

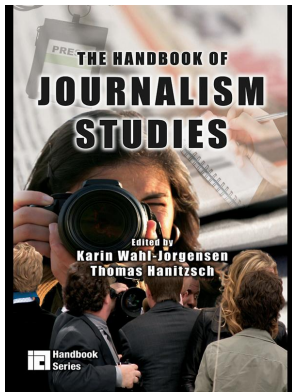
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### **Journalism and Globalization**

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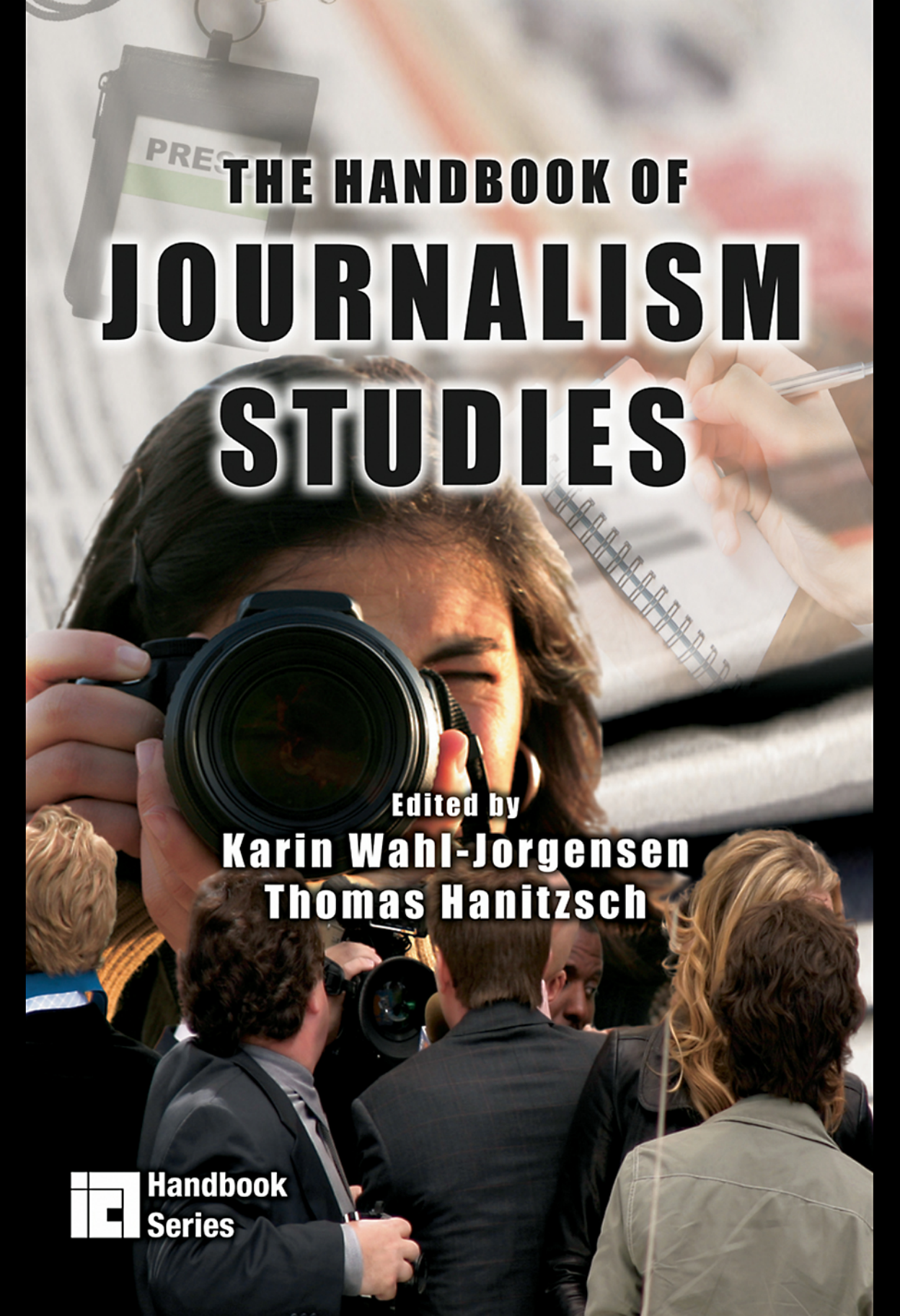
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Thomas Hanitzsch**

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# 24

## Journalism and Globalization

Simon Cottle

We live in an increasingly inter-connected, interdependent and inegalitarian world. In recent social theory parlance, a globalizing world that has both accelerated and shrunk through processes of “time-space compression” (Harvey, 1989) and stretched social relations (enabling action at a distance) through “time-space distanciation” (Giddens, 1990). These globalizing tendencies, moreover, have become increasingly *mediated* through communication flows that are now capable of circumnavigating the globe 24/7 in real-time. New digital technologies and satellite delivery systems disseminate a daily multitude of images, ideas and information to distant countries and disparate cultures. And mobile telephony and the Internet provide hitherto unimaginable opportunities for new forms of connectivity that are now being realized by vast numbers of people around the globe. This new communications-based “space of flows” underpins influential ideas of the rise of the “network society” and serves today’s global geometry of power (Castells, 1996, 2007). The central role of communications and flows of information and culture in processes of globalization are no less central to the thinking of other contemporary social theorists, whether embedded in influential ideas of “reflexive modernization” (Beck, Giddens, & Lash, 1994), “world risk society” (Beck, 1999), “liquid modernity” (Bauman, 2007) or “global complexity” (Urry, 2003). Each, in their own distinctive terms, endorses the discourse and reality of globalization.

Scholars and students of journalism, for their part, are no less interested in globalizing communication flows and have been for some time, though here the ideas of major contemporary social theorists have yet to take root. Concerns about transnational media corporations and the dominance of Western news agencies, news values and news flows, for example, have long been taken as characteristics of homogenizing world media (Galtung & Ruge, 1965; McBride, 1980), and more recent regional media formations, emergent contra-flows and the cacophony of views and voices emanating from the World Wide Web are today often seen as the more contradictory and uneven expressions of globalization. Clearly, much still hangs on what exactly is understood by this most contested “G’-word” (Giddens, 2005) and, as we shall hear, “sceptics,” “globalists” and “transformationalists” (Held & McGrew, 2003) all stake out the contested field of international and global journalism research today.

This chapter sets out to review the contemporary field of journalism studies approached through the theoretical and conceptual prisms of international communications and media globalization. Specifically, it seeks to map the principal orientations and theoretical debates now structuring the research field as well as pointing to emergent trends and new research depart-



tures. The theoretical approaches that variously orient the study of journalism in international and global contexts have long proved contentious and are destined to remain so. Whether approached through the paradigms and perspectives of “modernization” or “dependency,” “cultural imperialism” or “information society,” “global dominance” or “global public sphere,” “international communications” or “media globalization,” these competing frameworks structure the field as inherently contested. It is certainly theoretically disputatious and how could it not be given the essentially contested terrain of international relations, geo-political power and opposing interests and ideological outlooks that both shape and become struggled over in the formations and flows of international and global news. Recent discourses of media globalization, as we shall hear, have only exacerbated this tendency and their infusion into the world of journalism research has played a major part in unsettling entrenched theoretical positions. The following now seeks to provide an overview map of the overarching paradigms, principal approaches and salient debates currently structuring the research field of international and global journalism studies before briefly noting some productive research departures.

### INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS AND MEDIA GLOBALIZATION

Two research paradigms, one long established in international communications research, the other still emerging in the wider field of media and globalization studies, currently set the parameters for much of the work undertaken in the field today. Each has its own disciplinary antecedents, leading exponents, distinctive ontologies and epistemologies and characteristic research agendas. Studies within the “global dominance” paradigm generally work within and update the critical tradition of political economy while those conducted under the “global public sphere” paradigm represent a more diffuse group of recent disciplinary infusions from cultural studies, anthropology and approaches to the global “network society.” At their respective cores are deep-seated differences of theoretical orientation towards international and global communications as well as questions about the mechanisms and meanings of power. Whereas studies conducted under the “global dominance” paradigm generally approach questions of power in terms of the structures and interests of geo-political dominance and market determinations rooted in political economy, those coalescing under the “global public sphere” paradigm tend to pursue the emergence of world cosmopolitan citizenship and a global public sphere theorized in terms of transnational cultural flows, fluids, mobilities and networks (see Figure 24.1). Global dominance theorists are paradigmatically and methodologically inclined, therefore, to investigate the operations of markets and corporate interests in the structural conditioning of today’s cultural industries; global public sphere theorists are disposed to explore the flows of cultural meanings and discourses of identities that circulate around the globe. These essentially different theoretical orientations and outlooks can be elaborated on further.

#### News Media as Emissaries of Global Dominance

Under the global dominance paradigm, researchers observe news and journalism through a lens of geo-political economy that sees transnational media corporations and Western-dominated global news agencies positioned by history and market ascendancy to capitalize on contemporary internationalizing market processes (Boyd-Barrett & Rantanen, 1998; McChesney 1999; Thussu 2003). In an era of economic liberalization marked by de-regulation, privatization and transnational corporate expansion, fuelled in part by the market exploitation of digitalization and new communications delivery technologies (Murdock, 1990), processes of media corporate

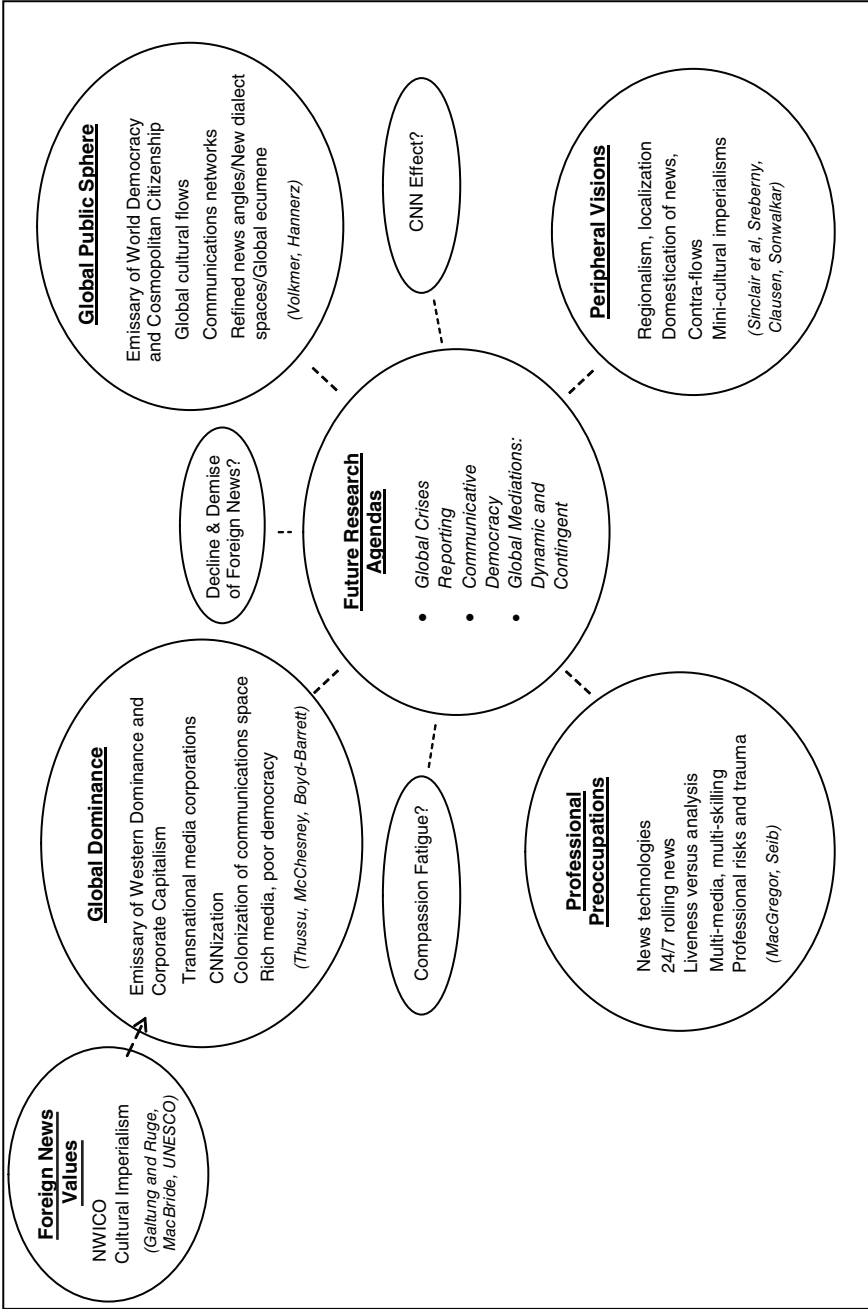


FIGURE 24.1 Journalism and globalization—paradigms and perspectives.

concentration and conglomeration have become exacerbated (McChesney, 1999). It is in this context that transnational corporations and regional formations of capital seek to “colonize communications space” (Boyd-Barrett, 1998). From this contemporary political economy perspective the cultural imperialism thesis underlined by the 1974 UNESCO report on international media flows (Nordenstreng & Varis, 1974), essentially still holds firm (Schiller, 2005) and this is so notwithstanding developed critiques across the years (Tomlinson 1991, 1999; Sreberny, 2000, Mackay, 2004).

Daya Thussu (2003) argues that a “CNNization” of television news is taking place with leading US and other Western networks such as CNN and the BBC effectively setting the agenda in the global news market where smaller, regional players monitor their content and adopt their models of production. Rather than contributing to a diversified “global public sphere,” then, new regional news channels represent a universalisation of “US-style” journalism and an increasing homogenization of news structures and content around the world. In such ways, these theorists are skeptical about the validity of ideas of the “global” and globalizing news formations and news flows which, more accurately, reflect the relentless capitalist expansion and worldwide “Westernization” of culture and commerce. Here discourses of globalization are likely to be rejected as little more than an ideological smokescreen concealing the continuing geo-political realities of Western power, corporate interests and neo-liberal economics. From this critical vantage point, “corporate transnationalism” not “globalism” best describes the “swelling global flows of the cultural industries” (Schiller, 2005), global media are perceived as the new “missionaries of corporate capitalism” (Herman & McChesney, 1997), and Western “rich media” are destined to produce “poor democracy” around the world (McChesney, 1999).

### News Media as Emissaries of a Global Public Sphere

Global public sphere theorists challenge the pessimistic accounts of the geo-political economists above. Building on Marshall McLuhan’s notion of a “global village” (1964) and refashioning Habermas’ well-known concept of the public sphere (1989), Ingrid Volkmer, for example, argues that world satellite news channels are engendering the emergence of a mediated “global public sphere” (1999, 2003) and thereby laying foundations of cosmopolitan citizenship. CNN, she argues, “invented a new form of international reporting, which extended the narrow, ‘national’ journalistic concept by including new political contexts and enlarging the political horizon beyond a single-nation-state” (Volkmer, 2002, p. 245). News angles are thus seen to have become “refined” and CNN is said to have played “an important role in the global public sphere by reconfiguring journalistic styles and formats” (p. 245). The complex communications cross-traffic and counter-flows around the world today, she argues, underpins the network society and this helps to constitute “a new concept of (world) citizenship” (Volkmer, 2003, p. 15). Much is made, for example, of CNNI’s *World Report*, a distinctive programme in which journalists from around the world can broadcast their own stories and story angles on CNNI’s platform. But to what extent *World Report* is truly representative of CNNI news reporting or global news flows more widely and opens up “new dialectical spaces” has yet to be fully explored (Rai & Cottle, 2007).

Volkmer’s emphasis on today’s mediated global interconnectedness is nonetheless important and encourages a deeper appreciation of how news can display cultural differences as well as communicate conflicts around the world. The anthropologist Ulf Hannerz (2000, p. 112) similarly observes in a study of contemporary foreign correspondents how a “conspicuous part of reporting [...] is not devoted to hard news and unique events but to a continuous thematization of difference itself.” Here in-depth news features and the subjunctive style of news writing contribute, he suggests, to “thick cosmopolitanism” or feelings of being at home within a culturally heterogeneous

world. The work of Volkmer, Hannerz and others invites us, therefore, to re-examine the cultural flows of global news and discover to what extent cultural disjuncture and difference are valorized in today's global "mediascape" (Appadurai, 1996) and consider how global media contribute to a new "global ecumene" (Hannerz, 2000) or sense of global belonging and world citizenship. For these globalists the contemporary international configuration of news delivery represents real changes in the global news landscape; processes that exemplify the spatial-temporal transformations that lie at the heart of globalization, namely: stretched social relations, intensification of flows, increasing interpenetration and global infrastructure (Held, 2004).

### QUALIFYING PERSPECTIVES IN THE FIELD: PERIPHERAL AND PROFESSIONAL

The contemporary field of international and global journalism studies also hosts a number of "peripheral visions" and "professional preoccupations" that serve to qualify, whether theoretically or on more pragmatic grounds, the generalizing tendencies and global claims of these two overshadowing paradigms.

#### Peripheral Visions

A number of disparate studies collectively termed here "peripheral visions" (Sinclair, Jacka, & Cunningham, 2002) are now beginning to qualify the overarching claims of Western media dominance and they also exhibit a more theoretically circumspect or cautious stance towards claims of an emergent global public sphere—whether advanced in the field of news and journalism study or media globalization studies more widely. Included here are studies of new regional media formations and regional media production (Chalaby, 2002; Sinclair et al., 2002; Sonwalkar, 2004; Sreberny, 2000), contra-flows from new regional players (Azran, 2004; El-Nawawy & Iskander, 2003), discerned "mini-cultural imperialisms" enacted by former colonies and new regional powers (Sonwalkar, 2001, 2004), the national "domestication" of news exchange materials and news reports of global events (Clausen, 2003; Cohen, Levy, Roeh, & Gurevitch, 1996), and studies of world news audiences (Jensen, 2000). Together these open up a host of new dynamics and complexities in the study of global communication formations and news flows. This more complex, variegated and regionalist perspective, sensitive to the specificities and dynamics of production and flows both within as well as across the international communications environment, qualifies Western-led and Western-centric accounts of contemporary journalism. Processes of news "domestication," both in respect of global news exchange materials and their cultural inflection by national broadcasters (Cohen et al., 1996) and processes of national construction of major global events such as the UN's world conference on women (Clausen, 2003), for example, point to the constitutive role of culture in processes of news mediation and manufacture. Studies of world news audiences also suggest that "varied local cultures manifest themselves in the interpretation of foreign as well as domestic news" and that "culture shines through" in processes of audience news reception (Jensen, 2000, p. 190). These studies seemingly dent presumptions about the Western news media's capacity to export ideological frames and impose meanings on local cultures and, in this respect, news remains "a potential resource for action in a specific time and place."

Prasun Sonwalkar (2001, 2004) also encourages a less Western-centric understanding of today's news media; post-colonial societies exhibit their own powered geometry in terms of media formations and markets and cannot adequately be theorized through a prism of "West to the rest" communications.



In large multicultural settings such as India, for the first time, local cultures and politics are being presented and represented within the country and to the rest of the world in ways that not only enhance local democratisation, a sense of nationalism and regional cohesion, but also a greater awareness and integration with global cultures and global politics [...] the proliferation of television since the mid-1980s has further enhanced India's cultural appeal in the region and created commercial opportunities to reach out to the 25 million strong South Asia diaspora across the globe [...] at the regional level, Indian cultural industries have the makings of "little cultural imperialism." (Sonwalkar, 2004, pp. 112–113)

These disparate studies of contemporary global journalism, then, each in their own way contribute to a more multi-faceted, less Western-led and deterministic theorization and in these respects entertain a more *transformationalist* (Held, 2004) view of the nature of contemporary news organizations, journalist practices, news output and processes of news reception around the globe. None, however, has sought to ignore the market conditioning of political economy or fails to acknowledge something of the democratizing impulses that sometimes register in the contra-flows and regional dynamics of contemporary media formations. These peripheral visions are less inclined nonetheless, on grounds of global complexity, to simply accept totalizing theoretical claims of either Western global dominance or global public sphere theorists.

### Professional Preoccupations and Practices

Also informing the academic field of journalism and globalization studies are professional journalist discourses about the changing nature of news production and practices. Concerns here are frequently raised about how new technologies of production and delivery are impacting journalists practices and their professional standing. These professional preoccupations often tend toward the technologically determinist and are generally a-theoretical in their conceptualization, contextualization and explanations of changing news practices and performance (such views often surface, for example, in UK trade publications such as *Press Gazette*, *Broadcast* and *British Journalism Review*). Their concerns are normatively framed and frequently point, as I say, to the changing technologies and infrastructure that are thought to facilitate or restrict the professional practices and performance of journalists working in international and global contexts. Specifically, these expressed concerns include: 1) the industry's fetish of "live" 24/7 news from around the globe facilitated by cable and satellite delivery systems; 2) the potential threat of the Internet to, respectively, traditional news forms, the use of accredited sources and established journalist norms of impartiality, detachment and balance; 3) the role of mobile telephony and camcorders in the rise of citizen journalism, freelance (often at risk) "war correspondents" and underpaid and casualized "video journalists"; and 4) the impact of new electronic systems of news production in reconfiguring newsrooms and facilitating multi-media news production and multi-skilled (or "deskilled") journalism.

Changes in news technology, then, are often at the heart of these and other professional preoccupations. Academics have pursued many of them more sociologically in methodologically informed and systematic studies. "Breaking news" as well as "live two-ways" and "hotel stand-ups" are professionally often regarded as a poor substitute for in-depth reportage delivered by knowledgeable correspondents based in the field and have received detailed academic commentary (MacGregor, 1997; Seib, 2004). A study of BBC World and other 24/7 UK channels has also put to the test the industry's claim to be providing live, breaking news documenting how significant "breaking news" (that is, up-to-the-moment news and live reporting as the story happens) is in fact a rarity on these channels—granting credence to professional concerns over the sacrifice of in-depth news analysis for superficial, content-thin, immediacy (Lewis, Cusion, & Thomas, 2005).

An ethnographic study of the introduction of new production technologies and multi-skilling at the BBC has further demonstrated how technological developments are today incorporated and deployed for strategic and competitive advantage but do not, in and of themselves, dictate corporate policy much less determine how they are incorporated and shaped in practice (Cottle, 1999; see also Marjoribanks, 2000). Based on observations and interviews with newsroom personnel and decision makers the study paints a more nuanced picture of multi-skilling within the changing and pressurized corporate context of the BBC. Here “the problem is professionally perceived and experienced as one of increased pressures of work informed by an impinging context of cost reduction and management’s sought efficiency gains through multi-skilled, multi-media working practices” and it is in this context that “Professional status, traditional hierarchies, career opportunities and traditional medium demarcations have all become unsettled” (Cottle, 1999, pp. 38–39).

Such studies, then, help to go behind the professional and normative concerns of journalists working with new technologies to reveal something of the complex mediations “at work.” Professional and normative concerns also feature in at least three major debates about the changing nature and impact of contemporary international and global journalism, discussed next.

#### DEBATES OF OUR TIME

Our two overarching paradigms and qualifying perspectives also feed into current debates about the nature and impacts of international and global journalism. These debates have a relatively independent standing in the field though each is also subject to the distinctive “takes” of surrounding theoretical positions and perspectives. This is clearly demonstrated in the debate surrounding the demise or redefinition of foreign correspondence, a debate that is positioned between the explanatory logic of political economy and global dominance on the one side and new forms of global interconnectedness and claims for an emergent global public sphere on the other (see Figure 24.1).

##### The Demise or Redefinition of Foreign Correspondence?

Amidst claims of “dumbing down” in the journalism field are specific concerns about the shrinkage of foreign news both in the press and on TV (Pew Centre, 2002; Utley, 1997). Garrick Utley (1997), for example, charted the shrinkage of foreign news (specifically, foreign bureau reports, foreign policy coverage and overseas news) over an eight year period and across the three main US networks, ABC, CBS and NBC, and found that foreign news had been generally reduced by half across this period. More recently research conducted by the Pew Centre (2002) has pointed to the US audiences’ need for more informed understanding of the world following the attacks of 9/11. Systematic studies of international issues in the news and general factual programming in the UK have also documented a decline in the public representation of serious issues over recent decades (DFID, 2000; Dover & Barnett, 2004; Stone, 2000). Foreign coverage in factual programming, for example, is now much more likely to be concerned with wildlife and travel than development, environment and human rights (Stone, 2000). The decline in international journalism documented by Utley and others clearly goes to the heart of concerns about an informed citizenry and its capacity for understanding today’s global world, its interdependencies and inequalities. In this context, so-called “parachute journalism” is a poor substitute for correspondents based in countries overseas with their on-the-ground knowledge and source contacts built up over time (Pedelty, 1995). Whether accenting “the economic” in explanations based on

market imperatives and the economic costs of supporting correspondents overseas or “the political” in terms of the influence of geo-political interests and outlooks inhibiting “foreign news” reports from politically remote places, political economy approaches are paradigmatically disposed to see such developments in terms of “business as usual.” When approached through an optic of globalization seen as intensified interdependencies and cultural flows, however, a less pessimistic account comes into view.

But do these perceived declines accurately measure the quantity and quality of foreign reporting that actually exists? We think not. The alarm, we propose, is based on an anachronistic and static model of what foreign correspondence is and who foreign correspondents are. (Hamilton & Jenner, 2004, p. 303)

For these authors, in a world of increasingly porous borders, the lines between foreign and domestic news have become blurred, just as they have in the world of commerce, health, culture and the environment. In this interconnected and interpenetrating context, they maintain, “Local reporters can find sources for foreign news among those they interact with daily” (p. 306) and “the new media landscape that undermines the old news flow structures allows foreign events to be covered in entirely new ways” (p. 313). On these grounds they question the use of numbers of traditional foreign correspondents and even the numbers of “overseas news stories” as the appropriate yardstick for measuring “foreign news.” It is not entirely clear, however, how this redefinition of foreign correspondence manages to address, if at all, the mainstream news media’s “forgotten humanitarian disasters” and “hidden wars” as well as other major concerns of development and human rights abuses around the globe—which brings us to two further debates in the current field of international journalism and global communications research: the CNN effect and compassion fatigue.

### The CNN Effect?

Claims about the “CNN effect” and “compassion fatigue” circulate widely today, are essentially contradictory and suffer from a similar lack of robust empirical evidence. Adherents to the so-called “CNN effect” maintain that global broadcasting corporations like CNN, which can transmit scenes and news reports of human suffering around the globe, prompt changes in foreign policy and galvanize the momentum for humanitarian interventions. The opposite effect is alleged by the compassion fatigue thesis, which argues that media reports and televised scenes of human suffering have a diminishing capacity to mobilize sentiments, sympathy and humanitarian forms of response.

Research about the “CNN effect” can usefully be situated in descent from the so-called “Vietnam war syndrome.” This refers to the US military and US State Department’s belief that media scenes of US military casualties and the carnage of the Vietnam War sapped public morale on the home front and undermined the resolve to continue the war. Daniel Hallin (1986) effectively rebuts this “myth” and does so on the basis of a detailed historical account of the changing trajectory of the war, the growing elite dissensus that this produced within the US administration and the belated opportunities only that this created for a more challenging and questioning journalism. In other words, he argues, the US media followed rather than led the establishment view. Though the “Vietnam syndrome” may be based on a myth, it has proved no less consequential in its effects; military commanders and governments around the world continue to impose tight media controls on this basis (Knightly, 2003; Lewis et al., 2006). The point here, however, is that Hallin’s study as well as other models of media-elite “indexing” (Bennett, 1990) prompt a more

historically contingent and politically dynamic approach to the role of media in conflict reporting and humanitarian emergencies. As such, they qualify the generalizing claims of a media-led causality built into the notion of the CNN effect. Even so, some commentators have argued that in exceptional cases such as the humanitarian intervention to support the Kurdish refugees following the US invasion of Iraq, the media can and do exert influence on decision makers.

The central agencies of global civil society in the Kurdish crisis, the institutions which forced the changes in state policies which constituted “humanitarian intervention,” were in fact television news programmes. Television—not newspapers, not social movements, certainly not the traditional representative institutions—took up the plight of the Kurds and in an unprecedented campaign successfully forced governments’ hands. [...] Television news’ role in the Kurdish crisis is all the more surprising, at first sight, since it contrasted so clearly with the managed medium which they had represented during the Gulf War. (Shaw, 1999)

Others, even in this seemingly strong case, are less convinced and point to underlying geopolitical interests as the most likely cause precipitating US humanitarian involvement in the Kurdish crisis and many other humanitarian interventions.

It is contended [...] that, given Turkey’s membership of NATO, its loyalty (particularly during the Gulf War) to the US and its on-going “problem” with Kurdish separatists in southern Turkey, geo-strategic concerns rather than media-inspired humanitarian intent or media-public relations are sufficient to explain the intervention. At the very most the critical and empathy-framed coverage would have had an enabling effect, helping to explain and justify the deployment of ground troops in Iraq to the US public, but the decision itself was most likely motivated by non-media related concerns. In short, the claim that ground troop intervention in northern Iraq was a case of the strong CNN effect is not born out by this case study. (Robinson 2002, pp. 70–71)

Across recent years a number of scholars have sought to develop more analytically nuanced accounts of the CNN effect (for a review, see Gilboa, 2005). Notable amongst them is Piers Robinson (2002) who, through detailed and comparative case studies, seeks to establish the precise conditions under which a CNN effect may, very occasionally, take place. He argues that this occurs when there is elite dissensus, a high degree of policy uncertainty and when preceding media coverage has involved emotive pictures and empathetic and critical framing. Even under these exact conditions however, as we have just pointed out, the operation of strategic and geo-political interests as well as other possible factors “behind the scenes,” may be the key determinants of humanitarian intervention and today’s new “military humanism” (Beck, 2005, p. 65). Too often claims about CNN effects are deduced from policy outcomes and based on a simple correlation with empathetic media coverage (Shaw, 1996), rather than in-depth study of policy making personnel, institutions and processes (Gilboa, 2005). Some theorists also suggest that the CNN effect essentially misses the point (Hawkins, 2002; Jakobsen, 2000). Victor Hawkins, for example, argues that by focusing its gaze on particular conflicts, the media ignores many others (and the massive amount of human suffering that they cause) and thereby exclude these as possible influences on public and policy agendas, though implicitly thereby granting the CNN effect some residual validity. The debate continues.

### Compassion Fatigue?

The notion of “compassion fatigue” (Moeller, 1999) has also gained popular (and media) currency across recent years—which is not to say, of course, that the media phenomenon the idea

purports to explain is real. In fact, the concept exhibits a distinct lack of analytical precision in terms of the complex interactions between humanitarian organizations, news media and audiences.

Compassion fatigue is the unacknowledged cause of much of the failure of international reporting today. It is at the base of many of the complaints about the public's short attention span, the media's peripatetic journalism, the public's boredom with international news, the media's preoccupation with crisis coverage. (p. 2)

As this all-encompassing statement signals, the concept of compassion fatigue is often asked to do a great deal, from explaining the failures, practices and forms of international news reporting to audience-based questions about levels of news engagement and interests. As we know however, matters are a good deal more complicated on all these fronts. Humanitarian aid organizations, interestingly, generally prefer to use the term "media fatigue" rather than the more generalised "compassion fatigue," and they do so on the basis of their understanding of the news media and its operations (Cottle & Nolan, 2007). The debate about "compassion fatigue" also tends to produce speculative statements rather than empirically sustained argument and theorisation. Michael Ignatieff (1998, pp. 11–12) has written, for example, that, "Through its news broadcasts and spectacles like 'Live Aid,' television has become the privileged medium through which moral relations between strangers are mediated in the modern world" and he suggests "Images of human suffering do not assert their own meaning; they can only instantiate a moral claim if those who watch understand themselves to be potentially under obligation to those they see." Keith Tester (1994, p. 130), no less eloquently, takes a more media-centric and less historically progressive view. "Certainly the media," he says, "communicate harrowing representations of others, but the more the face of the other is communicated and reproduced in this way the more it is denuded of any moral authority it might otherwise possess ... Increased visibility of the gaze seems to go hand in hand with increasing invisibility from the point of view of the responsibility of moral solidarity." Speculative views on the role of televised images of human suffering and their capacity to move us, such as these, demand further empirical investigation.

Here recent work on the news media's "spectacle of suffering" (Chouliaraki, 2006) and discourses of global compassion (Höijer, 2004) help to recover something of the complexities buried beneath the nebulous term of "compassion fatigue" and also point to the need for more refined analytical distinctions. Brigita Höijer (2004) observes in her audience-based study how "compassion" is often dependent on visuals, involves ideal victim images and can also be analytically disaggregated into different forms of "tender-hearted," "shame-filled," "blame-filled" and "powerlessness-filled" compassion. In such ways, she argues, audience responses to reports of human suffering exhibit their own complexities and contingencies, just as with the complex dynamics and determinants that we know shape international news reporting. These complexities, then, are not usefully collapsed under the catch-all concept of "compassion fatigue" especially when masquerading as an "explanation" for all things international and global news.

## WHERE TO NEXT? EMERGENT AND NEW TRAJECTORIES

The foregoing, in broad outline only, has mapped the principal paradigms, perspectives and debates currently structuring the field of international and global journalism studies and these no doubt will continue to shape much of the work undertaken in this field in the foreseeable future. Even so, it is possible to detect other research trajectories as well as prominent silences that



must now be addressed if the field of international and global journalism study is to continue to engage with pressing real-world concerns and developments. The following simply signals three possible trajectories, each of which chimes with contemporary social theoretical concerns and more nuanced positions now emerging in the field of international communications and media globalization.

### Global Issues and World Risk Society

The unprecedented nature of many of today's global threats has yet to be taken seriously by journalism scholars—theoretically, methodologically and substantively. Many of the conflicts and crises reported on in the world today are global in their nature, scope, and potential impacts. The fall-out from Chernobyl, as well as the potential effects of new virulent pandemics and market crashes, can all, for example, migrate at speed round the globe and with indiscriminate effects on distant populations as can new forms of transnational terrorism and its deadly twin, the “global war on terror.” Global warming and other ecological threats confront us all and do so notwithstanding the distributional inequalities of impact and response. There is something unprecedented about these global threats which go to the core of contemporary arguments about global cosmopolitanism and a possible global public sphere (Beck, 2006). They demand concerted responses from researchers working in the field of international and global journalism studies (Cottle, forthcoming).

According to Ulrich Beck (2005, pp. 38–39), it is the common and increasingly mediated perception of global threats, not universalizing statements about shared humanity, that serve to underpin and mobilize global cosmopolitan citizenship and an emergent global public sphere:

[...] it is the *reflexivity of world risk society* that creates the reciprocal relationship between the public sphere and globality. Regardless of all the borders and rifts that separate nations, the constructed and accepted definition of planetary threat and its global mass-media-projected omnipresence create a common arena of values, responsibility and action which, analogously to the national arena, *can* (though need not necessarily) give rise to political action among strangers. This is the case when the accepted definition of threat leads to global norms, agreements and common action. (original emphasis)

Today's crises of “World Risk Society” signal the necessity for a theoretical reorientation that deliberately moves beyond the confines of the nation state and “methodological nationalism.” This is warranted by the global nature of the perceived threats as well as their elaboration and engagement within and through the formations and flows of today's global media ecology. This is not an argument therefore for simply more comparative research but the necessity to take “global issues” seriously—theoretically, methodologically, ontologically. Important studies of “race” and migration, the global war on terror, environment and ecology, for example, continue to be conducted *inside* particular national contexts and *through* national prisms, but how many have sought to track and theorize these global phenomena beyond the nation state and with reference to the wider flows and formations of globalizing communications? Where are the studies today of journalism and international governance, journalism and international law, journalism and the normative discourse of global human rights, journalism and migration flows, journalism and ecology—all conceived and approached globally? A call, then, for new research agendas deliberately setting out to study today's major global issues and crises and how these become constituted and contested within global media formations and communication flows around the world and exploring what part these may perform in *re-imagining the political* within an increasingly interconnected, inter-dependent and *threat-filled* world.

## Communicative Democracy

Notwithstanding generalizing statements about the emergence of a democratizing “global public sphere” as well as its claimed opposite of “poor democracy” manufactured by corporate news media, there is in fact a democratic lacuna at the heart of major theoretical approaches to the study of international and global journalism (Cottle & Rai, 2008), as there is in the study of national news outlets more widely (Cottle & Rai, 2006). This concerns the failure to interrogate the complexities of the public elaboration of conflicting interests and identities in news presentation and delivery and how these become conditioned and shaped, enabled and disabled, within the communicative structures of their mediation. How global news providers, for example, mediate conflicts and imagined communities to wider audiences around the world is crucial for any serious evaluation of how news media are implicated in reproducing structures of dominance or processes of enhancing democracy. These complexities have generally been occluded by the theoretical generalizations and political expectations of both the global dominance and global public sphere paradigms. Conditions are now propitious for a re-examination of the news media’s possible contribution to processes of mediated democracy.

In late modern societies, traditional beliefs, political institutions and scientific and other authorities must seek public legitimacy on the media stage and they do so at a time of diminishing deference and a global profusion of migrating ideas, beliefs and values (Beck, 1999; Castells, 1997; Giddens, 1990, 1994). New social movements and different cultural identities compete and contend for media attention along with the “public relations state” and the “argumentation craftsmen” of corporate interests (Beck, 1999). And, as parliamentary democracies become perceived by many as moribund, civil societies have become increasingly agonistic and conflicted (Mouffe, 1996) and calls for the “democratizing of democracy” (Giddens, 1994), “democratic deepening” and “deliberative democracy” are made (Benhabib 2002, Habermas 1996). In today’s globally interconnected and inegalitarian world, democracy is not best conceived as “genteel conversation” but rather as a series of embattled fields of contention, insurgency and reflexivity that are local to transnational in scope (Dryzek, 2000, 2006).

In today’s mediated world, we also need to acknowledge and better theorize the contribution that image as well as ideas, rhetoric as well as reason, affect as well as analysis can play in the public enactment and elaboration of “communicative democracy.” Visualized narratives, experiential accounts and emotive testimonies can all contribute to processes of recognition and understanding of competing world outlooks (Cottle, 2006b, pp. 167–184) as can more traditional forms of information conveyance, claims-making and argumentation by contending interests. The communicative architecture of international and global journalism draws on both these communicative modes of *display* and *deliberation*—often consequentially so. As well as addressing “global issues” in the news, then, we also need to attend much more closely to the forms of “communicative democracy” embedded in their news mediation and how these become naturalised and professionally produced through time and across different news organisations.

## Global Mediations: Dynamic and Contingent

The ideas of “communicative democracy” referenced above are premised on ideas of social formations and processes of globalization as inherently contested and conflicted. How these contests of interest and identity are conducted and play out through space and time generates unpredictability, contingencies and political opportunities and these increasingly become enacted and performed in the media. Too often these dynamics and contingencies, the *stuff* of politics in action, become theoretically minimised by a priori expectations. So here, finally, is a claim for the necessity to the-

oretically bring politics back into the field of international and global journalism research and by this I mean into the study of how conflicts and contention are strategically pursued and performed in the media by contending interests and across time—challenging static theoretical frameworks and deterministic models in the field. There are good empirical grounds on which to develop a more dynamic and contingent understanding of international and global news mediations and its theorisation. Contrary to the “propaganda model” elaborated in Herman and Chomsky’s *Manufacturing Consent* (1988), for example, studies of war reporting (and peace reporting) are increasingly sensitive to the changing nature of reporting through time and in relation to shifts of political and public opinion (Entman, 2004; Hallin, 1986; Tumber & Palmer, 2004; Wolfsfeld, 1997, 2004). The *stuff* of politics is here enacted in and through processes of journalistic mediation and this demands fine-grained empirical analyses and refined theoretical elaboration. Only then will we be in a position to better theorise the complexities and contingencies involved and avoiding the heavy determinisms and ideological dominance of “manufacturing consent” (Herman & Chomsky, 1988) approaches on the one hand, and the recent tendency to theorise global journalism in terms of radical indeterminacy and chaos, on the other (McNair, 2006).

The study of mediatized rituals and global media events also challenges entrenched theoretical views about media power, its locations and determinations and the role of media in processes of manufacturing consent (Cottle 2006a; Alexander et al., 2006). Some mediatized rituals, contrary to both Durkheimian and neo-Marxian traditions (still the dominant traditions in the field of ritual study), appear to open up productive spaces for social reflexivity and critique and can be politically disruptive or even transformative in their reverberations within civil and wider societies. The media’s performative use of resonate symbols, dramatic visualization, narrative and embedding of emotions into ritual forms sometimes confront the strategic power of institutions and vested interests and can even lend moral gravitas to the projects of challenger groups within society. These sometimes disruptive phenomena and their globalization through the news media demand comparative empirical analysis and further theorization. Mediated disasters, whether Hurricane Katrina or the Asian Tsunami, for example, represent an important sub-class of potentially politically disruptive and globalised media events.

In contradistinction to media events, the shared collective space created by disaster time-out, zooming in on victims and their families, is the basis not for dignity and restraint but for the chaotic exploitation of the pain of participants on screen, and for the opportunistic fanning of establishment mismanagement, neglect, corruption, and so on. Whereas the principle of broadcast ceremony is to highlight emotions and solidarity and to bracket analysis, a disaster marathon constitutes a communal public forum where tragedy is the emotional motor which sizzles with conflict, emphasizing anxiety, argument and disagreement. (Liebes, 1998, pp. 75–76; see also Katz & Liebes, 2007)

How these, and other, major media events become circulated and consumed, contested and challenged in the global flows and forms of journalism and with what impact on political elites and the formations of publics around the world are important questions now deserving increased attention.

## CONCLUSION

The contemporary field of international and global journalism research, as we have seen, is inherently contested and theoretically disputatious—sometimes productively so. The above has done no more than sketch something of this structuration by overshadowing paradigms, different

perspectives and salient debates and has moved to offer three further possible research trajectories for the future. We live in a global age and journalism and processes of globalization are inextricably intertwined (though the role of journalism within these processes is often under-theorised by contemporary social theorists). Researchers need to rise to the significant challenge of studying journalism and continuing processes of globalization in all their multifaceted complexity and interpenetration. Guiding theoretical frameworks, empirical engagement and debate remain as indispensable as ever to this task.

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