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‘Disruption’ in UK journalism education? A study of narratives of resilience[1]

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Abstract

This paper examines the narratives of journalism relevant to journalism education from the perspective of those who ‘do’ journalism education in the UK. It draws on interviews with twelve individuals between 2006 and 2016 from within two distinct groups, both of which share a professional interest in journalism education: journalism educators with the UK Higher Education sector, and former practicing journalists from within the industry who have a particular interest in journalism education, either as employers or trainers within the industry. Drawing on Bourdieu’s field theory (Bourdieu 1990; Benson 1998; Benson & Neveu 2005) and Carlson’s theory of metajournalistic discourse (Carlson, 2015) the interviews highlight what Mensing (2011) describes as ‘industry-centred journalism education’ as being particularly resilient in the English HE sector. Despite reflexive notions of ‘digital disruption’ from within centres of journalism education, the practice driven, industry orientated approach to journalism education remains remarkably resilient over time.

Keywords: Journalism education and training; theory versus practice; vocationalism; disruption

INTRODUCTION

This research explores the perceptions, experiences and values of journalism educators within the UK HEI sector and those within the journalism industry itself. The paper draws on Bourdieu’s field theory, as rehearsed by Benson (1998; Benson & Neveu 2005) and Matt Carlson’s conception of metajournalistic discourse (Carlson 2015) to examine one of the essential problematics within journalism education in the UK – the so-called theory versus practice divide (Harcup 2011). Such a schism is well covered in the literature (Brown 1974; Reese 1999; Reese & Cohen 2000; Dickson 2000; Deuze 2006; Terzis 2009; Franklin and Mensing, 2011; Harcup 2011) and to borrow from Alasdair MacIntyre (1988) is an issue of ‘competing rationalities’ in which journalism education is seen either in essentially practical or intellectual terms. Despite the abundance of interest in this debate, in his survey of journalism education research (2006: 30), Mark Deuze has suggested that still more needs to be done to “re-ignite ‘old’ debates about what journalism is and should be and postulate

concepts, models and theories accordingly". It seems that these 'old' debates show no sign of moving forward and it is the resilience of vocationalism or industry centred narratives that is the central focus of this paper.

Using Bourdieu to inform his analysis of media studies and field theory, Rodney Benson (1998) has explored the formation of the journalistic field also in relation to how it functions in with reference to the larger field of power. Bourdieu's analysis frames society as being "structured around the opposition between two poles: economic power and cultural power – the latter being the weaker" (Benson 1998: 464) Benson suggests that "field theory […] locates journalism in its immediate structural environment, the ensemble of fields - politics, social sciences and journalism, that compete to impose the legitimate vision of the social world" within this larger field of power (Benson 1998: 466). What is important here is that at this juncture the journalistic field lies predominantly (but not exclusively) closer to the pole of economic and political power that the academic field. Within the context of this research, exploring the dynamics of journalism as a social practice this notion of field is connected to the "disposition" or habitus of journalism as a profession that prioritises technical skills over more nuanced and reflexive attributes. This perspective is enhanced by drawing on Carlson's notion of 'metajournalistic discourse' which "proposes [such] discourse to be a site in which actors publicly engage in processes of establishing definitions, setting boundaries, and rendering judgements about journalism's legitimacy" (Carlson 2015: 2). To complement the collection of papers in this special edition, this paper draws on these conceptual approaches to provide an understanding of the disruptive terrain of journalism education within the journalism industry and academic in the UK.

Based upon interviews with twelve journalism educators from within industry and higher education between 2006 and 2016 this paper highlights three narratives of resilience which indicate the ongoing durability of traditional normative foundations (Steel 2016). The interviews highlight what Mensing (2010) describes as 'industry-centred journalism education' which play a significant role in informing the normative basis of journalism education primarily because of the highly competitive journalism education marked in the UK HE sector (Mensing 2010). Moreover, in Bourdieuian terms, this paper identifies a strengthening of the journalistic field, as instrumentalist vocational values entrenched within outmoded normative claims (Steel 2016) become increasingly resistant to alteration. The

overall findings of this research reinforce Michael Bromley's observations that "while retaining the potential for resistance, opposition and negotiation, and for cultivating alternatives in practice, [journalism education] is chiefly concerned with the unproblematic reproduction of the existing labour force" (Bromley 2009: 29). The paper also adds nuance to this claim by providing insight into the ways in which such values – expressed as narratives - are articulated within the range of pedagogic repertoires and rationales. In other words, this study presents the discursive components of the tensions, or 'disruptions' as perceived and experienced by journalism educators within and outside the academy.

CONTEXT OF THE DEBATE

Even though 'disruption' has affected journalism educators (Brown 1974; Carey 1974; Haas 2006; Lugo-Ocando 2015), narratives invoking notions of journalistic professional identity and the requirements of industry, remain remarkably resilient (Lee-Wright *et al* 2011, Drok 2012; Hanitzsch & Müller 2009). The challenge for journalism education within the UK Higher Education Sector is to ensure students get the necessary practical grounding in journalism in tandem whilst ensuring that these skills, and the output that emerges from the deployment of these skills, are framed within critically reflective scholarly discourse. In other words, to ensure that journalism skills are taught within a broader critical framework which draws on long established academic disciplines in the social sciences, humanities and other cognate fields of intellectual inquiry. With the emergence of the discipline of journalism studies (Conboy 2013), one might have thought that the difficulties of reconciling these two elements of journalism education would be relatively easily overcome. Within a university setting, whether it be a university in the UK, in France or the US, the application of scholarly principles to any intellectual endeavour should never be up for question. As Theodore Glasser (2006) suggests in his assertion that the essential elements of a journalism education within a university context

> "involves the study of journalism, an enterprise that benefits students not because it provides a foundation for the practice of journalism but because it provides a context in which to critique and improve the practice of journalism" (Glasser 2006: 149).

Yet within this debate we see divergent notions of what 'good' journalism education entails and for what purpose. Such normative considerations are paramount if we are to take a 'disruptive approach' to discussing journalism. In exploring the perspectives of those who work in journalism education in industry and the academy we may develop a deeper sense of the particular dynamics of resilience and change and the disruption therein.

Controversy surrounding future directions of journalism education gained particular prominence when Lee Bollinger attempt to transform the curriculum at Columbia University's Journalism School in 2003. As Adam suggests, "Bollinger sought to forge a strong relationship between the principle disciplines of the university and journalism" (Adam 2006: 153). In the UK as well, the creation of an amenable 'balance' between the teaching of journalism as a *practice* or *craft* and the teaching of *journalism studies* as a reflective, historically situated and theoretically orientated academic subject, has been one of the key areas of contention within journalism education (Skinner *et al* 2001; Delano 2008; Blom & Davenport 2012; Donsbach 2014). The pressure on journalism programmes to turn out technically competent, smart and inquisitive graduates who can write well and who have a tenacious attitude for finding things out is significant. Schools and departments of journalism are of course under immense pressure to ensure that their students meet the requirements of an industry in which competition for jobs is high. Figures published 2015 on the Journalism.co.uk website, show that for every job in journalism there are approaching four graduates competing for the jobs, this is despite a slight increase in the number of journalism jobs available in 2015 (Anon 2015). Within the English HE sector university fees for home undergraduate students is currently £9k per year. In a competitive environment in which there are almost 60 HEIs in the UK offering journalism courses, providing value for money and being seen to be doing so is imperative. This means of course, though not guaranteeing a job at the end of the degree, journalism schools and departments need to give students the best possible chance of getting their dream job and this tends to achieved by explicitly tailoring the content of programmes to the requirements of industry. This not only involves selling their programmes to prospective students and their parents, it also means that departments have to sell their programmes to industry as well (Bigi 2012).

METHOD

This paper provides a qualitative account of the perceptions and experiences of individuals who had, at the time of interview, a professional concern with journalism education. For the purposes of this study, the twelve participants in the study have been organised in terms of their role and experience of journalism education and summarised as follows: a) Journalism educators within British HEIs who have no professional background in journalism; b) journalism educators within British HEIs who have a professional background in journalism; c) journalism educators within news organisations; and d) journalists or former journalists who have expressed a professional interest in journalism education. The range of experience of the participants range from just a few years to over forty years in journalism and/or journalism education (see table 1). All but one of the respondents have worked as a journalist at some point in their careers. Respondents reflected the full range of professional profile of journalists – from junior reporter on a local newspaper to senior editor on a national title or broadcast news editor.

	Background	Years as Journalist	Years as Educator
R1	b	+15	+20
R2	b	+15	+20
R3	c	+15	-5
R4	b	+20	+15
R5	a	-	+30
R6	c	+10	+10
R7	c	+10	+10
R8	c	+20	+5
P9	b	+25	+20
R10	d	+30	-5
R11	b	-5	-5
R12	b	+15	+10

Table 1. *Key: a) Journalism educator within British HEIs who have no professional background in journalism; b) journalism educator within British HEIs who have a professional background in journalism; c) journalism educator within news organisations; and d) journalist or former journalist who have a professional interest in journalism education.*

Interviews were conducted between November 2006 and January 2016 utilising a semi-structured approach (Saljo 1997) in order to allow for participants to be a detailed and descriptive as possible in their responses. Of course there are limitations to small scale projects such as this that derive their substantive evidence from a relatively small number of interviews. However, the point of this work is not to gauge the perspectives of an industry as a whole, rather to capture the perceptions and experiences of journalism educators in order emphasise nuance as well as resilience of these perspectives; nuance that would arguably be lost in larger scale surveys. The interview process followed a set schedule of questions that were used to frame the discussion and provide focus in specific areas. The questions were framed within a phenomenographic approach to qualitative research developed by Marton and Saljo (1998; Saljo 1997). This method places the perceptions and experiences of those interviewed at the centre of the research process, thus for this research enabling an insight into the world of journalism educators from industry and the academy. As Carlson (2015: 5) notes "[m]aking sense of this discursive environment requires attention to the conditions of journalism, the actors involved, and the interpretive process at work". It also allows for the participants to scope out the boundaries of their particular field (Deuze 2005; Eldridge 2013; Carlson 2015).

The interviews began with the researcher asking the participant to outline their interests and background in journalism and/or journalism education as well as number of years active (see fig. 1). They were then prompted to talk about what they considered to be the key issues in journalism education from their perspective. This question was used to encouraged participants to consider the main challenges and opportunities within journalism and journalism education as they perceived them so as to get a sense of their role as educators in relation to 'disruption' in journalism education or as change agents themselves. This question was followed up by encouraging participants to discuss the relationship between journalism education in industry and the academy and their thoughts on, what has been and arguably continues to be, contested spaces. This question in particular sought to explore the aforementioned schism between the more vocationally orientated approaches to journalism education with those that place a greater emphasis on the social science and humanities scholarship in journalism, media and communication studies. Participants were also asked to present a view on what makes a good journalist, framed in terms of exploring

the notion of a journalistic ethos. Again, this provided the respondents with an opportunity to emphasise their normative priorities and scope out the parameters of their field and how it might be cultivated in the next generation of journalists.

FINDINGS: ARTICULATING THE DIVIDE

Training versus education

The relationship between teaching theory and practice is one that has been the focus for academic developers since the mid 1990's. Yet as Glasser (2006) reminds us it is something that even Aristotle was concerned about in his theory of '*phronesis*' meaning the practical knowledge emerging from both practice and experience. Educational research in particular has proved a rich source of reflective scholarship on this aspect of learning and teaching (Prosser & Trigwell, 1999). Within journalism education, this more reflective approach to teaching and learning have been identified in previous studies (McDevitt 2000; Brandon 2002; Wasserman 2005; Steel *et al* 2007; Heinrich 2011; Clark 2013). Yet amongst those interviewed from within industry the emphasis on practical skills or 'craft' was seen as highly important without any indication that this 'craft' might be a social practice within a particular 'field' that is deserving of abstract theorisation or critical reflection on the part of those learning this craft. As the interview material demonstrates, the dominant discourse from former and practicing journalists training students within industry were: 'teach the skills, and leave the rest to us'; 'academic content is really not that important as a broad knowledge of history and current affairs'; 'the better journalists are those either without a degree or those who have degrees outside of media/communication/journalism studies'. Interestingly within such sentiments the word 'education' was rarely used, rather 'training' was the term used to describe the development of journalism learning. A key element of this narrative was the view that university was a good filter for companies as it picked up the brightest young people that would then be picked up by industry. This filtering and the acquisition of key practical skills seemed what people wanted from the academy as this respondent indicates:

> *"I mean from our perspective if the institutions can do one thing above all it's to teach people the basic core skills of journalism, it's not rocket science, it's recognising a story and being able to tell it simply using good English in a very straightforward way."* (R3)

This same respondent, when asked if the more academic components of a student's university education were equally if not more important replied:

> *"Not as much as the craft aspect of it really. I mean when we're recruiting people for placements and for jobs we are looking at rounded individuals and people with a world view, people with a point of view, people able to argue a case, people willing and able to take initiatives but also work as a member of a team."* (R3)

Similarly, any attempt at theorising journalism is often derided as being unnecessary in a journalism degree and more at home in the much derided 'media studies' (Murdock & Golding 2015). The implication being that if students wanted to analyse texts or reflect on the social construction of news then they should do a media studies degree as this industry based journalism educator suggests:

> *"people like me and numerous of my colleagues say "oh well we don't really want these Media Studies people […] our hearts sink when they say that "I can contextualise a programme", "ok, fine, can you write, can you meet a deadline?"."* (R8)

Indeed, journalism and media studies was perceived by a number of respondents as something of a cash cow for universities (Delano, 2008) rather than an attempt to understand the practices and products of journalism as this comment sarcastically emphasises:

> *"Well we seem to produce good journalists… before Journalism Studies was ever thought of we seemed to produce excellent journalists, how did we do that?"* (R8)

From the perspective of some of those working in the academy, the focus was slightly different. For them journalism education was much more than the honing of specific skills of journalism. For them, good journalism education is about encouraging the student to go beyond the practice of journalism and towards a broader and deeper level of awareness of the contexts of journalism. Understanding journalism as a social construct. Yet despite this ambition this respondent suggests that the schism between skills and higher learning remains remarkably resilient.

> *"I think there's still an unresolved tension between people who think the purpose of journalism education is to teach the how to, versus those who see journalism*

education as a place to think the why, the what ifs and the what can we learn from practice." (R10)

There is also the perception amongst some of the former journalists teaching in the academy that the perceived resistance from the industry is in part down to insecurity and short sightedness about possible future directions of the industry. Holding on to the traditional values at the expense of innovation in learning and teaching seemed to resonate in a number of interviews with former journalist academics. The so-called 'tyranny' of shorthand seemed to animate this element of the discussion:

"…it's more and more of a sacred cow if you like, an icon, a style of training and education that now I think is seriously out of date and it's just being held up by a range of editors who didn't get degrees themselves, don't fully understand what that means and frankly will all be out to the dogs in ten years' time anyway." (R4)

From within the academy, organisations like the National Council for the Training of Journalists (NCTJ) and the Broadcasting Journalism Training Council (BJTC) seemed to be identified as the source of much of the pressure being placed on the curriculum. Because of competition for students, many universities teaching journalism programmes use accreditation as markers of prestige as their accredited programmes provide 'industry relevant' learning that is purportedly demanded by students. Speaking about the NCTJ's perspective on journalism and scholastic approaches to journalism studies, this respondent succinctly identifies the gulf:

"They see it as a craft the university see it as a profession. They see it as skill based we see it as ideas driving practice. They see it as a training we see it as an education. But I think they have an incredibly narrow view of journalism too and I think ultimately it's a market driven view. What they want to do is to prepare people uncritically to deliver what's necessary to sell a product in a market place called News – and that's all they want and they're happy to skill it down until that's all it requires." (R5)

The extracts cited above do seem to be reflective of an awareness of a gulf between the requirements of industry and the ethos of the university. Yet it is argued that the university sector should meet the needs of industry, with some help from industry:

"And so I think there is a responsibility on the one hand on the universities to, whilst respecting their academic integrity, to recognise the demands of industry, and there's also a responsibility on the industry to help it as much as possible." (R7)

The Challenge of Technology

Technology and its impact on how journalists go about their work was seen as a massive challenge for journalism educators. 'Digital disruption' or 'managing how technology is impacting on the sector' was largely seen by journalists and the majority of ex-journalists, as shaping the journalism education curriculum, as this respondent suggests:

"I think the period we are living through at the moment is seismic, I think it's bigger than any of that because it affects the way we research, it affects the way we set stories up, it affects everything we touch really from intake right through to production." (R3)

The disruptive aspect of technology is also evident in this respondent's thinking:

"you do want people that kind of feel very comfortable with the technology and also don't feel that they're going to turn round and say "I don't do this and I don't do that". Because with convergence the demarcation is going to be blurred so much anyway." (R7)

The pace of change in particular was something that industry based educators thought that universities need to keep up with. The pressure is perceived as immense as one respondent suggests you must "embrace the change or die" (R3). Similarly, another industry based educator suggests that one of the roles of good journalism education is "making people feel that they're at the cutting edge, that they really understand what's coming up because it all changes so fast." (R7) Another respondent noted that with the prevelance social media in particular, both industry and the university sector need to be aware of the benefits and drawbacks of the use of social media by citizens.

"The fact that we know that these channels are valuable but they can be very good; they can be very bad as well, entirely misleading. If that's what our society is going to be based on, I think it's very important that we understand that and try and teach that." (R10)

There's clearly a sense here that good journalism education needs to ensure that students need to be aware of the broader implications of technology and to engage in meaningful analyses of how technology might be disrupting the traditional media landscape beyond recognition. The respondent continues:

> *"Many people who do journalism courses now may never work for a news organisation, they may only work for themselves, and they might do very well too. The jury is still out though as to whether it is still possible to make a living on those ventures." (R10)*

From an academic perspective, the role and impact of new technologies was largely seen in terms of a discourse of how the industry is being led by a technocentric market orientated ethic. Rather than a focus on getting to grips with the forever changing gadgetry of journalism.

> *"The web is, for all it's glory, a text-based medium essentially. So we concentrate on writing, concentrate on communication, precision, accuracy, ethical journalism, the watchdog role, so you have core journalism, ideals and skills and we concentrate on those and we do not try and do everything the industry wants us every time there is a technological advance."* (R12)

Yet there was also the recognition that journalism deals with the 'new' and as such is almost naturally drawn to new technologies. This respondent highlights something of a 'magpie effect' which offers both opportunities and challenges to journalism educators.

> *"Journalism education is populated mainly by people who came out of practice, so there's a feeling that 'its shiny its new, lets teach it'. It's exciting for students, its exciting for us to teach because it's new and flashy. What I think is inherent in journalism is the focus on the new. And it's hard to ignore, but you almost have to stop yourself."* (R11)

Likewise there is an expectation that students should increasingly be flexible and ready to adapt to change, particularly technological change. When discussing the digital disruption, though not in those words, respondents highlighted the increasing need for students to be adaptable, flexible and ready to embrace new challenges and changes taking place within the industry. For this group of respondents, journalism education should be

about "making people feel that, I suppose, they're at the cutting edge, that they really understand what's coming up because it all changes so fast." (R7) Similarly this respondent notes in relation to the impact of technology and the difficulty of maintain a handle on its impact on the industry: "I mean it's an interesting area and it's changing all the time […] it really is difficult to sort of keep in touch with all the developments." (R3)

Journalistic identity

The issue of journalistic identity reverberated throughout all the interviews with articulations of the traditional watchdog role of journalists being particularly resonant: "There are two sets of people in society, the people who run society and the rest of us and it's journalism's job to stick up for the rest of us." (R10) Nearly all agreed that high ethical standards were crucial to the democratic and social function of journalism and its important that journalism education retains the focus on ethics and integrity. This is in itself emphasises how the core normative claims of journalism remain in tact. However, when pushed about what actually makes a good journalist, many journalism educators from industry seemed to have difficulty articulating a response and tended to speak in terms of specific character traits as this respondent notes about people of in their "trade":

> *"They all like to think that they are rebels, standing up for the man in the street, standing up to power. Your motivation as a journalist has to be a motivation to find out stuff that maybe some people don't want you to find out. Maybe, to represent the interests of ordinary people. To be a difficult awkward customer."* (R10)

Essential, almost innate character traits were identified as characteristics of a good journalist, something that may not be able to be garnered in universities. A former journalist now teaching in higher education notes that

> *"someone like **** (famous journalist) would be ultimately against the view that you can teach it, you know, it's something you're born with. And there are all sorts of little phrases like "well you've either got a nose for the news or not."* (R1)

Like the previous extract suggest, what purportedly makes a good journalist seems to emerge from innate characteristics that one either posses or not. Traits such as "the ability to cut through the crap" the "indefinable spark" (R8). The following quote highlights the reified sense of what that spark might be, however loose this articulation is:

"I'm just sort of surprised at people who slide into journalism I suppose but I don't want that to sound elitist. But some of the people who turn up on my courses are BA's, I think "yeah, you'll be a great BA, you should stay a BA, you should be printing off the scripts for programmes but you haven't…." It's not an intellectual thing either, it's just… not necessarily… it's you haven't quite grasped what news is." (R8)

"I think journalism is one of those words that gets bandied around and rather like pornography, you know it when you see it, you can't quite define it but you know when you see it." (R6)

Few of the respondents from industry interviewed explicitly articulated how one could pin down this notion or attain the necessary 'spark' either in a university or even a formal training environment. In a sense it was conceived as something that was almost a natural element of a good journalist's essential make up. This idea that good journalists are born was more prominent than this author had envisaged. However, this definitional impasse started to break down when industry based journalism educators were pushed on just what good journalism practice was. It seems from the responses that many of the intellectual requirements of journalism which are routinely emphasised by the academy, are also seen as fundamental to good journalistic practice. The process of reflection and critique was articulated in a number of the interviews with the industry based educators as the following extracts demonstrate:

"it's an opportunity to think about what you do and how you operate and to think about the craft of journalism. It's a structural way of thinking about issues like impartiality and of how you handle particular situations but I think it gets you thinking about the craft of journalism and what is involved in it." (R7)

The above extract is from a journalism educator based in industry and would not be far removed from the sort of learning provided by those within the academy. There are other examples of this more nuanced discourse:

"journalism in the broadest sense, the media, they need to be studied just like anything else and so when people…. it's a practical repercussion that when people

start saying "oh the media are dumbing down" or whatever - are they? Dumbing down compared to what? Last week, last year, last century?" (R6)

"I mean when we're recruiting people for placements and for jobs we are looking at rounded individuals and people with a world view, people with a point of view, people able to argue a case, people willing and able to take initiatives but also work as a member of a team." (R3)

From an academic perspective, the view seems to be that such an insight may be cultivated by an appropriate contextualisation and reflection on the development of a story. In short, asking the questions, 'what is news? How does it come to be and why? In most of the interviews with both academics and industry based educators, though the articulations might have been different, given their different field orientations, there was some uniformity in the articulation of values of journalism and higher learning – an enthusiasm for and commitment to understanding; a sound work ethic; ethical integrity and emphasis on process. Again, such discourses emphasise resilience rather than disruption. However, and significantly, the notion of an ethos of journalism which links to traditional normative values is also understood in terms of the ways in which journalism has sough to carve out its own historical identity and social significance.

"I think ethos is a convenient narrative that suggests, and some of this goes back to the 'I was a journalist, I understand what it is to be a journalist', but it ends up almost repeating, almost as a mantra, these ideas of being a fourth estate, a watchdog etc. Yeah, they do exist in journalism, we see them all the time, but they are not the only thing and they are not in and off themselves substantial. […] So if you have the idea that 'news sense' is what makes a journalist or a journalistic ethos, well a lot of people are doing journalistic work that don't share that ethos – from the Andy Coulson's to the Julian Assange's, it's a wide spectrum...." (R11)

DISCUSSION

Though based upon just twelve interviews and therefore clearly not representative of a whole sector, the the key issues to emerge from this research correspond to previous work highlighting a schism between the academy and industry approaches to journalism education (Deuze 2006; Terzis 2009; Franklin and Mensing 2011; Harcup 2011). Despite efforts to

integrate the values of critical education with the requirements of a dramatically changing industry (Macdonald 2006), the 'disruption' felt (and resisted) by many in the journalism industry (Ellonen *et al* 2014) has had little affect on changing, as Deuze emphasises, "old" perspectives on what industry requires of its new journalists. In other words, the 'disruption' experienced by those working in journalism, is not permeating the core values of journalism educators, particularly but not exclusively for those still working in the industry. In Bourdieuian terms a form of 'field resilience' is evident which seems highly resilient to external disruption. Within academy, journalism's core values also remain relatively stable, with an emphasis on journalism's longstanding commitment to hold power to account. However, disruption is experienced in the academy as universities are being forced, mainly by market pressures to jettison critical scholarship in favour of a greater emphasis on the requirements of industry. Under this pressure, practical knowledge and skills are made abstract and complex to suit, at least nominally, academic priorities and the language of university education. In short practical skills become 'dereified' and theoretical without the theory. Moreover, the timeframe within which these interviews were conducted highlights the resilience of industry centred narratives which are overwhelmingly vocational. Seen in terms of disruption, the extracts provided above seemingly emphasise this gulf and given the little movement over the last ten years, offers little hope that any divide will be bridged. What is obvious from the above extracts is that 'disruption' is experienced in very different terms depending upon whether one is situated in the academy or the journalism industry.

The interviews with industry based educators emphasise a discourse of resilience to any external disruption or threat, while those from within the academy stress disruption, with little chance of resistance given the external pressures on universities to increase student numbers. From an academy perspective, disruption to the traditional university emphasis on scholarship is seen in terms of increased vocationalisation of the syllabus and the 'squeezing out' of more traditional modes of academic learning. Those respondents who remained anchored in industry saw a greater emphasis on skills and training as a reinforcement of their professional identities as journalists (Carlson 2015). From a university perspective, vocationalism places undue pressures on the traditional values of scholarship. This discourse was most keenly articulated in the context of accreditation and the pressures of ensuring journalism courses are relevant to the workplace *and* the university setting with accreditation

bodies have far too much power over universities in terms of defining the journalism syllabus. (Canter, 2015). Moreover, there was the perception that accreditation also serves as a very useful marketing tool for journalism courses which adds further 'industry' pressure to the syllabus while the values of commercialism and bottom line journalism which largely detract from the core values of scholarship (Delano, 2008). From the industry based educators' point of view, it seems that the academy is still tainted with the critical Marxist inspired theories from 'media studies' which have no relevance to the real world of journalism. Journalism education when it does not engage with practice and the skills that journalists require is all but irrelevant. This was tempered by the recognition that 'other' sorts of knowledge are useful in a 'well rounded' graduate who wants to enter journalism. 'Knowledge about the world - politics, international affairs' has instrumental value to the journalism industry.

The impact of digital technologies on the news production process clearly influenced discourses on the future direction of journalism and journalism education. However, from an industry practitioner's perspective, the technical competence required to navigate around and negotiate a way through this changing context is still largely seen as secondary to the principle core normative values of journalism. Moreover, beneath the technicist discourse evident in the interviews was a recognition that technology still requires appropriate contextualisation and reflection. Arguably such reflection takes place within disparate 'fields', each with their own suppositions and biases. Despite the disruptive challenges to journalism, here again were examples of discourses of resilience in which the disruptive challenges of technology are subsumed into the resilient logics of journalism, particularly from those continuing to work within the journalism industry. Resilience is evident as the rationale replicates the commercial competitive priorities of industry. Moreover, the technocentric approach adopted by journalism educators from industry and indeed some teaching in the academy, could be seen as reflective of an uncritical engagement with a technocentric discourse and its market rationale. In this context, it could be argued that not only is journalism studies under pressure from market imperatives of industry, but also from within the academy itself. As one respondent noted that the academy is still struggling to see journalism studies as something more than a set of vocational modules with critical reflection at its periphery – "that's what you do at universities, you don't train people you educate them." (R5)

Journalistic identity framed through the discursive articulations of those who work within the industry as educators was expressed in terms of journalists, or at least good journalists, having certain abstract characteristics that are perceived as pre-existing or at least external to the university experience, though they may be cultivated in places of higher learning. Usually expressed in terms of 'news sense' such abstract notions conform to discursive practices which demarcate or maintain boundaries of journalistic expertise. Rather than overt boundary maintenance through news discourse (Bishop 1999; Eldridge II 2014), demarcation is expressed in the interview transcripts of those, principally, but not exclusively working in the journalism industry, in terms of the innate qualities or sensibilities which transcend formal learning. Such expressions conform to Carlson's contention that metajournalistic discourse has a "role in the reiteration and negotiation of shared meanings and acceptable practices" (2015: 9) and which limit extension into spaces where such meanings and practices may become threatened such as the academy. Resilience to disruption therefore emerges in statements reasserting certain characteristics of journalistic identity as being beyond academic critique given their essential nature. In terms of the field of journalism education its proximity to economic rationality (Benson 1998) provides little space for expanding beyond these boundaries, despite pressure from the academy or more poignantly the industry itself. This is not to suggest, however, that the academy and scholarly discourse is free from the constraints of habitus and field orientation, (as Bourdieu famously points out) rather, because of its greater distance from economic and political rationality, more space with which to manoeuvre within the constraints of that economic power, though this is shrinking given the increasing financial pressures being placed on universities (Giroux 2002). In simple terms given that the journalistic field is much closer to the organising rationality of the market it is therefore less likely to articulate discourse that does not reflect its close proximity to economic rationality, hence the difficulty with which some respondents had in articulating just what it is that makes a good journalist.

CONCLUSION

This small scale study has explored the notion of disruption in journalism education by focussing on the perceptions and experience of a number of individuals who have a professional interest in journalism education. The key argument herein, evidenced by the findings above, is that despite narratives of crisis and disruption, the normative parameters

of journalism education remain remarkably resilient, particularly from the perspective of those who advocate the type of journalism education which meets the requirements of the journalism industry. This rejection of the intellectual utility of a more critically inflected journalism education, by those who focus on reinforcing the resilience, of course reflects the long standing 'problem of journalism education' (Mensing 2010; Anderson 2014). Though the linguistic gulf between the discourse of craft and the discourse of the academy can be animated by reference to Bourdieu's notion of habitus and field, the space to bridge that gap between the habitus of the newsroom and the habitus of the seminar room; and between the field of journalism and the field of academic endeavour, can only emerge from a continued rigorous analysis (Deuze 2006) of the theories and practice of journalism rather than attempts at balancing the two. A Bourdieuian reading of these discourses allows us to see competing fields with one field – the journalism field - engaging on a turf war with that of the academy, with the instrumentalist logic of journalism proving highly resilient – at least in journalism education. Such resilience is in part due to the very powerful normative foundations upon which journalism and journalism education has hitherto been built (Schudson 1978; Hanitzsch 2011). However, such weaknesses in the academy may also be seen as evidence of market logic penetrating the university (Giroux 2002). Such logic increasingly stems from the neoliberal requirement to necessitate the financial worth of education, a feature that Shore (2010) has labelled the 'schizophrenic university':

> "what we are witnessing is a competition between contrasting visions of the university, which are driving academic activity in different – and increasingly contradictory – directions. In the contemporary neoliberalised multiversity, it seems, conflicting institutional visions and managerial agendas are producing increasingly schizophrenic academic subjects."(Shore 2010: 28)

In reflecting on this conundrum, within the academy it is likely that disruption in journalism education will continue to reflect the disruption in universities more broadly. In examining the normative parameters of journalism education from the perspective of those who are engaged in the educational process of curating journalists, this paper addresses one of the central concerns for this special edition, that being that despite the challenges and disruption that journalism has hitherto faced, there remains a reluctance in journalism education, particularly that which takes place in industry, but also increasingly in Higher

Education, to re-evaluate the journalism curriculum, particularly at its normative core. Despite attempts to transform the journalism curriculum (McDevitt 2000; Wasserman 2005; Steel, *et al* 2007; Heinrich 2011; Clark 2013; Wall 2014) there remains an arguably widening schism between what could be termed normatively entrenched and relatively static journalistic practices and dynamic social change. I argue that the changes within journalism and society more broadly, which have been identified as having disruptive impact upon journalism itself, have still failed to challenge the core professional and ideological normative foundations of journalism education. For 'schizophrenic' universities and journalism educators therein, the prospect of negotiating these 'competing rationalities' remains bleak unless the pressures of neoliberalisation of our universities are resisted. For industry, if the sentiments expressed in this small study are suggestive of wider discourses, the resilience experienced by those in industry can only impact negatively to further disrupt the academy.

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