

On the Explanatory and Political Uses of Journalism History

By Rodney Benson

At its most basic, history is a tale of continuity and change. Things stay the same until they don't. So the big questions, for scholars, are: What are the conditions most likely to bring about change? How should we define "real" change? And how can individual or collective action make a difference in the outcome?

One response—structuralist history—is that, mostly, things don't change. Established political, social, and cultural structures inhibit not only change but also the possibility of imagining alternatives to the status quo. Another answer—voluntarist history—is that things change all the time. Whereas the structuralist emphasizes roles and positions, the voluntarist focuses on particular individuals and groups. Agency and contingency are everywhere, but admittedly some have more freedom of movement than others: the swashbuckling tales of media moguls and new technology entrepreneurs are prime examples of this kind of history. In a more theoretical vein, William H. Sewell Jr. has called for an "eventful sociology" highlighting how contingent events can transform structures.¹

But is there a sweet spot somewhere between voluntarism and structuralism when we attempt to explain the history of journalism? It's naïve to pretend that change is easy, but as Frederic Jameson once pointed out, there is also little merit in constructing a theoretical system so totalizing that it makes the reader feel powerless.² In my view, an institutional "field" model of journalism occupies that middle ground.³ It is clearly a structural model and yet it makes room for contestation and change, even if limited.

¹See William H. Sewell Jr., *Logics of History: Social Theory and Social Transformation* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2005), especially chapters 3, 7–8.

²Frederic Jameson, *Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (London: Verso, 1991), 5–6.

³See Rodney Benson, "News Media as a 'Journalistic Field': What Bourdieu Adds to New Institutionalism, and Vice Versa," *Political Communication* 23, no. 2 (2006): 187–202, and *Shaping Immigration News: A French-American Comparison* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2013). For general elaborations of field theory, see Pierre Bourdieu and Loïc J. D. Wacquant, *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992); John Martin, "What Is Field Theory," *American Journal of Sociology* 109, no. 1 (2003): 1–49;

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Thinking about journalism as a field starts with a series of observations or premises that, taken together, emphasize continuity between rare moments of change.

First, in the capitalist liberal democratic west, societies are class stratified and professionally differentiated into specialized, semi-autonomous spheres of action. Different classes and professions speak different languages and have different values and aspirations. Journalism has become one of these specialized fields. We see evidence of this in contemporary attempts to define who is or is not a journalist.

Second, each of these fields has a history. In Weberian fashion, it is argued that the historical circumstances (the particular moment and character) of field formation have lasting path-dependent effects. Once a certain road has been taken, it becomes difficult to deviate from established ways of thinking, established laws and regulations, and established interests.

Third, these specialized fields are situated in the broader field of power. The basic opposition, at least in the democratic west, is between market and non-market (or civic) logics of action. In other words, there is an ongoing conflict between a market logic oriented toward efficiency, individualism, consumerism, and profit versus a civic logic oriented toward egalitarianism, community, and solidarity. These civic and market logics are simultaneously material and symbolic. Organizing society according to competitive, individualistic market principles is no more “natural” than organizing it according to communitarian civic solidarity principles. Which logic predominates is the result of a political struggle in the broadest sense of the term.

Fourth, fields are sites of ongoing struggle over standards of excellence, prestige, and ethics. These internal logics of practice translate or “refract” the society-wide opposition between market and civic logics into field-specific terms: for example, audience ratings vs. professional awards (though such markers of achievement are not always opposed to one another).

Fifth, this internal struggle within the field will tend to be reproductive rather than transformative: there is more churn than change. Agents already in the field have material and symbolic interests in maintaining the status quo. By definition, new entrants have to differentiate themselves in order to find their own unique place in the field—and some will attempt to innovate in radically new ways—but it is easier for them to succeed by adapting to the field’s preexisting rules of the game than to try to completely transform these rules.

Finally, and here is where contingency re-enters the model, given this tendency toward field inertia: it takes a shock to the entire system to produce substantial change. Financial crises, electoral political realignments, scandals, or environmental cataclysms may provide the heretofore lacking

and Neil Fligstein and Doug McAdam, *A Theory of Fields* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

symbolic and material resources necessary for the rising generation to force out the old guard and create fundamentally new rules of the game. Such moments provide a brief opening to experiment with new ways of thinking and acting; investing these models with enduring power to shape action, however, generally demands legal/regulatory, organizational, or professional institutionalization. Because this second step of re-institutionalization is often not taken, or not undertaken effectively, even major systemic shocks often do not transform the status quo.

Some Examples of Field Continuity

In his short book *On Television*, Pierre Bourdieu argued that the privatization of the French public television channel TF 1 in 1987 had fundamentally transformed TF 1 and in the process the entire French journalistic field, shifting it from a civic to a market-driven orientation.⁴ He provides numerous examples and studies to support his claims. And yet in retrospect, and especially in cross-national comparative context, what I find striking about the French journalistic field over the past thirty years is continuity as much as or more than change. If Bourdieu is partially “wrong” in his diagnosis, it is not because field theory doesn’t work but that in this case he didn’t fully use it.

At its origins in the 1950s, TF 1 (originally simply “channel one”) was part of a public system that subsequently took on authoritarian characteristics under de Gaulle’s presidency but gradually gained some autonomy from the state. During the first few decades of its existence, it was entirely publicly funded. Advertising was introduced on French television in the early 1970s and by the time that TF 1 was privatized advertising made up about half of public TV revenues. So there was some transformation, but to a large extent the significant change took place in the 1970s rather than in the 1980s.

But the other reason that TF 1’s privatization was not fundamentally transformative is that French society as a whole has not been radically transformed since the 1980s—at least in relation to US society. The election of socialist president François Mitterrand in 1981 forestalled the kind of dramatic rightward transformation that occurred in the United States and Great Britain during that decade. Socialist policies had their neo-liberal elements but never dismantled the welfare state; say what one will about the conservative French presidents Chirac and Sarkozy, they likewise did not pursue aggressive neo-liberalization. Unlike in the United States, the gap between rich and poor in France has not increased substantially since the 1970s.⁵

⁴See Pierre Bourdieu, *On Television* (New York: Free Press, 1998).

⁵In 1970, the percentage of national income controlled by the top 0.1 percent of the population in both France and the United States was 2 percent; by 2005, this percentage had risen dramatically to 7.8 percent in the United States, while remaining steady at about 2.5 percent in France. These figures are from Facundo Alvarado, Tony Atkinson, Thomas

In similar fashion, French media practices and policies in general have not been transformed. A few examples: Even today, the TF 1 evening newscast is not interrupted by commercials. And its newscasts are still required by law to provide equal time to the political parties.

A few years after *On Television* was published in France, Jean-Luc Mano, a respected television journalist who has worked for both TF 1 and France 2, offered a version of field theory to explain why he disagreed with Bourdieu, that is, why he felt privatization had *not* transformed TF 1.

There are differences between TF 1 and France 2, but they aren't major. The two channels have a common history. TF 1 may be the major private channel, but at its origin it was part of the public system . . . and France 2 is a "false" public channel. It earns almost half of its revenues from advertising . . . It's true that France 2 still has protected spaces for culture and debates. But in their approach to news, [France 2 and TF 1] are not fundamentally different. Their journalists have the same professional training, they have the same culture.⁶

And this explanation accords with what I show in my book *Shaping Immigration News*.⁷ In my examination of immigration coverage from 2002 to 2006, I found that TF 1 was quite similar to France 2 in style and content. In line with other publicly subsidized media in France and the United States, France 2 was slightly more likely to present critical perspectives, but in general the differences between the two channels were relatively small.⁸ Comparison with the United States highlights their continuing public service orientation: both TF 1 and France 2 were substantially more likely to give voice to civil society organizations and to provide mobilizing information about these organizations' activities than their US commercial network counterparts. Belying the argument that a transformed TV sector had "pulled" the press closer to the commercial pole, French national newspapers continued to be substantially more multiperspectival and critical than television news.

Piketty, and Emmanuel Saez, The World Top Incomes Database, accessed May 9, 2012, <http://g-mond.parisschoolofeconomics.eu/topincomes/#>. See also Sewell, *Logics of History*, 67–69, regarding differences in recent French political and intellectual history versus that of the United States and Great Britain.

⁶Interview with author, May 1997, Paris.

⁷Benson, *Shaping Immigration News*.

⁸This story of change, which admittedly may be quite subtle, is not over. In recent years, as Jérôme Berthaut shows in his dissertation, "La Banlieue sur Commande: Enquête sur L'intériorisation d'un Sens Commun Journalistique," University of Paris-Diderot, 2012, many of the top news directors at France 2 have been recruited from TF 1 and have brought with them a more market-driven approach to news at the public channel.

Field-driven continuities are also evident in a French-US comparison of “forms of news.”⁹ There is good reason to suspect that French newspapers would increasingly resemble American newspapers. After all, there has been a long history of American attempts to influence French journalism as well as French attempts to imitate American journalism. In the early 2000s, the director of *Le Monde* was an ardent Americanophile who launched a partnership with the *New York Times* to publish a weekly *Times* insert inside the French newspaper. Through international organizations like the French-American Foundation and the German-Marshall Fund, French and US journalists are often brought together to exchange ideas and practices.

Yet my findings in *Shaping Immigration News* echo those of French sociologist Jean Padioleau’s 1970s comparison of *Le Monde* and the *Washington Post*. According to Padioleau, *Le Monde* favored a “pluralist” assemblage of multiple discursive genres and perspectives, anchored by its twin commitments to thoroughly “document” (via publication of diverse original source materials) and “comment” upon the issues of the day, with the two types of content in close spatial proximity. *Le Monde*’s “editor’s association” (société des rédacteurs), the vehicle of journalistic ownership of the newspaper, described its journalistic approach in 1978: “It isn’t enough to inform—one also has to do the groundwork to get ahead of events, to find ways to shed new light, to give voice to the voiceless.” In contrast, the *Washington Post* focused on “breaking” new information, providing new “insight” (though not making evaluative comments), and constructing “vivid narratives.” While avoiding explicit commentary in the news pages, the American approach was more active in shaping the news into coherent, compelling “stories.”¹⁰

These same differences are alive and well today. When the French newspaper *Libération* launched its new “Événement” format in 1981, it was not a rejection of *Le Monde*’s multi-genre style but rather an accentuation of it. More than thirty years later, most French newspapers look a lot like *Libération*.¹¹ In the United States, narrative journalism has become even more dominant. French-American differences in the form of news are persisting online as well as in print.¹²

⁹For other analyses of news formats, see Kevin Barnhurst and John Nerone, *The Form of News* (London: Guilford Press, 2001), and Marcel J. Broersma, ed., *Form and Style in Journalism. European Newspapers and the Representation of News 1880–2005* (Dudley, MA: Peeters, 2007).

¹⁰Jean Padioleau, *Le Monde et le Washington Post* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1985), 92–98, 255.

¹¹See Nicholas Hubé, *Décrocher la ‘Une’* (Strasbourg: Presses Universitaires de Strasbourg, 2008).

¹²Rodney Benson, Mark Blach-Ørsten, Matthew Powers, Ida Willig, and Sandra Vera Zambrano, “Media Systems Online and Off: Comparing the Form of News in the United States, Denmark, and France,” *Journal of Communication* 62, no. 1 (2012): 21–38. Regarding the accentuation of a narrative news approach in the United States, see Michele Weldon,

Again, why does there seem to be more continuity than change over time?

Cultural practices are slow to change because, as noted, existing agents have material and symbolic stakes in maintaining the status quo. Cultural practices are also slow to change to the extent that they become “naturalized” or “taken-for-granted” as “just the way things are”—rather than being understood as actual choices.

But it is also important to return to the claim that logics of practice are “refractions” of field position. Or to use the Weberian terminology, there is an elective affinity between these forms of news and the structural positions of the journalistic fields that produce them. US “narrative” journalism, as a form of serious (or light) entertainment, emerges in the context of advertiser pressures to attract the largest possible (high-consuming) audiences. French multi-genre “debate” journalism, substantially funded by the state, serves the interests of political elites in a pluralist democracy seeking a relatively open forum through which to articulate their positions and mobilize their supporters.

In other words, the refracted practices have not changed that much because the position of the refracting field has not substantially shifted. And in fact, over four decades, an already highly commercialized US media system became even more commercialized; a French media system sheltered from commercial pressures has continued to be sheltered. In the United States, the layoffs of one-third of the total journalistic workforce¹³ prompted no US governmental response; in France, an arguably less damaged (in part because it was never so profit-oriented to begin with) French media sector received almost \$1 billion in aid from the French government.¹⁴ At critical moments, public policy decisions were taken that tended to reinforce pre-existing models; inertia did not just happen—it was produced.

The Contemporary “Crisis” in American Journalism: Churn or Real Change?

Fair enough, one might respond, journalism in the United States and France remain different in many ways and these broad differences have not diminished all that much since the 1970s. But in the United States, right now, the discussion is not about the high degree of commercialism of the American

Everyman News (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2007), and Karin Wahl-Jorgensen, “The Strategic Ritual of Emotionality: A Case Study of Pulitzer Prize-Winning Articles,” *Journalism* 14 (2012): 1–17.

¹³Leonard Downie Jr. and Michael Schudson, “The Reconstruction of American Journalism,” *Columbia Journalism Review*, October 19, 2009, http://www.cjr.org/reconstruction/the_reconstruction_of_american.php?page=all.

¹⁴Corentin Wauters, “State Aid and 10 Commandments to Revive the French Press,” European Journalism Centre, July 6, 2009, http://www.ejc.net/magazine/article/state_aid_and_10_commandments_to_revive_french_press/.

news media but rather of the collapse of commercialism. When advertising revenues have decreased by half, when the size of the professional journalistic workforce has declined by one-third, and when the resources invested in public affairs and international reporting have been drastically reduced, isn't this what one would call a "cataclysm"? It surely is, both for the journalists who have lost their jobs and the communities who must now survive with a less robust supply of "politically relevant" and "democratically useful" discourse, to borrow the terms of Bruce Williams and Michael X. Delli Carpini.¹⁵ But whether this cataclysm is now producing a transformation or a doubling-down or intensification of the logic of the pre-existing model is another question.

Advertising may have been decimated, but the commercial underpinnings of the US journalistic field have not yet been replaced. A Pew State of the Media Report suggests three main reasons US journalism has suffered from the economic crisis far more than western European journalism. First, the publicly-traded and private equity ownership forms that are dominant in the United States create higher profit pressures than in other countries and hence "force" owners to lay off workers in order to maintain these high profits. Second, because US news media are so dependent on advertising—as opposed to reader subscriptions and public subsidies, which provide a greater proportion of revenues in Europe—the drop in revenues was more pronounced in the United States when advertising dried up. And third, due to US government policies that allow or encourage debt-driven mergers and acquisitions, many US media companies were in a far more fragile economic position than their European peers when the financial crisis hit in 2008.¹⁶

On the other hand, compared to western Europe, there has been far more commercial and non-commercial news start-up entrepreneurial activity in the United States. Doesn't this then constitute a transformation of the US field?

To answer this question, one needs to examine both the magnitude and the particular types of resources circulating in the field. Foundations and other non-profit, philanthropic organizations are refunding journalism at only a small fraction of the defunding engaged in by commercial owners and investors: over the past five years, \$1.6 billion in annual commercial investment in news have been lost, whereas only \$30 million in annual foundation funds are being reinvested.¹⁷

¹⁵Bruce A. Williams and Michael X. Delli Carpini, *After Broadcast News: Media Regimes, Democracy, and the New Information Environment* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

¹⁶Laura Houston Santhanam and Tom Rosenstiel, "Why US Newspapers Suffer More Than Others," *The State of the News Media 2010*, October 2011, <http://stateofthemediamedia.org/2011/mobile-survey/international-newspaper-economics/>. See also Rasmus Kleis Nielsen, *Ten Years That Shook the Media World: Big Questions and Big Trends in International Media Developments* (Oxford: Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, October 2012), 3.

¹⁷Steven Waldman, *The Information Needs of Communities* (Washington, DC: Federal Communications Commission, 2011), 10, 192.

Just as important to know is that much of this “non-profit” investment is actually oriented toward helping journalism re-establish its commercial viability. It is becoming clear that the jobs shed by this post-Fordist or “post-industrial” media system will never return and those that remain will be more precarious and lower-paid than in the years prior to the crisis.¹⁸ Few non-profit foundations have exhibited much if any intention to challenge this state of affairs: instead, they emphasize “business sustainability” and invite news “entrepreneurs” to figure out ways to do more with less, that is, to adapt to rather than to challenge the constraints set by neo-liberal finance capitalism. The *New York Times* may survive relatively intact, but the Huffington Post—with its small full-time staff, vast army of volunteer bloggers, and its “aggregated” free borrowing of content produced by others—is closer to the sustainable model of the future.

Just as there has been very little post-crisis challenge to the pre-existing model of commercialism, likewise, the pre-existing models of professionalism—constituting journalism’s accommodation and limited resistance to economic and political power—have also been remarkably robust. This is precisely what Tim Vos, Stephanie Craft, and Seth Ashley show in their study of blogger media critics: far from fundamentally challenging professional journalism’s dominant normative ideals, these bloggers take for granted values like “objectivity” and castigate journalists who fail to achieve it.¹⁹ Stephen Ostertag and Gaye Tuchman discovered that foundations worked to instill traditional professional practices at a New Orleans blog originally created as a sharp alternative to mainstream news.²⁰

To be fair, the foundation-funded version of journalistic professionalism—as evidenced by online news start-ups such as ProPublica, Investigative Reporting Workshop, MinnPost, Texas Tribune, Voice of San Diego, and others—aspires to and often exceeds the standards of explanatory and investigative reporting achieved during the “golden age” of print journalism. Thus, beneath the façade of commercial and professional continuity, there may indeed be stirrings of change, enabled by new “hybrid” commercial/non-commercial ownership forms. A field analysis would attempt to locate the “social properties” of the producers and audiences of these seemingly diverse news startups: To what extent are they expanding access, inclusion, and representation to previously excluded groups? Alternatively, to what extent are they targeting their editorial content to an

¹⁸See C. W. Anderson, Emily Bell, and Clay Shirkey, *Post-Industrial Journalism: Adapting to the Present* (New York: Columbia Journalism School, 2012).

¹⁹Tim Vos, Stephanie Craft, and Seth Ashley, “New Media, Old Criticism: Bloggers’ Press Criticism and the Journalistic Field,” *Journalism* 13, no. 7 (2012): 850–868.

²⁰Stephen Ostertag and Gaye Tuchman, “When Innovation Meets Legacy,” *Information, Community & Society* 15, no. 6 (2012): 909–931.

even narrower elite slice of the audience than did their print predecessors/ counterparts?

This is not to deny the transformative potential of the Internet and mobile communications. Technologies, as Bruno Latour emphasizes, cannot simply be reduced to expressions of social relations.²¹ But affordances by themselves do not create transformations: just because some people are using new technologies in transformative ways does not mean that most people are. As Raymond Williams showed in his classic, masterful study of television, new technologies do not come out of nowhere. Rather, they are developed and promoted by the powerful with the intention of maintaining and extending their power—even as there remains always the possibility of unintended consequences, unforeseen uses, and even collective resistance.²² New technologies do create possibilities for new types of cultural production capable of supplementing or replacing tasks previously performed by journalists, as Yochai Benkler has so persuasively argued. Even so, Benkler recognizes that this emerging “networked public sphere” relies on access, architecture, and policy that have to be defended against purely commercial interests.²³

The Politics of Historical Research

This brings me to my concluding point concerning the ironies and frustrations of drawing lessons from historical research for contemporary media policy debates. In my research, I have tried to bring together international comparative and historical approaches. One of the lessons I take from my comparative research is that media policy matters. Both the French and American constellations of approaches have their limitations and problems. However, in the light of the market’s failure to provide the amount of quality journalism that American democracy needs, one obvious solution is the kind of public support for media that is common in France and the rest of western Europe. Policy reports, including my own with Matthew Powers, have made the case for introducing more public funding of media in the United States.²⁴ Numerous studies, most notably in recent years by James Curran

²¹Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

²²Raymond Williams, *Television: Technology and Cultural Form* (London: Routledge Classics, 2003).

²³Yochai Benkler, *The Wealth of Networks: How Social Production Transforms Markets and Freedom* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006).

²⁴Downie, Jr., and Schudson, “The Reconstruction of American Journalism,” 2009; Rodney Benson and Matthew Powers, *Public Media and Political Independence* (Washington, DC: Free Press, 2011), <http://www.freepress.net/blog/11/02/10/public-media-and-political-independence-lessons-future-journalism-around-world>; and Geoffrey Cowan and David Westphal, *Public Policy and Funding the News* (Los Angeles: USC Annenberg School, 2010).

and colleagues,²⁵ have demonstrated the democratic virtues of public media. This is not to argue that public (taxpayer-funded) media ought to replace commercial media—only to suggest, quite reasonably, that for any healthy democracy, they ought to be part of the media ecosystem.

Even so, there have been many objections to expanding government support for journalism in the United States. One expects such opposition from libertarians and First Amendment absolutists, though the latter should take the time to read C. Edwin Baker's work to see if they might not agree with his position that while the government should not censor speech it ought to help promote speech that is being effectively censored by the market.²⁶ What is surprising and disappointing, however, is scholarly opposition linked to historical claims. The argument one sometimes hears spoken at policy forums goes like this: Well, yes, public taxpayer support might work in France or Sweden or Germany, but it simply won't work here because "we" (who is this "we"?) have a different history and a different culture. The problem with such uses of the terms history and culture is that they imply a community consensus (both now and in the past) where none in fact exists. Historical arguments are being used to effectively defend a purely commercial and advertising-supported press and to silence serious discussion of the possibility of expanding non-commercial media, which do in fact have solid public support (as evidenced by polls showing that PBS and NPR are among the most-trusted media in America).

Of course, as I have shown in my own research, it is true that various transnational, national, and sub-national institutional configurations have their own distinct histories, which help to explain how and why they operate as they do today. But here is where I would distinguish an institutional field theory approach from more fatalist structuralist theories of history: there is always struggle, and even if there is a tendency toward inertia, the outcome is not predetermined. Just because one side emerged victorious at a particular historical moment does not mean it will—or should—prevail henceforth and always. Historians slide from being scholars to being ideologists when they use their scholarship to insist that the media system a nation inherits is somehow its rightful destiny.

At this very moment, many journalists (and non-journalists) are actively trying to create new forms of ownership and funding for American journalism and new professional (and non-professional) practices with or without the help of major businesses or foundations. I have in mind start-ups like the *San Francisco Public Press*, which has leveraged volunteer labor (including

²⁵See, for example, James Curran, Shanto Iyengar, Anker Brink Lund, and Inka Salovaara-Moring, "Media System, Public Knowledge and Democracy: A Comparative Study," *European Journal of Communication* 24, no. 5 (2009): 5–26.

²⁶C. Edwin Baker, *Media, Markets, and Democracy* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

laid-off journalists), a few small foundation grants, and audience donations and subscriptions to produce in-depth explanatory and hard-hitting investigative journalism about issues and for audiences ignored by the mainstream commercial news media. The *Public Press*'s aspiration is to become the "Wall Street Journal for Working People." In a 2011 interview, *Public Press* executive editor Michael Stoll said "good riddance" to advertising funding of the news: "It was a bad marriage to begin with and it skewed coverage. And it foreclosed discussion of people and communities who were not targets of advertising. Sometimes it worked at producing good journalism, oftentimes it didn't."²⁷ This is a measured response: he concedes, and I would agree, that advertising is not antithetical to a quality critical press. But it should not be the dominant form of funding and it certainly should not be the only form of funding, which was almost the case for many years in the United States. And yet even this kind of limited critique of the professional shortcomings (not just the economic collapse) of the old business model is too often missing from both professional and scholarly discussions of the future of journalism.²⁸ If the ultimate result of the American journalism crisis is the creation of an even deeper integration of journalism with targeted consumer advertising and marketing, it will not be because it is somehow true to our history or consistent with our cultural tradition. It will be because, at this moment of new possibilities, the victors more successfully mobilized symbolic and material resources on behalf of their definitions of good journalism. Many years hence, scholars may look back and conclude that the weight of history was on the side of hyper-commercialism: Let's just hope they don't say it was "inevitable"—a fine line, perhaps, but one worth drawing.

²⁷Interview with author, April 2011, Boston.

²⁸Some important exceptions are Robert McChesney and John Nichols, *The Death and Life of American Journalism* (New York: Nation Books, 2010) and Robert McChesney and Victor Pickard, eds., *Will the Last Journalist Please Turn Out the Lights: The Collapse of Journalism and What Can Be Done to Fix It* (New York: New Press, 2011).