

6 Conceptualizing Journalistic Role Performance Across News Platforms

Claudia Mellado and Tim P. Vos

To talk about “journalism” is to talk about an abstraction. Recent theorizing has tried to account for what that abstraction is, much of it settling on journalism as a social institution (Ryfe, 2006). To talk about journalism as a social institution is to highlight the roles, rules, and routines that define it. This is no doubt important definitional work, given that the realities of journalism are changing so much that defining who is a journalist and what is journalism have become increasingly complicated (Deuze, 2005). Scholars now generally recognize that what we have called journalism cannot be necessarily defined in terms of a media platform. Indeed, this recognition has driven recent theorizing about journalism—theorizing that seeks to understand “journalism beyond its formerly distinct and bounded organization of newswork” (Deuze & Witschge, 2016).

While our field’s theorizing about journalism as a social institution has taken important strides by drawing on new institutionalism to focus on roles, rules, and routines of the profession (Cook, 1998; Lowrey, 2012), our empirical studies on how the practices of journalism take form have—at least in some regards—not kept pace. Much of our scholarship on the study of both news production and news content—with notable exceptions (e.g., Reich 2011, 2015; Shoemaker & Cohen, 2006)—still focuses on a single medium at a time. Particularly, recent studies that purport to study journalistic roles performance focusing on *news content*, really only examine newspaper journalism, something that Deuze refers to as “print bias” (2008, p. 199). However, media ecosystems overall are much broader, including multimedia and audiovisual dynamics, interactions, and elements that are nonexistent in print. Likewise, television and the Internet continue to be the most consumed media in the industrialized world (Hachten & Scotton, 2016). Journalists, for example, have increasingly made use of Twitter, either through personal or organizational accounts, to do their work.

Some national and international studies analyze specific aspects of journalistic practice in television (Bucy & Grabe, 2007; Esser, 2008; Grabe, Zhou, & Barnett, 2001; Mujica & Bachman, 2013), online (Curran et al., 2013), and social networks (Hermida, Lewis, & Zamith, 2014), but do so by examining one medium. A smaller number of studies, meanwhile, have simultaneously compared print media with more than one media platform

(Maier, 2010; Reich, 2011, 2015; Shoemaker & Cohen, 2006). Even so, none of these studies have directly addressed the study of professional roles in news content. This situation is worrisome, considering the technological advances available via different platforms, the impact that each platform has on the audience, and the ways of accessing and generating information from different media (audiovisual, multimedia, audio, and text).

However, if our theorizing about journalism points to constitutive roles, rules, and routines, then we should be able to discern the roles, rules, and routines of journalism in news content, regardless of the platform in which that content appears. In other words, if the watchdog role is truly a *journalistic* role, then it should be capable of being performed regardless of the medium in which journalists do their work. Reich (2011, 2015) has concluded that news reporting, whether practiced in newspapers, radio, or online organizations, is done in much the same way, and only diverges in forms of packaging. Nevertheless, what remains to be seen when analyzing news outcomes is if or how journalistic roles can be performed differently across media platforms.

Thus, this chapter explores news content as an institutionally and collectively performed phenomenon. In particular, we discuss six distinct journalistic role performance models previously operationalized by Mellado (2015)—watchdog, disseminator-interventionist, loyal facilitator, service journalism, infotainment, and civic-oriented—and how those roles are performed on five distinct news platforms—newspapers, television newscasts, radio newscasts, online websites, and social media.

If role performance is a situational, contextual, and relational phenomenon (Lynch, 2007), then we should be able to identify elements of role performance that transcend media platforms. Along the way, we are bound to also identify aspects of role performance that are unique expressions of the news platform on which the role is performed. Thus, we seek to accomplish a secondary goal—specifying unique medium characteristics of role performance. We argue that although elements that compose a specific role have the same meaning across news platforms, and some of them are common to all of them, what changes in different cases is the way they can be measured, considering specific aspects directly related to the platform under study.

What we do in this chapter is valuable for a number of reasons. Foremost, as suggested above, it advances scholarship on professional roles and news content to bring it into better alignment with institutional theorizing about journalism. It also moves empirical scholarship in the direction of approximating actual journalism practice—that is, journalism is practiced on multiple news platforms. Journalists, including freelance reporters, increasingly shift work between platforms, publishing work in multimedia platforms and via social media (Briggs, 2012). A comparative approach of this kind contributes conceptually, outlining—in a context where convergence and technological development are increasingly prevalent—to what

extent the type of media platform shapes news content. Thus, we take up the challenge posed by Reich (2011, 2015) to discern if a different conceptual framework is necessary to explain journalistic output for each medium or whether a joint conceptual apparatus can still cover the journalistic and global media context.

In arguing our case, it is not our intention to be overly critical of medium-specific content studies. The political economy of journalism studies is such that much of the scholarship of our field is done by single researchers or small research partnerships without external funding. With limited resources, print archives are relatively easy to come by. Indeed, one of the most recent cross-national endeavors to measure role performance compares different models of performance—the same as we are analyzing in this chapter—but only at the level of the print press (<http://www.journalisticperformance.org>). Cross-platform content studies generally require scholars to build their own archive over time. This requires time and resources that few scholars have access to. What's more, single medium studies still make valuable contributions, particularly if they can be placed in a broader theoretical framework that contextualizes their findings. This chapter seeks to help build that theoretical context.

Professional Role Performance as Object of Study

Journalistic roles have been of significant interest to journalism scholars, who have examined the roles journalists give most importance to in informing society (Hanitzsch et al., 2011; Patterson & Donsbach, 1996; Weaver & Wilhoit, 1986, 1996; Weaver, Beam, Brownlee, Voakes, & Wilhoit, 2007; Weaver & Willnat, 2012). However, significantly less attention has been paid to empirically measuring professional roles evidenced in journalistic output (Blumler & Cushion, 2014). Nevertheless, efforts have been made in recent years to open new research agendas that measure how journalistic roles are manifest in news content (Hellmueller & Mellado, 2015; Mellado, 2015; Tandoc, Hellmueller, & Vos, 2013; Van Dalen, de Vreese, & Albæk, 2012; Vos, 2002).

In what appears to be the first study that attempted to measure role performance or to compare role conception to role performance, Vos (2002) found that journalists gave more importance to interpretative and disseminator roles, while the role most present in the news the same journalists wrote was the disseminator role followed by the interpretative role. A follow-up study (Tandoc et al., 2013) used a different measure of role performance, but continued to find a gap between role conception and role performance. Only a mobilizer role conception predicted a mobilizer role performance. The study also concluded that routine influences and organizational location were stronger and more consistent predictors of the materialization of role conceptions in news content.

Other research has identified how a range of institutional factors—from news topic to media and organizational type to reporter workload—have a

bearing on role performance. Mellado and Lagos (2014) analyze the presence of the watchdog, disseminator-interventionist, civic, loyal-facilitator, service, and infotainment roles in Chilean news stories, addressing the differences in role performance depending on media type and news topic. The results indicate that the presence of the different roles in news content depends on both media orientation and news topic, and that while the infotainment and disseminator roles were more influenced by media type, the watchdog, service, civic, and loyal-facilitator roles were more influenced by news topic. Meanwhile, Carpenter, Boehmer, and Fico (2015) analyzed four roles in news content—dissemination, interpretative, adversarial, and mobilization—examining differences in the presence of the performance of these roles according to organization type and reporter workload. The data from that study show that nonprofit journalists are more likely to include interpretation in news stories, while for-profit journalists are more likely to perform the disseminator and the mobilizer roles. Likewise, as journalists' workload increases, they perform the disseminator more than the interpretative and adversarial roles.

Studies have also sought to parse differences in role performance based on broader institutional differences. Mellado and Van Dalen (2016) in their validation of a scale to measure audience approaches in news content (service, infotainment, and civic roles) found significant differences in the performance of the infotainment role between the popular and the quality press, where infotainment is more present in popular than in quality news; that the service role was more present in the popular than in the quality press; and that the civic approach was as much present in the popular press as in quality newspapers. Based on Blumler and Gurevich's (1995) model of roles, Van Dalen et al. (2012) studied the relation between cross-national differences in role conceptions and news content among political journalists in Denmark, Germany, the United Kingdom, and Spain. The study showed that role conceptions vary more across countries than within countries, and that differences in role conceptions were reflected in the reporting style of political news.

While the body of empirical scholarship on role performance is still small and new in journalism, it builds on a much larger and older body of work dealing with role conceptions and ideals of the practice of the profession. As Mellado (2015, p. 599) indicates, "although the conceptual equivalence between specific role types has not been particularly strong, literature suggests that journalistic roles can be analyzed from at least three fundamental domains" depending on the expectations of journalistic roles in different media systems: the presence of the journalistic voice; the relationship that journalism has with those in power; and the way in which journalism approaches the audience (Donsbach, 2008; Eide & Knight, 1999; Hanitzsch, 2007; Marr et al., 2001). Therefore, it is possible to take advantage of those specific domains as a baseline, analyzing different journalistic role performance models and how they work in different platforms. These domains, therefore, can aid in the construction of different indexes representing the

position of the news, the media and the journalist relative to each dimension of professional role.

Specifically, Mellado (2015, pp. 599–608) operationalizes six dimensions of journalistic role performances in news content, based on the three domains.

The first domain addresses the *active-passive stance of journalists* in their reporting (Donsbach & Patterson, 2004), and the *role of the journalist as disseminator or interventionist* (Weaver & Wilhoit, 1986). Here, the journalistic voice—its absence or presence—is central. The absence of the journalistic voice has to do with the distance between the journalist and the facts. The presence of the journalistic voice manifests in news content when the journalists stand for a specific point of view, demand and propose, and use elements such as interpretation, clarifying adjectives, and first person. These two ways of performance conform to a one-dimensional structure, where a less present journalistic voice implies lower levels of intervention, and vice versa. Since most of the indicators that compose this model are based on the narrative of the journalists, this dimension tends to be less contextual (e.g., the odds are small that the watchdog role would be present in a news story covering the result of a football match, but nevertheless always present in how the journalistic voice is present in the narrative logic found in news).

The power relations domain has to do with the relationship that journalism has with institutionalized power (e.g., political, economic, cultural, and civil society), depending on specific context. Some journalists might support the idea of monitoring those in power and exposing wrongdoing (Ettema & Glasser, 1998); others might support being loyal to those in power, portraying a positive image of one's country, or strengthening of national unity (Ramaprasad & Kelly, 2003; Sparrow, 1999). In that regard, two independent dimensions of role performance can be identified at the level of reporting styles and narrative structures that appear in news content: the watchdog and the loyal-facilitator.

The watchdog includes elements such as questioning, critiquing, and denouncing of those in power, as well as the coverage of trials and legal processes, investigative reporting, or the inclusion of external research. In each case the news story contains evidence of explicit conflict between the journalist/media and the monitored power. The loyal-facilitator can materialize in two ways. On one hand, the news reporting supports institutional activities, promotes national or regional policies, and/or gives a positive image of the political, economic, and cultural elite. On the other hand, the manifestation of this role can be seen through indicators such as highlighting the country's progress and/or triumphs, patriotism, comparisons of one's country with the rest of the world, and/or promoting the country's image.

The audience approach domain maps on to the debate between the public service versus the commercial orientation of journalism (Eide & Knight, 1999; Hanusch, 2012; Rosen, 1996), specifically, through the ways journalism addresses the public: as citizens, clients, and/or spectators

(Mellado & Van Dalen, 2016). Based on this, three independent dimensions of professional role emerge: the service, the infotainment, and the civic.

The service role deals with the everyday life of persons and how specific events can influence their routines and personal lives (Eide & Knight, 1999). The journalism that prioritizes this model provides help, tips, and guidance about the management of day-to-day life and individual problems, as well as information on services and products. The focus here is on directly helping the audience. This is distinct from journalism that can be said to indirectly help the audience (e.g., through a story that seeks to root out wrongdoing that might aid the general public welfare).

The infotainment role borrows from the conventions of entertainment genres—such as action movies, TV dramas, and suspense novels—by using story-telling devices establishing characters and settings. The logic here is to shock the audience's moral and aesthetic sensibilities (Tannenbaum & Lynch, 1960), using different stylistic, narrative, and/or visual discourses, where the audience's relaxation and emotional experiences become the center of attention. Specific indicators of this model include personalization, sensationalism, moral scandals, emotions, private life, and morbidity.

Finally, the civic role deals with encouraging the public to get involved in public debate, and to participate in social, political, and cultural life (Merritt, 1998; Rosen, 1996). Here, space is given to sources and actors who are not always considered by the media, where news pays particular attention to the presentation of groups without social empowerment. In this sense, the journalistic work closest to this role allows people to do their jobs as citizens in a broad sense. That is, this model focuses not only in giving background information and educating citizens for making political decisions, such as participation in electoral processes, protests, or in citizen groups, as well as participation, affiliation, and support of political parties, but also in helping citizens to make sense of their own communities and to understand how their communities can be affected by different political decisions or developments in the social and cultural atmosphere.

Previous empirical evidence shows that these dimensions are independent dimensions of each other, and the lesser presence of one does not mean the greater presence of the other (Hellmueller & Mellado, 2015; Mellado & Lagos, 2014; Mellado & Van Dalen, 2016). Indeed, even intermediate models can exist as long as the roles are not mutually exclusive and overlap in practice. Moreover, the interventionist-disseminator dimension is transversal to the other five roles, so it can interact and change the meaning of these roles. For example, the presence of indicators of the watchdog role combined with a high presence of the journalistic voice within a news story would make the watchdog role closer to an adversarial role. Likewise, the presence of indicators of the service role combined with a high presence of the journalistic voice within a news story would make the service role closer to a promotional role.

As roles are intrinsically pluralist and situational, the different journalistic role performance models should be seen as vehicles of analysis and of understanding according to their interrelation with different news platforms. This allows less for identifying fixed patterns than “for establishing trends in terms of the intensity of the presence of specific role performances within the same news story” (Mellado, 2015, p. 609). For example, at the individual level, negotiations between the journalist and different reference groups may give the journalist the chance to switch or combine roles (Hellmueller & Mellado, 2015).

Journalism Models in the Multiplatform Context

Print journalists long looked down on their broadcast counterparts as offering up a shallow, entertaining version of real news (Newman & Levine, 2012). How could journalists produce serious news in brief reports that were driven by short sound bites or flashy visuals? The initial criticism might have been skepticism about a new competitor—journalism that was luring audiences and advertisers away from traditional print media—but the criticism also spoke to skepticism about the suitability of an aural or visual medium to deliver news. Television in particular came in for criticism as irredeemably driven by an entertainment ethic and largely incapable of fostering linear, rational thought (Postman, 1985). Whether one or another medium is better suited to “real news” is not the concern here; however, these criticisms point to a general concern about the affordances of a technological platform—whether that be print, television, radio, online, or social media—and now those affordances might shape how a particular journalistic role is performed.

Meanwhile, it is difficult to separate observations about the affordances of media platforms from the institutional, journalistic culture that arose around these platforms. While we associate brevity, for example, with broadcast journalism, brief reports were as much a product of institutional developments as they were any inherent technological limitations (Jackaway, 1994). Similarly, while television’s emphasis on straightforward storytelling seems bound to the visual nature of the medium, much of this approach to news emerged through market research and not because of inherent technological requirements (Allen, 2005). A culture of reception has also left a mark on how news is crafted. Audiences have come to expect short sound bites on radio and television, inhibiting broadcast producers from changing routines, even if they wanted to do so (Vos, 2013). Comparative research on sound bites drives home the point—although broadcast journalists across countries use the same technologies, they diverge in their construction of sound bites (Esser, 2008). Although the length of a sound bite does not portend deep differences in journalistic practice, it does underscore that institutional routines leave a mark on how technology is used to construct news. Likewise, technology does not preclude print and television journalists from

using an *emoji* or emoticon in a story. The fact that *emojis* and emoticons are used in social media and not on the pages of a newspaper is simply a matter of institutional convention. In fact, that is changing in some cultures.

News platforms, then, have both technological and institutional characteristics. Whether these characteristics result to significant differences in journalism practice is a matter of theoretical debate and empirical study. As Reich (2011) emphasizes, the existence or non-existence of significant differences in the news content across different news platforms is a theoretical dispute between the generalist and the particularist perspectives. According to the generalist perspective (Benson, Blach-Orsten, Powers, Willig, & Vera, 2012; Cook, 1998; Gans, 1979), professional structures, procedures, and values regulate news production uniformly and journalists tend to make similar news decisions, regardless of the news platform (Reich, 2011). Similarities among the media are generated because journalists—regardless of platform—are immersed in the same established practices and beliefs within the journalistic field (Bourdieu, 1998), coverage of the same sources, and the same news routines. These similarities have only grown with technological and organizational convergence (Boczkowski & Ferris, 2005; Cook, 1998).

According to the particularist perspective, meanwhile, journalists from each kind of news platform carry out different practices by following specific production cultures (Deuze, 2008) and medium logics (Dahlgren, 1996). These cultures and logics are manifested in each medium—and even each news outlets—as differing approaches to editorial policy, work routines, type of staff, and professional standards. The particularist perspective is often used to hypothesize possible tensions between information and commercialization, and between opinion and deliberation in the news (Benson et al., 2012).

Despite this important theoretical discussion, there are few empirical studies that analyze journalism from a cross-media point of view. This is especially true in terms of journalistic role performance. Nevertheless, there are studies comparing different news media platforms. These studies deal with a range of issues, including differences in journalistic role conceptions (Hanitzsch et al., 2011; Mellado, Moreira, Lagos, & Hernández, 2012; Weaver & Willnat, 2012), format or use of technology (Steensen, 2009), news agendas (Puente & Mujica, 2006), the convergence of newsrooms (Boczkowski & Ferris, 2005; Singer, 2004), and routines of news production in general (Reich, 2011).

Some cross-platform studies point to similarities in the journalism produced via various news platforms. Druckman (2005), for example, compares coverage and construction of political news in both television and print media, and finds that while there is a difference between them in the amount of information offered, the actual content of the information differed little. Maier (2010) analyzes the news agenda across four platforms and finds considerable consonance in the selection and approach to news topics, especially political and economic topics. Puente and Mujica (2005) analyze the

news agenda produced by the press, radio, and television in Chile, highlighting homogeneity of topics. Lee (2007) found uniformity in the news agenda in U.S. election coverage. Other studies have found similarities across media platforms based on topic, the social actors covered (Ghersetti, 2013), and the inclusion of non-journalistic voices (Engebretsen, 2006). Reich (2011) compared Israeli journalistic work in print, radio, and online media and concludes that the generalist perspective is better supported by his results.

But, a number of studies do find significant differences in news content across different news platforms. Graber (1993) and Bennett (2003), for example, compared political coverage of television with print media and found that the former emphasizes individual traits, such as a politicians' personality and emotions, over coverage of political developments. Along the same lines, Curran, Iyengar, Lund, and Salovaara-Moring (2009) combined an analysis of news content on television and print media with a survey of audiences and found differences in the perception of the reporting on the two platforms. They concluded that television tends to serve more as a model of public service, while print media focuses on showing hard, local news. Benson et al. (2012) sought to identify changes in content and structure of news discourse when moving from the print to the online version, and found that although there are more similarities than differences, online media favor soft and sensationalistic news. In a similar analysis of print and online media, Hoffman (2006) and Gerhards and Schäfer (2010) conclude that there are similarities in content on both platforms, but differ substantially in tone (more informal online), depth (greater in print), and geographical focus (strongly local online).

Meanwhile, other studies have identified journalistic institutional differences across platforms. Tandoc and Takahashi (2014) found differences in professional attitudes between print and online journalists. They argue that digital media allow journalists who are reporting on the environment to be more explicit in their personal interest. Research also shows the adaptation of Twitter to the journalistic work environment as a source of contention (Tremblay, 2010). Hermida et al. (2014) concluded that social networks require journalists to pay attention to the access and selection of their information sources. Wasike (2013) analyzed the use of Twitter by social media editors at television and print media and found the editors employ a personal tone when using social networks. Simply put, news media platforms make a difference in newswork and news content.

So, regardless of whether technological or institutional developments are at play, the fact remains that journalism may be practiced differently across media platforms. Thus, if we are to identify journalistic role performances across print, television, radio, online, or social media platforms, we must look for how the same journalistic roles are refracted by technological affordances and institutional routines to produce performances with platform-specific features. In other words, a print journalist, a broadcast journalist, and a journalist using only social media can all perform

an identical role, but do so in (slightly or broadly) different ways. We believe this to be true regardless of the role performance, whether that be disseminator-interventionist, watchdog, loyal facilitator, service journalism, infotainment, or civic-oriented roles.

Operationalizing Role Performance Across Platforms

Various scholars (Mellado & Van Dalen, 2014, 2016; Tandoc et al., 2013; Van Dalen et al., 2012) draw our attention to the importance of media platforms in the study of role performance. Here, we examine the six dimensions of professional role performance outlined above and how they can be operationalized on the various media platforms. Studying roles—or any journalistic topic—across media platforms comes with inherent challenges. It is not easy to structure a study when the sample to be analyzed requires the examination of texts, audio, fixed and moving images, hyperlinks, and multimedia, especially when trying to analyze reporting styles. Nevertheless, previous research provides us with a sound footing to propose standardized measurements that can be applied to each of the platforms. This new step offered here also enables us to move forward in the theorization of different models of journalism. This in turn has implications for studying journalistic role performance across a diversity of media platforms.

Thus, we examine the affordances that news platforms place on journalistic role performance and posit a means for assessing role performance across platforms. We specify the uniqueness of role performances in print, broadcast, social networks, and digital platforms, but also make the case for performance criteria that are applicable regardless of platform. So, for example, journalists' performance of a watchdog role will be uniquely different when practiced via Twitter, television, radio, and online news sites, although the role being performed in the various settings is still identifiable as a watchdog role. In order to analyze the presence or absence of different indicators that encompass different journalistic role performances across platforms, we should pay attention to different aspects, depending on the type of media outlet we are going to analyze.

A key starting point is that textual elements are the common denominator for all media outlets. All the other elements may vary depending on media. When analyzing news stories from the print press, the main elements that should be taken into account are the text and images. Text refers to the words on the page, including titles, phrases, paragraphs, footnotes, and the like, and how those words, particularly adjectives and adverbs, create meaning. Images include such things as pictures, graphics, and info graphics. They also add meaning to a news story.

When analyzing news stories from television, images, sound elements, and texts—whether written or spoken—come into play. This makes television more complex to analyze when identifying or measuring roles. When it comes to analyzing television texts (including character generator and

verbal texts), pictures, and graphics, we can use the same approach used for the print press. There the similarities stop, since sound and dynamic images must be considered. When it comes to sound manipulation, we should consider the music (used to create stylistic elements alongside a text or image); the voice intonation of the journalists, anchors, and sources (used to signal emotions, moods, or state of mind, including evaluation); as well as natural sounds and sound effects (used to convey information, setting mood and/or any particular atmosphere). Regarding images, we should look at non-verbal expressions (such as body and facial expression and gestures that are used to signal emotions, moods, or state of mind, including evaluation), video motion (created through maneuvers such as camera pans, tilts, zooms, and slow motion), image frames (such as close-ups, POV [point-of-view], and hidden cameras), lighting (such as darkness and shadow, used to signal emotions, and to create stylistic elements to a text or image, such as mood and character), and editing (such as fast cutting, contradiction among images, combinations of music and text, repetition of images, dissolves, freeze effects, slide-and-peel effects, bounce effects, fly effects, wipe movements, flashes, and disorder of images). How any of these elements are used shapes meaning and can have a bearing on which role is being performed.

When analyzing news stories from radio, text and sound are the central elements to look at. For verbal elements, we should look at the same aspect used for the analysis of the printed word, focusing on the meaning created by word choice. In addition to the words that are spoken, other aural elements are relevant, as they were for television news. Thus, we must heed sound manipulation, including music; the voice intonation of the journalists, presenter and sources; as well as natural sounds and sound effects. These elements can work together to create meaning that results in the performance of various journalistic roles.

When analyzing news stories from online journalism, as well as from social networks (Twitter and Facebook), text—whether written or spoken—images and sounds come into play. Thus, we can examine text and pictures in the same way that we would when studying the print press. Although with social media, emoticons and *emoji* must also be noted. We can employ the same approach used for television when examining video, and the same approach for radio when listening for audio. Social media links and shares will also be relevant for some indicators of role performance.

So, how might the platform elements outlined above be used to identify and measure role performance? Space does not permit a full examination of each unique element of role performance, but what we offer in this chapter should serve the purpose of illustrating our argument. As the illustrations below show, much of the platform differences can be boiled down to a simple matter of using textual versus visual or aural elements.

We start with an examination of the textual and the visual. While journalists are generally seen as wordsmiths, they have an array of communicative tools at their disposal. Take for example, the disseminator-interventionist

role, which involves, among other things, the statement of a journalist's opinion. A journalist's stated or written opinion, regardless of platform, would be readily apparent based on the use of evaluative language. However, an evaluative gesture—such as a thumb down signal following a source's stated opinion—or an emoticon, such as a thumb down—could also accomplish the communication of the journalist's opinion. Likewise, the civic-oriented role includes a number of dimensions, one of which is to confer credibility to citizens and their claims. Print and broadcast journalists can do this in a variety of ways, using their own statements, the opinions of others, or the citation of evidence that enhances the credibility of what the citizens perceive, denounce, or demand. Journalists can accomplish the civic-oriented role on Twitter and Facebook with retweets and shares of citizens' comments provided where they explicitly reference citizens' claims. Or an online news site could include a graph showing that a citizen's claims about labor are backed by the last 5 years of economic data.

Some scenarios of how various platforms could be used to perform a role perhaps appear more realistic than others. The disseminator-interventionist model also involves the use of adjectives by the journalist to label persons, organizations, actions, and so on. This represents the intervention of the voice of the journalist. Spoken and written adjectives are easily identified as manifestations of a role, such as calling a candidate "crazy." But a television reporter could spin a finger by her ear to signal the political candidate being talked about is crazy. The fact that this is almost an unimaginable scenario—we would be shocked to see this during a newscast—reflects the limits to performing the disseminator-interventionist role on this platform in this way. However, another feature of this model is the use of first-person, which is more imaginable across media platforms. The important point here is that the use of images and video can constitute the performance of the role in ways that are distinct from how text alone would constitute the role.

The affordances of the various platforms are of particular importance. Sometime the role performance requires not only nonverbal, visual elements, but capitalizes on the affordances of the media in a more complex way. For example, the broadcast journalist could accomplish a first-person perspective—a characteristic of the disseminator-interventionist role—by using POV camera shots during a story of a drug raid to indicate he is a character in the action of story. The infotainment journalism model provides another example. One dimension of this role is personalization, which entails new stories that are focused on the physical, mental, or social characteristics of central subjects. Simply providing the name or picture of a person would not be enough to constitute personalization. However, a video report that includes proportionally more close-ups than any other camera shot would perfectly constitute personalization. So would video maneuvers, such as tilting the camera to scan a fashion model's body or panning the camera to follow the main subject's every movement. A radio report could accomplish personalization without reporter discourse, relying instead on

vérité-style that used only naturally occurring dialogue and sound to follow a senator as she goes about her daily work routine of interacting with constituents, colleagues, staff, and lobbyists.

Likewise, sensationalism, another feature of the infotainment role, would not necessarily be manifested in the image of an explosion, unless the image is repeated multiple times. Or if journalists used a succession of short video clips of an escaping fugitive, edited in rapid succession to exaggerate the pace of the story, then this would be a performance of an infotainment role. Again, it is not simply the use of a visual or verbal element that is central; rather it is the combination of elements—made possible by the affordances of the technology involved—that allow for the role to be performed.

Sometimes, however, images, video, sound, or voice must or could be used in combination with textual or verbal elements for the role to be performed. Take, for example, the performance of the watchdog role. This role performance includes a number of dimensions, such as a journalist's expression of doubt directed at a powerful individual. Words of doubt can be expressed in written or spoken form. Journalists can raise questions or express comments that call into question the actions and motives of a person. A radio reporter's voice intonation, such as use of pitch, rate, volume, silence, and inflection, could supplement his or her evaluation; but intonation, without a vocabulary of doubt, would likely not be enough to perform this role. Thus, if the reporter intoned incredulity after an official states an idea, then the watchdog role is likely being performed. Journalists on social media could also follow an official's statement with an *emoji* expressing questioning or doubt.

In some instances, the visual elements would simply be supplementary. Another expression of the watchdog role involves the journalist's evaluation. Here, too, journalists would need to textually or verbally accuse someone of failing to meet an implicit or explicit social or institutional standard; but this could be supplemented through images, such as cellphone footage of a police officer beating a person while the officer is denying the charge. The juxtaposition of claims and images is what constitutes the performance of the role. All the non-print platforms would have the capabilities of offering these sorts of combinations of textual and visual elements.

A final example deals with a particularly complex form of role performance that is related to the communication of emotion. An important characteristic of the infotainment journalism role is the communication of emotion. News stories, of course, depict human emotions on a fairly regular basis (Wahl-Jorgensen, 2013). Newspaper and magazine news stories include descriptions of the emotions of subjects in the story, referring to persons being anxious, angry, sad, confident, embarrassed, happy, disgusted, scared, euphoric, and so on. Audio or still and moving images can depict someone crying, yelling, or roaring with laughter. The intonation of the journalist's voice can exhibit emotion too, communicating fear, happiness, and an array of other emotions.

When it comes to depictions of emotion, it should be noted that emotions are characteristics of human beings. Thus, just the sound of "sad music" is not a depiction of emotion. This is where the complexity comes into play, because in addition to the depiction of emotion, the infotainment style of news can also evoke emotion. Thus, we can say that the use of music or lighting elements sometimes naturally evokes human feelings of emotion. Certain visual or auditory elements approximate real-life situations that create automatic sensory responses in the human body (Shoemaker, 1996). This reaction can even occur via certain cultural forms; for example, music can be said to be haunting, evoking fear or dread. Music "seems to affect our emotions directly without first being filtered through our ratio—our rational faculties" (Zettl, 2005, p. 341). Sound, lighting, and other elements can also evoke emotion (Zettl, 2005). The evocation of emotion can also happen in print forms of journalism: "Journalists deploy widespread narrative devices—including the juxtaposition of normalcy with an unexpected event—to create audience emotional engagement" (Wahl-Jorgensen, 2013, p. 142).

What we have sought to demonstrate here is how journalistic role performance might be operationalized across various news platforms. We have touched on a relatively small number of examples. A complete list would fill a sizable codebook.

Conclusions: Theoretical and Empirical Implications

Scholarship that has sought to identify and measure role performance is relatively new, especially compared to the more established literature on role conception, perception, and/or perceived role enactment. The initial literature on the place of roles in the construction of news largely assumed that a journalist's ideal of a journalistic role would result in a predictable imprint on news content. A watchdog role conception would produce a news story that performed a watchdog function. However, early research that questioned this assumption (Vos, 2002) opened up a consideration of what journalistic role performance would look like in news content. That work continues to this present chapter and will hopefully continue a good while longer.

The utility of this exercise, of course, is to identify the empirical referents for journalistic role performances. While those referents might be different from one media platform to another, they still allow us to measure the same theoretical construct. This chapter examined six models of role performance—watchdog, disseminator-interventionist, loyal facilitator, service journalism, infotainment, and civic-oriented roles. We conclude that these roles can be performed just as readily in television, radio, online, and social media environments as they can in print-based newspapers. However, each of these platforms requires attention to unique and common elements. We have outlined some examples of how this can be done to identify and measure models of role performance.

We believe this is important work. The examples presented here suggest ways in which platform affordances, such as text, image, video, and sound, result in different sensorial experiences, degrees of realism, and levels of immediacy. This in turn constitutes how and which journalistic roles are performed, and thereby influences the credibility of news, subsequent production logics, and ultimately the news that reaches the audience. These affordances shape the news landscape in profound and cascading ways, leading to greater media fragmentation, which in turns deepens audience polarization, which then leads to audiences selecting the kind of news that coincides with their personal views.

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