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REVIEWS

RELOCATING TELEVISION: TELEVISION IN THE DIGITAL CONTEXT, JOSTEIN GRIPSRUD (ED.) (2010)

London and New York: Routledge, 275+xxi pp.,
ISBN 978-0-415-56453-3, p/bk, \$42.95,
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Reviewed by Stephen D. McDowell

1. *Relocating Television*, a significant edited collection, includes chapters from
2. leading researchers and theorists in media studies and cultural studies of
3. media. The articles here were first presented at a conference organized by
4. the Norwegian research group Digicult (Democracy and the Digitalization of
5. Audiovisual Culture) and the Institut Français de Presse in Paris in October 2008.
6. Jostein Gripsrud organized the conference and edited this volume. The book
7. offers many original and useful insights and interpretations, and its contribu-
8. tors include top theoreticians, researchers and analysts in the field. The authors
9. are from Northern Europe, the United Kingdom and the United States, and
10. the scope and context of the articles draws from the European experience,
11. while US critical perspectives are also included. As such, some of the examples
12. and problem framing will offer new ideas for readers based in North America,
13. which should stimulate some fresh discussion and thinking on a range of
14. questions about what is happening with television.
15. The book is organized into four sections: changes and continuities in the
16. medium of television; changing genres; figures, experience and significance in
17. reception; and critical perspectives. The cases considered are diverse, including
18. *The Wire* programme produced and broadcast by Home Box Office (Lavik), the
19. MSN interface (Browne), the sale of box sets of television series (Brundson),
20. Indian news (Thussu), *X Factor* blogs (Jersley), online forums (Larsen), news and
21. entertainment smears (Gitlin), building a sense of the commons on networks
22. (Murdock), and thinking about television as a means of transport (Morley).

This book is ambitious in several ways. It addresses some of the central challenges for communication research, including media genre studies, audience analysis and communication policy research, as well as examinations of the technologies of production, distribution, and use of media programmes and services. The digitalization of television as presented here is not just the shifts in the technology formats for programme production, distribution and viewing, but, seen more broadly, offers a set of changes and challenges that have been employed by a wide range of actors that introduce elements of continuity and change into every dimension of what we traditionally consider to be television. This broad scope of definition calls for a careful and nuanced conceptualization of what television now is and how and in what ways it is significant.

Television as a medium of seeing at a distance is content and programme genres, technologies and practices of production, distribution, reception and use, as well as industry and institutional arrangements. The configurations different countries have grown used to over the past decades are now under stress and flux at multiple points. We are in a period typified by simultaneous transitions on a number of fronts. It is not clear whether new programme genres, industry structures, technology utilization, and audience and user patterns will emerge and stabilize, or whether the institutional basis for continued and disruptive innovation across various sites that make up 'television' is the new normal.

This discussion starts with the attempt to understand multiple dimensions of this shifting media ecology in production, distribution of audio-visual material (technology, industry organization, public-private roles), and audience and user practices and understandings. For instance, although we are accustomed to broadcast distribution, new modalities such as online servers (YouTube), online streaming sales (iTunes) and box sets of television series have emerged as important distribution modes. At the same time, distribution modes may attract different forms of audience use and enjoyment.

One theme that arises is the importance for any research agenda addressing digital television of the experiences outside the United States, in this case in the United Kingdom, Europe and South Asia (India). The growth of private sector broadcast channels in news and entertainment and the transformation of industry structure in these regions have been astounding, and viewed over the past one or two decades, represent much more radical reorientations than industry developments in the United States.

The significance of these changes is underlined by several chapters' examination of arguments about the morphing and declining quality of the contribution of journalism and news to the public sphere and the civil society communication that supports democratic participation by citizens and underpins democratic governance and institutions (Golding and others). The core concern about the connections between the production and use of journalism and news on one hand, and the public sphere and how media serves citizens' needs for communication and information in democracy on the other, is the problem that animates much of the investigation and discussion in these papers. This normative stance, asking about the significance of television news, is a more useful theoretic and policy starting point than just trying to understand what is going on, in that citizens, groups and governments do have choices to make about the values reflected in their institutions about communication media are designed, deployed and governed (N.B. developments in summer 2011 in the United Kingdom alleging widespread

1. telephone hacking and pay-offs to police by members of the press, shattering
 2. public trust in media and in government). This reflection on the core ques-
 3. tions and reasons for media and communication studies, and what values and
 4. norms orient the questions we explore, remains central to theory and research
 5. concerning digital television.

6. The importance of ongoing creativity in introducing new programme
 7. genres is also highlighted here. While television audiences have been frag-
 8. mented among many channels and among other new audio-visual distri-
 9. bution modes and platforms, new or revived programme genres such as
 10. live performance competitions have drawn in large numbers of the public
 11. through viewing and voting, and displaced scripted drama and comedy from
 12. prime time television programming schedules in many instances. The abil-
 13. ity to structure and communicate compelling stories, whether in short form
 14. clips, longer traditional narratives, or in sports and news, and seek and obtain
 15. attention in a very crowded media environment, remains the driver of audio-
 16. visual media.

17. New applications of media technology and distribution formats are part
 18. of the digital television world. These include professionally produced shows
 19. and user-generated videos posted on sharing sites, as well as downloads
 20. and streaming available for purchase or supported by advertising. This also
 21. includes the numerous small, medium and large screens among which we can
 22. choose from or use at the same time.

23. Another important conclusion arising from reading the overall collection
 24. is the crucial need to retain a sense of indeterminacy in investigating and
 25. trying to understand the shifting media field. Todd Gitlin points to some insti-
 26. tutional continuity and rigidity that masks the changes in television, but these
 27. institutional patterns also shape the possibility of public choice and media
 28. governance. This analysis also points to the historical contingency of the tele-
 29. vision industries, practices and institutions that are often assumed to be the
 30. only models available. It could be that the period from the introduction of
 31. television in the mid-twentieth century, whether in public service models in
 32. much of the world or even in regulated private sector models in the United
 33. States, should be viewed as a special case that was the result of somewhat
 34. unique technology formats, industry structure and historical bargains. They
 35. included modes of centralized production and mass distribution, some sense
 36. of public service even in the terms of licensing of private operators, perceived
 37. and imposed spectrum scarcity, the aggregation of mass audiences, stable
 38. technology platforms for production, distribution and use, and combinations
 39. of advertising, public and subscription revenues.

40. The accretion of small changes that have occurred over the last 30 years
 41. has the net impact of undermining different parts of this model. Is it necessary
 42. to think about the possible disutility of using the television broadcast network
 43. model as a starting point for analysis, in that it may obscure more than it illu-
 44. minates? Cable distribution, modes of programming are cheaper than filmed
 45. drama or comedy, video recorders, sales and rentals of films as videos, direct
 46. to home satellite distribution, online streaming and downloads, and posting
 47. of user-generated videos are just some of the changes that undermined the
 48. network broadcast television model. At the same time, in many parts of the
 49. world new advertising-funded private channels, distributed via satellite to
 50. cable systems and homes, and specialized news, sports and entertainment for
 51. multiple language groups and audience segments, have really taken off in the
 52. last decade, introducing a multichannel universe of private television to many

parts of the world. The modes of operation here do reflect a more traditional television broadcast model, albeit in a multiple channel television universe with fragmented audiences.

The integration of new media platforms into television strategies to build and retain audiences and the greater flexibility in story development necessary to attract niche audiences may mean that some television companies are integrating the processes and tools and networks for continuous 'creative destruction' in their industry. The separation between programme production units and broadcast networks in the past introduced some flexibility into programme production and sales markets, as annual schedules were commissioned or purchased. At the same time, greater uncertainty about audiences and revenues has led to buying programme genres that have been successful in other countries. Distribution networks, although more diverse than in the past, remain the possible bottleneck that will offer some industry participants the opportunity to exercise market power in their dealings with other companies (programme producers, advertisers), or with the public.

The examples here also point to the research disadvantage of academic researchers. Online search companies and those offering video services online constantly track user behaviour, as do e-commerce companies. Web search and other firms design interactive audience research as part of the user experience, and consistently use this information to develop content and design user experiences that may provide a competitive advantage.

What does all this mean for orientating communication and media research on digital television? Readers may not agree with every claim made in this volume, but the questions raised are important, and address some foundational assumptions and challenges in media and television studies.

Certainly, a focus on uses of media and digital audio-visual is the starting point, starting with what audience members are doing and what audience members are doing with media. Are content and stories still the drivers of user practices, whether in viewing audio-visual or in database-driven services? The book also highlights the importance of technologies of production, distribution, use in allowing for certain industry offerings and user experiences. Multi-nodal networks versus the single broadcasting model will be more difficult to track and understand, especially for those who do not have insider resources. Broadcast television networks are still central, but related to, supported by and in support of multiple media platforms and channels.

Hence, the studies here underline the continued need for research into what is actually going, what are industry players, audiences, governments and users doing? They also highlight the importance of selecting evaluative criteria in such examinations. While the story of digital television is in part about new ways to tell stories that are fictional and non-fictional, it is not just about new ways to make money.

One contribution of this book might be to view some other new media as television, and bring in some of the genre, industry, institutional and audience concerns that have arguably been lost in the rush to explore new forms of interactivity.

If readers can take away an overarching theory of this change, or an overarching theory of where we are now, it would be recognition of the multi-dimensional and ongoing nature of changes in the field of digital television. While this is less satisfying than a single technical change, political economy or cultural studies explanation, this is perhaps the most useful theoretic guide possible.

CONTRIBUTOR DETAILS

Stephen D. McDowell is John H. Phipps Professor and Director of the School of Communication at Florida State University, USA. His teaching interests are new communication technology and society, mass media telecommunications policy, and international communication.

Contact:

E-mail: smcdowell@fsu.edu

DIGITAL DIVIDES IN EUROPE. CULTURE, POLITICS AND THE WESTERN-SOUTHERN DIVIDE, PANAYIOTA TSATSOU (2011)

Bern: Peter Lang, 286 pp.,

ISBN 978-3-0343-0189-3, p/bk, £37.50

Reviewed by Tom Evens

Increasingly, information and communication technologies and services (ICTS) are moving to the heart of today's economy and society, which have come to known as the Knowledge Economy and the Information Society, respectively, in literature. Economies and societies are undergoing a fundamental transformation as information, delivered and managed over network infrastructure, are gaining importance. The establishment of this Information Society (and the creation of a single Digital Market) is high on the European political agenda. However, a significant part of the European population is still not able to participate in this Information Society and cannot benefit from the externalities of this information-driven society as they lack access to or the required skills to make use of the (broadband) Internet. This book, *Digital divides in Europe. Culture, Politics and the Western-Southern Divide*, deals with this hotly debated subject of participatory gaps and specifically addresses the divide between European countries. Instead of a techno-economic perspective on digital divides, the author applies a bottom-up, two-way account of digital divides and highlights the influence of the sociocultural and public policy context on the persisting inclusion/exclusion gaps within Europe.

After an introductory part, which contains the scope and goal of the book, the work proposes a theoretical framework that goes beyond the traditional drivers of digital divides (namely socio-economic status, infrastructure access and technology use) and instead places the digital divide in a sociocultural and decision-making framework. According to the author, this 'complex set of societal cultures with their gaps and disparities, as well as policy and regulatory mindsets and practices are in a constant dialogue with technology, influencing digital inclusion and participation' (244). One major contribution of this book is that it moves beyond the 'access debate', and examines how digital divides are socially contextualized as well as shaped by policy and regulatory practices that might structure this sociocultural context. Whereas digital divide research used to emphasize equipment and infrastructure inequalities and disparities between different groups of people, digital divides have been increasingly contextualized in a broader sociocultural framework during recent years. Although this

strand originally focused on socio-demographic causes and effects (e.g. income and age as explaining variables), people's everyday lives and information needs become increasingly acknowledged in current ICT research. This more sociological perspective thus complements the earlier access debates and provides a more thorough understanding of the digital divide complexity.

In brief, the sociological theorization of digital divides presented in this book is built upon three major blocks. First, the conceptual framework relies on Schutz's concept of 'everyday lifeworld' albeit with a broader scope. The author stresses that digital divides could be examined by looking how users and non-users deal with the position and meaning of ICT usage in people's daily lives. Whereas Schutz attributes human agency with autonomy from structural conditions, this book identifies the influence of external social and power relations (and their interactions with individual agents). Second, the framework refers to Bauer's work on 'resistance' to technology and links this concept of 'technophobia' to resistant elements of social culture (e.g. conservatism, traditionalism, etc.). Resistance to technology not only helps to explain behavioural patterns (e.g. Internet use or non-use) but also attitudes to technologies (such as the Internet). This implies that resistance is not only due to technology design, but may have underlying sociocultural forces. Third, the importance of more structural conditions complementing the abovementioned sociocultural forces is recognized by scrutinizing policies and regulatory practices. Since these policies and regulatory practices are to be understood within a complex sociocultural context, they also help explaining existing inequalities and disparities in the development and adoption of digital technology. Summarized, the book suggests studying digital divides from sociocultural and decision-making perspective in order to fully understand its drivers. This conceptual framework focusing on historical, sociocultural, and policy and regulatory conditions may thus help explaining the development and user adoption of the Internet across Europe and beyond.

Further in the book, this conceptual framework is applied to the so-called western-southern divide in Europe. Indeed, Europe is marked by disparate rates of ICT development and adoption, with the Internet in particular having strong regional dimensions. Although digital divides appear within countries, this book aims at exploring the western-southern divide in Europe and includes individual cases of digital divides. Since the best performers are mainly western/northern European countries and southern European countries perform below EU-average, countries from South Europe (Greece and Portugal) and western Europe (United Kingdom) were selected and examined, both in a quantitative and qualitative way. By providing a lot of statistical data about ICT development, investments, revenues and e-inclusion indicators in the selected countries, this longitudinal account of digital divides across Europe empirically illustrates the role of decision-making and sociocultural contexts on digital divides (policies and regulations seem to influence digital divides to a smaller extent than social culture). The book provides strong evidence for different rates of ICT development and adoption between western and southern European countries, but also reveals remarkable variations between Greece and Portugal. These findings suggest that future studies of digital divides in Europe could look beyond the simplistic western-southern nexus and could also consider intra-regional and even intra-national nuances to assess the political and sociocultural character of digital divides. Such meaningful insights into the sociocultural and political forces that drive digital divides across Europe (and also affect

the establishment of the Information Society) are undoubtedly one of the main contributions of this book.

Basically, this theoretical two-way model has been developed and validated for studying the 'digital divide', but might also serve as a methodological framework for assessing the disparate rates of development and adoption of digital technologies other than the Internet. Within the scope of this journal, the application and even the further extension of the model to digital television could be a useful research opportunity. What counts for the Internet, may also be true for digital television services. In addition to a pure market-based approach, this framework can help to explain the uneven course of digital television penetration between countries by looking at media consumption habits and more general sociocultural traditions, but also by scrutinizing the role of policies and regulations in the promotion of competition, investments and technological innovation in the market. In several countries, governments played an active role in the development of digital television as part of a wider digital divide policy. By providing public information via digital television set-top boxes, it was thought that this new technology would bridge the digital divide and contribute to the establishment of the Information Society. This technology-driven belief, however, proved way too optimistic since the rather passive television consumption is totally different from the more active 'search, browse and click' experience the Internet demands. Therefore, a more sociological view on ICT development and adoption certainly makes sense and could provide new insights in the challenges many countries face in assisting viewers to migrate to digital television systems.

CONTRIBUTOR DETAILS

Tom Evens works as a researcher at the Research Group for Media & ICT (IBBT-MICT) at Ghent University, Belgium. His research focuses on new media economics, changing business models and the implications for public and private policy.

Contact:

E-mail: tom.evens@ugent.be

FACE THE FUTURE: TOOLS FOR THE MODERN MEDIA AGE – THE INTERNET AND JOURNALISM TODAY, JOHN MAIR AND RICHARD LANCE KEEBLE (EDS) (2011)

UK: Abramis Academic Publishing, 341 pp.,

ISBN 978 1 84549 483 4, p/bk, £17.95

Reviewed by Giles Tanner

Suppose you have a friend or relative who wants to be a journalist. What would you advise them to do? If they plan to study journalism at university, you might want to warn them it's the extracurricular stuff that will clinch them a job – as true now as it was 30 years ago. But while a year spent editing the university newspaper might have done the trick in those days, times have changed.

Josh Halliday recently scored a job at Britain's *Guardian* newspaper. 'Changes in the predominant routes into journalism could hardly be starker', he told the *Face the Future* conference in November 2010:

Students will get short shrift pounding the pavements of Fleet Street, but on Twitter – where access to senior media executives is but a 140-character burst away – a potential way in is just around the corner.

While he studied journalism, Halliday was also serving an unpaid apprenticeship in the new world of online social media and Twitter. Apart from hard graft, his tips are to network like mad and 'become invaluable'. 'First step is [to decide] what you want to be known for, and that is branding', he told conference attendees.

The Internet allows the hungry would-be journalist to bypass the traditional filters of social connections, class and geography and publish material online that could quite easily make it before the eyes of a potential employer. Halliday recommends mapping out interests and researching the market. If you cannot think of a better niche, you can always go 'hyper-local'. Opportunity, when it knocks, might be as simple as a professional journalist linking to an interesting posting.

The very concept of branding implies an entrepreneurial streak that is hardly native to most twentieth-century varieties of investigative journalism, but Halliday's message to would-be journalists is that an entrepreneurial streak is becoming 'nigh-on essential'. Coyly, he wonders whether he could have got his job anyway, without bothering with a journalism degree.

So here's a left-field suggestion for the aspiring journalist in 2011: why not do statistics instead?

The Google economist Hal Varian has predicted that the job of statistician will be a 'sexy' one to have in the next ten years. Oliver Snoddy, from the US corporate communications consultant Doremus, told the conference this was nowhere more relevant than in journalism, where material from leaks, and information released by governments and NGOs, is increasingly providing grist for 'data mining journalists'.

In the spirit of 'if you can't beat 'em, join 'em', Ian Reeves, a 'hackademic', or ex-journalist now teaching at a university, wonders whether a future would-be journalist ought simply to study computer programming:

Is the divide between 'hacks' and 'hackers' narrowing? Does the emerging category of 'programmer-journalist' have an important role to play?

Unfortunately, Reeves finds little consensus amongst digitally literate journalists in the United Kingdom about what the 'core set' of programming skills might contain. Indeed, there are suggestions that it might be more practical for media organizations to assemble multidisciplinary teams of programmers and journalists. But for the would-be programmer-journalist, tertiary training options are already at hand. Columbia Journalism School, in the United States, has recently launched a new Master's programme in conjunction with the university's computer science department, with students splitting their time 50/50 between traditional journalism skills and computer science.

All these suggestions can be found in a recent collection of essays by media practitioners, journalism academics and students, drawn from *Face the Future*, the Third Coventry Conversations, BBC College of Journalism International

1. Conference, held in Coventry in November 2010. The conference was entirely
 2. devoted to the most-recent-but-one crisis to engulf the journalistic profession
 3. in the United Kingdom. To quote co-editor John Mair:

4.
 5. This collection of essays [...] is unashamedly about the future of
 6. journalism – if it has one! The internet is just twenty years old but has been
 7. the Great Disruptor of our age. No more so than in journalism worldwide.
 8.

9. If the collection has a theme, it is the profound way social media are trans-
 10. forming the practice of journalism even as the Internet is destroying the reve-
 11. nue model of the traditional home of long-form investigative journalism, the
 12. newspaper.

13. Until the Global Financial Crisis, the claim that newspapers might actually
 14. vanish altogether was regularly trotted out as an example of the hyperbolic
 15. claims of Internet boosters. That was until newspapers started disappearing,
 16. particularly in the United States. While a measure of stability has returned,
 17. the continuing spectacle of the survivors shedding skilled journalists and sub-
 18. editors, rationalizing art departments, or exploring increased syndication and
 19. outsourcing has prompted an understandable crisis of confidence inside the
 20. journalism training industry.

21. One of the highlights of *Face the Future* is its affectionate and insightful
 22. pieces on how the British regional and local press has fared in the global storm.
 23. In perhaps the best of them, researcher and former newspaper editor Neil
 24. Fowler gives a snapshot of an industry in inexorable, demographically driven
 25. decline that still employs about 10,000 journalists and enjoys a substantial
 26. readership. Advertiser-supported print journalism, writes Fowler, is caught in
 27. a pincer movement between the financial downturn and the Internet, with the
 28. industry's share of total UK advertising spend plunging from 20 per cent to
 29. 11.6 per cent in the four years from 2005 and 2009. Circulation has also declined,
 30. though less dramatically: older readers have taken up some of the slack by
 31. paying higher cover prices. Fowler comments that younger readers source their
 32. news from elsewhere – either from the free dailies or the BBC online.

33. The industry has reacted with strong cost-cutting measures and further
 34. investment in free titles, and has belatedly embraced the Web; it remains a
 35. major employer of journalists, and Fowler is unaware of any region of the
 36. United Kingdom without local professional journalists. But he sees no consen-
 37. sus on what the future revenue model will look like. Significant revenue has
 38. not yet followed any innovation to date. He believes the free availability of
 39. online news is here to stay, but the business model of advertiser-funded news
 40. is still alive and may survive in the long term.

41. A ray of hope for newspapers is that consumers seeking news online typi-
 42. cally go to the websites of the traditional mass media. In Australia last year,
 43. the successful fusion of *The Guardian's* newspaper and digital operations was
 44. the subject of an influential talk by *Guardian* editor Alan Rusbridger, in which
 45. he examined the splintering of the Fourth Estate as the World Wide Web and
 46. social media joined the broadcast and print 'wings' of journalism. *Face the Future*
 47. reproduces an extract from this lecture in its chapter on Twitter, but it is worth
 48. reading the whole piece for Rusbridger's larger thesis (Rusbridger 2010).

49. So I was surprised to learn that the most popular news website in the
 50. United Kingdom today actually belongs to the 'Bible of Middle England', the
 51. *Daily Mail*. A quick sounding of the *Mail Online's* almost bottomless front
 52. page suggests an overwhelming preponderance of celebrity and human

interest stories, with eye-catching headlines and a bit of 'flame-bait' – posts deliberately published to provoke strong reactions. Though it has around 35 per cent of the United Kingdom's online newspaper traffic, its online-generated revenues are reported to be small – Carson cites industry estimates of anywhere between £10 and £50m.

Steep declines in revenue as newspaper mastheads transition from print to the Web may not be fatal to the advertiser-supported news model, as overheads will also fall dramatically. All the same, neither Fowler nor Carson seems entirely confident that there will always be sufficient revenues to draw readers in with compelling content, or whether we are observing a death spiral.

At the same time as job opportunities for traditional journalists are drying up, the new social media have become indispensable tools for anyone aspiring to become or remain a journalist. In a remarkably short time, social media sites, such as Twitter and YouTube, and new investigation techniques, such as crowd-sourcing, have transformed the way news is gathered and stories are broken. If you are lucky enough to score a job interview, Dan Bennett's essay in the section '140 Characters that are changing the world' might help you sound like a digital native as you field the inevitable question about Twitter.

A Ph.D. student at London's King's College, Bennett argues that the true 'Twitter revolution' has occurred in newsrooms. He recaps the history of Twitter's emergence, in less than five years, as an essential tool of journalists, and then patiently unpicks a couple of common scenarios for its use: in relation to major breaking news stories, and day-to-day – as an increasingly indispensable journalist's tool for sourcing and exchanging information and spotting new developments as they occur.

If Twitter is a tool, blogging holds out the potential for journalists to reach a mass audience without the need for a newspaper or TV station employer. Charles Miller, a producer at the BBC College of Journalism, estimates that there are over 150 million bloggers online, but only a minority of professional bloggers attract most of the readership, some of them appearing in substantial, advertiser-supported web magazines such as *Engadget*.

Miller interviewed four successful journalist bloggers to see to what extent the Internet had contributed to their editorial and financial freedom and career success; in one case (Nikki Finke) blogging appears to have led to considerable personal wealth. (Before you try this at home, be warned that Finke is a Hollywood journalist, specializing in movie and television industry news.)

The Internet also gives journalists and their employers a much better idea of their audiences than in the past. Oliver Snoddy sees technology driving journalism and marketing in a similar direction and the necessary skills of each industry converging on one another. Individuals and, increasingly, their smart devices are casting a revealing 'digital shadow' of who and where they are and what they are thinking and doing. The result is what he calls 'massive, passive' data sets: data created from everyday, low-involvement actions. These are ripe for analysis by professional influencers such as marketers and news organizations:

Put simply, 'massive, passive' data analysis can tell us what people really think and feel in real time, which is highly valuable to a journalist [...]
Access to and mastery of real-time data is going to be a clear source of competitive advantage in journalism, as it is in marketing.

1. If Snoddy's vision has a slightly Orwellian flavour, Malcolm Coles, a 'search
 2. engine optimization consultant', has some simple tips for ordinary journal-
 3. ists to maximize the likelihood that people seeking out news on the Internet
 4. will seek out their version of the news, just by using a range of free tools
 5. and websites. (For example, why not let Google's Autocomplete function
 6. tell you what people think of politicians and celebrities? Just type '(person's
 7. name) is' into Google and amuse yourself seeing what comes up.)

8. In a choice of illustration that should be instructive for the would-be
 9. journalist, Coles considers the case of *Dr Who* girl Karen Gillan, tracking the
 10. propensity of British males to view underwear shots of the actress online and
 11. concluding that interest spikes for very short periods, usually following episodes
 12. of *Dr Who* and before other distractions, such as the football, can intercede.

13. Should we be concerned if newspapers die?

14. The last two decades in my own country, Australia, have seen major
 15. changes in the geographic distribution of professional electronic media jour-
 16. 17. nalists, as regional broadcasting is increasingly hubbed out of major centres.
 18. This has often left professional journalism in smaller communities to local
 19. newspapers, with some help from the taxpayer-funded Australian Broadcasting
 20. Corporation. What would happen to local news coverage if we were to trade
 21. the cow of professional newspaper journalism for the handful of magic beans
 22. that is the blogosphere and the World Wide Web? Will local issues increas-
 23. 24. ingly fly under the radar of investigative journalism, and at what cost to
 25. democracy?

26. A strength of *Face the Future* is its breadth of views on so-called 'citizen',
 27. activist and community journalism online, though none have the panache of
 28. this blogger:

29. As a bit of a reality check, when was the last time you encountered a 'citizen
 30. doctor', valued a report by a 'citizen researcher', took off in a plane flown
 31. by a 'citizen pilot' or saw justice meted out by (a) 'citizen policeman'?

(Farmer 2006)

32. There is nothing in *Face the Future* to suggest that armies of volunteers are
 33. about to do to investigative journalism what Wikipedia has done to the
 34. encyclopaedia industry, or at least not in countries where the media are
 35. reasonably free. Indeed, what is striking in the essays is the importance of
 36. professional journalists to much that is worthwhile in volunteer-, activist- and
 37. citizen-based initiatives online. Many professional journalists have a passion
 38. for what they do, and some need other outlets in addition to what their
 39. paymasters are able to provide.

40. This pervasive volunteerism itself poses challenges for the professional
 41. teaching of journalism by universities, as John Mair and Peter Wooldridge
 42. reflect in their essay at the end of the book. They appropriate the term 'gift
 43. economy' to describe the wealth of free advice, information and mentoring
 44. now available online both from institutions, such as universities and the BBC,
 45. and individual professionals. Of the BBC Academy and the BBC College of
 46. Journalism (bbb.co.uk/journalism), they observe:

47. [...] if undergraduate journalism students discovered it, most would stop
 48. paying their university tuition fees! 'BBC Cojo', as it is already known,
 49. has in just a year of existence put out there in cyberspace enough
 50. instructional videos to at least kick off a broadcasting career.

Face the Future is striking for the wealth of different perspectives it offers on a profession and its teachers in tertiary institutions dealing with the transformative and disruptive power of the Internet. Overseas readers should not be deterred by the collection's mainly British focus.

In Australia this September, when the federal government announced an independent media enquiry to focus on print media regulation, including online publications, and the operation of the local newspaper self-regulatory body, it immediately faced charges of targeting News Limited, which dominates the Australian newspaper market, in the wake of revelations emerging from the phone-hacking scandal in Britain. Similarly, the terms of reference for the enquiry take note of 'the technological change that is leading to the migration of print media to digital and online platforms' and include for consideration:

The impact of this technological change on the business model that has supported the investment by traditional media organisations in quality journalism and the production of news, and how such activities can be supported, and diversity enhanced, in the changed media environment.

(Conroy 2011)

Notwithstanding the unique features of UK journalism, notably the power of the BBC, the themes of Mair and Keeble's volume are of global relevance.

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CONTRIBUTOR DETAILS

Giles Tanner is the General Manager, Digital Transition Division at the Australian Communications and Media Authority. Until 2005 he was the General Manager of the Australian Broadcasting Authority, and he has worked more recently on public resource management, notably management of the radio frequency spectrum. He is currently working on television digitization and allocating the spectrum 'digital dividend'. The views in this article are his own.

Contact:

E-mail: giles.tanner@acma.gov.au