

Editorial:

Journalism and New Media

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What is journalism? What is a journalist? How do we define news? These are the first questions I ask students in my history of journalism class, year after year. I do not adhere to one particular definition because I do not believe that any journalism professional or scholar adheres to a shared body of knowledge. However, I do believe that we experience journalism through the eyes of technology. Whether it be through pen and paper, a typewriter, a camera, a microphone, a computer, or an iPhone, journalists make their mark. Yet, the values and the process that let us explore our reality have not changed all that much regardless of the tags or labels we give them. The goals are to seek the truth, to inform and improve the world we live in.

New media and more recently social media are the newest lenses through which we are experiencing the products of journalism. Unlike previous technology, these allow online communities created by readers, listeners, and viewers to discuss issues, have their voices heard, and get feedback in record time. New technology and networks have also provided journalists with new avenues for leads and means to reach and validate sources. News organizations and individuals are exploring and revamping existing roles, as well as creating new ones to maximize the use of these resources.

One issue in this journal is not enough to fully investigate the many transformations in journalism that are brought about by new media, but we hope here to highlight some of the most recent trends and challenges for the future of journalism.

By examining the messages of 140 characters or less, provided through Twitter, Ben S. Wasike explores how social media editors interact with their audiences and tries to establish the frames created in the news articles posted via Twitter. Wasike determines if the focus varies according to the platform (print or television) the social media editor is supposed to represent. His results point to a more personal relationship with social media editors working for television outlets, as opposed to print employees who focused on human interest, conflict, and economic frames. All social media editors seem to emphasize technology and human interest stories above all, which is contrary to typical journalistic interests that favour the economy and politics. Has technology encouraged the audience to become “softer” or is the audience different online? This paper may not have all the answers, but it puts us on the path to understanding the role social media editors play in the digital environment and the information made available to Internet users.

Amandine Degand's paper explores the role of technicians and computer specialists in the newsroom. Through a historical overview of the literature, she examines how their roles interact with those of journalists. Though their relationships have not always been clear and the space taken up by the technicians and computer specialists, as of late, made some professionals worried they may have overstepped their boundaries, a better knowledge of their struggles is important to our understanding of newsroom evolution. To validate her assumptions, Degand focuses on empirical evidence from newsrooms across Belgium to assess the real roles of technicians and the relationship they have with journalists.

Luke Justin Heemsbergen's paper is also about controversial roles played in the new media environment. He explores the notion of transparency as a way to further journalistic and democratic objectives by looking at radical publications such as WikiLeaks and historical equivalents in the 18th and 20th centuries. Although different than the other two papers in looking at the products of journalism rather than the producer of content, the paper is similarly searching for new or renewed ways of achieving journalistic goals—in this case making changes for political effects. In this refreshing piece, Heemsbergen finds out how deep and significant the changes are.

The book reviews section of this journal issue starts with a review article, "Making Journalism Better by Understanding Data", by award-winning journalist, professor, and data crunching expert Fred-Vallance Jones. The article reviews the three books: *The Data Journalism Handbook* (2012), *The Filter Bubble* (2011), and *PDQ Statistics* (2003), for a thought-provoking journey of some of the most recent literature blending technology and journalistic practice. Then, five book reviews are in this issue to peek the readers' interest in other areas of communication and journalism: *Transferts de Pouvoirs* (2012) by Lise Boily, *Kurdish Identity, Discourse, and New Media* (2011) by Heather McIntosh, *Expanding Peace Journalism: Comparative and Critical Approaches* (2011) by Hayley Phillips, *Journalism After September 11* (2011) by Irene Serrano Vazquez, and *Liberation Square: Inside the Egyptian Revolution and the Rebirth of a Nation* (2012) by Joel Bowerbank.

Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to Mahmoud Eid for selecting me as Guest Editor of this 2013 Spring Issue of the *Global Media Journal -- Canadian Edition*. His trust and guidance made this experience memorable. I would also like to thank the reviewers who took the time to provide authors with constructive feedback, as well as the many contributors who have given us food for thought.

About the Editor

Geneviève A. Bonin, Ph.D. is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Communication at the University of Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. She is a public adjudicator for the Canadian Broadcast Standards Council, and has most recently worked on a funded research project involving the evaluation of radio newsrooms to determine the impact of social media on journalists, their organizations, and the news they produce. Her research interests include the study of media industries, accountability, media policy and governance, women and media, as well as the history of communication and journalism. Dr. Bonin has recently co-edited *Media Research: Learning from the Past, Strategies for the Future* (2013, with Yorgo Pasadeos).

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