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The Two Professionalisms of Journalism: Journalism and the changing context of work

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ABSTRACT: The aim of this paper is to place contemporary debates about journalism (in particular those debates that frame the current state of journalism in terms of *decline*, in some form or other) within the wider context of changes in the organization of work in the so-called 'new economy'. Using a framework based on the notion of two different forms of professionalism (*organisational* and *occupational* professionalism) advanced by Julia Evetts (2003, 2006), the paper analyses the current changes in the journalistic occupation in terms of four key general trends in the world of work and occupation: (1) the deregulation of labour markets, (2) the rise of new forms of employment, (3) the technologisation of the workplace and (4) concerns about the large-scale de-skilling of parts of the workforce. The paper ends by suggesting a set of research questions for a future programme of research on occupational change within journalism that goes beyond general arguments of decline, and also incorporates current research from the sociology of work and occupations (as journalism cannot be understood as separate and isolated from other occupations and general trends affecting all occupations).

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Introduction

Journalists seem to be perpetually concerned with the decline of their occupation. Journalism used to be good, but now it is bad. A narrative of decline is at the heart of many journalists' accounts of journalism (e.g. Davies, 2008; Greenslade, 2004; Lloyd, 2004; Marr, 2005) – all examples are from the UK (where the present author is based), but similar books exist in the US as well (e.g. Downie Jr and Kaiser, 2003; Henry, 2007). These narratives cannot be easily discounted: clearly, at the start of the 21st century, many experienced journalists fear for the future of journalism.

This persistent narrative of decline is of interest to media scholars, as it provides insights into the self-understanding and self-definition of journalists.

Broadly speaking, two reasons are given for the decline of journalism, and in general those active in the debate support one or the other, not both. One version holds that journalism is declining because journalists themselves are increasingly ignoring their professional role and have a weakening commitment to journalistic professionalism (Lloyd, 2004, is a representative of this view, as is Davies, 2008). The other version holds that journalistic professionalism is under assault from the outside, squeezed by profit-hungry media conglomerates, government spin doctors, convergence of media technologies and so on (Henry, 2007, is clearly in this camp, for example). One explanation favours *internal* factors (i.e. journalists as a collective are to blame for the decline of their profession), the other *external* (i.e. the decline of journalism is the result of pressures coming from outside journalism as a professional collective). Regardless of which cause of decline is considered to be the most important, both explanations give great weight to the notion of *professionalism* as a counter-force.

Journalistic professionalism: concerns for academics

If leading media practitioners are concerned about the decline of journalistic professionalism (regardless of the cause), then this is something that academics must take seriously (following Zelizer, 2004). However, 'take seriously' is not the same thing as 'take as given', i.e. journalistic accounts of professional decline must be subjected to critical analysis and placed in a wider context. Aldridge, for example, suggests that lament over a lost 'Golden Age' of journalism could be interpreted as a male concern that journalism is becoming feminized, i.e. more women are entering the profession (Aldridge, 1998: 122–3).

Journalistic concerns over a declining commitment to professionalism must also be put in a wider context. Such concerns are not unique to journalism. As demonstrated by recent sociology of work and occupations, the so-called 'new economy' is transforming labour through practices and phenomena like the general deregulation of labour markets, proliferation of short-term contracts and other forms of flexible employment (and the related trend of outsourcing), technologisation of the workplace, concerns over de-skilling of parts of the workforce, etc. (Benner, 2002; Greenbaum, 1995; Head, 2003; Jones, 1996; McFall, 2004), leading to consequences such as insecurity and stress – but also to the possibility of increased autonomy and commitment (Crompton *et al.*, 1996; Edwards, 2005; Purcell *et al.*, 1999). These changes affect journalism as well by adding external pressure to redefine and renegotiate the concept of professionalism.

Unfortunately, journalism scholarship has so far not been very successful in placing the changes in journalism within the wider context of changes in work, employment and occupations. I will argue that this is

because journalism research has not kept up to date with the sociology of work and occupations (arguably the field of sociology was one of the key influences on journalism research in the 1970s and 1980s), and that bringing recent work from the sociology of work and occupations back into the study of journalism is essential for understanding the changes taking place within journalism at the start of the 21st century. Similar arguments have recently been made by Meryl Aldridge and Julia Evetts:

The episodic debate about modes of occupational control in journalism has persisted with an implicit model of professionalism as a set of professional 'traits' that was abandoned by sociology thirty years ago. (Aldridge and Evetts, 2003: 548)

And also by Roger Dickinson:

Researchers who have tightened their focus on occupational practices in media workplaces have pursued a course of enquiry that seems almost to have abandoned sociology altogether. By the 1990s British work was giving prominence to producers' accounts in explanations of how media content is produced instead of applying sociological models of analysis. (Dickinson, 2007: 193)

Following Aldridge and Evetts as well as Dickinson, there is a need to update journalism research and to apply more stringent sociological analysis to the work done by journalists. As the concept of professionalism is central to both journalists' own understanding of their profession as well as to academic accounts of journalism, it seems a good starting point for developing a framework for analysing journalism that incorporates more recent sociology of work and occupations. I will use Evetts's recent model of *two competing discourses of professionalism* in the context of labour in a new economy (Evetts, 2003: 407ff.; 2006: 140–1) as a basis for such an updated framework. These two competing discourses roughly correspond to the internal and external factors in the decline of professionalism as defined by practitioners, and in the following section of the paper I will present this model and its place in relation to previous scholarly work on journalistic professionalism as well as in relation to the wider context of the changing conditions of labour in the 21st century. I am specifically interested in how Evetts's model can be used to describe and analyse actual work practices and work routines of journalists – and how they are changing.

Journalistic professionalism revisited – again

There is a wealth of literature on journalistic professionalism, journalism as a profession, and related areas such as the role perceptions of journalists, the norms and ideals of journalism, and the professional practices of journalists (e.g. Bagdikian, 1974; Bantz, 1985; Breed, 1955; de Burgh, 2005; Delano and Henningham, 1995; Elliott, 1978; Esser, 1998; Gieber, 1964; Golding and Elliott, 1979; Høyer and Lorentzen, 1977; Johnstone *et al.*, 1976; Kepplinger and Koecher, 1990; Schlesinger, 1978; Sigelman, 1973; Tunstall, 1971). Can anything possibly be added to a body of research that has been revisited again and again? A brief note on the history of the field provides a suggestion for a much-needed reorientation of research: Dickinson points out that while early research on journalism as a profession placed the journalist at the centre of inquiry, later studies developed into a more general social critique of the media that did not attempt to understand the occupation of journalism, despite the analytical weight given to work roles and work routines (Dickinson, 2007: 192; also, see Tuchman, 2003). Evetts's model can provide precisely the return to studying journalism as an occupation that Dickinson advocates – a return to a sociology of journalists rather than a sociology of journalism (Dickinson, 2007: 195, 201).

According to Evetts, there are two discourses of professionalism at play in many occupations undergoing 'new economy'-type transformations (i.e. labour market deregulation, rise in short-term contracts and project-based work, etc. – see previous section): *organisational* professionalism and *occupational* professionalism (Evetts, 2003: 407ff.; 2006: 140–1). Evetts explains the difference between these two drivers of professionalisation thus:

Organizational professionalism is a discourse of control used increasingly by managers in work organizations. It incorporates rational-legal forms of decision-making, hierarchical structures of authority, the standardization of work practices, accountability, target-setting and performance review and is based on occupational training and certification. In contrast, occupational professionalism is the more traditional, historical form. This involves a discourse constructed within professional groups themselves that involves discretionary decision-making in complex cases, collegial authority, the occupational control of the work and is based on trust in the practitioner by both clients and employers. It is operationalised and controlled by practitioners themselves and is based on shared education and training, a strong socialization process, work culture and occupational identity, and codes of ethics that are monitored and operationalized by professional institutes and associations. (Evetts, 2006: 140–1)

Simply put, manager and managed very likely have different ideas about what professionalism means. For the manager, being professional may mean complying with regulations, accepting standardized work practices, hitting performance targets, and so on. Professionalism as understood by the managed may then in some cases be in outright opposition to professionalism as managerially defined, focusing instead on autonomy, compliance with a code of ethics decided on by professional groups or bodies rather than employer's organisations and so on. It is not difficult to see the similarities between this way of viewing professionalism and the journalistic notion of professionalism as a counter-force (described in the introduction) against profit-seeking media owners as well as media professionals with little or no commitment to professional standards. Some sociologists of work hold similar views on occupational professionalism (to use Evetts's term), i.e. that professionalism is a belief system/ideology that can work against increased managerial surveillance, hierarchical structures, standardisation of labour, etc. and increase the quality of certain types of labour (Annandale, 1998; Burrage and Torstendahl, 1990; Friedson, 1994, 2001; Halliday, 1987).

Applied to journalism, this view conjures up images of heroic journalists standing against bean-counter managers to report the story regardless of attempts to control or quash them. Needless to say, the equation of organisational professionalism = bad, occupational professionalism = good, is a gross simplification and that is not what Evetts is saying. In fact, when writing specifically about how journalism is affected by the two competing notions of professionalism, Aldridge and Evetts are very critical of elements of journalistic occupational professionalism, using the word 'mythology' to describe it:

Journalism, which, in the UK, has for a century been indifferent to the structures of conventional professions (however modelled) and occupies unusually ambiguous cultural terrain, would seem an unlikely exemplar of the contemporary meaning of professionalism. Nevertheless the very vigour of its occupational mythology, including an iconic individualism which, we have argued elsewhere (Aldridge, 2001b), can produce a certain naivety about change at the structural level, has allowed it to be seduced. The operational meaning of being 'professional' opened up spaces for radical change in what the job is, what it ought to be and how it is done. (Aldridge and Evetts, 2003: 561–2)

In an earlier article on the same topic, Aldridge also writes:

'Professionalism' is, though, widely used in a sense often invoked in other occupations: the ability to handle oneself and do the job

regardless of personal feelings. Where, for a police officer, this might mean not weeping or passing out at the scene of a road traffic accident, for the journalist it often indicates *doing something you do not believe in*. (Aldridge, 1998: 124; original emphasis)

These quotes demonstrate that the relationship between organisational and occupational professionalism is more complex than mere antagonism. That occupational professionalism (or *professional ideology*, a term Aldridge and Aldridge and Evetts use synonymously with occupational professionalism, e.g. Aldridge and Evetts 2003: 559–60) has problematic dimensions is well known both from the general sociology of occupations as well as from the specific study of journalism. Breed showed that conformity and social control in the newsroom was the result of colleagues' expectations rather than managerial decrees (Breed, 1955); Sigelman found that journalists were unusually conformist and complied with organisational goals to minimize conflict (Sigelman, 1973); and Soloski demonstrated how professional ideology also works as a useful management tool to control the professional behavior of journalists (Soloski, 1989). Other studies in this vein all draw on what is usually called the *critical* or *continental* (as opposed to *Anglo-American*) tradition in professionalism research: viewing professionalism as a system for professional closure and control, as well as a possible source of 'group-think' with negative rather than positive consequences (for an overview of the continental tradition and its often fraught relationship with the Anglo-American tradition, see Sciulli, 2005).

In summary, the relationship between organisational professionalism (representing drives external to the occupational group to define professionalism as compliance with employers' goals and methods) and occupational professionalism (representing drives internal to the occupational group to retain autonomy and the right to define professional standards, as well as to socialize other members into the occupation) can more accurately be characterised as a *negotiation* than a wholly antagonistic relationship. This does not mean that the relationship is *never* antagonistic, merely that it is shifting, and that professionals for example may internalize organisational goals and/or express organisational goals in such a way as to minimize conflict with perceived occupational norms – or, for that matter, that media organisations may take on occupational norms and values as their own. But clearly, many media professionals (as exemplified by the works on journalism by journalists quoted in the Introduction) view the relationship between organisational and occupational professionalism (though these specific terms are not used) as straightforward and antagonistic, and this view is something that researchers must keep in mind – and subject to critical analysis.

In the following section, I will demonstrate how journalism as a practice can be interpreted and analysed as an ongoing negotiation between the two types of professionalism Evetts describes.

Negotiating journalism: between business and vocation

Journalism is and always has been part of a business enterprise – and journalists have always been aware of this. However, many writers have argued that the wider economic context of journalism in the contemporary era is different from what it was fifty or even twenty-five years ago. This difference is often encapsulated by the term *commercialisation*: a word that refers to diverse but related trends like the deregulation of broadcasting, a more competitive media market, decreasing importance and strength of the links between news media (primarily newspapers) and political parties, tabloidisation and individualisation of journalism as a way of being more consumer-friendly etc. (for overviews of these arguments, see Franklin, 1997; Hallin and Mancini, 2004: 273ff.; Weymouth and Lamizet, 1996). In short, the argument is that the business aspects of news are exerting more and more influence over journalism as a profession to the detriment of journalistic quality (McManus, 1994, is the locus classicus for this argument) – using Evetts's terms, organisational professionalism is weakening occupational professionalism.

The concept of commercialisation also encapsulates the broader changes in labour conditions and work structures mentioned earlier in this paper: general deregulation of labour markets, proliferation of short-term contracts and other forms of flexible employment, technologisation of the workplace and concerns over de-skilling of parts of the workforce. As noted, these changes affect journalism too, and in different ways affect the relationship – or balance – between occupational and organisational professionalism. I will look at the aforementioned four trends in turn, to see how they affect the occupation of journalism and the relationship between occupational and organisational professionalism.

Deregulation of labour markets

Perhaps the most obvious consequence of the deregulation of the journalism and media labour market is the substantial weakening of journalists' unions and in many cases wholesale union derecognition. Gall has examined union derecognition in both the provincial newspaper industry and the magazine industry in the UK, and he and others have demonstrated that the systematic weakening of the unions (mainly the NUJ, the National Union of Journalists) through derecognition, decollectivisation and individualisation is the result of strategic and purposive action on the part of the employers, rather than being the outcome of reactive or opportunistic policies as a consequence of

government deregulation (Gall, 1993, 1997; Marjoribanks, 2000b; see also Smith and Morton, 1990, 1992). Derecognition has 'centered on a drive to increase the rate of accumulation and management control' (Gall, 1993: 622). The diminished role of unions has also been studied in the US and Canada, with similar results (McKercher, 2002). Union derecognition has taken place parallel with the transformation of journalism into a mass occupation (Ursell, 2004), something that in turn seems to indicate that an oversupply of labour is driving wages down (Becker *et al.*, 1996). And in the case where some labour market regulation has remained (affirmative action policies in the US), they do not seem to have had much effect (Becker *et al.*, 1999). However, it is worth noting that some scholars also have pointed out that an informal labour market largely based on reputation and labour market intermediaries can have positive effects on individuals' mobility and employers' recruitment practices (Baumann, 2002).

As unions are a key type of professional organisation, and strong unions in many cases seem to coincide with strong professional standards within journalism (Hallin and Mancini, 2004: 171–2), then the weakening of unions can be viewed as the weakening of a key source of occupational professionalism. However, viewing occupational professionalism critically, this may not necessarily be a bad thing as unions also can be vehicles for exclusion and professional control through 'closed shop' practices and the like – something pointed out in McKinlay and Quinn's (1999) otherwise 'union-friendly' analysis of labour transformation in the UK commercial broadcasting sector. Regardless of the exact role that unions play in the relationship between occupational and organisational professionalism, they do need to be studied more thoroughly.

New forms of employment

The second trend, proliferation of short-term contracts and other forms of flexible employment, is also likely to have an impact on the organisational/occupational professionalism balance. While the dominant form of employment for journalists is still as regular, permanent contract staff within a large media organisation (Aldridge and Evetts, 2003; Ursell, 2004), freelance and other atypical work is on the increase (Walters *et al.*, 2006). As noted earlier, journalism scholarship has been relatively slow in recognizing broader changes in work and labour structures, as well as scholarship in other fields dealing with these changes – the normal unit of analysis for studies of journalistic work practices is still the newsroom within a large and stable media organisation. However, some interesting work has been done on atypical/flexible work in the media industry in general and journalism in particular by academics outside the field.

Baines has studied freelance media workers – primarily journalists – with specific reference to teleworking practices, i.e. working from home using ICTs to remain connected to employers. Her conclusion is that teleworking and freelancing is more of an ‘electronic cage’ than an ‘electronic cottage’, as the experiences of freelancers are marked by insecurity and weakness in the market rather than a sense of freedom and independence (Baines, 1999). Furthermore, teleworking is likely to have damaging effects on the quality of working life of freelancers as the blurred boundaries between paid work and household work are deeply problematic, primarily for female freelancers (Baines, 2002).

Baines also points out that the discourse of ‘enterprise’ and individualisation of career management characteristic of the new economy for many translates into a reality of dependence on single employers and the inability to say no to work (Baines, 1999: 29) – i.e. flexible forms of employment also give considerable flexibility (in the form of bargaining power) to employers, and a lack of autonomy for employees. Similar critical assessments of labour flexibility have also been made by other scholars. In her study of magazine freelancers, Ekinsmyth argues that employment flexibility may in reality translate into employment risk, and that individualisation of labour and careers is an unavoidable consequence of the increased need for freelance workers to construct their own reflexive biographies (1999: 353, 359–60). Dex *et al.* (2000) come to similar conclusions in their study of freelance work in the television industry. Storey *et al.* (2005: 1052) note that in a culture of individual enterprise, media freelancers redefine ‘professional success’ in very modest terms, such as ‘keeping afloat’ or ‘getting by’, i.e. success is to merely stay in the occupation. The following quote from another study of media freelancers by Platman neatly sums up the consequences of flexible employment and individualisation of career management:

The paradox of freedom was that release from organizational restraint was, itself, restraining, since individuals were now responsible for their own welfare. On the one hand, there was a ‘positive’ pole of self-expression, independence and control; on the other, a ‘negative’ pole of fragmentation and uncertainty. Individuals were forced to survive a workplace ‘saturated’ with risk. (Platman, 2004: 592)

As in the previous case (union derecognition), the consequences of increasingly flexible working condition and forms of employment may be positive as well as negative – Platman notes the positive facets of self-employment and freelancing, for example. But again, we are drawn to the conclusion that an increased individualisation of labour and insecure forms of employment must have a weakening impact on occupational

professionalisation, as this form of professionalisation relies on strong occupational socialisation and a strong collective sense of belonging (both more difficult to achieve in an environment of individualised career management). Plus, it also seems likely to have a strengthening effect on organisational professionalism, as research notes that freelancers normally are in a position of weakness *vis-à-vis* their employers and employers can dictate the conditions of labour.

Technologisation of the workplace

The third trend, technologisation of the workplace, is in the case of journalism intimately linked with the deregulation of labour markets: the paradigmatic case in the UK is of course Rupert Murdoch's move of his production facilities from Fleet Street to Wapping, and the following 'labour crisis' culminating in the thorough decimation of union power within Murdoch's News Corporation. This event has been carefully studied by Marjoribanks, who concludes that technology and technologisation of the workplace in this particular case was explicitly part of an aggressive management strategy to gain a higher degree of control over the labour force (Marjoribanks, 2000a, 2000b). McKercher covers similar developments in the US and Canada and comes to similar conclusions – technologically motivated restructuring of the journalistic workplace almost always reduces the staff (McKercher, 2002: 37ff.). Such technologically motivated restructuring is not always successful, however, and media organisations sometimes show both considerable resistance and considerable reflexivity when integrating new production technologies (Hemmingway, 2005).

There is still a concern that technologisation of the workplace is a management 'Trojan horse', primarily used as a tool for making journalistic labour more cost-effective, i.e. cheaper (Marjoribanks, 2000b: 590; Ursell, 2004: 44). In a historical overview of journalistic labour, Hardt's conclusion is that technology has been used by owners and managers to increase control of the news production process (Hardt, 1990). In another historical study of journalism at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, Salcetti points out that the division of labour between reporters (who did the newsgathering) and rewrite men (who wrote the actual article) was driven by the commercial need to increase the production speed of news through technological developments like the telegraph and later the telephone (Salcetti, 1995). Some contemporary analysts are also concerned that technologisation of the workplace forces journalists to do more work in less time (Bromley, 1997), and/or that working with various presentation technologies takes time away from more 'abstract' occupational tasks such as the collation and analysis of news information or the verification of sources (Nygren, 2008: 115–16; Russial, 1994). And in a 2001 study, Lowery and

Becker noted that skill with web presentation software was the strongest predictor of success for journalism/communication graduates applying for jobs, more important than all other aspects of their education, i.e. technological skill is prized above all by employers (or was, in 2001).

Key studies seem to indicate at least a potential link between technologisation of the workplace and increase in organisational professionalism (i.e. the pressure to comply with new technological demands is used by management as a lever to increase general control over labour). The existence of a 'reverse' link between technologisation and weakening of occupational professionalism is more dubious, however (again, see Hemmingway, 2005). For example, in her study of how photojournalists react to and incorporate new digital imaging technologies into their professional repertoire, Becker comes to the conclusion that the proliferation of technologies calling the authenticity of the news photograph into question in fact increases the occupational professional commitment to the concept of photographic truth (1991: 396).

De-skilling

The conceptual step from technologisation to de-skilling is not a long one, as the notion of de-skilling originates in a study of technological impact on craft labour and using 'technology in the service of capitalism' (Braverman, 1974). Braverman's analysis has encountered serious criticism, not least because of his apparent lack of systematic evidence for the idea that workers are systematically de-skilled in a capitalist system (Attewell, 1987; Littler, 1982). I will not go into the multi-faceted discussion of exactly what constitutes 'skill' here, but just point out that the general empirical trend in contemporary society is towards *upskilling* of the workforce rather than de-skilling (Ashton *et al.*, 1999; Gallie *et al.*, 1998).

This has not stopped the de-skilling argument from resurfacing in studies of journalistic work, which merits closer study – it is for example possible that not all occupations follow the general trends. Liu specifically links de-skilling to technologisation in his study of Taiwanese journalism, stating that employers actively contribute to the de-skilling of journalists by placing more value on technical skills than on professional experience and knowledge (Liu, 2006: 708). A recent study by Avilés *et al.* (2004) of Spanish and British TV journalists in digital newsrooms shows that multi-skilling and de-skilling are not necessarily mutually exclusive. First and foremost, they note that in both countries, 'The new digital system was accepted by journalists as a tool that helps the job to be done more easily, rather than something that hinders their work or the quality of news output' (p. 91). However, they later conclude:

Digitisation seems to have an ambivalent impact on journalism. Multi-skilling leaves journalists less time to fulfil traditional journalistic practices, such as double-checking of sources and finding contextual information. The newly established routines tend to emphasise the importance of speed, which sometimes raises concern about the quality of output. In addition, the fact that technology allows for faster processing of news increases the pressure to be first with the story and to provide more on-the-spot, instantaneous live news, which leaves very little chance to explain context. (p. 99)

There seems to be some anecdotal evidence that as journalists become more skilled in digital production techniques, they find less use for their newsgathering and collating skills (MacGregor, 1997). Deuze and Paulussen note that online journalists studied in the Netherlands and Belgium spend most of their times in front of their computer and rarely leave the newsroom (2002: 43). These observations are also supported by recent empirical research on Swedish journalists (Nygren, 2008). But overall, perhaps re-skilling is a better term than either de-skilling or multi-skilling: Marjoribanks shows that the introduction of digital news production systems in Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation significantly altered the skills required of journalists – they were expected to become more technically proficient and computer literate (Marjoribanks, 2000a). Restructuring of work also leads to new skill demands that in some ways can be viewed as 'degrading' traditional journalistic skills: Ursell notes that the British Press Association (the oldest domestic news agency in Britain) now has sharply differentiated their newsgathering operation and their news processing operation – news process employees, or 'production journalists', are tasked to convert gathered information into saleable news products, and are not required to have journalism training (but must have good writing skills and be proficient in digital production technologies) (Ursell, 2004: 45–6). In this case, something that could be described as (partial) de-skilling is linked to a more developed division of labour among journalists, incidentally mirroring the late 19th-century transformations of journalism as an occupation described by Salcetti in the previous section.

If de-skilling is occurring, it would be a powerful influence on the organisational/occupational professionalism dynamic – the power to define which skills should be associated with the professional practice of journalists is clearly central to how professionalism itself is defined. The question of whether de-skilling is actually occurring remains, however, but as there appears to be some empirical evidence for a 'weaker' interpretation of the de-skilling thesis, further study of skill requirements among journalists is needed.

Concluding remarks

The primary goals of this brief presentation have been simple: first, to bring more recent work in occupational sociology, sociology of work and the sociology of professions to bear on the study of journalism as an occupation/professional activity, and second, to highlight the fact that the economic-structural changes taking place within journalism (and thereby affecting journalistic work practices) are part of broader societal trends not only linked to the media industry – though, as some authors have found, the media industry provides some very illustrative case studies. I have argued that Evetts’s model of two competing discourses of journalism provides a fruitful framework for analysing journalism as a practice taking the context of labour/work/employment transformations into account. Above all, I hope I have demonstrated that the notion of negotiated professionalism actually generates some new and previously understudied research questions and research areas that seem particularly relevant for understanding journalism – and journalists, following Dickinson – at the beginning of the 21st century.

Deregulation of labour markets

- What role have journalists’ unions played, and what role do they play, in shaping occupational professionalism?

New forms of employment

- What are the work and power dynamics of freelance journalism? To what extent and in what areas do freelance work, self-employment, teleworking, etc. provide flexibility for the worker, and to what extent do they provide flexibility for the employer? How is professionalism redefined and renegotiated in the relationship between the freelancer and the employer?
- Is freelance journalism done differently from other journalism, i.e. are there other work practices that come to the fore, are new work practices developed? Are freelance journalists developing a discourse of occupational professionalism separate or at least different from other journalists?

Technologisation of the workplace

- How are new technologies in the workplace actually put to use by managers and the managed? Are they used to develop new work practices, new work routines and new forms of on-the-job socialisation, or are they used as a management tool for increased control and surveillance – or both?

De-skilling

- Are skill demands on journalists changing, and if so to what extent and in what direction? And does this have any empirically testable consequences for the quality of journalistic output?
- Does an increased focus on technical skill mean less focus on investigative/analytical skills, or are these skill sets complementary rather than opposed? Are the skill gaps between different types of journalists (e.g. print/broadcast, specialist/generalist reporters) growing, leading to a differentiation of occupational professionalism?

As can be inferred from these questions, the overarching research questions for a future project on the two professionalisms of journalism would be:

- To what extent is journalistic practice shaped by notions of organisational professionalism, and to what extent is it shaped by notions of occupational professionalism?
- What is the balance between these two forms of professionalism, and when and under what conditions does one dominate the other?
- When and how are the two forms of professionalism integrated/internalised, how are conflicts between these two notions of professionalism resolved – and what consequences do those conflicts have for journalistic practice?

I hope that asking these questions will not only be meaningful to academics but also to professionals, as it offers the possibility of examining empirically and critically the argument of decline put forward by some journalists, through a research framework focusing on a concept that is recognizable and useful for practitioners: the concept of professionalism.

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