedback, no matter the source, is more important in news professionals’ daily work than previously known. Getting insightful, relevant and reliable feedback is crucial in order to improve the quality of news work and yet the skills in peer-to-peer feedback are unevenly distributed in the newsrooms. But in spite of their importance, the aforementioned issues are seldom reflected upon or discussed among news professionals (Gynnild, 2006, 2007, 2009).

When I decided to apply aspects of the theory of feedback cycling in a university setting, the underlying idea was that the more competent students become in feedback cycling in class, the better reporters they would become later. At the same time, there was uncertainty whether theorizing derived from the professional field was directly applicable to students in higher education. What would there be to learn?

When designing the course program, I was relieved to get acquainted to the concept of learning space. In their interesting article on enhancing experiential learning in higher education Kolb and Kolb (2005) defined learning space as “a framework for understanding the interface between student learning and the institutional learning environment” (p. 193). Learning space was derived from the field theory of Kurt Levin and his life space concept. The concept also draws on Vygotsky’s situated learning theory, Wenger’s communities of practice, and the Japanese concept of *ba*, which refers to a shared space that serves as the foundation for knowledge creation.

Learning spaces can be physical, virtual, and regulated by time or geographical limits. But, according to Kolb and Kolb (2005), learning spaces require “norms of psychological safety, serious purpose, and respect to promote learning” (p. 192). It later proved that exactly the norms of psychological safety were crucial to promote feedback learning.

## Data and analysis

The study presented in this chapter is an applied follow-up of an empirical investigation of news work processes in a dozen Norwegian newsrooms (Gynnild, 2006, 2007), in which feedback cycling proved to be crucial to the motivation, creativity, and productivity of journalists. The empirical data of this study stem from participatory observations, group discussions, survey data, and reflection reports from 180 media students at a Norwegian university during a period of four years.

The project of peer-to-peer informal feedback training started out as a simple presentation of feedback switching to a journalism class of twenty students. The context was a second semester practice-focused news course in which students were supposed

to produce news items for an online platform. At this stage, students tended to be not very talkative, but typically expressed considerable needs for hands-on feedback from teachers.

In this particular class, students displayed little interest in collaborative sharing of experiences and inherent knowledge. The idea behind introducing students to the informal feedback package was thus to provide them with concepts that could open up new ways of seeing, discussing, and reflecting on news production while in class. Little did the author know that the conceptual introduction to feedback cycling was only the beginning of a new learning cycle that concerned the interrelation of *feedback and trust*.

As a result, the students became engaged in the topic. Their enthusiasm inspired the author to develop PIF as a new tool for learning that was used during the entire eight-week course. The basic principle of PIF is quick interventions. Within the frames of a lecture or a workshop, the teacher provides a variety of feedback interventions with which the students work in groups of two or three. The interventions typically constitute specific peer-to-peer tasks to be carried out within timespans varying from one minute to half an hour. The tasks are referred to as mini-exercises or mini-workshops. In these mini-exercises or mini-workshops the teacher briefly presents a topic to be investigated or practiced. The introduction is followed by a short student activity, a debriefing of the activity, and a plenary discussion about the learning outcome of the task. The wrap-up discussion is particularly valuable for the planning of the next activity, which might take place either the same day or at some later time.

One early, mind-opening workshop that works well in smaller groups up to 20 students is the unfilled sentence exercise. Students are briefly introduced to the topic of informal feedback as a specific communication skill. Then they get a sheet of paper with 10-15 unfilled sentences, a tool that is much used in for instance gestalt pedagogy to prompt cognitive and emotional polarities. The unfilled sentences invites participants to verbalize their individual but yet directed ideas on a variety of informal feedback issues. Examples of unfilled sentences would be as follows: "To me, informal feedback is . . .", "To me, informal feedback is hard to receive/ask for/provide to others because . . .", and "To get better at providing informal feedback to others, I . . .".

Usually, a sheet of eight to ten unfilled sentences provides enough material for raising students' awareness on this particular topic. This mini-exercise takes less than ten minutes, and is followed by sharing the sentences in groups of two students and a subsequent plenary discussion. The immediate effect of this mini-workshop is a new awareness of individual differences in the group, while at the same time confirming similarities between participants. The exercise helps build trust and might be used very early in the semester.

If time permits, the exercise might be followed up by physically testing differences in the group regarding self-perception of abilities in giving, receiving, and asking for feedback. The physical learning space might be split into three areas in which students are invited to walk to a physical location in the room that symbolizes either of the three feedback actions. This exercise helps visualize that some people are better at giving



feedback, some at receiving, and some at providing feedback. The group can be resorted based on a new instruction, for instance, In what areas of feedback would you like to improve your skills? It often comes as a surprise to students that most of them are more interested in *receiving* feedback from others than *giving* feedback themselves. So if nearly everyone stands at the spot in the room reserved for “we want feedback,” who is then going to *provide* all the feedback? Such exercises prompt, in turn, new space for reflection upon action, which takes individual awareness and knowledge one step further.

Short interventions using PIF might also be used regularly during lectures. They prove particularly helpful to productive idea development. A two-minute intervention is sufficient for pitching ideas and providing valuable informal feedback from a classmate. For instance, within the span of one minute, students might be asked to provide three ideas for exciting news beats they want to do. Then they are asked to pitch the ideas to a peer in one minute. The peer is instructed not to say anything and only listen intently while the ideas are presented. For the next minute, the pitcher is instructed to listen intensively while the peer responds constructively to the ideas with well-funded arguments on which of the three ideas he or she likes better. Then the students switch roles. It always comes as a surprise how much help one can get from a peer in a very short period of time.

For three years in a row, aspects of informal feedback cycling were successfully adopted in the particular basic news journalism course. In parallel with doing journalism work on an internal, online news platform, students had their work evaluated and discussed in plenary on a daily basis. Students soon realized that the better they became at providing constructive, informal feedback on each others’ news beats, the more productive they became. In turn, the more skills in journalism they learned. The goal of the interventions was to raise awareness of the different types of feedback in a gradual manner, to introduce ways of using feedback as a peer-to-peer communication tool, and to provide space to test how the tool can be applied. PIF interventions work as well during lectures as during practical work sessions. The interventions serve the role as short breaks or mental timeouts in which an outside-in perspective on learning is provided. The approach is in alignment with experiential learning theory in which all learning is considered relearning: “Learning is best facilitated by a process that draws out the students’ beliefs and ideas about a topic so that they can be examined, tested, and integrated with new, more refined ideas” (Kolb, & Kolb, 2005, p. 194).

After testing the PIF tool on second-semester students for three years, I was confident that I had developed a new, valuable tool to journalism in higher education. The next step was to apply the tool on first-semester students. This time, the setting was lecturing in a larger group setting. The students in this large group were enrolled in three different, profession-oriented bachelor programs within media studies: journalism, new media, and TV and film production.

The somewhat cross-disciplinary profile of the group appeared to be a good arena to explore informal peer-to-peer feedback within “safe frames.” Thus, at first glance, it was a puzzle in that informal feedback training appeared less fruitful to first-semester

students than to second-semester students. Closer examinations revealed, however, that the first-semester students were not yet able to relate feedback issues to any form of practice; informal feedback was not sufficiently contextualized to be meaningful to them.

Before we move on to the results section, however, let us sum up the research results (Gynnild, 2006) that prompted the development of PIF. The theorizing of feedback cycling indicated a) that news professionals never seem to get enough feedback from their editors and managers; b) that informal feedback, no matter the source, is more important in news professionals' daily work than previously acknowledged; c) that getting insightful, relevant and reliable feedback is crucial in order to improve the quality of news work; d) that skills in peer-to-peer feedback is unevenly distributed in the newsrooms; e) that the best reporters tend to be extraordinary good at asking other people for responses to their work; and, d) that in spite of their importance, these issues are seldom reflected upon or discussed among news professionals.

When I decided to apply the theory of feedback switching in a university setting, the underlying idea of PIF was that the more competent students become in feedback switching before they head for the professional news world, the better equipped they will be at handling complex interaction issues that influence the quality of their own news production. Implicitly, exploring a variety of tools in order to build respect, openness, and mutual trust in a class is of vital importance to ensure a best possible learning environment. This observation is in perfect alignment with the implications of PIF.

While exploring informal feedback as a learning tool in journalism classes, observational and written data were coded, analyzed, and conceptualized in accordance with the tenets of the classic grounded theory method (Glaser, & Strauss, 1967; Glaser, 1998).

## Results

Just like professional journalists, journalism students are very dependent on feedback on their work. In particular, while working in the intern journalism lab, journalism students want as much informal feedback as possible. The students normally expect teachers to be the providers of such responses and the tacit expectation is that all informal feedback should be relevant and constructive. Before being introduced to PIF, informal feedback was viewed in a one-dimensional top-down, give-receive perspective where students tended not to see themselves as active contributors to a fruitful learning environment. A goal of the training was therefore to fill the gap by making active feedback more evenly distributed among students.

The training sessions clearly demonstrated that positive, peer-to-peer informal feedback on students' work contributes to positive energies in the learning space. Such feedback increases motivation and the feeling of task mastery. Positive, informal feedback from peers contributes to an atmosphere of joy and optimism by pointing out how problems might be resolved. And most importantly, positive informal feedback from peers helps ensure the individual student that he or she is on track. Relevant,

explicit, and immediate feedback from peers is thus considered the most important way to enhancing performance while working on a project. Unequivocally, it makes students do more. In addition, it takes off some of the feedback pressure that is often left to teachers.

By contrast, it emerged from the data that negative informal feedback from peers makes students feel unhappy, sorry, become irritated, and lose motivation. In some cases, students have to spend much time to get back on track after a negative feedback experience from a classmate. Negative responses from classmates might even lead some students to drop out. Other students, though, are triggered by negative responses and react by working even harder to prove that the feedback was not fair.

The question of unfairness brings up the main concern of journalism students when dealing with informal feedback in the learning space, namely believability: *What* feedback can you actually trust, and *whose* feedback can you trust? How can you know that the person from whom you are asking for a response, is honest with you? How can you be sure that he or she actually means what is said when you don't know that person? For beginners who don't know the rules and criteria for judgment it is difficult to know how to sort informal feedback from other people, particularly from peers.

This study indicates that journalism students often *find* themselves in a double bind (Argyris, & Schön, 1978) when it comes to response on their work. On the one hand, students are afraid of being hurt by informal feedback from peers. Thus, they seek to avoid situations where they risk negative feedback or feedback they believe to be unfair. But paradoxically, the same students are just as scared of hurting others when they are themselves asked for feedback.

The dilemma is illustrated by this quote from an unfilled sentence intervention: "Concerning feedback, I would like to *improve my skills in being honest when giving feedback to others*, because *oftentimes, one does not want to hurt others*."

Another student writes, "I think the most difficult is to *give/ask for/receive feedback because I don't want to hurt anybody*." The student continues, "When working to improve my feedback skills, *the biggest challenge for me will probably be not to be too intrusive, so that the feedback is not felt as criticism by the receiver*."

When students receive feedback from others, their internal discussion might go as follows: "Hmm, I really wonder whether I can trust what this person is telling me?" Similarly, when students *provide* feedback to peers that they don't know well, they turn to *neutralizing*, which implies not saying what you really mean in order not to hurt anyone. Moreover, media students typically find it very hard to *ask* others for response to their work. Thus, avoidance strategies are also a part of their prevalent competence in social maneuvering. These examples actually help understand the intricate sets of social-psychological strategies that might be at play inside and outside of the university classroom.

It turns out that students resolve the dilemma of believability by *developing strategies of selective trust*. The concept of selective trust implies that feedback issues, by students, are handled with much sensitivity and skepticism. Novice journalism students

typically tend to distrust informal feedback from peers whom they don't know very well. They systematically sort and evaluate the believability or truthfulness of other people's responses to their work.

To ensure really honest comments, novices typically turn to close family members or very close friends, often outside of class. Thus, the development of a productive learning environment in class co-varies with the level of feedback trust among its students. The development of a productive learning environment also presupposes that students have access to a common feedback terminology that helps them verbalize what is needed to improve the quality of their work. Developing skills in providing, asking for, and receiving feedback in constructive ways is a threshold skill to master for future journalists. However, the study indicates that unless informal feedback training is experienced as *meaningful in a relevant context*, it is likely that students will not engage in such activities. These conclusions are based on the testing out of PIF on five different students groups.

The teacher's learning experience is that contextualization is crucial when creating a meaningful learning environment. Informal feedback training works well for large groups in an auditory setting as long as the chosen learning-by-doing approach appears relevant to the course' learning outcomes. It should be noted that *feedback training* is but one topic that students are invited to test out during class sessions and between lessons. However, since the effect of learning about, and practicing, *feedback cycling* turned out to be a communicative cutting point for the participants, I decided to devote the whole chapter to this dimension alone.

I will now sum up some arguments for implementing informal peer-to-peer feedback training in journalism education at universities and colleges.

## Concluding remarks

This study suggests that journalists and students are surprisingly unaware of the effects of peer-to-peer communication on productive and trusting learning environments. Without training, a common feature of both groups is a rather one-dimensional approach to feedback issues; providing targeted feedback in order to improve the quality of a journalistic process or product is often considered the sole responsibility of editors and teachers. Moreover, when journalists talk about feedback, they usually have formal feedback formats in mind, such as daily or weekly written or oral product evaluations provided by newsroom authorities. Paradoxically, anecdotal evidence suggests that when journalism students complain about too little feedback, they usually refer to the provision of informal feedback by teachers, in other words, focused responses given on the spot. So what is the shared, but missing communication link of students and professionals and what can be done?

The keyword is *informal feedback*, a set of communication skills that are of great value to students' learning and professional growth, but are often overlooked. Thus,

this chapter has focused on ways informal feedback might be applied as a learning tool in journalism programs in higher education, and the potential impact of integrating this tool in teaching and learning activities. I propose that informal feedback training is vital for journalism students to develop the professional autonomy that is required in the highly competitive news world.

Faculty members know fairly little about underlying causes that might lead to student dropouts from journalism studies, except that they are new to higher education. Most students are recruited directly from secondary school with little or no media experience before they enroll at the university. There are indications, though, that high achievers coming directly from very structured cultures of learning have a hard time adapting and adopting to the more liberal and flexible approaches of a university setting. An implicit aim of the courses referred to in this chapter is thus to enhance students' skills in self-monitoring, of which informal feedback training is but one of many ingredients.

Observations of student interaction and analyses of course reflection reports indicate that practical training in informal feedback switching might help media students find solutions to a variety of production challenges, particularly when they feel stuck and momentarily do not know what to do. Feedback competence helps develop competent judgment. The training in feedback switching thus provides students with psychological tools they can turn to in order to develop their skills further in becoming creative and productive in the media.

In their discussion on enhancing experiential learning in higher education, Kolb and Kolb (2005) point to the pedagogical skill of making space: effective learning requires not only factual knowledge, but the organization of these facts and ideas in a conceptual framework and the ability to retrieve knowledge for application and transfer to different contexts; educators must dare to make space for acting and reflecting, feeling and thinking; in short, they must make space for the development of expertise. When engaging in experiential learning as a pedagogical approach, finding the right balance between practice-focused and theory-focused teaching methods is an ongoing challenge.

Conclusively, this study proved that the four steps of Kolb's learning cycle (1984) are relevant to enhance students' learning. Additionally, the learning cycle is a valuable approach for teachers to learn from the students – and it is valuable to journalists, students and teachers to learn from each other.

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“This edited volume addresses journalism education as a central component of journalistic professionalization, making it necessary to understand what is a crucial period in most future journalists’ lives. Nowadays, journalism scholars are realizing the need for more sustained, in-depth and critical studies of why students embark on such degrees, how they develop their professional views and practices at universities, how the educational curricula of journalism programs match the needs of the labor market, and also, what the news industry thinks about journalism courses and their graduates. This volume addresses all of these important questions in-depth, with admirable attention to different elements that may explain all these issues.

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