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AT THE CROSSROADS OF CRISIS:
NEWSPAPER JOURNALISTS' STRUGGLE TO REDEFINE THEMSELVES AND THEIR
WORK AS THEIR ORGANIZATIONS AND THE PROFESSION CHANGE

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by
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Newspaper journalists today find themselves at the nexus of a changing media landscape. Their professional principles and job roles are being challenged by changes in the technology they are expected to use, changes in the economic model that has supported the industry since this nation was founded, and changes in public attitudes and perceptions of newspaper journalism. This study examines these changes through the lens of social identity theory, examining how technological and economic changes have affected newspaper journalists' perceptions about the ways in which they are able to perform their jobs and their perceptions about threats to the status of their profession, and how those beliefs affect their identification with their newspaper organizations and the profession. The primary methodological approach used was a national Web-based survey of journalists working at newspapers with circulations of more than 10,000. To supplement the survey findings, in-depth interviews were conducted with survey participants who volunteered to be interviewed. The findings included that journalists who have

negative perceptions about changes in the newspaper industry will be more likely to have negative feelings about the impact of those changes on their jobs, and that journalists with negative feelings about those changes on their jobs will be more likely to have lower organizational identification. Professional identification was found to partially mediate this relationship, in large part because it has a considerable overlap with journalists' organizational identification. This study also found that journalists who have negative perceptions about changes in the industry will be more likely to perceive the status of the profession has been threatened, and that journalists who perceive those status threats will be more likely to have lower professional identification. Additionally, journalists' job type and the circulation size of their newspaper affected some of these relationships, such as the link between negative feelings about technological and economic changes and lower organizational identification. The implications of this study's findings for the newspaper profession and those who study it are discussed in the last chapter.

Table of contents

Chapter One: Introduction.....	1
The newspaper industry at present.....	2
Theoretical perspective.....	7
Chapter Two: Social identity theory.....	12
Antecedents to identification.....	13
Paths to identification.....	18
Identification with the work organization.....	21
Identification with the profession.....	23
Identity conflict and decline.....	26
Chapter Three: How journalists come to know who they are.....	31
Professional standards and roles.....	33
Learning to be a journalist.....	38
Organizational culture in journalism.....	43
Changes within the media industry.....	47
Changes outside the media industry.....	54
Journalists' job satisfaction impeded by industry changes.....	57
Chapter 4: Research questions and hypotheses.....	64
Chapter 5: Methodology.....	76
Online survey procedure.....	76
Online survey rationale.....	81
Depth interview procedure.....	82

Depth interview rationale.....	85
Online survey measures.....	87
Profile of journalists.....	88
Job satisfaction.....	89
Job roles.....	90
Impact of change on workload.....	91
Impact of technology tasks on quality.....	92
Effect of layoffs on newsroom numbers.....	93
Industry change.....	94
Impact of recent changes on job roles.....	95
Organizational identification.....	98
Professional identification.....	101
Status threats to profession.....	102
Interview protocol.....	107
Industry change.....	109
Journalists' job roles.....	109
Organizational identification.....	110
Professional identification.....	110
Status threats to profession.....	111
Chapter 6: Results: General overview of sample.....	113
Demographic data about journalists.....	113
Newspaper journalists' feelings about their jobs.....	116

Chapter 7: Results: The impact of change on job roles and organizational	
identification.....	128
Industry and job roles changes.....	128
Job role changes and organizational identification.....	139
The potential effect of professional identification.....	147
Chapter 8: Results: Industry change, status threat, and professional	
identification	156
Industry change and professional status threat.....	156
Professional status threat and professional identification.....	165
Chapter 9: Discussion.....	171
U.S. newspaper journalists today.....	172
Industry change and the effect on jobs roles.....	176
Changes in job roles and the effect on organizational identification.....	179
Explaining organizational identification.....	184
Explaining professional identification.....	188
Effect of public regard and status threat on identification.....	192
Methodological contributions and recommendations.....	197
In closing.....	202
Appendices.....	208
Appendix 1: Survey invitation and reminders.....	208
Appendix 2: Survey consent and instrument.....	212
Appendix 3: Interview consent and protocol.....	232

Appendix 4: Profile of depth-interview participants.....	235
References.....	236
Vita.....	251

List of tables

Table 6.1: Frequencies of job titles.....	115
Table 6.2: Importance of newspaper journalists' job roles.....	118
Table 6.3: Job roles dimensions.....	120
Table 6.4: Effect of technology and economic changes on workload.....	122
Table 6.5: Quality of work improved with technology tools.....	124
Table 7.1: Effect of technology changes on performing job roles.....	130
Table 7.2: Effect of economic changes on performing job roles.....	134
Table 7.3: Importance of job roles and effects of technology and economic changes.....	136
Table 7.4: Predicting organizational identification from job roles perceptions and professional identification.....	151
Table 8.1: Journalists' perceptions of public regard for the newspaper profession.....	159
Table 8.2: Public regard for the newspaper profession's performance on job roles.....	165

List of figures

Figure 4.1: Journalists' feelings about industry changes, their jobs, and their organization.....	70
Figure 4.2: Journalists' feelings about industry changes, threats to the profession's status, and their profession.....	74

Chapter One

Introduction

Newspaper journalists today may feel as if they are members of a dying breed. The heyday of newspapers in the United States has been falling away for some time, with circulation declines steady for the past 20 years and advertising revenues slipping since 2000 (Newspaper Association of America, 2010). During this time, the newspaper industry has faced profound changes including the integration of pagination systems and digital photography, as well as the introduction of the Internet and digital tools (Russial, 2009; Witschge & Nygren, 2009). Never particularly adept at accepting change, the newspaper industry was slow at incorporating these new technologies, which forced alterations in journalists' job routines—routines that had remained largely unchanged for nearly a century (Sylvie & Witherspoon, 2002). As the profession has grappled with resistance from some workers at the changes required for their jobs, such as producing more frequent news reports to be published online or learning how to create multimedia packages, the industry has also struggled to integrate these new routines into its identity (Deuze, 2008).

More recently, these changes in technology have been occurring alongside another phenomenon that has left many newspapers shaken—the faltering of their business model. With advertising revenues and circulation rates in steady decline, newspapers have slashed their expenses in attempts to remain profitable (Ferguson, 2006; Newspaper Association of America, 2010; Redmond, 2006). These

cost-cutting measures have hit newsrooms particularly hard: Thousands of journalists have lost their jobs, and other resources have been reduced or eliminated (Beam, Weaver & Brownlee, 2009; Pew Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2010a; Russial, 2009; Smith, 2009).

The convergence of these technological and economic changes has led to an identity crisis for newspapers and their journalists, left perplexed by how to define who is a journalist and what is journalism, and how to financially sustain the industry (Pew Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2010a). These changes have forced journalists to re-examine their identification with their newspaper organizations and the industry itself, leading to the central question of this study: How are newspaper journalists' organizational and professional identities affected in the face of sweeping changes across the industry and in their job roles, and threats to the status of the profession? The answer to this question can help to better understand how the next generation of newspaper journalists will frame themselves and their industry. It can also advance social identity theory, which is the theoretical perspective applied in this research, by adding to the richness of the identity literature in the context of a profession in crisis, struggling to define—or perhaps redefine—its identity in the face of significant industry-wide changes.

The newspaper industry at present

The newspaper profession today is at the nexus of a changing media landscape in which it is besieged from within and beyond. Losses in advertising and subscriptions have contributed to falling revenues that forced many organizations

to implement downsizing measures, which have been so widespread that the Pew Project for Excellence in Journalism (2010a) reported about one-third of newspaper journalists' jobs in 2001 are now gone. Thousands of newspaper journalists have left the industry since 2006 (Ballinger, Ho-Walker & McGregor, 2009). The Pew report (2010a) found nearly 6,000 full-time newsroom jobs were lost in 2009. Other estimates, drawn from media reports and reports from journalists themselves, suggest about 14,000 newspaper employees were laid off or accepted buyouts in 2009 (Smith, 2009). That figure includes editorial, advertising, and other newspaper workers, many of whom were full-time workers but others who were not. For 2008, that number was near 16,000. By the end of March 2010, more than 1,600 workers had been laid off or accepted buyouts (Smith, 2010). The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2008) projects these trends will continue, with few job prospects for journalists expected to be in the field by 2016.

The cuts in newsroom personnel have been precipitated by two factors common across industries: pressure on corporations to remain competitive, and advances in technology that result in a reduced need for workers (Pew Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2010a; Shah, 2000). For newspaper companies, declining revenues and the worldwide recession have compounded their competitive pressures. In 2009, advertising revenues at newspapers across the U.S. dropped nearly 30% for both print and online products—the year before, newspapers had reported an almost 17% decline (Newspaper Association of America, 2010). The newspaper industry has relied on advertising to support its business model, and

now that model is crumbling as audiences increasingly go online for news, where the information is largely available at no cost (Pew Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2009). Journalists themselves are not optimistic that their audiences will return, with about three-quarters of the news professionals in one study saying they don't know if the readers and viewers will ever come back (Wilson, 2008).

Advertisers are not necessarily following consumers online, at least not to newspaper Web sites—online advertising expenditures had a small decline from 2007 to 2008, and a more marked one (12%) from 2008 to 2009 (Newspaper Association of America, 2010). Declining revenues at newspapers have meant shrinking operating margins, as some major metropolitan dailies like the *Boston Globe* and *Washington Post* have fought to stay afloat financially and others such as the *Rocky Mountain News* closed (Pew Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2009). At the end of 2008, newspaper stock shares had plummeted more than 80%, a loss of \$64.5 billion in market value (Mutter, 2009). In March 2010, only the *Washington Post* stock was trading above \$5 per share (Pew Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2010a). Although journalists are concerned about these losses and the implications on their job security, they also are distressed by what they see as a shifting focus in the industry, moving away from journalistic principles to profit-driven business concerns (Gade, 2004). This can lead to journalists feeling that their beliefs and the company's values are no longer aligned, and is discussed in the next section.

Dire financial straits have forced layoffs, putting additional strains on news workers whose jobs have absorbed the duties of coworkers who have left and

whose jobs have expanded to include new technology. More than two-thirds of the journalists participating in a case study of layoffs at their newspaper said their workloads had changed since the newsroom cuts (Reinardy, 2009b); a national survey of journalists found similar results, that the workloads of about two-thirds of the news professionals had increased (Beam et al., 2009). As a result of being forced to take on more work, the journalists in the national Beam et al. (2009) study said they felt they had less autonomy. Not only do staffing changes affect the layoff survivors' job roles, they can affect the workers' morale, performance, and feelings toward the organization (Reinardy, 2009a; Reinardy, 2009b; Sylvie & Gade, 2009; Wiesenfeld, Brockner & Martin, 1999).

Journalists also have had to adjust their work routines to include technology—nearly all news professionals in a European study said they had modified their days to include elements of new technology (Oriella PR Network, 2009). Almost half said they produce more content in their jobs today than in the past; much of that content is for online distribution by their employers and includes video clips and blogs. Despite the increased demand to produce news across a variety of platforms, relatively little training has been offered for these skills (Oriella PR Network, 2009; Williams, Lynch & LeBailly, 2009). More than half of the 3,700 journalists in a study of American newspapers had not received any digital production training in the past year, and one-quarter said they had never received training (Williams et al., 2009). This lack of training may reflect the shortage of resources available to fund instruction or hire experts to complete those tasks.

Workers also may interpret it as a signal that managers do not value these skills and, thus, the journalists believe the digital activities are not important aspects of their jobs. The journalists also may feel that being required to take on “extra” work amounts to a statement that management does not value the duties they already were performing. Additionally, the greater demands placed on journalists to produce online content along with traditional content have resulted in longer work hours for about one-third of journalists (Oriella PR Network, 2009).

Technology also allows the audience to demand more from journalists. The Internet enables news consumers to go online at any time of day in search of information, requiring news to be updated on a 24/7 cycle (Sylvie & Gade, 2009). This phenomenon reinforces the need for journalists to produce more content under ongoing deadlines (Deuze, 2008; Sylvie & Witherspoon, 2002). With technology, the audience, too, can produce content and disseminate it throughout the public sphere. Journalists are no longer the sole arbiters of news and information; news workers must share the realm with citizen journalists and others who are using technology tools to produce blogs, video clips, podcasts, and other materials for online consumption around the world (Deuze, 2008; O'Sullivan & Heinonen, 2008). News organizations now compete not only with each other, but also with bloggers and others outside the mainstream media.

As consumers go online to find news from a variety of sources, and advertisers vanish, the prestige newspapers once had is dwindling (Pew Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2010a). This loss of prestige has been compounded by

advances in technology and cutbacks in resources that have required journalists to adjust their work routines and expectations, forcing an examination of what it means to be a newspaper journalist because the nature of the job and the industry have fundamentally changed. Change—or rather the acceptance of it—is difficult to bring into professions such as journalism with norms that are tied to ideology and entrenched in newsroom culture (Deuze, 2008; Gade, 2004). Journalists are socialized to adhere to certain tenets of the profession, such as autonomy, objectivity, and public service (Deuze, 2008; Singer, 2004). Financial and personnel cuts in newsrooms are often perceived as threats to these principles, as are expectations about what a journalist’s job should entail; these threats can lead news workers to push back against change (Gade, 2004). Additionally, technological innovations have reshaped journalists’ duties and enabled citizens to step into the gatekeeping role that was once the exclusive domain of news workers (Pew Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2010a). Now, almost anyone can take their unmediated message to the masses, raising the question of who is a journalist and what is journalism. Such questions further complicate the elements that made the profession distinctive.

Theoretical perspective

These changes in the profession can have an intense impact on those in the newsroom, affecting their workload as well as morale. Examining these effects through workers’ organizational and professional identification—the sense of connectedness and commitment journalists feel toward their newspaper and

profession—presents an avenue of research that applies social identity theory to facilitate understanding the effects of the changes occurring throughout the newspaper industry.

Social identity theory, as described by Tajfel and Turner (1986), explains the process individuals embark upon as they negotiate group membership. Human nature compels people to crave a positive self-image and they seek to obtain this goal through comparison with others. In that comparison, they establish a sense of belongingness with a group of others who share traits valued by the individual. In order for a group to be desirable to individuals, they must consider it to be prestigious in some way, to have distinctive values and practices, to promote self-continuity so that out-groups remain salient, and to reduce the uncertainty of group membership by reinforcing the psychological cues that led to group formation, such as a common history among members (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). Identification then occurs when an individual has accepted a group's values and internalized them as his or her own. For journalists, much of the process of identifying with their organization and profession occurs through socialization (Deuze, 2008; Schudson, 1978; Tuchman, 1978). They may be drawn to journalism because they believe its ideals reflect their own and as they learn how to be successful members of the profession, those ideals are reinforced through the norms and practices exercised in newsrooms.

The result of this acceptance and integration is high identification, which has tangible benefits for media companies. High identification with a group—such as a

profession or an organization—is signaled by an individual’s investment of more of his or her own identity in belonging to that group instead of others. Workers with high identification are more likely to be committed to the organization, leading to greater cooperation, productivity, and morale among members, and trust in the organization (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Pratt, 1998).

Journalists, however, largely appear to prefer defining themselves through their profession and tend to feel less identification with their employer (Russo, 1998). For journalists with high identification, the present state of the newspaper industry may have an intense effect on the way they not only view their profession and organization but themselves as well. As the Pew State of the Media report (2010a) shows, newspaper organizations and the industry itself have suffered mightily in recent years as revenues and circulation declined, resulting in widespread job losses and cutbacks in other resources. Journalists may perceive these economic decisions as signals that their organizations and the industry itself are shifting away from their emphasis on journalistic principles to an emphasis on profits at the expense of journalistic quality (Gade, 2004). Since journalists have largely reported being drawn to the field because of its principles that tie workers to being watchdogs and working in the service of the public (Weaver, Beam, Brownlee, Voakes & Wilhoit, 2007). For many, fulfilling these functions is the essence of being a journalist and if they believe their newspapers no longer support these roles, their identification with the organization may begin to recede.

At the same that economic changes began threatening the newspaper industry, technology advances were demanding more time from the journalists who remained in the field and had taken on greater responsibilities to cover the tasks once performed by colleagues who had been let go. These two forces working in concert—technological demands and economic cutbacks—may leave journalists feeling they are unable to satisfactorily perform their jobs; they may feel they are failing as journalists.

Research has shown that workers who are highly identified with a group see that group's successes *and* its failures as their own (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). As the newspaper industry grapples with unprecedented changes and searches for ways to integrate or overcome those issues, workers may also begin to feel uneasy about who they are and their place in the profession. If they perceive these changes as threats, they are more likely to experience a decline in their identification with the organization and profession (Pratt, 1998). As they begin to distance themselves from their organizations and the profession, they are likely to transfer those identities to other groups and leave as a result.

The public has long benefitted from journalists who are highly identified with the profession and its principles; they have delivered to readers a steady stream of information about the world around them, from their back porch, to city hall and the statehouse, to the White House and beyond. Today, however, journalists feel these roles have been imperiled by technology and economic changes that signal a devaluation of their work (Deuze, 2008). This type of a status threat can lead to

identity declines among journalists, whose morale and productivity may suffer. In the end, the public will suffer as well—suffer a lack of information and of people (journalists) holding public officials accountable, and a lack of analysis of the issues facing the complex world in which they live.

This dissertation examines social identity theory as it applies to journalists' identification with their profession and organization; the chapters also analyze the relevant literature that provides insight into journalism as a profession, including the socialization of news workers and changes in the industry, and the resulting hypotheses and research questions. The methodology for testing the hypotheses and answering the research question is detailed in a mixed-methods approach and the significance of this study is outlined for its theoretical and practical contributions.

Chapter Two

Social identity theory

Social identity theory explains the processes people employ to form their preferences for certain groups over others and come to consider themselves as a part of the chosen groups (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). In this regard, a group is an assembly of individuals who believe they belong to “the same social category, share some emotional involvement in this common definition of themselves, and achieve some degree of social consensus about the evaluation of their group and of their membership in it” (Tajfel & Turner, 1986, p. 15). When individuals share this sense of belongingness with a group of similar others, part of their identity becomes wrapped up in their group membership—as Ashforth & Mael (1989) explained, social identification helps individuals define who they are. Pratt (1998) further refined this notion, describing identification as the way in which individuals define who they are in relation to others.

One way groups come to be understood is through categorization; people tend to categorize themselves and others based on their perceptions of how well they fit into certain social schemas, coming to see themselves and similar others as part of a collective rather than as individuals (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Such categorizations help individuals locate their position in society, and define themselves in relation to the collective (Meyer, Becker & Van Dick, 2006). Likewise, people tend to view dissimilar others as a collective, not as individuals, and in-group bias develops. In this process of testing the comparative fit of individuals and

groups, people will examine the extent of similarities between members in the same group and their differences from other groups (Huddy, 2002). Another way categorizations occur is through evaluating the normative fit of individuals to a group: For individuals to be considered part of a group, they must conform to certain behaviors and norms that are expected of members (Huddy, 2002).

The in-group bias fuels comparison in which the worth of others is assessed across relevant factors and the individual builds a sense of identity through personal perceptions of being a member of certain groups (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). It is human nature for individuals to desire a positive social identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) and because of this, they are compelled to perceive their in-groups more favorably than out-groups (Pratt, 1998). Ultimately, Ashforth, Harrison & Corley (2008) noted, the motivation to identify with a group derives from the need to build self-esteem—"in other words, people identify to provide the basis for thinking of themselves in a positive light" (p. 335). If a comparison with another group challenges those positive feelings, individuals may feel their group's status has been threatened and they will either work to enhance their group or disidentify with it and join a different, more positive group (Spears, Doosje & Ellemers, 1999; Tajfel & Turner, 1986).

Antecedents to identification

By making favorable in-group comparisons, one engages in self-enhancement, which serves as a vital element in identity development (Pratt, 1998). Several factors, in fact, influence an individual's assessment of groups and

guide his or her desire to assimilate into a group and remain as a member. The prestige of the group is among the elements for consideration (Ashforth & Mael, 1989), and a great number of social realities can affect the perceived prestige of a group. The level of respect and status the group commands from other groups contributes to its prestige and influences in-group members' feelings of favorability toward the group (Tyler, 2001). The external image of the group—its reputation among outsiders—affects its standing in comparison to other groups, and group members' feelings about the prestige of their group can be influenced by their perceptions of outsiders' assessments (Dutton, Dukerich & Harquail, 1994). Group members rate the prestige of their unit based in part on how they believe others think of them because of their ties to the group. If the group members believe outsiders' perceptions of their group—known as the group's construed external image—is unfavorable, they may feel the status of their group has been threatened and may invoke a variety of cognitive defenses to reassure themselves of the worthiness of their group (Dutton et al., 1994).

Journalists today are facing threats to the status of their profession because the prestige they once enjoyed as a function of their jobs as the gatekeepers of news and information has been diminished with advances in technology (Deuze, 2008; Singer, 2007). No longer is journalism an exclusive profession whose members wield the power to determine what the public needs to know—now virtually anyone with an Internet connection and a computer can act as their own gatekeeper, sifting through the multitude of information available online and

disseminating that information to others. News professionals' prestige in being the arbiters of public knowledge is disappearing. Instead, journalists seek to affirm the prestige of their profession by highlighting the differences in what they do, such as claiming to provide objective accounts of the news of the day, as opposed to others who produce partisan or otherwise reflective accounts (O'Sullivan & Heinonen, 2008). In an essay, Singer (2008) wrote that ethics are what separate journalists from other content producers: "Journalism is, at its core, about truth and fairness and independence and accountability" (p. 127). She highlighted the prestige of journalists by discussing the need for news workers who adhere to these tenets of the profession:

We need journalists to put those bits of information, once confirmed, into a broader context, to help us understand what is relevant and important. We need journalists to explain how the pieces connect—to the past, to the present, to the future, to *us*—and what is interesting or useful to know about those connections. We need the journalist to do all that without fear or favor, courageously and honestly and as fairly as possible (p. 126).

In seeking to renew the prestige of the profession and assuage perceived threats to its status, journalists focus on what makes them distinctive from other groups. Distinctiveness, the special qualities of the group, is an antecedent of identification in and of itself (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). The distinctiveness of a group is measured by its differences from other groups; those differences are what allow individuals to categorize others according to in-groups and out-groups and

contribute to what people believe is special about the groups to which they belong (Pratt, 1998). These differences include a group's values and practices, which set it apart from other groups (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). The individual's awareness of these differences can reinforce the salience of the out-group as well as the in-group, making the in-group all the more distinctive. When members feel the social identity they draw from a group is distinctive, it increases the attractiveness of the group in their eyes (Dutton et al., 1994).

By accentuating the differences between themselves and other information-producers, journalists (as in the examples above) seek to make their work distinctive from others. In doing so, they call attention to the perceived journalistic quality of their reports and apply standards that cause the comparison material to pale, such as a lack of journalistic ethics exercised by bloggers and citizen journalists (O'Sullivan & Heinonen, 2008). Additionally, journalists may feel the prestige and distinctiveness of their jobs is threatened by corporate downsizings that can belittle the value of the tasks they perform by eliminating the same or similar positions and adding to the work of those who remain (Brockner, Davy & Carter, 1985; Reinardy, 2009b). In response, journalists employ coping mechanisms that reaffirm the importance of their work, such as putting in longer hours and more effort (Reinardy, 2009a).

This self-enhancement serves to assuage one's uncertainty about his or her place in the social stratosphere; uncertainty reduction is yet another factor that leads to identification with a collective (Hogg & Terry, 2001). Belonging to a group

helps individuals make sense of their own identity and through membership; individuals' subjective doubts about their attitudes and actions are alleviated. The certainty derived from group membership provides individuals a sense of purpose and infuses them with confidence regarding their behavior and expectations (Hogg & Terry, 2001). Because recent economic hardships in the media industry have forced layoffs and buyouts, many workers are uneasy about the financial future of their employers and their prospects for remaining with the organization (Wilson, 2008). Workers no longer feel that performing their jobs well—that is, according to their employers' expectations—guarantees they will remain gainfully employed with the organization. These feelings of uncertainty carry over into the profession, which has suffered widespread economic turmoil and changes due to technology, and leaves many to ponder the long-term stability of the industry (Wilson, 2008).

Finally, the desire for self-continuity drives social identification (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Ashforth et al., 2008). Certainly developing a sense of self-continuity can be linked to uncertainty reduction. As Ashforth and Mael (1989) explained: "People attempt to manage their lives in order to establish a sense of continuity in their identity" (p. 29). Mastering one's identity enables an individual to maintain a sense of self, of self-continuity, that endures over time and thus allows the person to feel secure in his or her environment. Many journalists question the prospects for security in their employment at the organizational and professional levels (Wilson, 2008). Those who remain may use coping strategies to establish a sense of balance, such as working harder because they believe it will increase their value to the

company and reaffirm to themselves they are “good” journalists (Reinardy, 2009a; Reinardy, 2009b).

Paths to identification

Identification, the connection an individual feels to a group, occurs when that person feels “psychologically intertwined” with a group, to the extent that he or she experiences suffering when the group fails and elation in its successes (Ashforth & Mael, 1989, p. 21). The person’s self-image is tied to similarities shared with the group and identification arises as Meyer, Becker, and Van Dick (2006) described: “This sense of self includes an awareness of shared characteristics (e.g. values), an evaluation of these characteristics, and positive or negative affect (e.g. pride, shame) associated with this evaluation” (p. 667). These emotions go beyond internalization of the group’s values; the person relates his or her identity to that of the group, believing that he or she *is* the group (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Ashforth et al., 2008). In this regard, perceived threats to the group’s status would be interpreted as personal threats to the individuals in the group.

Pratt (1998) hypothesized that there are two paths to identification. In one, individuals use their already-established identity to evaluate whether a group’s values align with their own. This path, known as affinity identification, posits that the internalization of the group’s core values has occurred prior to membership and that the person chooses to become a group member because the group reflects what he or she already believes. For journalists, this path to identification with the profession likely results from society’s construction of who journalists are—before

embarking on their careers in journalism, some journalists decide they want to belong to the “group” of journalists because they have learned that journalism represents certain beliefs that mirror their own attitudes regarding ideologies such as truth-telling and public service.

The second path Pratt (1998) outlined is known as emulation identification; it occurs when individuals adopt a group’s values as their own after becoming a member. In this path, members are socialized to the group’s standards by other members and learn how to adopt their new roles. Each new group member has to come to understand the group’s formal and informal policies, its norms and practices, and its expectations of members (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). By socializing new members, groups can encourage the internalization of their values and commitment to the group. This then heightens the salience of the individual’s membership in the group, which can spur acceptance of the person’s role within the group and ultimately lead to identification with the group (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Pratt, 1998). Socialization is especially important in work settings because individuals’ decisions about which occupations to pursue often “bind them to a given identity” (Kreiner, Hollensbe & Sheep, 2006, p. 1052). Socialization serves to accelerate and strengthen that bond, leading to group members who are active in constructing their occupational identity. Among journalists, much of their identification with the profession occurs through socialization; as Chapter 3 outlines, journalists are socialized into the profession through their education and their employer (Schudson, 1978; Tuchman, 1978; Weaver et al, 2007). Through

these institutions, they learn the standards and norms of the profession and enact those principles through their work as journalists at news organizations.

When a person has invested more of his or her identity in belonging to one group over others and regards him or herself as having embraced characteristics reflected by the group, high identification has occurred (Dutton et al., 1994). Though one's social identity may ebb and flow depending on particular situations, his or her identification with a group is likely to remain stable once it has been established. Through the heightened salience of membership, an individual's behavior is influenced by seeking to act like other members of the group (van Knippenberg & Ellemers, 2003) and such behavior can be manifested in stronger in-group cooperation and cohesion (Ashforth & Mael, 1989).

Other outcomes associated with identification include enhanced support for the group and trust in other members as well as the group as a whole (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Kramer, 2001). Identification can also contribute to homogeneity in group members' attitudes and actions, leading them to act as a unified collective (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). It can even reinforce the elements that initially attracted individuals to the group, such as its values, distinctiveness, and prestige, and strengthen the salience of out-groups. Though case-study research conducted by Russo (1998) suggested journalists tend to be more highly identified with the profession, in part because of the socialization they receive during their collegiate training, they also had fairly high levels of organizational identification, which is discussed in the next section.

Identification with the work organization

Organizational identification examines individuals' sense of connectedness to a group in the context of their employment and is one of the most widely studied topics in the social identity literature. As with identification to any group, organizational identification occurs when a person's beliefs about himself or herself are viewed through the lens of their beliefs about the organization and are integrated into their identity (Pratt, 1998). Dutton et al. (1994) explained: "People find a perceived organizational identity more attractive when it matches their own sense of who they are (i.e., their self-concept) simply because this type of information is easy to process and understand" (p. 244). Identification with the work organization defines how individuals perceive themselves in relation to their employers—it is the "psychological merging of self and group" (Ellemers, Haslam, Platow & van Knippenberg, 2003, p. 14).

Organizations can reap the rewards of having highly identified workers. Employees who identify with the company are more likely to act in the best interests of the group, to comply with organizational policies and standards, and to get along with other workers (Pratt, 1998; Van Dick et al., 2004). In essence, employees with high organizational identification are easier to control because they generally also have high job satisfaction and commitment to the organization. This also makes them less likely to voluntarily leave the organization (Abrams & Randsley de Moura, 2001; Pratt, 1998; Reynolds & Platow, 2003; Van Dick et al., 2004). Turnover rates are lower among highly identified workers because their self-

concept is intertwined with their perception of the organization, contributing to members' beliefs that their own futures are tied to the future of the organization—meaning that leaving the group would have a negative impact on individuals' self-concepts because departure from the organization would also mean losing part of themselves (Van Dick et al., 2004).

Identification does not come without risk for organizations. Although organizations desire workers who are highly identified with the group, it can result in homogeneous values and behaviors, which may ultimately stifle the organization's ability to adapt to changes in the outside environment (Pratt, 1998). Some like Deuze (2008) might assert that this homogeneity among journalists has contributed to their present imperiled situation—journalists today have been so tightly socialized to believe their organizations and industry must operate in certain ways that they have resisted accepting changes in their work even as the audience and technology changed around them.

If organizations employ workers who are so highly identified that they cannot recognize threats to the group from outside—or who refuse to acknowledge such threats because to do so would violate accepted practices or norms—then the group may be doomed to fail. A less ominous risk for organizations is the challenge of balancing employees' identifications, such as between an organization and a profession. Research has shown that employees who work in professions such as medicine, veterinary science, and journalism are more likely to face conflicts in identifying with their work organization and their profession at large (Hekman,

Bigley, Steensma & Hereford, 2009; Johnson, Morgeson, Ilgen, Meyer & Lloyd, 2006; Pratt, Rockmann & Kaufmann, 2006; Russo, 1998). These workers have undertaken specialized education or training to develop particular skills that distinguish them from other professions. The workers, then, may opt to maintain high identification with the profession at the expense of their organization if they feel the values or ideals of their employer are not in sync with those of the profession (Hekman et al., 2009; Russo, 1998). Such workers, who would normally experience great identification with their employing organization, feel forced to choose between their commitment to the organization and profession, and because the socialization they received while training for their profession preceded their on-the-job socialization, their identification with the organization is diminished.

Identification with the profession

At the professional level, identification manifests itself in the same ways as explained above—with a person developing a professional identity based on the characteristics, values, and behaviors that the individual believes define his or her professional role (Ibarra, 1999). Once identification with the profession has occurred, these same elements can function to reinforce the cycle. A professional identity not only distinguishes itself from that of other professions, it allows workers for the same organization to categorize themselves according to the professional roles they enact such as news workers aligning themselves according to job types (Witschge & Nygren, 2009). Identification with a profession provides a prescribed roadmap that tells people how they should do their work, as well as the

attitudes and ideals they should pursue and the language they should use while doing their work.

Professional identification develops largely through socialization and cues from role models (Ibarra, 1999). Individuals in professional trades often embark on specialized training that affords them opportunities to learn the traits associated with the profession from those teaching them about it as well as those actually working in the profession. The newcomers can use these role models as a yardstick to assess how well they, the newcomers, are able to carry out the functions of the profession and uphold its principles. They can also assess the performance of the role models, determining “whether the role models represent a desirable possible self, or instead, a self they feared becoming” (Ibarra, 1999, p. 775). The nature of work in professions is often demanding and challenges those who choose the profession, which can lead to intense identification with the profession—a sense that working in the profession is a calling, not just a job at a particular organization (Kreiner et al., 2006).

Among journalists, their greatest opportunities to be socialized into the profession come during their years spent at universities in journalism courses and in college media newsrooms, as well as during formal on-the-job training sessions they receive and informal ones, like observing other journalists’ work patterns to learn acceptable practices (Russo, 1998; Weaver et al., 2007).

The socialization of individuals into the journalism profession is discussed at length in the coming chapter, but it is important here to note the significant role

socialization plays in constructing a strong connection to the profession. Part of this socialization includes conveying the notion that practicing journalism is indeed a higher calling, due in part to its protected status in the U.S. Constitution and long-held ideals of a profession that is altruistic and independent (Sylvie & Witherspoon, 2002; Weaver et al., 2007).

Many media scholars assert that journalists experience greater identification at the professional level than the organizational one (Russo, 1998; Singer, 2007; Witschge & Nygren, 2009). As Singer (2007) noted: “Most journalists consider themselves professionals in the important sense that they feel loyalty to the ideals of a profession and a particular assortment of shared norms” (p. 81).

In research on the professional and organizational identification of newspaper journalists, Russo (1998) found greater levels of identification with the profession than organization, but that the extent of identification with both groups was high—so much so that the boundaries between the two concepts overlapped. However, the journalists reported drawing on their professional identities during trying times, such as when they needed inspiration or strength to confront the daily challenges of working in a newsroom. Though their dominant identity was that of a journalist, that professional purpose fueled them in the workplace—“the newspaper served as a vehicle for their expression of their professional beliefs and their roles as journalists” (Russo, 1998, p. 102).

Identity conflict and decline

An individual's identity is not a single, unified identity; instead, it is what Ashforth and Mael (1989) called "an amalgam of loosely coupled identities" (p. 30). As previously noted, the balancing of these identities can lead to conflict when the values associated with one contradict those of another (Hekman et al., 2009; Johnson et al., 2006; Pratt, 1998; Russo, 1998). In the course of their daily lives, individuals invoke a variety of cognitive mechanisms to resolve these conflicts, such as buffering the identities and choosing to define themselves according to the identity that is most salient at the time or in given situations (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). The inherent risk in attempting to assimilate multiple identities is that it may prevent members from fully incorporating the attitudes and standards of each group, thus limiting the extent of their identification. By attempting to manage their identification with multiple groups, individuals may feel they must shed values and behaviors of some groups in order to maintain their membership in others.

When members of different collectives feel pressured to assume multiple identities at the same time—to act in the interests of two or more groups though it is impossible to serve each one equally—their ability to otherwise manage those identities breaks down (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). The resulting conflict between identities causes cognitive strain for the individual as well as stress (Kreiner et al., 2006).

In the work context, individuals often strive to identify with both their profession and organization, as well as smaller-scale groups such as a specific

department or unit (Hekman et al., 2009; Johnson et al., 2006; Pratt, 1998). Such endeavors can lead to a co-mingling of identifications, in which the organizational identity is correlated with the professional one but both can stand independently as well. For individual workers, the strength of their identifications depends in part on which identity they favor in given situations and the extent of conflict they experience (Johnson et al., 2006). If workers feel a particular identity is threatened, they may shift their focus to another identity as a way of managing the threat.

As workers attempt to maintain a sense of stability among their identities, the resulting conflicts may lead them to re-evaluate their connections to certain groups. If members believe the group is not meeting certain individual needs, they may begin to psychologically withdraw from the group (Pratt, 1998). By distancing themselves from one group, members are better able to manage their other identities, which rise to greater salience. Psychological withdrawal may result from a variety of experiences that leave the individual feeling that membership in the group is no longer as beneficial to them as it once was. One factor in this perception shift is due to the nature of identification itself, in which members experience the group's successes and failures on a personal level (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). An increase in the group's failures—even the perception of not meeting their own standards or not measuring up to the performance of other groups—can lead to negative personal outcomes such as lower self-esteem because group members may perceive their status has been threatened. The desire to see one's self in a positive

light may push an individual to disassociate with one group and identify with another.

Journalists, who Russo (1998) found to have high identification with their profession and organization, may find themselves at an identity crossroads today because of technological and economic changes at individual newspapers and across the industry. The state of the media is such that most organizations are struggling to maintain the profits they once enjoyed and to reconnect with disappearing audiences; taken together, the magnitude of these losses leads to doubts about the health and sustainability of the journalism profession (Witschge & Nygren, 2009). Not only are journalists faced with organizations that are in decline, the entire profession seems to be floundering as it struggles to find profitable business models and incorporate new technology, and debates whether to open their ranks to non-traditional journalists such as bloggers (Deuze, 2008). Low public regard for the journalism profession also can influence journalists' feelings about the profession; a poll released in March 2010 found that nearly three-quarters of Americans believe the media are biased in their coverage (Pew Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2010b). Journalists may take on these insecurities as their own, and as a self-preservation mechanism it may lead them to eventually question their commitment to withering organizations and a profession in turmoil.

The perception of an impending crisis, as well as feelings of betrayal, contributes to the loss of identity salience (Pratt, 1998). In the case of journalists, the current climate of downsizings and greater demands on remaining workers may

leave them questioning their commitment to organizations and a profession that do not appear to be as invested in their welfare and wellbeing. This presents a problem for newspapers and other media institutions since “employees are likely to be committed to institutions in direct proportion to the degree to which they believe that the organization is committed to them” (Wiesenfeld et al., 1999, p. 445). Not only do organizations have to be concerned that perceived failures—such as not adhering to the values employees believe are representative of the group—will negatively affect members’ feelings about the group and their own self-worth, the organizations must also be anxious that those failures will lessen workers’ identification with the group. Ultimately, it can affect the workers’ job satisfaction and intent to stay with the organization (Bunderson, 2001; Robinson, 1996).

An employee’s job satisfaction is derived from his or her attitude about the nature of the job itself and the tasks involved in its performance, as well as feelings about relationships with colleagues, supervisors, and subordinates (Van Dick et al., 2004). In terms of social identity, commitment to the organization is often reflected in assessments of employees’ satisfaction with the organization; workers who feel satisfied with their work also experience greater feelings of commitment to the organization and identification with it (Pratt, 1998). Organizational breaches of workers’ expectations lead to drops in their job satisfaction (Bunderson, 2001). Employees’ turnover intent is largely influenced by the commitment they feel toward the organization and their satisfaction with the job (Pratt, 1998).

Many journalists attribute their job satisfaction to their enjoyment of the intrinsic tasks of the profession, such as storytelling and writing, as well as the autonomy associated with their jobs and ability to provide information to the public (Weaver et al., 2007). In the most recent national *American Journalist* survey, conducted in 2002, more than half said they were “fairly satisfied” in their jobs and another third were “very satisfied” (Weaver et al., 2007). Another study, based on the same surveys, identified rising concerns about dwindling resources and an emphasis on profits, which hamper job satisfaction (Beam, 2006). As journalists have experienced the downward spiral of job losses and cuts in newsroom resources, along with frequent increases in workload, nearly half of the print journalists in a more recent study feared they would not be working at a newspaper in five years and about 30 percent had neutral feelings about their prospects (Wilson, 2008).

These reports of an apparent decline in journalists’ jobs satisfaction brought on, at least in part, by changes in the industry illustrate the beneficial role social identity theory can play in this situation. Social identity theory can help to explain journalists’ perceptions of the impact of these changes on their jobs and the effect of those changes on their sense of connection to the profession and their newspaper organizations. By understanding these relationships, newsroom managers can learn how to better introduce and implement changes in ways that are less disruptive and less threatening to workers’ identification.

Chapter Three: Literature Review

How journalists come to know who they are

Social identity theory illustrates how journalists develop connections with their profession and employers, and come to understand how their personal values align with those of the industry and organization. This chapter examines the literature detailing how journalists come to know who they are—from their beliefs on journalism’s place in democracy and the journalist’s role in that framework, to their acceptance of industry standards through socialization and organizational culture, to their feelings about the sea change sweeping through media companies and the profession at large and the impact of those changes on their lives as journalists. By understanding how journalists perceive these changes, industry leaders and academics can develop more effective ways of incorporating the changes into journalists’ already-accepted notions of what it means to be a journalist in the profession and for a particular organization.

For journalists to identify with the profession, they must have a sense of what it means to be a journalist and perceive themselves as possessing the trade’s core values. Research on the press suggests journalists hold two primary role conceptions—that they should contribute to an informed society and serve as watchdogs on public officials (Beam et al., 2009; Croteau & Hoynes, 2001; Sylvie & Witherspoon, 2002; Weaver et al., 2007). Both of these pursuits align with the notion that journalism is a public-service calling; because of the profession’s status as the only trade protected in the U.S. Constitution, it carries with it a “semi-virtuous

mission” (Sylvie & Witherspoon, 2002, p. 8). Journalism is seen as an altruistic profession in which members serve the public by providing information about the diverse range of views and events in society, which helps individuals make sense of the world (Croteau & Hoynes, 2001).

This perception is perhaps heightened for newspapers, which have been the voice of the public since before the nation was founded. Additionally, newspapers, perhaps more than other media, are considered to have a responsibility to contribute to the public sphere. Though most newspaper journalists work at for-profit corporations, which have economic needs to consider along with their journalistic obligations, the workers at daily and weekly publications still believe their organizations do a good job of informing the public (Weaver et al., 2007). One component of keeping the public informed is delivering information quickly, which was once fueled by daily deadlines and is now driven by a 24/7 news cycle (Sylvie & Gade, 2009; Weaver et al., 2007). As media workers labor to deliver news quickly in order to contribute to an informed society, they also believe one of their sacred endeavors is to analyze and interpret that information for news consumers (Beam et al., 2009).

The other elemental function of journalism—to act as a watchdog—also centers on providing information to the public, but emphasizes the independent nature of the press and its duty to safeguard public interests from powerful institutions (Croteau & Hoynes, 2001). Investigating government claims and holding public officials accountable are among the actions journalists believe are

fundamental to their trade (Weaver et al., 2007) and have been incorporated into the ethical creeds of many press organizations. Among these are the codes adopted by the American Society of News Editors, Society of Professional Journalists, and the Radio-Television-Digital News Association, which call for journalists to act independently and report the truth (American Society of News Editors, 2009; Radio Television Digital News Association, 2000; Society of Professional Journalists, 1996). The Society of Professional Journalists, for example, calls for journalists to “be vigilant and courageous about holding those with power accountable” and “recognize a special obligation to ensure that the public's business is conducted in the open and that government records are open to inspection.”

These basic tenets of journalism—to work in the service of an informed society and to behave as watchdogs—lead journalists to establish certain standards that are considered to define the profession and become the ideologies that drive it. Individuals who embrace these roles and attitudes are accepted by other members in the journalism trade and personally believe they belong to the profession; it can be said those individuals are highly identified with the profession.

Professional standards and roles

The standards that journalists have adopted in their jobs are drawn from the public service and watchdog foundations of their craft, and allow journalists to define who, in fact, is a journalist. As Witschge and Nygren (2009) explained:

It provides an identity that shows the ‘appropriate’ way of doing the work, the values and attitudes, and professional language and symbols. The

professional role prescribes to a certain extent the work at hand, what you can do and what you should not do (p. 49).

The principal traits associated with journalists' work, in study after study, are autonomy and objectivity (Beam et al., 2009; Deuze, 2008; Reese, 2001; Tuchman, 1978; Weaver et al., 2007). Autonomy is the individual's ability to routinely have control over his or her work (Witschge & Nygren, 2009); objectivity implies that workers are free from outside influence and dedicated to acting fairly as they engage in their tasks (Redmond, 2006; Tuchman, 1978). Journalists believe that by acting autonomously and objectively, they are upholding the public service ideology that has become ingrained in the profession (Weaver et al., 2007; Witschge & Nygren, 2009). Through their beliefs about the importance of these principles, journalists are acting in ways that uphold those principles and show they are highly identified with the profession.

One of the characteristics that qualifies a vocation to be considered a profession is that its workers feel they control the everyday functions of their jobs, that they are free to choose how they perform the tasks associated with that job (Reese, 2001; Witschge & Nygren, 2009). In this regard, then, autonomous employees also have increased accountability because they alone are responsible for accomplishing assigned tasks (Singer, 2007). Many jobs in the media industry lack rigid supervision—although workers are expected to perform their jobs according to certain standards, how they choose to do those jobs within those parameters is mostly left to their discretion (Tuchman, 1978). Reporters, for

example, while knowing their supervisors have particular expectations of the news dispatches they produce, are relatively free to choose the elements they include in those reports as long as they meet organizational standards. Organizations, then, can draw upon workers' identification with the profession by permitting them to satisfy professional norms as a member of the organization. In this way, Russo (1998) found organizations can benefit from a crossover effect that blends professional identification with organizational identification.

Though journalists have considerable autonomy in their jobs, many feel some of that freedom—such as reporters' ability to select which stories to work on—has declined in recent years (Beam et al., 2009; Weaver et al., 2007). A number of factors can constrain journalists' sense of autonomy, limiting their professional activities. In one instance, constraints on journalists benefit the industry; ethical and legal standards limit journalists from behaving in ways they may find personally satisfying but that do not mesh with principles accepted in the profession (Weaver et al., 2007). Most of the other constraints on journalists are just that—constraints. Media corporations are driven by profit margins and the realities of the business world; this makes them susceptible to the influence of sources and advertisers who are motivated to promote their own agendas (Beam et al., 2009; Weaver et al., 2007; Underwood, 1995). Further commercial pressures have led many organizations to limit the resources available to employees and increase their workloads, leaving the journalists feeling that they have less control and freedom in their jobs (Beam et al., 2009; Weaver et al., 2007). Workers said this was especially true at larger media

organizations and daily newspapers, as well as at companies that had implemented recent buyout programs or layoffs (Beam et al., 2009). Workers who feel they are not able to fulfill integral professional principles and perform certain job roles because of organizational mandates may suffer a decline in their organizational identification as a result (Pratt, 1998).

Other corporate financial realities, such as a handful of companies now owning most of the major media outlets, also have affected perceptions of journalists' abilities to be objective and autonomous. As media conglomerates have bought out existing owners, the group of owners in the media industry has dwindled to a concentrated central group of players that includes Disney, News Corporation, Time Warner, Viacom, and General Electric (Straubhaar & LaRose, 2006). General Electric recently agreed to sell controlling interest of NBC Universal to Comcast (Bravo & Layne, 2010).

Deregulation in the media industry created economies of scale in which these corporations expanded their holdings, many of which are related to the media industry but some of which are not. Because of their vast holdings, these corporations have adopted management strategies that focus on efficiency and profits, while their news workers focus on the tenets of their profession. This results in a clash of principles—management on the side of for-profit business deals and journalists favoring objectivity, autonomy and altruism as the bedrock of their professional foundation (Redmond, 2006). McManus (1994) argues that by commodifying news, corporations have to peddle their products to advertisers and

create a conflict of interest for their editorial workers who may feel they have to sacrifice control over their work and neutrality in order to meet the demands of their employer.

The ideal of objectivity in journalism is not one that is universally embraced—one only has to look to the popularity of the partisan press on Fleet Street in London as evidence. The early press in America was also divided by party affiliation, and the pages of those newspapers were filled with the political dogma of whichever group supported the publication (Mindich, 1998). It was the rise of the penny press in the 1830s, Mindich (1998) argues, that introduced coverage of news beyond the political spectrum—much of it was sensational, but it was not partisan. In that regard, it was objective. Schudson (1978), however, asserted that objective journalism—free from sensationalized reports that blatantly attempted to grab readers—did not take hold in the United States until after World War I. He said journalists' experiences with propaganda during the war, coupled with public relations efforts after it, led them to conclude, "the world they reported was one that interested parties had constructed for them to report" (Schudson, 1978, p. 6).

Journalists turned to a re-evaluation of the methods they used to gather information, relying on the scientific objectivity promoted by Lippmann to guide their reporting. This influence can be seen in the creation of journalism organizations, such as the American Society of Newspaper Editors and Sigma Delta Chi (which later became the American Society of News Editors and the Society of Professional Journalists, respectively), in the 1920s. At its first meeting, the

newspaper editors' group established a code of ethics that relied heavily on notions of objectivity, and Sigma Delta Chi later adopted that same code (American Society of News Editors, 2009; Society of Professional Journalists, 1996). The popular adoption of objectivity may also have been spurred by the desire of journalists to hold themselves above reproach. Shoemaker and Reese (1996) suggested objectivity, while serving as an essential element of journalistic ideals, additionally provides "a set of procedures to which journalists willingly conform in order to protect themselves from attack" (p. 112).

Journalists may embrace objectivity as a form of self-preservation or as an ideological imperative, and they may fear their autonomy has fallen victim to the crushing conglomerization of the industry, but as the *American Journalist* studies show these standards for the profession persevere among journalists (Weaver et al., 2007). How, then, did news workers come to expect that to be a journalist, one must act as an altruistic defender of the public interest who objectively and freely delivers the news, and how do they convey that image to others and attract them to the profession?

Learning to be a journalist

The answer to the question posed above is, largely, through socialization. When members are socialized into a group, they are introduced to the standards and routines that make the group cohesive (Petersen, 1992). They predominantly learn these expectations by observing and emulating other group members who may act as role models, teaching them how to behave according to expectations

(Ibarra, 1999; Pratt, 1998). Newcomers who accept these norms as their own incorporate the group's identity into their self-definition. As explained in the social identity literature, socialization is a critical step in the path to identification because new members absorb the ideals and values of the group and behave in ways that promote those principles (Pratt, 1998).

Journalists are socialized into the profession through two institutions: their education and their employer (Schudson, 1978; Tuchman, 1978; Weaver et al., 2007). Following the Civil War, journalism classes and schools were launched at several universities, and helped to professionalize the vocation by teaching the reporting and editing skills that publications desired as well as educating students on concepts such as ethics and accountability (Schudson, 1978). As undergraduate and graduate journalism programs grew, it signaled the rise of the trade's status and acceptance as a profession. For decades, though, employers did not have firm expectations that new hires had to have attended journalism school—in many cases, reporters and editors did not have college degrees or they had studied other subjects (Schudson, 1978). This has changed for the latest generations of journalists. Over the past four decades, the number of journalists with a bachelor's degree went from little more than half to nearly all, from 58 percent to 89 percent (Weaver et al., 2007). Even more journalists at daily newspapers have college degrees—92%. In the most recent *American Journalist* survey, about three-quarters of the graduates working as journalists had taken journalism classes or worked for campus media organizations (Weaver et al., 2007). These figures suggest that a

college education, particularly one emphasizing journalism studies, is expected of those seeking work at a newspaper, television station, or other media. If journalists are, for all intents and purposes, required to obtain an education on the mass media, then it vaults the level of influence collegiate programs can wield—students *need* those programs and the degrees associated with them to find work in the field. Journalists, once praised for the variety of their backgrounds, now have fairly homogenous educations (Weaver et al., 2007). As such, their socialization experiences with learning the skills of the craft and its ideals are common, reinforcing the widespread acceptance of those professional norms. This homogeneity can be detrimental, though, as well. Through socialization workers can become highly identified and their shared values and perspectives can cripple them in times of change because they refuse to adapt their principles to meet new challenges (Pratt, 2008).

Although journalists learn the basic skills and principles of their trade in the classroom, they must assess how these elements are practiced on the job and adapt to those expectations. Each news organization has its own routines and standards, though rare is the employee program that formally outlines them; instead, new hires are expected to navigate the system and adapt accordingly (Deuze, 2008). Newcomers look to veteran journalists for cues about norms and routines of the organization, which dictate how they should perform their jobs (Sigelman, 1973; Tuchman, 1978). This is an example of the emulation path to identification, in which journalists learn which routines and roles they should enact (Pratt, 1998).

For journalists, routines are the “ongoing, structured ... procedures that are embedded in media work” (Reese, 2001, p. 180). Routines enable workers to meet the needs of the organization, namely producing material to disseminate to the public (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996; Tuchman, 1978). Routines also limit journalists’ autonomy, though Deuze (2008) and Reese (2001) doubt workers, many of whom are drawn to the field because of the freedom they believe it offers, are cognizant of the fact that they cannot pursue the job in any way they see fit. Doing so would hamper their ability to effectively fulfill the organization’s needs and likely violate the organization’s expectations regarding the way the job should be carried out.

So instead, journalists opt to work within the parameters they have learned and develop what Tuchman (1978) called “the rhythm of newswork” (p. 63). One of the widely accepted practices in “doing journalism” is to regularly contact certain sources for information because it enables journalists to produce a steady stream of material and satisfy the organizational need for information to provide to the public (Ryfe, 2009). Public agencies are among the most popular sources for journalists simply because the institutions generate multitudes of information. Because of this ongoing contact, journalists feel they are protecting the public’s interests:

Out of the routine of interacting with officials at public agencies, reporters have developed a sense of themselves as ‘watchdogs,’ and this identity is one symbolic measure by which they identify ‘good’ journalism (Ryfe, 2009, p. 199).

Seeing other journalists do this, newcomers accept that certain sources are permitted to have a hand in constructing the reality that media professionals convey to the public (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996). The routine of meeting with public officials and covering those institutions signals to journalists that they are carrying out the obligations of their roles, but they walk a fine line in becoming over-reliant on those sources. By regularly turning to the same sources for information, journalists also reinforce those sources' positions of power and credibility, as well as their ability to influence the public and, potentially, the media coverage they receive (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996). The confluence of these elements means that in acting out the routines of their profession, journalists must also be mindful of jeopardizing the appearance that they act objectively and autonomously in the pursuit of stories.

Like the learning of routines, journalists also are socialized to accept the norms of their roles, which include the previously discussed standards of objectivity and autonomy. For professionals, "to follow norms is a motive in itself, due to the mix of a desire to avoid sanction, feel 'normal', and live up to standards that one embraces" (Alvesson, 2000, p. 1105). Socializing journalists to adhere to the norms of the industry, then, encourages them to identify with other journalists and the profession. Based on her research, Singer (2007) predicts it is the norms of the profession that will increasingly identify journalists in the future—that the ways in which they apply the ideological values of the profession to their journalistic endeavors will define them as journalists.

Organizational culture in journalism

It is not just the socialization efforts of organizations that inform journalists' notions of how they should do their jobs and give them a sense of who they are professionally, the entire culture of the organization sets the standards to which journalists mold themselves (Argyris, 1974; Breed, 1955; Deuze, 2008; Sylvie & Witherspoon, 2002). As media workers identify themselves as being members of an organization, they situate themselves in the cultural framework of the group and perceive potential changes as threats to the culture and, by extension, themselves.

Organizational culture is a broad concept with many elements that influence and shape it. At its heart, a culture is built upon the values, practices, and behaviors of members whose shared experiences lead to a collective knowledge that sustains its survival (Redmond, 2006; Schein, 2003). The values an organization promotes lead to the establishment of norms and routines for its members, who absorb those attitudes and practices and integrate them into the jobs they perform, and communicate them to new members (Schein, 2003; Sylvie, 2003; Sylvie & Witherspoon, 2002). Through this socialization, members learn the roles valued by others in the group and decide whether to take on those values as their own, which is one step in the path of becoming highly identified with a group (Pratt, 1998). Part of identifying with a group is accepting its culture. As McLellan and Porter (2007) explained: "Culture is in the air an organization breathes. It is the environment, unseen but omnipresent, in which everyone works. It helps shape attitudes, morale, values, products and even vocabulary" (p. 36). For business organizations, like those

that operate in the media industry, the business environment and marketplace influence corporate culture and promote economic efficiency (Petersen, 1992).

Organizational culture transcends written contracts—it is nestled in the history of the organization and gives definition to the organization and its purpose (Petersen, 1992; Redmond, 2006). In order to perpetuate themselves, organizations must have a culture that fundamentally attracts new members who learn nuanced elements from existing members as they are socialized into the group; this works to continually reinforce the importance of keeping faith in the culture of the organization (Petersen, 1992). From this point, then, culture influences the socialization and communication of the organization's members, as well as the strategies and technology they adopt and their productivity within the group (Sylvie, 2003). In this regard, an organization's culture should promote being highly identified with the group.

Culture, while it can be the lifeblood of an organization, can also be its downfall, as illustrated by Sylvie (2003), who wrote: "A newspaper, like many organizations, is often slave to its culture" (p. 300). Newspapers, as with other organizations in the media industry and beyond, can become tied to their history and their norms—the understanding how they are supposed to operate and function. This presents a confounding dilemma for introducing and adopting change at a time like the present, when profound change is reverberating throughout the media industry. Advances in technology have led to changes in society's information-sharing abilities and the shifting definition of who can be a journalist,

which threatens not only the identity of those who consider themselves journalists, but the very culture those identities are built upon. Change threatens culture, often leading to strong opposition from organizational members regarding change and new ideas (Petersen, 1992). Scholars assert these reactions are widespread throughout the media industry, perhaps none moreso than at newspapers: “The predominant culture in the newspaper industry is defensive. ... That kind of defensiveness is a powerful barrier to change” (McLellan & Porter, 2007, p. 35). This defensiveness, McLellan and Porter (2007) said, has led to newspapers falling further and further out of sync with their audiences and competitors—one example they give was newspapers’ focus on “[perfecting] their print product(s) while ignoring ways to reach new readers online” (p. 38). In this regard, news workers relied on the homogeneity of attitudes about resisting change and used professional identification as a crutch—at the expense of losing audiences and profits.

The ideology of the journalism profession itself may serve as barrier to change; professional norms and standards contribute to a professional culture that “reproduce[s] the dominant self-understanding of journalism among its practitioners, allowing the profession to remain operationally closed through processes of self-reference—up to and including a homogenization of the workforce” (Deuze, 2008, p. 20). Again, as was noted in the previous chapter, homogeneity in a group can be its downfall if members wrap themselves in their shared mindsets and refuse to respond to challenges to their values and principles.

Bringing about change is difficult because it requires members to reimagine and reinvent the way they do business, which can include the wholesale adoption of different values and practices, as well as new goals for the organization or profession (Gade, 2004). All of these elements challenge the current identity. By understanding the existing culture of the group, changes can be implemented more easily if they are tied to that culture and the group's identity (Petersen, 1992). The changes must be framed in ways that members can understand and accept, usually by placing them within the framework of the current culture and identity (Sylvie & Witherspoon, 2002).

Change comes differently to different organizational members because of variation in their roles. As Gade (2004) explained: "Management is responsible for conceiving, guiding, and monitoring change, while rank-and-file must execute management's vision and live with the new roles and values associated with change" (p. 28-29). One of the roadblocks to change in the media industry is that management often doesn't have a firm grasp on what the organization's culture is, let alone how to effectively manage changing it. Managers and employees often do not understand the central values in their organization's culture (Petersen, 1992). Ineffective change management can, and often does, lead to greater change resistance.

Effective change must come from throughout the organization, not just management-down. Organizational members are invested in the organization through their identification with it, and they should have an investment in the

changes they face as well. News workers across all levels “need to feel they own, and control, their own destinies – particularly in the organizations where they spend much of their lives” (Sylvie & Witherspoon, 2002, p. 41). Here, communication is a key factor in achieving change. By creating shared understandings of what changes are needed and how they can best be implemented, organizations can begin to more effectively change their cultures (Sylvie & Witherspoon, 2002).

Changes within the media industry

Changes in the media industry in the past two decades have altered the entire production process of newspapers (Sylvie & Witherspoon, 2002). Technology is the major contributor to these shifts, leading to expanded job roles for some journalists and the elimination of jobs for other media workers (Witschge & Nygren, 2009). Other factors that have influenced industry-wide changes include the increasing commercialization of news and the high profit margins expected by shareholders and corporate owners, which has led to a dwindling divide between news and business operations that was made all the more visible by a worldwide recession that forced media companies to cut workers’ resources in order to remain financially solvent (Beam et al., 2009). As a result of these transformations:

Journalists tend to be cautious and skeptical towards changes in the institutional and organizational arrangements of their work, as lessons learnt in the past suggest that such changes tend to go hand in hand with downsizing, lay-offs, and having to do more with less staff, budget, and resources (Deuze, 2008, p. 8).

Journalists may feel justifiably reticent toward changes in the workplace because change has often equaled greater demands and hardships on news workers, many of whom believe the focus of the industry's culture on journalistic principles is giving way to profit demands (Gade, 2004). The result, Gade (2004) said, is "a cultural 'battle' unfolding in news organizations as they become more integrated" (p. 42). Because change threatens newsroom culture, news workers are often resistant to it, seeing the change as a challenge to their identity (Ryfe, 2009; Sylvie & Witherspoon, 2002).

This perception can readily be seen in journalists' reactions to changes in technology across the industry; though new technologies have allowed journalists advantages such as greater mobility and reaching a larger audience, they are also decried for the additional job dimensions they require (Deuze, 2008; Russial, 2009; Witschge & Nygren, 2009). As new technology has been introduced, journalists have seen their job roles expand along with the news cycle, contributing to higher reported stress levels (Wilson, 2008; Witschge & Nygren, 2009). A national study of burnout among American journalists found their exhaustion rates were closely tied to beliefs that they had more new-media work to do with fewer resources and in less time (Wheeler, Christiansen, Cameron, Hollingshead & Rawlins, 2009). Changes such as these can challenge workers' identification with the profession and their organizations if they believe the changes are not permitting them to enact the principles and values that attracted them to the profession.

Pagination was among the first widespread technology shifts to occur at newspapers; in the 1980s, computers began to replace workers who physically laid out the pages (Russial, 2009). Instead, editors increasingly took on the role of laying out pages on the computer screen and today nearly every newspaper in the U.S. is designed on computers and electronically sent to press. The rise of the Internet and digital photography in the 1990s brought other fundamental changes to the industry by altering workers' job routines and roles (Witschge & Nygren, 2009). These changes, in some cases, made journalists feel the work they were already performing was being devalued by their employers and made workers resentful and resistant to the new roles they were being asked to take on (Deuze, 2008). Today, newspaper reporters still spend most of their time writing articles, but they do it across platforms, writing for the print publication, as well as its Web site and related blogs (Russial, 2009). Journalists also produce audio, video, and multimedia packages, but say they are being asked to do more with little consideration for the additional time it takes to collect the material for these endeavors and compile the elements into a polished report for the public (Witschge & Nygren, 2009). Such attitudes from management contribute to journalists' feelings of devaluation, and as news professionals' workload increases, it can make their jobs seem less distinctive. In order for workers to identify with their organizations, they must feel their work is distinctive (Ashforth & Mael, 1989).

If journalists do not feel their work is valued, it can leave them feeling that the emphasis in their newsrooms is now on the quantity of work they produce, not

the quality of it (O'Sullivan & Heinonen, 2008; Witschge & Nygren, 2009). Because journalistic ideology focuses on the quality of the work—such as good storytelling that is factually accurate and balanced, and meets the ethical standards of the profession—increased production demands can result in workers perceiving that delivering the news is valued above getting the news right. Accuracy is another of the professional standards journalists believe makes their profession distinctive, and if journalists believe their organizations are forcing them to compromise accuracy, they will likely perceive it as a violation of one of the tenets of the profession, resulting in lower organizational identification. The 24/7 news cycle made possible by the Internet means that journalists are always on deadline, always rushed to be the first to get their news to the public (Sylvie & Gade, 2009). Witschge and Nygren (2009) said:

The journalistic process has three parts: newsgathering, evaluation and production. The constant deadline in online media compacts these three parts, and the phase of evaluation is often carried out in front of the audience; facts are published, only to be checked retrospectively and new information is published on the site as ongoing news (p. 45).

These ongoing deadlines coupled with the pressure to produce reports across a variety of platforms increases the amount of stress journalists experience (Deuze, 2008; Wilson, 2008; Witschge & Nygren, 2009). News workers' stress can be manifested in several ways, including making more errors and having a heightened resistance to workload demands, which ultimately can decrease job

satisfaction and increase intentions to leave the organization or profession (Weaver et al., 2007; Witschge & Nygren, 2009).

This is not to say that journalists uniformly resist technological change in the newsroom; they do recognize the increased mobility that is enabled by the Internet and digital tools. But some of the ways in which these changes are introduced is problematic—they are seldom framed in a manner that exemplifies their utility (Deuze, 2008; O'Sullivan & Heinonen, 2008). In a study on converged newsrooms, Singer (2004) found newspaper journalists were reticent about taking on what they considered to be additional duties and deadlines associated with online and broadcast journalism. Journalists are more likely to willingly adopt technology if they believe it is similar to the work they were already doing and enhances their standing in some fashion, thus contributing to the prestige of the profession and reinforcing their identification with it. Instead, journalists more often find their jobs expanded to include using an unfamiliar technological device that they have received little to no training on and receive minimal explanation from management on the benefits to the journalist personally. Thus, Deuze (2008) emphasized that technological changes “take a long time to sediment into the working culture of a news organization” (p. 11), and that:

The success or failure of journalists to deal with the role of technology in their work must therefore also be set against the history of their professional identity, the changes in the institutional structure of the industry, and the fragmentation and even disappearance of their audiences (and thus

advertisers), (p. 13).

The latter part of Deuze's (2008) statement points to another challenge journalists face from within the industry: the decline of the economic model of newspapers. Once basking in annual profit margins of 20 percent or more, newspapers are now staggering under the evaporation of their audiences and advertisers as well as the debt they took on when times were better (Redmond, 2006; Shaver & Shaver, 2006). Newspapers are searching for new business models and strategies that will generate revenue from the audience's shift to the online consumption of news and information and advertisers' reluctance to buy space for smaller returns. Before the surge in the Internet's popularity, the print media used to be able to deliver a guaranteed audience of readers to advertisers (Croteau & Hoynes, 2001; Shoemaker & Reese, 1996). With an economic model sustained by advertising, newspapers have been crippled by the online migration of classified advertising, the rise in other types of online ads, and the global recession that has perhaps forever shifted the way businesses choose to spend their advertising dollars (Ferguson, 2006; Pew Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2010a).

Declining profit margins for media companies have contributed to the emergence of megacorporations with diverse holdings that can—in the short term—sustain losses in the media sector, but many journalists complain their employers' concerns about profits trump upholding journalistic principles (Redmond, 2006). When workers feel their employers are not permitting them to act as journalists should—by

performing tasks that adhere to professional principles—the connection they feel toward the organization is likely to suffer (Russo, 1998).

Economic losses at media corporations have resulted in layoffs throughout the years, but recent reports lament that 2008 and 2009 have been among the worst years for journalists. During that time, more than 45,000 jobs were lost in the news industry (Unity, 2009). Estimates for job losses in editorial departments at newspapers in 2008 and 2009 were around 12,000 (Pew Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2010a) although other estimates push the number of all jobs lost at newspapers to be closer to 30,000 (Smith, 2009). In a panel study of reporters, Beam et al. (2009) found nearly half of those workers' organizations had reduced their staffs in the preceding 12 months, and about one-third of the employers had eliminated positions through layoffs and buyouts. Although downsizings are common when corporations experience financial hardships, it does not lessen the effect of those cuts on the employees who remain and can lessen the connection they feel they share with the organization (Brockner et al., 1986). Much of this impact results from layoff survivors' increased workloads—just because positions are cut, the work associated with them does not also disappear (Beam et al., 2009). Of the workers in the Beam et al. (2009) study, two-thirds said the work they were expected to do had increased. Reduced staff sizes and increased workloads led to many of the reporters feeling they had less control of their jobs. Another study, which examined the effects of employee downsizing at a particular newspaper, found that two-thirds of the newsroom workers' jobs had changed following layoffs

and buyouts in the previous months; they were taking on more work responsibilities as a result and were more often taking work home (Reinardy, 2009b).

The consequences of cutting media workers' positions goes beyond the changes to survivors' work routines. Journalists' feelings toward the organization can be altered, drawing down their morale and commitment and raising the likelihood they will experience job insecurity and seek work elsewhere (Brockner et al., 1985; Brockner et al., 1986; Brockner, Wiesenfeld, Reed, Grover & Martin, 1993; Reinardy, 2009a; Reinardy, 2009b; Shah, 2000; Sylvie & Gade, 2009). Workers who lose friends at the organization or colleagues whose work is significantly linked with theirs are more likely to have a negative perception of the organization (Shah, 2000), and to suffer a range of negative emotions including anxiety, guilt, and remorse about their status as survivors (Reinardy, 2009b). These feelings can cause workers to experience a drop in the connection they feel to the organization and trigger lowered identification with the company.

Changes outside the media industry

Journalists have to struggle against challenges to their professional authority not only from technological and economic changes within the industry, but from outside forces as well. Technology, which has increased the workload of journalists in the newsroom, has also made it possible for virtually anyone to be a journalist (Bruns, 2005; Deuze, 2008; O'Sullivan & Heinonen, 2008; Singer, 2005). The Internet and digital media tools have introduced publishing to the world—no longer

are journalists the exclusive gatekeepers of news and information. Anyone can take their message to the masses; they don't need journalists to do it anymore or, at least, they don't need them as much (Bruns, 2005).

Although most of these content producers do not consider their blogs to be "journalism," those who do are more likely to engage in what they consider to be journalistic acts, including fact-checking and independent reporting (Gil de Zuniga et al., in press). Journalists, however, are not as accepting of blogs and other forms of citizen journalism as being "real journalism" (O'Sullivan & Heinonen, 2008, p. 364), though many journalists report reading blogs, using them to keep informed of the news and assess public opinion (Jeong, 2009). Print journalists in particular were less apt to consider bloggers and other content producers to be journalists as they, the "professional journalists," define the profession. This attitude reflects the threat journalists feel to their status—if anyone can be a journalist, then the profession becomes less distinctive and prestigious and, ultimately, is devalued (Deuze, 2008). Because perceptions of prestige and distinctiveness are crucial components of identification, perceived threats to the respect and status the group receives from others can leave workers questioning the extent of their identification with the group (Tyler, 2001). As Deuze (2008) succinctly explained, "Once the audience disappears or has gone off to make its own media ... the professional identity of the media worker gets significantly undermined" (p. 12).

The shrinking-audience phenomenon has also been brought on by technology—circulation figures at newspapers in the U.S. have nosedived as the

Internet's reach has increased (Ortuary, 2009). Most newspapers have offered their content free of charge online, and though some publications are experimenting with erecting paywalls, the audience may not be willing to pay for news that it had been receiving at no cost for years and may be able to find elsewhere on the Internet at no cost (Pew Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2010a). Declining circulation rates have meant less revenue for newspapers, and drops in circulation have made newspapers less appealing to advertisers (Croteau & Hoynes, 2001; Shoemaker & Reese, 1996). Newspapers' business models are built on supplying an audience to advertisers—without the audience, organizations have no incentive to advertise, and without advertisements, newspapers have little other significant revenue.

The declining audience weighs heavily on the minds of journalists and many predict a gloomy future for the industry (Wilson, 2008). In a study of working journalists, almost two-thirds reported that their audience numbers have been falling and three-quarters think their organizations may not recover those numbers (Wilson, 2008). That the audience is disappearing and may not be willing to pay for news online leads to a devaluation of the news product, which signals another threat to journalists' status because it suggests a lack of respect for the work they do. As Tyler (2001) wrote, a perceived lack of respect by others can lessen group members' feelings of favorability for the group.

The 24/7 news cycle may also feed into the reduced value of news—with so many sources of information available online, the news has less value overall. The constant deadlines also indicate a shift of power from the journalist to the audience:

Many newsrooms' move to the 24/7 news cycle—an acknowledgment that people, not journalists, determine when news happens—represents the beginning re-distribution of power by signaling that audience (not journalists and their editors) wants must have a higher priority (as opposed to audience needs) if news media are to remain profitable (Sylvie & Gade, 2009, p. 124).

If journalists believe their power as gatekeepers is slipping, that too jeopardizes their identification with the profession they have chosen. Their power has been threatened on multiple levels: Technological changes have led to shifts in journalists' work routines that they largely had little choice but to accept, and those same technological tools have enabled audience members to become news producers, challenging the notion of who is a journalist (Deuze, 2008). Economic elements also endanger journalists' sense of who they are and what they do—corporate decisions to implement layoffs and buyouts have increased the workload on journalists at a time when the public is less willing to pay for the material journalists produce (Beam et al., 2009; Ortuary, 2009). These forces coalesce to leave journalists feeling that the job is not what they expected it to be, which can detract from media professionals' satisfaction with their work and diminish the journalists' identification with their organization and profession, and ultimately lead them to leave the organization and even the profession.

Journalists' job satisfaction impeded by industry changes

Job satisfaction, as a concept, is one's attitude about certain facets of the job and the duties associated with it (Van Dick et al., 2004). Van Dick et al. (2004) found

organizational identification strongly affects job satisfaction, suggesting that workers who are highly identified with an organization also will report high job satisfaction. An individual's current job satisfaction is influenced by past feelings about the job as well as issues intrinsic and extrinsic to its context (Van Dick et al., 2004). The nature of the work is one of the principal intrinsic elements of job satisfaction, and among journalists it has a significant effect on their feelings toward their jobs (Weaver et al., 2007). Enjoyment of the nature of the work itself, the autonomy afforded through the work, and the personal achievement gained through it—all linked to intrinsic motivation—are rated highly by journalists who feel satisfied in their jobs (Barrett, 1984; Beam, 2006; Bergen & Weaver, 1988; McQuarrie, 1999; Shaver, 1978; Weaver et al., 2007). A national survey of journalists indicated the ones who felt the greatest satisfaction with their jobs were the ones who experienced higher levels of autonomy and believed their organizations were doing a good job of informing the public (Beam, 2006). These reports suggest support for Van Dick et al.'s (2004) finding that strong ties exist between job satisfaction and organizational identification. For journalists in particular, this suggests they draw their satisfaction from being able to do work through their organization that enables them to act as journalists should according to tenets of the profession.

The technological and economic changes in the media industry do not appear to have diminished the value journalists place on the intrinsic tasks of their jobs, but they do feel organizational demands related to these changes inhibit their autonomy

(Beam et al., 2009). Additionally, these dynamics have affected journalists' feelings about the extrinsic elements of their jobs. Extrinsic motivation is drawn from the elements of the job that the worker does not have control over, such as his or her relationship with coworkers and supervisors as well as the position's workload, salary, job security, and status (Herzberg, 1966; Steers & Porter, 1991). Journalists have consistently reported that these elements contribute to their dissatisfaction on the job (Barrett, 1984; Bergen & Weaver, 1988; McQuarrie, 1999; Pease, 1992; Shaver, 1978; Weaver et al., 2007). Workers who are less satisfied with their jobs are less likely to identify with their organizations (Van Dick et al., 2004).

Many journalists perceive the changes required in their jobs as technology-related tasks have been added signal that their supervisors do not value the work they were already performing, which jeopardizes their standing in the organization (Deuze, 2008). Journalists who do not feel their employer values their work are less likely to report that they enjoy their work (Beam, 2006). These changes in journalists' work conditions can lead them to develop negative feelings about the organization and the culture it fosters, chipping away at their identification with the organization. A journalist can also come to believe that the company has unfairly changed its expectations of them, or that the company has not fulfilled its obligations to them, also resulting in lowered organizational identification.

Technological advances that permit the public to become content producers further threaten journalists' status, encroaching on the gatekeeping domain that media workers had exclusively held (Bruns, 2005; Deuze, 2008). Such threats can

cause journalists to believe the profession's status has been diminished, and that the work they do has less value in the public's eyes. Journalists may experience additional devaluation related to society's use of media-produced reports—dropping circulation figures indicate the public is using technology to get news and information in other ways and often from other sources, suggesting to journalists that the public does not value their work in the way it once did (Deuze, 2008; Ortuay, 2009). Because of these experiences, journalists may feel that the “agreement” they had with the public—that journalists would produce reports and the public would consume the material journalists provided—has been violated. If group members perceive their construed external image (the image others have of their group) has weakened and they are no longer held in the same regard they once were, they are likely to believe the group's status has been threatened (Dutton et al., 1994). For journalists, this means perceptions that the public no longer values their work could lead to beliefs that their status has been threatened.

The economic realities of news production today also affect media professionals' feelings about their jobs. Corporate downsizings in the form of layoffs and buyouts, as well as other reductions in staff resources, have increased the workload of many remaining journalists (Wilson, 2008). The increase in work at organizations that have reduced staffs has resulted in journalists believing they have less autonomy (Beam et al., 2009). Because journalistic ideology is so wrapped up in the notion of autonomy, workers who perceive challenges to their professional discretion at the hands of their employers are likely to feel the organization has

violated one of the foundational principles of the profession and decreased organizational identification is the likely result (Russo, 1998).

The economic woes at media corporations have also focused attention on the business side of those enterprises and brought the companies' for-profit interests to the forefront, resulting in news workers feeling the journalistic mission of the profession has been degraded at organizations concerned about the bottom line (Beam et al., 2009). These issues contribute to journalists' dissatisfaction with their jobs and employers (Beam, 2006; Beam et al., 2009). In fact, Beam (2006) asserted:

The rank-and-file tend to think their employers care more about earning large profits and care less about producing high-quality journalism. They think that their organization puts profits ahead of journalism and that newsroom resources are shrinking, and they are less likely to say journalistic quality is rising (p. 181).

Situations like this, in which workers believe the culture of the organization has shifted away from professional standards and toward business interests, again devalue the role journalists play in the lifeblood of the organization (Beam et al., 2009; Gade, 2004). Coupled together, feelings such as these can shift the balance in journalists' assessments of their job satisfaction, with dissatisfaction outweighing satisfaction. A recent meta-analysis of studies on journalists found their job turnover intentions were tied to their job satisfaction, with those who suffer low job satisfaction being the most likely to entertain thoughts of leaving (Chang & Massey, 2008).

Turnover hurts organizations in a variety of ways, the least of which is the loss of valuable employees and the impact it can have on other employees, who may suffer an increased workload (and therefore, make more mistakes) and decreased morale, contributing to an overall decline in product quality (Roseman, 1981). Over time, the organization's profits suffer if turnover is not managed efficiently. In short, turnover is costly for the organization (Lawler, 2003). Van Dick et al. (2004) found organizational identification is closely correlated with turnover intent; companies that want to reduce turnover should strive to build up workers' identification with the organization.

In exploring a model of voluntary turnover, Lee, Mitchell, Holtom, McDaniel and Hill (1999) found the path one follows in making the decision to leave an organization begins with certain expectations not being met and the impediment that creates in achieving their goals. Dissatisfaction with the job builds, as do thoughts of leaving the organization. Lawler (2003), too, concluded higher job satisfaction results in lower turnover rates, which for employers means suppressing turnover by understanding workers' motivations and fulfilling their expectations.

This chapter examined the literature on journalists' development of their professional and organizational identities, from the socialization they undergo to learn the norms and principles to journalism to the impact of recent industry changes on those perceptions. By understanding the components that influence journalists' feelings about their work and their profession, newsroom managers and researchers can better understand how recent changes in the media industry and

audience may affect outcomes such as journalists' morale, productivity, job satisfaction, and turnover intent.

Chapter Four

Research questions and hypotheses

Before the hypotheses were tested in this research, five research questions were posed to gain foundational information about newspaper journalists' attitudes toward their work and build support for the hypotheses. After a general profile of newspaper journalists was gleaned from demographic data, the first research question examined their job satisfaction because previous research has shown strong ties between workers' job satisfaction and their identification with their organization (Van Dick et al., 2004). Since organizational identification is a central interest in this research, the job satisfaction question was posed to gain preliminary indication of journalists' feelings. Journalists' present job satisfaction could also be compared against previous reports of their job satisfaction, such as in the *American Journalist* study (Weaver et al., 2007). Therefore, the first research question was:

RQ1: How satisfied are journalists at their current newspaper jobs?

Several factors can influence journalists' feelings about their jobs, including the nature of their work and the tasks they perform (Barrett, 1984; Beam, 2006; Bergen & Weaver, 1988; Chang & Massey, 2008; Weaver et al., 2007). Because journalists are socialized to accept certain professional principles and execute them in their work (Schudson, 1978; Tuchman, 1978), the second research question explored the importance that journalists place on being able to perform some of these principles. The list of job roles included items from the *American Journalist* study, such as providing analysis of complex problems, getting information to the

public quickly, and avoiding stories with content that was not verified. The second research question posed was: RQ2: How do newspaper journalists perceive the importance of their job roles?

Previous research has suggested that journalists' jobs have changed recently with the introduction of new technology tasks and economic decisions that reduced resources (Beam et al., 2009). Furthermore, that research indicates journalists are taking on more work as a result. To further explore these findings among newspaper journalists, a third research question was added to the present study: RQ3: What is the perception of the impact of technological and economic changes on newspaper journalists' workload?

To study the separate impact of these types of changes—technological and economic—two additional research questions were posed. The *Life beyond print* and other studies have shown that recent technological changes have significantly affected the ways in which journalists do their jobs but have stopped short of assessing how journalists believe some of these specific technology-related tasks have affected the work they produce. Hence, the fourth question asked: RQ4: How do newspaper journalists believe technology tasks affect the quality of the journalism they produce?

As mentioned, another type of change has also affected the newspaper industry. Economic changes resulting from reduced circulation and advertising revenue have contributed to downsizing measures at organizations across the profession. Layoffs have been a particular concern because they have been

widespread, with estimates of 12,000 jobs lost at newspapers in 2008 and 2009 (Pew Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2010a). Layoffs also can have a negative effect on those who remain, altering their feelings toward the organization and making them more likely to plan to leave (Brockner et al., 1985; Brockner et al. 1986; Shah, 2000). The fifth research examined layoffs in the newspaper industry by asking: RQ5: How have layoffs affected newsroom numbers?

Following the development of these research questions to lay the foundation for this research, six hypotheses and several related research questions were posed.

The journalism industry is at a crossroads, facing profound changes that have arrived—perhaps no other medium has been as deeply affected as newspapers. The changes in technology, such as the introduction of the Internet and digital media tools, have forced dramatic changes in newspaper journalists' routines, which had not been significantly altered since the start of the 20th Century (Sylvie & Witherspoon, 2002). Socialization plays a great part in journalists' learning and acceptance of the routines associated with their jobs at the professional and organizational levels (Tuchman, 1978; Weaver et al., 2007). In the professional arena, journalists behave in certain ways because those actions support professional ideologies such as acting autonomously and objectively, and in the public's interest (Croteau & Hoynes, 2001; Weaver et al., 2007). Newspaper journalists, however, live their professional lives as workers at news organizations, which also have certain expectations of how journalists will do their jobs. As organizations have integrated new technology into journalists' work, their routines have changed (Deuze, 2008;

Sylvie & Gade, 2009; Witschge & Nygren, 2009). In many cases, the incorporation of technology-related tasks, such as producing multimedia packages or writing additional reports for online publication, has resulted in increased workloads (Russial, 2009; Wilson, 2008; Witschge & Nygren, 2009).

Changes in the business of running newspapers have also led to greater workload demands on journalists (Russial, 2009). As newspapers have strained to maintain their profitability under a crumbling economic model, they have slashed resources—human and otherwise (Beam et al., 2009). With thousands of workers cut from the news industry in 2008 and 2009 (Smith, 2009; Unity, 2009), those who remain have had to take on additional work and have had to do more with fewer resources available to them (Beam et al., 2009; Reinardy, 2009b). These changes in personnel and workload can lead to workers developing negative feelings about their job roles, and the same can be said for their perceptions of technological advances and the resulting changes required in workers' job roles. Therefore, the following hypotheses were proposed:

H1: Newspaper journalists who have negative perceptions about technological changes in the industry will be more likely to have negative feelings about the impact of those changes on their job roles.

And,

H2: Newspaper journalists who have negative perceptions about economic changes in the industry will be more likely to have negative feelings about the impact of those changes on their job roles.

The sixth and seventh research questions are related to these two hypotheses; journalists' job types and the circulation size of their newspapers were tested to determine whether they affected the relationships found in H1 and H2.

Therefore, the research questions were posed:

R6: How are perceptions about industry changes and feelings about the effect of those changes on their job roles affected by newspaper journalists' job type?

And,

RQ7: How are perceptions about industry changes and feelings about the effect of those changes on their job roles affected by newspaper journalists' status as workers at newspapers of various circulation sizes?

Newspaper journalists' negative feelings about their job roles can lead to a greater dilemma for their employers. These negative perceptions, if left unresolved, can evolve into a weakening of employees' identification with the organization (Reinardy, 2009a; Wiesenfeld et al., 1999). As detailed in Chapter 2, organizational identification centers on the sense of connection and belongingness workers feel toward their employer (Pratt, 1998). In order to identify with a group, individuals must believe their membership is valued and secure (Hogg & Terry, 2001). By changing journalists' job roles and increasing their workload, employers are not sending the message to employees that they are valued members. If workers do not believe they are valued, they may begin to withdraw from the organization. As Ryfe (2009) explained, journalists' perceptions about management's changes in journalists' work practices may lead to changes in the workers' identities.

Further, if workers perceive their employer has violated an expectation—such as by continually adding more work to journalists’ jobs with few or no benefits reciprocated—those workers are more likely to begin to disidentify with the organization (Robinson, 1996). This leads to the second and third hypotheses:

H3: Newspaper journalists who have negative feelings about the impact of technological changes on their job roles will be more likely to have lower organizational identification.

And,

H4: Newspaper journalists who have negative feelings about the impact of economic changes on their job roles will be more likely to have lower organizational identification.

As with H1 and H2, these relationships were tested to control for journalists’ job types and circulation sizes in the following research questions:

RQ8: How are feelings about industry changes on newspaper journalists’ job roles and the extent of their organizational identification affected by journalists’ job type?

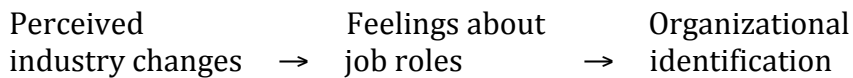
And,

RQ9: How are feelings about industry changes on newspaper journalists’ job roles and the extent of their organizational identification affected by journalists’ status as workers at newspapers of various circulation sizes?

A diagram of these hypotheses is detailed below (Figure 4.1). It shows the expected relationship between newspaper journalists’ feelings about changes in

their industry and the effect of those feelings on the perception of their job roles, which then affects the level of their organizational identification.

Figure 4.1. Journalists' feelings about industry changes, their jobs, and their organization.



It is possible that journalists' professional identification could have an effect on their feelings about their employer. Russo (1998) found that journalists typically possess greater identification with their profession than with their organization. Their identification, though, can be blurred between the profession and organization, with journalists "[requiring] the newspaper to enact the practices, expectations, and values of their profession. The newspaper served as a vehicle for their expression of their professional beliefs and their roles as journalists" (p. 102). In Russo's (1998) research and other studies of professional workers, it was suggested the socialization that occurred during the future workers' educational programs predisposed them to identify with the profession first and later with the organizations that hire them (Kreiner et al., 2006). Therefore, because of the possible overlap of professional and organizational identification, professional identification was explored for its potential effect on the expected relationship between journalists' feelings about changes in their job roles and their organizational identification in: RQ10: How will newspaper journalists' professional

identification affect the relationship between their feelings about their present job roles and the strength of their organizational identification?

Journalists' negative feelings about changes in the newspaper industry may also increase the likelihood that they will believe the status of the profession has been threatened. Previous research involving status threat has predominantly studied it from the comparison perspective—groups will experience status threats if their members believe other groups do not hold them in the same regard they hold themselves (Dutton et al., 1994; Elsbach & Kramer, 1996). In this regard, journalists who believe the public holds their profession in low regard are likely to feel their professional status has been threatened.

Changes in technology and economics may have contributed to declines in the public's regard for the newspaper profession. Digital technology, along with the Internet, has enabled almost anyone to produce content and publish it (Deuze, 2008). This has rendered the profession less distinctive and prestigious, raising the question of who, in fact, is a journalist now that the public can generate news and information (Bruns, 2005; Deuze, 2008). The professional status of journalists has also been undermined by the online migration of the audience—now that the audience can access information directly from sources that used to rely on newspaper journalists to act as gatekeepers, there is a perceived reduced need for journalists, which threatens their status (Bruns, 2005; Deuze, 2008). Newspapers' circulation figures point to the dropping demand for the printed word, and perhaps by extension, the public's value of the profession (Ortuary, 2009). These trends

suggest the following hypothesis: H5: Newspaper journalists who have negative perceptions about changes in the industry will be more likely to perceive the status of the profession has been threatened.

Two research questions were posed to enhance the findings of H5 by exploring journalists' perceptions of public regard and assessing the ways in which they manage threats to their professional status. The eleventh research question drew out journalists' explanations for their perceptions of the public's regard for their profession, and the twelfth question asked them to rate their perceptions of the public's regard for the newspaper profession's performance on various journalism job roles:

RQ11: What reasons do newspaper journalists give to explain their perceptions of the public's regard for their profession?

And,

RQ12: How do journalists rate public perceptions of the newspaper profession's performance of certain job roles?

As with the previous hypotheses, the proposed relationships were tested in research questions for the effect of journalists' job types and circulation sizes:

RQ13: How are perceptions about industry changes and professional status affected by newspaper journalists' job type?

And,

RQ14: How are perceptions about industry changes and professional status affected by newspaper journalists' status as workers at newspapers of various circulation sizes?

To build upon the relationship proposed in the previous hypothesis, it is necessary to examine what is likely to occur in the aftermath of status threat. Identification with a group—such as the profession of journalism—occurs after assessing several characteristics of the group to ascertain its status (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Pratt, 1998). Individuals are likely to be enticed to become members of a group and remain if they believe the group is prestigious and distinctive. They also seek a sense of purpose and security from the group (Hogg & Terry, 2001), and wish for others to hold their group in high regard (Dutton & Dukerich, 1991). As detailed in the previous hypothesis, few of these antecedents of identification are being met, in large part due to changes that have occurred in the journalism profession. Practically anyone with an Internet connection and a computer today can do tasks that some consider to be journalism, which threatens the status of the newspaper profession by lessening its prestige. This change also threatens the security newspaper journalists sought in the profession—if more people can act like journalists and serve as their own gatekeepers, and if fewer people are reading newspapers—then these workers may not be as needed as they once were.

Because journalists have been found to have high degrees of identification with the profession, perceived threats to their organization are likely to affect the way they view the profession and themselves (Russo, 1998). The devaluation of the

profession in the eyes of the public as well as within the newspaper industry is likely to lead to journalists' decline identification with the profession. Therefore, the final hypothesis is proposed: H6: Newspaper journalists who perceive their professional status has been threatened will be more likely to have lower professional identification.

The final research questions in this study also tested the relationship in H6 by controlling for job type and circulation size:

RQ15: How are perceptions about professional status threat and professional identification affected by newspaper journalists' job type?

And,

RQ16: How are perceptions about professional status threat and professional identification affected by newspaper journalists' status as workers at newspapers of various circulation sizes?

The links between the two previous hypotheses are illustrated below (Figure 4.2). Journalists with negative feelings about the changes that have occurred in the newspaper industry are likely to feel the status of the profession has been threatened; that perceived threat to the profession's status is expected to be associated with a decline in newspaper journalists' identification with their profession.

Figure 4.2. Journalists' feelings about industry changes, threats to the profession's status, and their profession.

Perceived industry changes → Professional status threat → Professional identification

The hypotheses and research questions posed for this research connect social identity theory to a group in crisis as newspaper journalists struggle with redefining their identities professionally and organizationally. Changes in the newspaper industry have brought on this “identity crisis” among journalists, who can be studied as their connections to the profession and their employers falter at a crossroads and they cognitively maneuver the process of renegotiating their identities.

Chapter Five

Methodology

This research used a mixed-methods approach to explore the hypotheses and research question; an online survey was sent to randomly selected journalists working full-time at daily newspapers in the U.S., and from that group, volunteers were solicited for depth interviews to further investigate the central research questions. The combination of these methods was expected to yield richer data for the study, particularly on newspaper journalists' perceptions about the effect of technological and economic changes on their job roles, and the extent of their identification with the organization and profession.

Online survey procedure

The online survey was pretested on 20 current and former journalists known by the researcher to assess the clarity of questions and answer responses in the instrument. Based on written and verbal feedback, the wording of three questions was slightly changed to enhance the precision of the question; in addition, two sentences of further explanation were added to two other questions to clarify their meaning. These changes are detailed later in this chapter.

Journalists were selected from a commercial database maintained by a media contact service that has been in business for more than 75 years. The company has collected information from professional journalists through direct contact by telephone, mail, and email as well as online searches. Worldwide, its list includes almost one million journalists. For the purposes of the present research, the names

and e-mail addresses of about 25,000 journalists working at daily newspapers in the United States were available. Examples include 437 contacts at the *New York Times*, 128 at the *Miami Herald*, and 30 at the *Anchorage Daily News*.

The database of professional journalists primarily includes editors and reporters, as well as some photographers, at daily newspapers; therefore, workers at these types of publications were targeted. So as to obtain a sample that was representative of the circulation breakdown of U.S. mainstream newspapers, the journalists in the database were categorized into subsets by circulation size. According to the most recent industry circulation figures, there were 1,408 daily newspapers in the United States (Editor & Publisher, 2009). Daily newspapers are defined as those that publish four times or more each week.

The study's survey was directed at journalists working at daily newspapers with circulations of more than 10,000 because those publications are more likely to have incorporated wide-scale modifications to journalists' jobs as a result of economic and technological changes. Once the smaller newspapers were excluded, 770 publications remained, according to Editor & Publisher's 2009 figures. These publications were then cross-checked in the commercial database; of this group, 720 publications with staff contact information were listed in the online database. Some newspapers on the Editor & Publisher list, such as the *Ann Arbor (Mich.) News* and *Rocky Mountain News (Colo.)* have ceased publication, and others are not English-language newspapers, such as *La Opinion (Calif.)* These listings contributed to the higher number of daily newspapers in the Editor & Publisher figures.

Of the 720 daily newspapers included in this study, the percentage breakdowns by circulation were as follows: 1.1 percent (n=8) have circulations of more than 500,000; 2.2 percent (n=16) have circulations of 250,001 to 500,000; 8.5 percent (n=61) have circulations of 100,001 to 250,000; 12.2 percent (n=88) have circulations of 50,001 to 100,000; 25.1 percent (n=181) have circulations of 25,001 to 50,000; and 50.8 percent (n=366) have circulations of 10,001 to 25,000. From these circulation groups, a random sample that reflects a representative percentage of journalists was selected to receive the online survey; the total number of invitations sent out was 5,000.

The survey was administered through online survey software produced by Qualtrics. Through the online survey, participants received an email invitation with a unique access link to take the survey. After the initial invitation, participants who had not yet completed their survey received two reminders, plus another email from the director of the School of Journalism at the University of Texas encouraging their participation. The email invitation, as well as the subsequent notes and the survey main page, informed the journalists that their participation was voluntary and that their names and responses would be kept confidential. Additionally, they completed an informed consent form that met IRB guidelines at the University of Texas at Austin.

The initial email invitation to participate in the online survey was sent to the 5,000 selected newspaper journalists on Feb. 23, 2010. Each email contained a brief explanation of the research project and invited the journalists to learn more about

the project and participate in the survey through a link placed in the email. (See Appendix 1 for the email invitation and subsequent reminders.) The initial invitation also included information about the incentive offered by the researcher—participants who completed the survey by 11:59 p.m. Feb. 25, 2010, had the opportunity to register for a drawing of a \$100 VISA gift card. To register, they entered their contact information in a space at the end of the survey. A reminder about the survey and the registration deadline was sent on the morning of Feb. 25, 2010 to the journalists who had not yet completed the survey. By the deadline, 560 newspaper journalists had completed the survey. Another 24 journalists completed the survey after the deadline and before the next email was sent out.

Surveys were assigned a number in the order they were received, so when the researcher drew a number on Feb. 26, 2010 for the drawing winner, the numbers 1 to 560 were entered into the Web site random.org to generate a random number that was the winner of the drawing. The site selected number 50 and that person was contacted via email about winning the gift card. The gift card was mailed to the winner.

On March 2, 2010, an email from the director of the School of Journalism at the University of Texas at Austin was sent to journalists who had not yet completed the survey, encouraging their participation. Between that time and the mailing of a final reminder two days later, 230 surveys were completed.

The final email, which reminded the journalists that the survey ended at 11:59 p.m. March 5, 2010, was sent on March 4. From that time to the deadline, 153

more journalists completed their surveys. In total, 967 newspaper journalists completed the survey, for a response rate of slightly less than 20 percent (19.3%). This response rate falls within acceptable rates for Web-based surveys; response rates for this type of survey usually varies from around 17 percent (Sax, Gilmartin & Bryant, 2003) to up to 30 percent (Wimmer & Dominick, 2003). Recent research involving online surveys administered to journalists yielded response rates similar to this study's rate (Cassidy, 2007; Dailey, Demo & Spillman, 2005; Jeong, 2009.).

As the dataset was analyzed, 40 surveys were omitted from the sample because the participants indicated they either were not full-time newspaper journalists or did not work at a daily newspaper with a circulation of more than 10,000. The final sample contained responses from 927 newspaper journalists.

Using the journalists in the database was expected to yield an accurate representation of journalists working at daily newspapers in the United States. Conducting a survey of journalists is an appropriate tool to collect data on the hypotheses and research questions; surveys are an efficient way to reach a large number of working journalists, as evidenced by past research (Barrett, 1984; Beam, 2006; Bergen & Weaver, 1988; McQuarrie, 1999; Pease, 1992; Shaver, 1978; Weaver et al., 2007). Additionally, the online component was expected to increase response rates because it enabled the participants to respond at their convenience from any location with Internet access.

Online survey rationale

Email surveys “are perhaps closest to the traditional mail survey that the respondent self-administers” (Poindexter & McCombs, 2000, p. 279). As with other Internet surveys, email ones can be far less expensive to conduct than traditional mail or telephone surveys and allow data to be collected much more quickly (Wimmer & Dominick, 2003). They are not without their challenges, though. Some email systems filter out messages that appear to be spam, such as emails sent to a large number of recipients. To combat this, the Qualtrics system sent each email individually. In some online surveys, accessibility of the instrument has posed a problem—the link may not work or the user’s computer may not support the system needed to access and complete the survey (Reynolds, 2007). In the case of this study, fewer than 10 journalists contacted the researcher to report that their work computers were so old that they would not support accessing the survey. When this occurred, the journalists were given the option of receiving the survey invitation at a different email account that could be accessed elsewhere.

Additionally, because the participants were contacted through their work email, it was possible they might not feel comfortable responding to the survey due to the nature of the study. In the email invitation and reminder emails, the journalists had the option of contacting the researcher to receive a survey link at an alternate email account.

Depth interview procedure

To supplement and expand on the quantitative information gained from the online survey of journalists working at U.S. newspapers, 12 journalists were interviewed for the proposed research project. These depth interviews further explored newspaper journalists' attitudes about changes in the industry and the effect of those changes on their job roles, as well as the effect of these feelings on their identification with their employer and the profession.

Journalists who completed the online survey were asked if they would be willing to participate in a brief telephone interview to further detail their responses. Of the journalists who respond in the affirmative, several were contacted to elaborate on their survey answers. Among the considerations when the journalists were chosen was their representation of the circulation categories of U.S. newspapers and various job types; another factor in the selection of journalists for depth interviews was to capture a diverse range of identification levels since identification is the dependent variable in the hypotheses. In this regard, the principal elements of social identity theory were used to guide the selection of potential interviewees.

Interview participants included those who had reported high, low, and mid-range organizational and professional identification, and who had varying feelings about the impact of technological and economic changes on the newspaper industry and on their individual jobs. Among the 12 journalists who were interviewed, most were relatively positive about the impact of technology on their job roles and the

industry, but had little to only moderate support for economic changes—feelings that reflect the overall sentiment of the journalists who completed surveys. The interviewees’ levels of organizational and professional identification were wide ranging, with some who said they were highly identified with both their organization and profession and others who were low in both categories. Most of the interview subjects, however, were somewhere in the middle—they had moderate feelings toward both, or their feelings were mixed with one high score and one low or moderate score. This, too, showcases the range of responses from survey participants, which are detailed in Chapter 6.

In terms of demographics, four of the interview subjects worked at newspapers with circulations of 10,001-25,000, two were at 25,001-50,000 circulation papers and 50,001-100,000 circulation papers, and another two worked at 100,001-250,000 circulation papers. Of the remaining two journalists, one worked at a newspaper with a circulation of 250,001-500,000 and one worked at a paper with a circulation of more than 500,000. Five were reporters, one was a columnist, one was an online/multimedia content producer, and one was a photographer; in later chapters, they fall into a group called the frontline workers. Another group that is discussed later—the managers and decision-makers—were represented in the interviews by two section editors and a managing editor. The final interviewee reported working at an “other” job; in the interview, the subject said he was the editor of the newspaper’s editorial page.

Several of the interviewees had worked in the newspaper industry for more than 20 years, while others were relatively new to the field, having worked only a handful of years. These differences were also reflected in their ages, which ranged from 26 to 63. Eight of the subjects were men and four were women. In addition, eight self-identified as Caucasian, two were Hispanic, one was African-American, and another selected “other” on the survey and later self-identified as multiracial.

A set number of interviews was not established at the outset of the selection process; consistent with depth interview research, the interviews for this project ceased when redundancy in responses was reached. Twelve interviews can be considered to be a fair representation of the pervasive themes in journalists’ survey responses; research on data saturation suggests interview responses reflect basic themes within six participants’ interviews (Guest, Bunce & Johnson, 2006). Interviews were conducted one-on-one via Skype, which allowed the researcher to call participants’ cell phones or landline phones over the Internet and enabled the calls to be recorded digitally and later transcribed. Participants were asked to give their consent for recording the calls prior to the start of each interview.

After each interview was transcribed, the researcher coded responses to each question asked in the interview according to which variables they were related and then further coded those responses on the extent of their support for the constructs being studied in this research. Once the coding was complete, the responses were grouped based on the hypotheses and research questions they

helped to explain and then the answers that were most representative of the various survey responses were used to illustrate the empirical data findings.

Depth interview rationale

Depth interviews are qualitative research tools used to entice detailed responses from participants and identify common themes among those responses (Iorio, 2004). In other words, depth interviews' functions center on the interpretation of insights gleaned from individuals' responses and their understanding of certain problems or subjects (Iorio, 2004). Interviews are unique from other methods of conducting research in a variety of ways. Perhaps most obvious is that they use a smaller sample size than empirical forms of research and that they can be customized to each individual respondent, although interviewers generally construct the same set of questions for all respondents (Wimmer & Dominick, 2003). Interviews allow for the collection of detailed commentary from respondents, who can speak at length on their reasons for giving certain answers, such as their opinions, motivations, and feelings.

These unique qualities can yield great benefits—chief among them are providing a wealth of detail and context that cannot be derived from other types of methods, such as surveys (Poindexter & McCombs, 2000). As Poindexter & McCombs (2000) explained: “One-on-one interviews are most beneficial as a research tool when the topic being explored involves change, novelty or uniqueness and the people being interviewed play influential or unique roles” (p. 269). Interviews are also beneficial in terms of dealing with the respondents, who are

often not in the same location and cannot come together in a larger panel. By interacting with respondents one-on-one, the interviewer is more likely to develop a rapport with them, so the respondents may be more willing to open up to the interviewer because a trust relationship has been established and they are less likely to terminate the interview (Wimmer & Dominick, 2003).

Interviews are not without their pitfalls, as well. Because they are conducted with nonrandom samples, the findings of studies based on interviews are not generalizable to the population being studied (Wimmer & Dominick, 2003). The personal contact that enables the interviewer to develop a connection with the respondent can also make the research susceptible to inadvertent bias—the interviewer may unintentionally signal his or her attitudes, which can then affect the validity of the responses (Wimmer & Dominick, 2003). Time may also be an issue. A frequent challenge in conducting interview research is finding individuals willing to be interviewed who fit the research criteria (Poindexter & McCombs, 2000), and once those people are identified, the time required to conduct the interviews may serve as a further challenge (Wimmer & Dominick, 2003).

A final element that sets interviews apart from other methods is through the analysis of the data collected. Unlike, for example, surveys, there is no data to be quantitatively analyzed. Instead the analysis is rather subjective, which presents another challenge. As Wimmer & Dominick (2003) explained: “A researcher given the same body of data taken from an interview may wind up with interpretations significantly different from those of the original investigator” (p. 128). To insulate

the research from this situation, the researcher must develop a coding scheme for the data, in which categories of responses are identified (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002). An initial step in this process requires close reading of the data to find connections between the responses. Because of the volume of data generated in interview research, this essential step may be a lengthy one, taking several weeks or even months (Wimmer & Dominick, 2003). Fortunately, as the number of categories levels out, most responses will fit into them (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002).

Online survey measures

Before the research questions were answered and hypotheses tested, a general profile of the participating journalists was developed using percentage breakdowns of demographic data and basic information about their jobs. For the profile, as well as the research questions and hypotheses, the statistical software package SPSS was used to analyze the data. Appendix 2 presents the consent form and survey instrument approved by the Institutional review Board at the University of Texas at Austin.

The hypotheses were tested with Pearson r correlations. The first five research questions were answered with frequencies and means. Research questions 6-9 were answered with crosstabulation correlations. RQ10 included regression tests. RQ11 was answered by qualitatively analyzing participants' responses to an open-ended question, and RQ12 used means. The final set of research questions, RQ13-16, were answered with crosstabulation correlations.

The hypotheses, RQs6-10 and RQs13-16 were deemed supported when results of the statistical tests had a significance level of less than .05.

Profile of journalists. Prior to testing the hypotheses and answering the research questions, a profile of the participants was created to learn more about their demographics and backgrounds. This information was reported as means and percentages. Journalists were asked to select which job title best describes their position: reporter; columnist; copy editor; designer; copy editor and designer; photographer; online/multimedia content producer; copy chief; head designer; photo editor; city/metropolitan editor; section editor; managing editor; editor in chief; publisher; and other. Participants were asked to select the approximate circulation of their newspaper from selections based on the circulation categories used by Editor & Publisher (Editor & Publisher, 2009), which are listed previously in this chapter.

Additional questions included how long each journalist has been working full-time at the newspaper, with the following response options: less than 6 months; 6-11 months; 1-2 years; 3-4 years; 5-7 years; 8-10 years; 11-15 years; 16-20 years; 21-25 years; and more than 25 years. Another response option of “I don’t work full-time at the newspaper” ended the survey for the journalist, with a note thanking him or her for participating. A later question asked how long the journalists have been working full-time in the newspaper industry, with the same set of possible responses as above.

Another question determined the approximate number of journalists working in each participant's newsroom, starting at fewer than 10 people, and increasing by increments of nine from 10-19 people to 90-99 people, and 100 or more people. The journalists also were asked about their supervisory status with the following question: "About how many employees, if any, do you supervise as part of your job?" Possible answers included: none; 1-3 employees; 4-6 employees; 7-9 employees; 10-14 employees; 15-19 employees; 20-24 employees; and 25 or more employees.

Among the demographic information, they were asked to provide their current annual salary range, which was somewhat collapsed from the numerous categories used by Weaver et al. (2007). The ranges were: Less than \$25,000; \$25,000-\$34,999; \$35,000-\$44,999; \$45,000-\$54,999; \$55,000-\$64,999; \$65,000-\$74,999; \$75,000-\$99,999; and \$100,000 or more. Other demographics questions included the highest level of education completed, undergraduate major, involvement at the campus newspaper, current marital status, gender, and race. The response categories for each of these demographic questions are labeled in the instrument. (See Appendix 2.)

Job satisfaction. To answer the first research question (RQ1: How satisfied are journalists at their current newspaper jobs?), journalists were asked: "All things considered, how satisfied are you with your job?" The wording of this question was based on a similar question posed in the *American Journalist* study, which asked about the journalists' "present job" and used ordinal response choices (Weaver et

al., 2007, p. 264). Response choices for participants in this research were drawn from a seven-point scale that ranged from not at all satisfied (1) to very satisfied (7). The mean score was reported.

Because turnover intent has been shown to be indicative of job satisfaction, journalists also were asked: “Where do you think you will be working in two years?” with the response choices: At your newspaper; At a different newspaper; At a different news organization; Somewhere else that’s not a news organization; or You don’t plan to be working in two years. Percentage breakdowns were reported for each answer choice. This question is one that was changed based on feedback from the pretest. The original question was taken from the *American Journalist* study, which asked journalists about where they wanted to be working in five years and gave the options of “in news media” or “somewhere else.” Because of the changing nature of the newspaper industry today, the pretest subjects suggested substituting “two years” for “five years” and instead of asking where journalists wanted to work, asking them where they thought they would be working.

Job roles. The second research question (RQ2: How do newspaper journalists perceive the importance of their job roles?) was answered with a matrix of journalists’ job roles that reflected some of the longest-held tenets of the profession, based on variations of the questions in multiple *American Journalist* surveys (Weaver et al., 2007), as well as studies such as the more recent Beam (2009) article. Journalists were asked about their beliefs on the importance of fulfilling certain job roles in the question: “Each journalist’s job entails general roles

that may reflect some elements in the newspaper profession. How important is it to you that you as a newspaper journalist are able to..." followed by a matrix of roles and importance levels. The roles read: "Have the chance to develop a specialty; Exercise autonomy over your work; Have the opportunity to help people; Have the chance to influence public opinion; Be objective; Get stories covered that should be covered; Get information to the public quickly; Provide analysis and interpretation of complex problems; Stay away from stories where factual content cannot be verified; Give ordinary people a chance to express their views; Be a watchdog for the public."¹ The response choices ranged from not important (1) to very important (7) on a seven-point scale, and were reported by the journalists' mean scores of each item. Those items were then factor-analyzed to learn the underlying dimensions of the journalists' beliefs about the importance of the items.

Impact of change on workload. The third research question assessed journalists' feelings about the effect of recent changes on their workloads (RQ3: What is the perception of the impact of technological and economic changes on newspaper journalists' workload?) Journalists were asked about the number of hours per week that they usually work at the newspaper, from less than 30 hours per week, to 31-40 hours per week, 41-50 hours per week, or 51 or more hours per week. The journalists' answers were reported as percentages. Participants also were asked about how their workloads had changed as a result of recent economic and technological changes at their newspapers. The first question read: "As a result of recent economic changes (which may include budget cuts, layoffs or buyouts, or

reduced resources) at your newspaper, how has your workload changed?”

Journalists chose from among the following response options: Your workload has increased; Your workload has stayed about the same; Your workload has decreased; and Your newspaper hasn't introduced any economic changes lately. The second question used these same answer choices and asked: “As a result of recent technological changes (which may include the introduction of new equipment or additional duties related to new media) at your newspaper, how has your workload changed?” Answers to these questions were presented as percentage breakdowns for the journalists who had experienced recent changes at their newspapers. The wording of the questions in this section was devised by the researcher.

Impact of technology tasks on quality. RQ4 asked: How do newspaper journalists believe technology tasks affect the quality of the journalism they produce? Participants were presented with a matrix list drawn from one in the *Life beyond print* study (Williams et al., 2009) that examines journalists' perceptions of how the technological requirements of their jobs affect the quality of the journalism they produce. The question reads, “If you regularly do the following things as part of your job at the newspaper, how do they affect the quality of the work you produce?” (Based on pretest feedback, “quality of work” was substituted for “quality of journalism” in this question.) The 15 matrix options were: “Write or edit breaking news updates on your newspaper's Web site; Write or manage a blog; Write or manage Twitter posts; Write or manage posts on Facebook or similar sites; Post stories or photos on your newspaper's Web site; Monitor or respond to users' online

comments; Use Twitter as a reporting or research tool; Use Facebook or similar sites as a reporting or research tool; Shoot or edit videos; Gather or edit audio files; Create online-only stories or content; Rewrite headlines to make them more 'Web friendly'; Add links to stories; Create photo galleries or slide shows; Provide continual online updates of stories or photos." The items specifically asking about Facebook and Twitter were added based on feedback from the pretest, which suggested that journalists are spending a significant part of their time online performing these tasks. For each item, participants selected from a seven-point range of makes the quality much worse (1) to makes the quality much better (7), or not part of my job. Mean scores were reported in the analysis.

Effect of layoffs on newsroom numbers. Before moving on to test the hypotheses, RQ5 asked: "How have layoffs affected newsroom numbers?" Participating journalists were asked "Has your newspaper laid off any newsroom workers in the past two years?" with the possible responses of yes or no. If they respond in the affirmative, workers received two questions. The first asked, "About how many newsroom workers have been laid off in the past two years?" and the other queried, "Did you consider any of those laid-off workers to be your friends?" Responses to the first question fell into these ranges: fewer than 10 workers; 10-19 workers; 20-29 workers; 30-39 workers; 40-49 workers; 50-59 workers; 60-69 workers; 70-79 workers; 80-89 workers; 90-99 workers; 100 or more workers. Answer choices for the second question were: not really, a few, several, and many or almost all. To answer RQ5, responses to each of the three questions were reported

by percentages. The wording of this question and the response choices were devised by the researcher.

Industry change. The first two hypotheses in this study examined journalists' perceptions of technological and economic changes in the newspaper industry and compares them to the news workers' feelings about their job roles. The first hypothesis reads H1: Newspaper journalists who have negative perceptions about technological changes in the industry will be more likely to have negative feelings about the impact of those changes on their job roles. The independent variable, technological changes in the newspaper industry, was measured with a question designed to gauge the participating journalists' feelings about technological changes in the newspaper industry: "The newspaper industry has undergone some significant changes recently, including the introduction of new technology, which have received varied responses from journalists. How do you feel about the following statement: You think recent technological changes in the newspaper industry are helping to uphold its principles." Participants were presented with a seven-point scale anchored by strongly disagree (1) and strongly agree (7) and asked to select the option that best represented their perception. Responses were reported as the mean score. The researcher devised the wording of this question and its response choices, as well as the similar question and response options presented in H2.

H2 (Newspaper journalists who have negative perceptions about economic changes in the industry will be more likely to have negative feelings about the

impact of those changes on their job roles) used a statement similar to H1 for measuring the independent variable. It asked: “The newspaper industry has undergone some significant changes recently in relation to its economic standing. How do you feel about the following statement: You think recent economic changes in the newspaper industry are helping to uphold its principles.” Answer responses were the same as H1’s seven-point scale and were reported as the mean score.

Impact of recent changes on job roles. The dependent variable in H1 and H2, newspaper journalists’ feelings about the effect of technological and economic changes on their job roles, was assessed with four questions, although two could be skipped depending on the participant’s response to the previous question. The first question asked: “Thinking back to the general list of job roles you rated a couple of minutes ago—ones that asked about the importance you place on things like having autonomy over your work and being able to help people—have any technological changes to your job affected how well you are able to perform those roles, either in helping you achieve them or providing challenges?” It has two possible responses: Yes, technology has changed how well you can perform your job roles; or No, technology hasn’t changed how well you can perform your job roles. The researcher developed this question and response options.

If the answer was yes, participants were directed to the following question: “How well have changes in technology enabled you to perform your job roles as a journalist in the following ways...” The matrix list is the same as the one associated with RQ2, which included “Have the chance to develop a specialty; and Exercise

autonomy over your work.” Responses were drawn from a seven-point scale that began with not well (1) and ended with very well (7). Participants could also mark whether particular items did not apply to their jobs. The means of each item were reported in a table, and to test H1 each participant’s responses were summed to create a single score that was used in the hypothesis test.

Similarly, the dependent-variable question for H2 asked: “Thinking about those same job roles, have any economic changes at your company affected how well you are able to perform your job roles, either in helping you achieve them or providing challenges?” It had the same Yes or No response choices as detailed above and the researcher developed this question and response choices as well. If the journalist answered in the affirmative, then he or she received this question: “How well have economic changes enabled you to perform your job roles as a journalist in the following ways...” with the same matrix and response options as H1. The responses were reported as means in a table and like H1, the participants’ responses were summed to create a single score that was used in the hypothesis test.

H1 and H2 were tested with Pearson r correlations between the independent and dependent variables. These relationships were explored further with research questions 6 & 7, which asked whether journalists’ job types or the circulation size of their newspapers affected the relationships. To answer RQ6 (How are perceptions about industry changes and feelings about the effect of those changes on their job roles affected by newspaper journalists’ job type?), each variable’s responses were recoded into ordinal groups and tested with crosstabulation correlations. Cramer’s

V was used as the statistical test. The responses regarding the effect of technological and economic changes upholding the industry's principles were recoded into three categories: disagree (responses 1-3), moderate (responses 4-5), and agree (responses 6-7). These breaks helped to divide the groups roughly into thirds.

Participants' answers on the summed scale of their feelings about the impact of technological and economic changes on their job roles were also recoded into ordinal groups according to whether their summed responses were low, moderate, or high. The low category was created with responses that summed to equal 33 or less; moderates had scores of 34 to 49. The high group consisted of those with summed responses of 50 or more. These breaks were made based on the seven-point scale items and 11 statements—11 scores of three totaled 33, thus signaling the cutoff point for those in the low group. Moderates would have predominantly had scores of four and five on the 11 items. Forty-nine was the dividing point for this group because six scores of 4 and five scores of 5 totaled 49, suggesting that people in this group were less likely to have strong feelings either way about the impact of technology on their job roles. Those who had high scores, then, were those with summed responses of 50 or more.

Job type was categorized into two groups, based generally on journalists who are not managers—called frontline workers—whose jobs include reporters, copy editors, designers, and photographers. The second group was made up of editors, publishers, and other decision-makers. Those journalists who had marked their job

types as “other” were not included in this analysis or subsequent RQ analyses since their status as decision-makers could not be determined.

To answer RQ7 (How are perceptions about industry changes and feelings about the effect of those changes on their job roles affected by newspaper journalists’ status as workers at newspapers of various circulation sizes?), the same ordinal categories were used for the variables as explained in RQ6. Circulation size was split into three groups: small-circulation newspapers (50,000 circulation or less), midsize newspapers (more than 50,000 to 250,000 circulation), and large newspapers (circulation of more than 250,000). These groups are generally based on the ones used by *Editor & Publisher*. The variables were tested with crosstabulation correlations, using Kendall’s tau-b and gamma.

Organizational identification. The third and fourth hypotheses examine the job-role questions as independent variables and introduce organizational identification as the dependent variable. H3 states: Newspaper journalists who have negative feelings about the impact of technological changes on their job roles will be more likely to have lower organizational identification, and H4 reads: Newspaper journalists who have negative feelings about the impact of economic changes on their job roles will be more likely to have lower organizational identification.

To test these hypotheses, the job-role measures used in H1 and H2 remained the same for H3 and H4. The new element—organizational identification—was measured with two questions. Both questions were developed and empirically tested by social psychologists Bergami and Bagozzi (2000) to more fully measure

organizational identification than other scales, such as one developed by Mael and Ashforth (1992). These other measures primarily focus on the affective components of identification and not the cognitive ones (Bergami & Bagozzi, 2000).

In the first question to measure organizational identification, participants were asked: "Please indicate to what degree your self-image overlaps with the newspaper's image." Two additional sentences of explanation were added, based on feedback gained in the pretest: In other words, how much overlap is there in how you see yourself and how you see your newspaper? To what extent do you define yourself through your employment at the newspaper? Responses ranged on a scale of 1 (not at all) to 7 (very much) and the mean score was reported.

For the second question, journalists saw a figure and were asked to select the image that best represented their personal identity and that of their newspaper. The question read: "Imagine that one of the circles on the left in the rows below represents your own self-definition or identity and the circle on the right represents your newspaper's identity." They were instructed to choose the row of circles that best described the level of overlap between their own identity and the newspaper's identity. The rows in the figure were: (1) Far apart; (2) Close together but separate; (3) Very small overlap; (4) Small overlap; (5) Moderate overlap; (6) Large overlap; (7) Very large overlap; (8) Complete overlap. The mean score was reported.

Participants' responses to each question were then summed to create a single OI score for each journalist.

As in the first two hypotheses, H3 and H4 were tested with Pearson r correlations. These relationships were investigated further with RQ8 & RQ9, which asked whether journalists' job type and circulation size affected the relationships. To answer RQ8, (How are feelings about industry changes on newspaper journalists' job roles and the extent of their organizational identification affected by journalists' job type?), each variable's responses were recoded into ordinal groups and tested with crosstabulations. Cramer's V was used as the statistical test. The groups for the independent variables—feelings about the impact of technological and economic changes on the journalists' job roles—remained in the same low, moderate, and high breakdowns as from RQ6. The low group was made up of journalists with summed responses of 33 or less; moderates had scores of 34 to 49; and high group members had summed responses of 50 or more.

Organizational identification (OI) was also divided into three groups based on the summed scores of the OI questions: low OI (responses of 8 or fewer), moderate OI (responses of 9-11), and high OI (responses of 12 or more). These breaks were made based on the two scales used to measure OI—one was a seven-point scale and the other was an eight-point scale. Therefore, summed scores of 8 or less were the low OI group because ratings of 1 through 3 on the seven-point scale were considered to signal low OI and 4 suggested indifference, and the first four options in the eight-row figure were examples of little overlap in one's own identity and the identity of the newspaper. Moderate OI scores ranged from 9 to 11 on the summed scale because 5 was the moderate option on the eight-point figure and four

was the midpoint on the seven-point scale, so one point in either direction on both scales was included to capture feelings of moderate organizational identification. Finally, high OI was established with scores of 12 or more.

As with RQ6, job type was categorized into two groups: frontline workers and managers.

To answer RQ9 (How are feelings about industry changes on newspaper journalists' job roles and the extent of their organizational identification affected by journalists' status as workers at newspapers of various circulation sizes?), the same ordinal categories for job-role feelings of low, moderate, and high were used as in RQ6. The same ordinal categories for organizational identification (also low, moderate, and high) as explained in RQ8 were used. Circulation size was again divided into three groups of small-, midsize-, and large-circulation newspapers based on the ranges described in RQ7. The variables were tested with crosstabulation correlations, using Kendall's tau-b and gamma.

Professional identification. The study's tenth research question also deals with identification; this time, at the professional level. (RQ10: How will newspaper journalists' professional identification affect the relationship between their feelings about their present job roles and the strength of their organizational identification?) It is possible that professional identification influences the relationship between journalists' feelings about their job roles and their organizational identification, based on previous studies such as Russo's (1998) that found overlaps in journalists' identification with their profession and organization. Professional identification

was measured using the same two questions and scales as with organizational identification; “the newspaper profession” replaced “newspaper” in the statements asked of the participating journalists. As with the first OI question, two additional sentences were added for clarification, based on pretest feedback. The first question was: “I’d like you to please indicate to what degree your self-image overlaps with the newspaper profession’s image.” The clarifying statements were: “In other words, how much overlap is there in how you see yourself and how you see the profession? To what extent do you define yourself through your employment in the newspaper profession?”

To answer RQ10, journalists’ responses to the two professional identification questions were summed into to a single score. Similarly, the participants’ responses to the job roles’ matrix questions about the impact of technological and economic changes were summed into a single score.

Using multiple regression, professional identification was tested for its potential mediating effect on journalists’ feelings about the effect of technological and economic changes on their present jobs and their organizational identification.

Status threats to profession. In the fifth hypothesis, the independent variable was journalists’ perceptions about industry changes; the dependent variable was their perceptions about status threats to the newspaper profession. (H5 reads: Newspaper journalists who have negative perceptions about changes in the industry will be more likely to perceive the status of the profession has been threatened.) The independent variable—journalists’ perceptions about industry

changes—was measured by summing the scores of journalists' responses to two previous statements: You think recent technological changes in the newspaper industry are helping to uphold its principles, and You think recent economic changes in the newspaper industry are helping to uphold its principles. (These were the independent variables in H1 and H2.) Response options were placed on a seven-point scale that ranged from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7).

Threats to the status of the newspaper profession was measured with one question: "In what regard do you think the public holds the newspaper profession today?" and a scale of responses from low (1) to high (7). The researcher developed the wording of this question. Public regard was used to operationalize status threat because previous research has shown that group members derive their feelings of status in large part from their perception that others hold them in high regard; if they feel this regard is wavering or has declined, they are likely to believe their status has been threatened (Dutton et al., 1994; Elsbach & Kramer, 1996).

This hypothesis was tested with a Pearson r correlation between the variables.

Two additional research questions helped to explain the relationship found. To answer RQ11 (What reasons do newspaper journalists give to explain their perceptions of the public's regard for their profession?), journalists were asked an open-ended question. After they indicated their perception of the public's regard for the newspaper profession today on the scale used in H5, they were asked: "Why do you think the public feels that way?" The researcher also developed the wording of

this question. For the analysis, each response was read and general categories of answers were developed. Four main categories emerged: changes in public trust and attitudes; changes in professional principles; changes in media technology; and changes in media economics. Within in each group, responses were noted as to whether they were positive or negative. With these coding schemes established, the journalists' answers were coded based on their first response. For example, if a journalist wrote about the detrimental effects of layoffs on the quality of work and then went on to mention that the audience has become more polarized, the first response was the only one coded; in this case, the response would have been grouped into the changes in media economics-negative group.

The second research question used to illustrate the findings in H5 asked: RQ12: How do journalists rate public perceptions of the newspaper profession's performance of certain job roles? This was answered in a query similar to the one used in previous hypotheses about journalists' job roles, which was based on the *American Journalist* surveys (Weaver et al., 2007). The list of job roles was modified for this research, and posed from the public perspective: "How good of a job do you think the public believes the newspaper profession is doing in the following areas..." Journalists were presented with a matrix of these job roles: "Acting with autonomy; Helping people; Being objective; Covering stories that should be covered; Getting information to the public quickly; Providing analysis and interpretation of complex problems; Verifying facts; Giving ordinary people a chance to express their views; and Being a watchdog for the public." Responses for each item ranged from not well

(1) to very well (7). The participants' responses were summed to create a single score that used in the hypothesis test.

To further explore H5, research questions that asked whether journalists' job types or the circulation size of their newspaper affected the relationship between the variables. To answer RQ13 (How are perceptions about industry changes and professional status threat affected by newspaper journalists' job type?) the participants were categorized into two groups as previously described: frontline journalists and managers. Responses to each variable were recoded into ordinal groups and tested with crosstabulation correlations. Cramer's V was used as the statistical test. The responses regarding perceptions about industry changes were recoded into three categories based on their summed scores: low (scores of 1-6); midrange (scores of 7-9), and high (scores of 10 or more). These breaks were made based on the ones used in RQ6 in analyzing these same questions.

Journalists' answers about public regard for the newspaper profession were also divided into three groups: low (responses 1-3), moderate (responses 4-5), and high (6-7). These breaks were based on similar splits used on the seven-point scale to measure low, moderate, and high perceptions.

To answer RQ14 (How are perceptions about industry changes and professional status affected by newspaper journalists' status as workers at newspapers of various circulation sizes?), the same ordinal categories were used for the variables in RQ13. Circulation size was, as with the other research questions,

split into three groups: small, midsize, and large newspapers. The variables were tested with crosstabulation correlations, using Kendall's tau-b and gamma.

The sixth hypothesis (H6), which examines the interconnection of professional status threats and journalists' professional identification, was: Newspaper journalists who perceive their professional status has been threatened will be more likely to have lower professional identification. These variables were measured using the questions and responses previously explained for each variable—professional status threat and professional identification. As with the other hypotheses, H6 was tested with Pearson *r* correlations. These relationships were investigated further with RQ15 & RQ16, which asked whether journalists' job type and circulation size affected the relationship.

To answer RQ15 (How are perceptions about professional status threat and professional identification affected by newspaper journalists' job type?), each variable's responses were recoded into ordinal groups and tested with crosstabulations. Cramer's V was used as the statistical test. The status threat variable was measured the same way as in RQ13, and the summed score for professional identification was divided into the same three groups as with organizational identification in RQ8: low (scores of 8 or fewer), moderate (scores of 9-11), and high (scores of 12 or more). Workers were categorized into two groups: frontline journalists and managers.

To answer RQ16 (How are perceptions about professional status threat and professional identification affected by newspaper journalists' status as workers at

newspapers of various circulation sizes?), the same ordinal groups were used as in the previous research question. Circulation sizes again were small, midsize, and large. The variables were tested with crosstabulation correlations, using Kendall's tau-b and gamma.

Interview protocol

As previously explained, journalists who participated in the online survey had the option of volunteering for a phone interview with the researcher. After they completed the survey questions, participants were asked: "If you would like to volunteer for the opportunity to talk in greater detail about the subjects covered in this project, you can do so in a short phone interview with me." Further details were provided in the following statement: "It's possible that not everyone who is willing to be interviewed will be contacted, depending on the number of volunteers. Your willingness is appreciated, since it will help to better explain how journalists feel about the changes that have occurred in the newspaper industry and how those changes have affected their jobs. If you're willing to volunteer for a 15-20 minute phone interview, please provide your email address in the space below so you can be contacted to schedule an interview. If you don't wish to volunteer it will not affect your ability to win the \$100 VISA gift card, and you can simply go to the next page to exit the survey." The consent form and interview protocol approved by the Institutional Review Board at the University of Texas at Austin are in Appendix 3.

Previous research on social identification and workers' commitment to their jobs shows the illustrative value of interviewing employees to better understand

their motivations and attitudes (Dutton & Dukerich, 1991; Ibarra, 1999; Kreiner et al., 2006; Nag, Corley & Gioia, 2007; Pratt et al., 2006; Russo, 1998). In particular, Nag et al. (2007) examined employees' perceptions of change at a company, Pratt et al. (2006) explored workers' perceptions of their professional and organizational identities and daily activities, and Kreiner et al. (2006) analyzed the blending of individuals' personal, organizational and professional identities. Russo (1998) studied identity issues among journalists using a mixed-methods approach of surveys and interviews as well. These works served to inform the interview questions that were posed to newspaper journalists who participate in the proposed research.

As with many depth interviews, a protocol list of questions was asked of each participating journalist and some additional probing questions were necessary to encourage participants to expand on their responses. Examples of such probes included questions like: "Could you please explain that?" and "Could you please talk about that a little more?" Probing questions were used to ensure the researcher understood the participants' responses and feelings.

The series of questions listed in Appendix 3 were asked to gain additional insight into the concepts being studied in the hypotheses and research questions, such as newspaper journalists' feelings about changes in the industry and their job roles, as well as the extent of their identification with their organization and the profession, and their perceptions about threats to the status of the profession.

The interviews were recorded and transcribed. To analyze the responses, they were coded according to the variables to which they applied and the responses that best represented the survey findings were chosen to add context and help explain the journalists' perceptions and feelings.

Industry change. To better understand newspaper journalists' reactions to changes in their industry, participants were asked the following question: "What are some of the biggest changes you think the newspaper industry has faced recently?" This is similar to questions used by Nag et al. (2007) to study the perception of changes at a company. Another series of questions assessed the journalists' attitudes about more specific changes in the industry in relation to the impact of those changes on the journalists' jobs at newspapers; these questions are listed below.

Journalists' job roles. Newspaper journalists' feelings about their job roles in the context of industry-wide changes were queried in the interviews in the question: "Thinking about technological and economic changes in the newspaper industry, how have such changes affected your job roles as a journalist?" If necessary, follow-up questions included "Have some of the changes made it easier to do your job? How?; Have some of the changes made it harder to do your job?; and How?" Participants were asked about the tasks they do that are not part of their roles as newspaper journalists in the question: "Are there any tasks assigned to you that you don't consider to be part of a journalist's job?" If they responded in the affirmative

and did not elaborate, journalists were asked: “What are these tasks?” and “Why don’t you think they’re part of what it means to be a journalist?”

Organizational identification. One question in the interview protocol specifically focused on learning more about newspaper journalists’ identification with their organization. It was: “How does working at your newspaper define you as a journalist?” This question was based on queries of participants in the Kreiner et al. (2006) research. (Participants previously had been asked about the qualities they identified with in the newspaper profession, and many related those elements to their present jobs and organizations as well. The newspaper profession elements are discussed in the next paragraph.)

Professional identification. Professional identification is of particular interest in this research because previous research suggests journalists develop stronger identification with the profession than their organization (Russo, 1998); several questions will assess their feelings about the profession. The first set of questions began with the request: “Tell me a little about how you became a newspaper journalist.” The next question, which is similar to one used in the Pratt et al. (2006) study, asked: “What did you think it meant to be a newspaper journalist?”

To gauge the newspaper journalists’ feelings about their profession today, another question asked: “What do you think it means to be a newspaper journalist today?” To follow up on the extent of journalists’ identification with the newspaper profession and the media industry at large, another query was posed: “Do you see

yourself more as a newspaper journalist or just a journalist?” These questions are similar to ones asked in the Kreiner et al. (2006) and Pratt et al. (2006) studies.

Status threats to profession. The threats to the status of the newspaper profession—as the journalists perceive them—were ascertained with follow-up questions that explore the journalists’ views about how the public sees the profession. As detailed in a previous section, journalists were asked about some of the biggest changes that have occurred in the newspaper industry. To gauge the status threat journalists perceived regarding those changes, they were asked: “How do these changes affect the way the public sees the newspaper industry?”

By conducting this research in both quantitative and qualitative approaches, the data was expanded and enriched. Through the statistical analysis enabled with survey research on a large sample, the results of the study are generalizable to U.S. newspaper journalists. This generalizability allows conclusions to be drawn about the effect of industry changes on journalists’ perceptions of their job roles and perceptions of threats to the profession’s status, and the influence of those feelings on their identification with their news organization and the newspaper profession. Depth interviews further illustrate these concepts, showing how some newspaper journalists make meaning in their organizational and professional lives and manage their identities in the face of wholesale change in the newspaper industry.

¹ An additional item, Avoid conflicts of interest, was removed from this list and the related technological and economic lists in the analysis. Due to an error in the survey instrument, this item

did not appear on the technological list and thus it was removed from all three lists for the purposes of equal comparison. It was also removed from the public regard list.

Chapter Six

Results: General Overview of Sample

Almost 970 journalists completed the survey, and 927 of those responses were included in the data analysis. Exclusions included those who did not meet the requirements for participation, such as working full-time at a daily newspaper with a circulation of more than 10,000. To better understand these journalists, this chapter assesses some general research questions that helped to inform the testing of the hypotheses. These questions help establish who the journalists are, how they perceive their job roles, and how they feel about technological and economic changes in their work. This chapter presents the results of the initial research questions.

Demographic data about newspaper journalists

To complete the development of an overall picture of the journalists who responded to this survey, demographic variables were examined. These variables include the participants' education, race, salary, age, and gender. Almost all of the newspaper journalists included in this research (93%) had earned a college degree. Two-thirds (66%) majored in journalism or a related communication field, and almost that many (62%) reported that they regularly worked at the campus newspaper. Majoring in journalism and working at the college newspaper served as invaluable training grounds for learning the profession. They learned about writing standards like the inverted pyramid and accuracy, as well as the concepts of objectivity and being watchdogs. Some like Journalist 5 were drawn to the idea of

being the first to know the news and share it with others; they liked the adrenaline rush they got from that, and from living a life working on deadline. They learned what it *meant* to be news professionals. For Journalist 7, now a section editor, it was also learning the difference between newspaper workers and other types of journalists: “Newspaper journalists were the real deal. The TV people cared more about what they looked like and how something was presented than what it was, what the core of it was. You know, newspapers were the serious journalists.”

Half (50%) of the newspaper journalists in this survey earned less than \$45,000 each year. Women reported making less than men—in this study, almost two-thirds (62%) of women earned less than \$45,000, while only 45% of men did so. Women did tend to be a bit younger than men and have fewer years of experience in the profession.

Almost two-thirds (64%) of the newspaper journalists who completed this survey were male and 36% were female. Almost three-quarters (72%) of the men were married, compared to slightly more than half (52%) of women. Two percent of the journalists self-identified as African-American, 2% as Hispanic/Latino, 1% as Asian-American, 0.5% as Native American, and 94% as Caucasian or other.

More than one-fifth (22%) of the newspaper journalists were 34 or younger and one-fifth (20%) of the newspaper journalists in this study were between the ages of 35 and 44. Thirty percent of the journalists who completed this survey were 45 to 54 and 27% were 55 and older. The median age was 47.

Almost three-fifths (58%) of the participating journalists were frontline workers—reporters, copy editors, designers, photographers, and the like—while 38% identified themselves as editors, publishers and other decision-makers. Fewer than 5% said their jobs fell into other categories. Table 6.1 illustrates the percentage breakdowns of the job titles held by journalists who participated in the survey.

Table 6.1
Frequencies of job titles

Job title	Percent
Frontline workers/nonmanagers	
Reporter	48
Columnist	4
Copy editor/designer	3
Photographer	1
Online/multimedia content producer	1
Managers	
Section editor	15
City/metropolitan editor	6
Managing editor	5
Editor in chief	5
Publisher	4
Copy chief/head designer	1
Other	4

Note. n=926, 1 missing

Forty percent of the journalists who completed the survey for this research were employed at newspapers with circulations of 10,001 to 25,000 and 26% worked at newspapers with circulations of 25,001 to 50,000. Seventeen percent of the journalists worked at newspapers with 50,001 to 100,000 circulations, and 11% were at publications with 100,001 to 250,000 circulations. The remaining

circulation groups—250,001 to 500,000 and more than 500,000—had 5% and 1%, respectively.

In terms of newsroom size, 30% of newspaper journalists worked in newsrooms today with fewer than 20 editorial employees, and 20% had 20 to 29 newsroom colleagues. The remaining 37% of the newspaper journalists worked in newsrooms of 30 or more employees. Of the journalists in the survey, one-third (33%) had been at their job for seven years or less. Thirty percent had been on the job for 8 to 15 years, and 37% for 16 or more years.

More than three-fifths (64%) of the newspaper journalists in this study had been working in the profession for 16 or more years. About one-fifth (21%) had been working 8 to 15 years, and 15% had been working seven or fewer years.

Newspaper journalists' feelings about their jobs

The first research question (RQ1: How satisfied are journalists at their current newspaper jobs?) explored how journalists generally feel about their jobs by asking about the extent of their satisfaction at their present job. The mean satisfaction was 4.71 on a seven-point scale (SD=1.48).

Because the literature suggested workers who are less satisfied with their jobs are more likely to leave, journalists in this research were also asked where they thought they would be working in two years. Two-thirds (66%) expected to remain at their newspaper, while 5% thought they would move to a different newspaper and another 6% would probably be at a different news organization. Additionally,

one-fifth (21%) expect to be at a job somewhere else that is not a news organization and 3% do not plan to be working in two years.

The second research question (RQ2) was: How do newspaper journalists perceive the importance of their job roles? Survey participants were asked to rate the importance of certain job roles that they as journalists were able to perform; in almost every case, the majority of newspaper workers reported believing it was quite important to fulfill those roles. The importance of these job roles, measured on a seven-point scale, is reported in Table 6.2, and includes acts such as being a watchdog for the public and providing analysis of complex problems. Several of the job roles items were identical or slightly modified versions of entries on a similar list in the *American Journalist* study (Weaver et al., 2007).

Table 6.2
Importance of newspaper journalists' job roles

	M	SD
Get stories that should be covered	6.57	0.76
Be objective	6.46	1.05
Be a watchdog for the public	6.41	0.99
Get information to the public quickly	6.27	1.00
Stay away from stories where factual content cannot be verified	6.11	1.26
Provide analysis and interpretation of complex problems	6.09	1.18
Give ordinary people a chance to express themselves	5.91	1.24
Have the opportunity to help people	5.89	1.18
Exercise autonomy over your work	5.88	1.16
Have the chance to influence public opinion	5.27	1.46
Have the chance to develop a specialty	5.23	1.56

Note: Response scale measured each journalist's beliefs about the how important it is that he or she as a journalist could perform the above roles. The number of responses to each question ranged from 922 to 926.

These job roles were then factor-analyzed to assess the underlying dimensions of the 11 items, and are shown in Table 6.3. The items in factor 1—being objective, getting information to the public quickly, and getting stories covered that should be covered—accounted for almost 23% of the variance in the dataset. Because the characteristics associated with job roles in this factor are linked to maintaining two of the principles of the profession, acting ethically and serving the public, this factor was titled “Uphold journalism principles.” Factor 2 accounted for about 17% of the variance and was given the title “Serve as interpreter & watchdog” because its items included the importance journalists assigned to providing analysis and interpretation of complex problems and being a watchdog for the public.

Finally, Factor 3 was composed of two items—exercising autonomy over their work and having the chance to develop a specialty—that accounted for 15% of the variance. This section was titled “Be autonomous & develop professionally.” The three factors accounted for more than half of the variance (55%) in the dataset. A few of the items—such as having the opportunity to help people and staying away from stories where factual content cannot be verified—did not load highly enough with any of the three factors to be included in the factor groupings.

Table 6.3
Job roles dimensions

	Uphold journalism principles	Serve as interpreter & watchdog	Be autonomous & develop professionally
Be objective	.74	-.06	.06
Get information to the public quickly	.74	.23	-.03
Get stories that should be covered	.73	.30	.04
Give ordinary people a chance to express themselves	.57	.20	.18
Stay away from stories where factual content cannot be verified	.54	.04	.29
Be a watchdog for the public	.35	.72	-.05
Have the opportunity to help people	.34	.30	.48
Provide analysis and interpretation of complex problems	.15	.78	.06
Have the chance to develop a specialty	.10	.04	.73
Exercise autonomy over your work	.05	.06	.78
Have the chance to influence public opinion	-.03	.65	.39
Eigenvalues	2.52	1.82	1.66
%Variance	22.88	16.58	15.07

Note. Cronbach's α = .76

Extraction method: Principal component analysis

Rotation method: Varimax

Primary loading of factor is bold

n=915

The in-depth interviews with participating journalists emphasized the importance journalists place on these tasks, particularly acting as watchdogs and getting stories covered that should be covered. (See Appendix 4 for a profile of the journalists who were interviewed.) As Journalist 2, now a managing editor, explained:

“I really was inspired to stay in the field early on by some of the people I worked with at the paper who were completely and absolutely dedicated to the idea that people ought to know what is going on. ... And this was the mid to late ‘60s when the government was in disarray, to say the least. The streets were burning in Chicago and L.A., and at the Democratic National Convention they were beating kids my own age. And so I just thought, you know, this is...people have to know that this kind of sh-- is going on. And I am part of that. I am part of that telling people what is happening, and it is important. What I do is really, really important.”

Journalist 10, a columnist, gave more recent examples of the important work news workers do at his newspaper, which included reporting on corruption in the county government. “The people voted to change the form of government as a direct result of our reporting,” he said, and went on to list other examples of watchdog reporting. “The newspaper has enormous impact.”

A younger journalist—Journalist 4, a reporter in the field for about five years—was drawn to working in newspapers because it allowed her develop a specialty in business journalism and provide “more in-depth stories, ... put it in a context, and really gauge the impact of what happens and how it affects the everyday news.” She went on to say that using social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter have been invaluable research and reporting tools, which are tied to a central interest in this research: to explore the effects of recent changes in the newspaper industry on workers’ jobs.

In particular, changes brought on by technology and economics were examined in RQ3 because previous research indicated these types of changes have profoundly impacted the way news professionals do their work. The third research question asked: What is the perception of the impact of technological and economic changes on newspaper journalists' workload? This study found nearly three-quarters (74%) of newspaper journalists work more than 40 hours per week, and the majority believe technological and economic changes at their organizations have resulted in a greater workload. Among the journalists who reported that there had been recent changes at their newspapers, Table 6.4 displays the percentage breakdowns of their perceptions of the effect of technological and economic changes on their workloads. Journalist 5, whose job is to primarily produce online and multimedia content, succinctly explained the impact of both types of changes: "We're making less money. We're working with fewer people and we're publishing on multiple formats. So, that's a strain. That's difficult. It doesn't mean it isn't important, but it's more work." As another news professional, Journalist 12, explained in an interview, "these two forces operating at once created a perfect storm, a perfectly awful one for anybody in newspapers."

Table 6.4
Effect of technology and economic changes on workload

	Technology	Economic
Workload has increased	81	86
Workload has stayed about the same	18	14
Workload has decreased	0.2	0.2

Note. Technology n=909; Economic n=920

Although many of the newspaper journalists in the survey said their workloads had increased as result of technology, they were generally positive about the effect of those things on the quality of their work. To answer RQ4: How do newspaper journalists believe technology tasks affect the quality of the journalism they produce?, participants were asked to rate the effect of 15 items, many of which were taken from or somewhat modified from the *Life beyond print* study (Williams et al., 2009). Journalists rated only those tasks that they regularly perform as part of their jobs, and the scale ranged from “makes the quality much worse” (1) to “makes the quality much better” (7). The number of journalists who regularly do those tasks ranged from 259 who gather or edit audio files to 690 who write or edit breaking news on their newspaper’s Web site. The mean scores for each item are displayed in Table 6.5. Among the top items were creating photo galleries or slideshows, adding links to stories, and providing continual online updates. Social media tools such as Facebook were also well-regarded as reporting and research tools among the journalists who use them on a regular basis. Journalist 4—the younger reporter mentioned previously—said she begins her day at home by perusing social networking sites:

“Facebook and Twitter, it’s almost ... better than the scanner because you’re not listening to the police, you’re listening to real people who are right there on the ground floor, seeing, thinking, hearing things for your beat. So I use all these things to gather information and to journalize and to write.”

Table 6.5
Quality of work improved with technology tools

Task	M	SD
Create photo galleries or slideshows	5.45	1.61
Add links to stories	5.33	1.51
Provide continual online updates of stories or photos	4.99	1.71
Use Facebook or similar sites as a reporting or research tool	4.93	1.46
Post stories or photos on newspaper's Web site	4.89	1.54
Create online-only stories or content	4.85	1.61
Rewrite headlines or other content to make them more 'Web friendly'	4.75	1.66
Write or manage a blog	4.74	1.56
Shoot or edit videos	4.66	1.76
Use Twitter as a reporting or research tool	4.65	1.61
Write or edit breaking news updates on newspaper's Web site	4.60	1.49
Gather or edit audio	4.55	1.72
Monitor or respond to readers' online comments	4.51	1.77
Write or manage Twitter posts	4.43	1.64
Write or manage posts on Facebook or similar sites	4.38	1.64

Note. Response scale measured how doing the above tasks affected the quality of work produced, ranging from 1 (makes quality much worse) to 7 (makes quality much better). Participants responded to only those items that applied to their jobs, so $n=259-690$.
Cronbach's $\alpha=.95$

The final research question in this chapter was RQ5: How have layoffs affected newsroom numbers? Economic changes, such as layoffs, have swept through newsrooms across the U.S.; in this study, 84% of the participants said their newsrooms had lost workers in the past two years due to layoffs. Journalists at almost all (96%) of the largest newspapers (ones with circulations of more than 250,000) said editorial staff sizes had been cut; that figure was 91% at midsize papers, which have circulations of more than 50,000 to 250,000. Eighty percent of

workers at the smallest publications—newspapers with circulations of less than 50,000—reported workers had been cut from their newsrooms as well during the past two years.

More than two-fifths (42%) of the newspapers had seen 10 or more workers laid off during that time, but the most revealing comparisons can be made by examining newspapers' staff sizes today and the number of journalists laid off. Most (86%) small-circulation newspapers employ fewer than 30 journalists today, and in the past two years nearly four-fifths (78%) had lost up to nine workers. Another 18% had laid off 10 to 19 newsroom workers. Midsize newspapers have a broader range of employee figures, but generally have between 30 and 89 newsroom workers. Fifty-six percent of the midsize newspapers had laid off up to 19 editorial employees. Another one-fifth (17%) had laid off 20 to 29 workers. Most of the large newspapers (86%) had 100 or more journalists working there today, and one-third (32%) of the survey respondents said their organizations had laid off that many workers in the past two years. More than half (54%) of the large newspapers had lost up to 59 workers. At some newspapers, jobs lost through attrition added to the effect of layoffs. As Journalist 3, a section editor at a small-circulation newspaper, explained:

"We lost more from attrition. Just, positions weren't filled. I think we only had three people that were fired or laid off from the newsroom. But there was a time where we had as many as eight positions in the newsroom which were vacant. ... You have to work twice as hard to cover those gaps."

Survey participants were also asked about their personal connection to the workers who had been laid off—more than two-fifths (43%) said they were friends with several to almost all of their coworkers who had lost their jobs in the past two years. More than one-third (36%) said they considered a few of the laid-off workers to be their friends, and one-fifth (21%) said “not really.” When the journalists were compared by job type, only 19% of frontline workers—reporters and other nonmanagers—reported they did not really consider any of the laid-off workers to be friends. One-quarter (25%) of the editors and other managers responded similarly, and of the journalists who indicated they had other types of jobs, 13% fell into this group. Nearly the same percentage of frontline workers and managers said they were friends with several to almost all of their laid-off coworkers, 44% and 41% respectively. Fifty percent of the “other” workers shared these feelings.

This chapter provided a profile of journalists working at newspapers across the United States. About half (48%) were reporters and almost another one-tenth (9%) were other frontline workers; more than one-third (36%) were managers and the final 4% marked their jobs as “other.” They felt that among their most important job roles were getting stories covered that should be covered, being objective, and being watchdogs for the public. Most of the journalists reported that their workloads had increased due to technological and economic changes at their newspapers, but that in some cases technology changes had helped to improve the quality of their work. Economic changes, however, led to widespread layoffs; more than four-fifths (84%) said their newspapers had laid off newsroom workers in the

past two years. These findings about technological and economic changes in the industry will be explored in the next chapter for their effects on journalists' job roles.

Chapter Seven

Results: The impact of change on job roles and organizational identification

To understand the impact of technological and economic changes on newspaper journalists and their feelings about their newspapers, four hypotheses were tested and eight research questions were answered. The hypotheses test the relationships between journalists' perceptions about the effects of technological and economic changes on the newspaper industry and the journalists' job roles, and on the extent of their organizational identification. The research questions examine whether the journalists' job type or the circulation size of their newspapers affects the relationships found in the hypotheses.

Industry and job role changes

The first hypothesis (H1: Newspaper journalists with negative perceptions about technological changes in the industry will be more likely to have negative feelings about the impact of those changes on their job roles) was tested by correlating perceptions about technological changes in the industry and feelings about the effects of those changes on journalists' job roles. To assess perceptions about technological changes in the industry, survey participants were asked to select their level of agreement with the statement: "You think recent technological changes in the newspaper industry are helping to uphold its principles."

Participants chose the response that best represented their perception on a seven-point scale anchored by strongly disagree (1) and strongly agree (7). The mean

score of perceptions about technology changes in the industry was 3.86 out of 7 points possible ($SD=1.54$).

Perceptions about the impact of technological changes on the 11 journalists' job roles were measured by asking survey participants to indicate their level of agreement on each of the job-role items based on the statement: "How well have changes in technology enabled you to perform your job roles as a journalist in the following ways..." Level of agreement was measured on a seven-point scale ranging from not well (1) to very well (7). According to Table 7.1, two of the 11 job roles were perceived as benefiting the most from technology: Get information to the public quickly ($M=6.76$, $SD=0.73$) and Give ordinary people a chance to express themselves ($M=6.18$, $SD=1.26$).

Table 7.1
Effect of technology changes on performing job roles

	M	SD
Get information to the public quickly	6.76	0.73
Give ordinary people a chance to express themselves	6.18	1.26
Have the opportunity to help people	5.50	1.42
Get stories that should be covered	5.43	1.58
Be a watchdog for the public	5.43	1.54
Have the chance to influence public opinion	5.41	1.42
Exercise autonomy over your work	5.01	1.62
Have the chance to develop a specialty	4.94	1.79
Be objective	4.88	1.61
Provide analysis and interpretation of complex problems	4.80	1.80
Stay away from stories where factual content cannot be verified	4.03	1.89
Summed mean of items	53.75/77	12.98

Note: Response scale measured how well technology enabled them to perform each role, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Participants responded to only those items that applied to their jobs, so $n=682-766$.

Cronbach's $\alpha=.87$

A correlation of perceptions about technological changes in the industry and feelings about the effects of those changes on journalists' job roles found support for H1, Newspaper journalists with negative perceptions about technological changes in the industry will be more likely to have negative feelings about the impact of those changes on their job roles, ($r(781)=.32, p<.001$, one-tailed).

Most of the journalists in the surveys and depth interviews—particularly those whose jobs primarily involve reporting—believed that technology was helping them perform their job roles. The depth interview participants explained

that the Internet speeds up fact-checking and finding contact information for sources, and makes connecting with readers easier.

A newspaper journalist who was interviewed as part of the follow-up depth interviews was able to provide insight into this hypothesis because his responsibilities included producing online and multimedia content. This journalist (Journalist 5) observed that some of the biggest boons of technology were the immediacy of connecting with the public and providing information, which were also among the highest-rated job roles items in relation to technology:

“You talk about things like mobile and stuff like that and you really get, literally, in somebody’s pocket all the time. And you’re that important to them if they follow you on social networking things, or if they’re subscribing to your feed. You’re with them all the time. I think that’s pretty exciting.”

Others saw technology tasks like producing videos for newspapers’ Web sites as a means to an end, such as Journalist 7 who said: “Sometimes [videos] are just like entertainment value. But that is what is going to get hits on your newspaper’s Web site and keep you in business, then that is sort of what you have to do in order to finance more meaningful journalism.”

Some were more hesitant about the effect of technology clouding the quality of journalistic work. As Journalist 4 explained:

“Not only do you have to check various Web sites, you have to be in social media, and you have to listen to the scanner, and you have to track emails from various accounts, and you have to check the facts too. So it’s all these

different things we have to monitor to do what we have to do ... that's the challenge. In the midst of all that, we actually have to get away from our desks and still go out and meet people. ... Who has time? We have to do all these things."

Some, like a reporter who reported in her survey that she had negative perceptions about the impact of technology changes on the industry but positive feelings about those changes helping her do her job, may have been influenced what she saw occurring in the newsroom. At the end of her survey, she wrote: "One of my colleagues gets all of his comments on all stories from his friends on Facebook. It makes me want to puke—it's the same people, with the same slant, all the time, and I don't think the bosses know." Journalists may believe that they themselves use technology like the Internet responsibly and that it improves the quality of their work, but fear that others are abusing the shortcuts technology can provide and dragging down the foundational principles of the profession.

The second hypothesis examined the effect of changes in the industry but this time from an economic standpoint. H2 (Newspaper journalists who have negative perceptions about economic changes in the industry will be more likely to have negative feelings about the impact of those changes on their job roles) was tested by correlating perceptions about economic changes in the industry and feelings about the effects of those changes on journalists' job roles. To determine perceptions about economic changes in the industry, the participating journalists were asked to select their level of agreement with the statement: "You think recent

economic changes in the newspaper industry are helping to uphold its principles.” Participants chose the response that best represented their perception on a seven-point scale anchored by strongly disagree (1) and strongly agree (7). The mean score was 2.25 on the 7-point scale ($SD=1.35$), which was even more pronounced than the technological changes examined in H1 ($M=3.86$, $SD=1.54$).

Perceptions about the impact of economic changes on the 11 journalists’ job roles were measured by asking survey participants to indicate their level of agreement on each of the job-role items based on the statement: “How well have economic changes enabled you to perform your job roles as a journalist in the following ways...” Level of agreement was measured on a seven-point scale ranging from not well (1) to very well (7). The mean of each item in relation to how well economic changes have affected their performance is reported in Table 7.2. Overall, the mean scores suggest journalists believe economic changes have had a detrimental effect on their ability to fulfill their job roles. The lowest-rated item on the economic-impact scale, getting stories covered that should be covered, was the highest-rated one when journalists reported the importance of their job roles in Table 6.2. In their interviews, many journalists lamented the decline in coverage and not being able to cover certain stories as a result of fewer resources. One reporter, Journalist 4, said: “We closed four bureaus. What happens with those areas? ... Obviously we don’t care.”

Table 7.2
Effect of economic changes on performing job roles

	M	SD
Give ordinary people a chance to express themselves	4.18	1.76
Be objective	4.08	1.57
Get information to the public quickly	3.78	1.87
Stay away from stories where factual content cannot be verified	3.72	1.68
Exercise autonomy over your work	3.65	1.71
Have the chance to influence public opinion	3.51	1.56
Have the opportunity to help people	3.29	1.57
Be a watchdog for the public	3.00	1.75
Provide analysis and interpretation of complex problems	2.75	1.63
Have the chance to develop a specialty	2.67	1.66
Get stories that should be covered	2.53	1.62
Summed mean of items	34.81/77	14.72

Note. Response scale measured how well technology enabled them to perform each role, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Participants responded to only those items that applied to their jobs, so $n=738-818$.
Cronbach's $\alpha=.93$

While this reporter's comment offers insight into the frustration journalists have felt in not being able to get stories covered that should be covered, the overall effects of economic changes on journalists' perceptions of their job roles are tested in the second hypothesis. A correlation of perceptions about economic changes in the industry and feelings about the effects of those changes on journalists' job roles supported H2, Newspaper journalists who have negative perceptions about economic changes in the industry will be more likely to have negative feelings about the impact of those changes on their job roles, $r(794)=.39, p<.001$, one-tailed.

Although some journalists did not specifically mention the leadership at their newspapers and the corporate decision-makers as being responsible for the negative impact of economic changes on their job roles, Journalist 2 was more candid about his impressions of working at a corporate-owned newspaper. He spent much of his career at such a newspaper before moving to his current position as the managing editor of a family-owned newspaper and said in a depth interview:

“I think the field is so imperiled by threats from the giant corporations that own newspapers, and constantly being on edge about whether you are going to have a job. And not really knowing which side the big boys are on. You know, the front office. Are they still on my side or are they not? You know, money. When people start worrying about money and stop worrying about the 1st Amendment, then I think you are playing a losing game.”

Table 7.3 highlights the importance journalists place on being able to perform 11 job roles and the differences in their ability to perform those job roles brought on by technological and economic changes. The top three items ranked by importance in newspaper journalists’ jobs—getting stories covered that should be covered, being objective, and being a watchdog for the public—all declined when technological and economic changes were taken into account. The one exception, being objective, remained in the same ranking in regard to the effect economic changes on journalists’ ability to perform that job role.

Table 7.3

Importance of job roles and effects of technology and economic changes

	Importance of job role M	Technology change M	Economic change M
Get stories that should be covered	6.57 (1)	5.43 (4)	2.53 (11)
Be objective	6.46 (2)	4.88 (9)	4.08 (2)
Be a watchdog for the public	6.41 (3)	5.43 (5)	3.00 (8)
Get information to the public quickly	6.27 (4)	6.76 (1)	3.78 (3)
Stay away from stories where factual content cannot be verified	6.11 (5)	4.03 (11)	3.72 (4)
Provide analysis and interpretation of complex problems	6.09 (6)	4.80 (10)	2.75 (9)
Give ordinary people a chance to express themselves	5.91 (7)	6.18 (2)	4.18 (1)
Have the opportunity to help people	5.89 (8)	5.50 (3)	3.29 (7)
Exercise autonomy over your work	5.88 (9)	5.01 (7)	3.65 (5)
Have the chance to influence public opinion	5.27 (10)	5.41 (6)	3.51 (6)
Have the chance to develop a specialty	5.23 (11)	4.94 (8)	2.67 (10)

Note. Response scale for Importance of job role measured how important it was to journalists that they are able to perform each job role, ranging from 1 (not important) to 7 (very important). Response scales for Technology change and Economic change measured how well those changes enabled journalists to perform each job role, ranging from 1 (not well) to 7 (very well). The numbers in parentheses to the right of each mean represent the item's rank on that list.

Research questions 6 and 7 examined the possibility that the journalists' perceptions about industry changes and feelings about the effect of those changes on their job roles identified in H1 and H2 could have been influenced by the type of job they held and the size of their newspaper. To answer RQ6 (How are perceptions about industry changes and feelings about the effect of those changes on their job roles affected by newspaper journalists' job type?), job type was held constant in order to determine its impact, if any, on perceptions. Since survey results revealed there were two primary job types—frontline workers (57%), such as reporters,

copy editors, and photographers, and those who are in managerial and leadership positions (36%) such as editors and publishers, the relationship between changes affecting industry principles and job roles was examined for each job type.¹

Results showed that whether comparing frontline workers or journalists in managerial and leadership positions, statistically significant relationships remained between perceptions about technological changes affecting the industry's principles and the impact of technological changes on journalists' job roles: frontline workers (Cramer's $V=.18$, $p<.001$) and managers (Cramer's $V=.18$, $p<.01$).²

When a similar analysis was done for perceptions about economic impact on the industry's principles and journalists' job roles, the statistically significant relationship remained: frontline workers (Cramer's $V=.26$, $p<.001$) and managers (Cramer's $V=.22$, $p<.001$).

Therefore, RQ6, How are perceptions about industry changes and feelings about the effect of those changes on their job roles affected by newspaper journalists' job type?, found job type did not affect the newspaper journalists' perceptions about technological and economic changes in the industry and the effect of those changes on their job roles.

To examine RQ7 (How are perceptions about industry changes and feelings about the effect of those changes on their job roles affected by newspaper journalists' status as workers at newspapers of various circulation sizes?), circulation was held constant in order to determine its impact, if any, on perceptions. Three circulation sizes—small newspapers with circulations of 50,000

or less; midsize publications with circulations ranging from 50,001 to 250,000; and large newspapers with circulations of more than 250,000—were examined to explore the relationship between perceptions about industry changes and feelings about the effects of those changes on newspaper journalists' job roles.

Results showed that when comparing journalists working at these three circulation levels, statistically significant relationships between perceptions about technological changes affecting the industry's principles and journalists' feelings about the impact of those technological changes on their job roles remained in the first two circulation groups, but not the third: small newspapers ($\tau\text{-}b=.21, p<.001$; $\gamma=.39, p<.001$); midsize papers ($\tau\text{-}b=.24, p<.001$; $\gamma=.42, p<.001$); large papers ($\tau\text{-}b=.02, p=.89$; $\gamma=.03, p=.89$).

A reporter at a small-circulation daily explained in his written comments about why adapting work routines to new technology is more difficult than at larger publications: "For the smaller newspaper, technology helps but also hinders. ... A large paper can afford to send a writer and a photographer while the smaller newspaper's reporter has to take notes, shoot photos and often video while keeping a high standard all at the same time. It's hard to say the least."

In contrast to technological changes where the relationship did not hold for large circulation newspapers, for economic changes, the relationship between perceptions about economic changes affecting the industry's principles and journalists' feelings about the impact of those economic changes on their job roles remained statistically significant in all three circulation-size groups: small

newspapers ($\tau\text{-}b=.20, p<.001$; $\gamma=.43, p<.001$); midsize papers ($\tau\text{-}b=.33, p<.001$; $\gamma=.73, p<.001$); large papers ($\tau\text{-}b=.33, p<.05$; $\gamma=.71, p<.05$).

Therefore, RQ7, How are perceptions about industry changes and feelings about the effect of those changes on their job roles affected by newspaper journalists' status as workers at newspapers of various circulation sizes?, found that circulation size was not a factor in the relationship between perceptions about the effect of economic changes on the industry's principles and feelings about the impact of economic changes on journalists' job roles.

Circulation size was not a factor for journalists at small- and midsize-newspapers in the relationship of perceptions about the effect of technological changes on the industry's principles and the impact of those technological changes on their job roles—the relationship remained statistically significant. However, for journalists at larger newspapers that relationship of perceptions of technological change on the industry and job roles did not hold. In other words, the significant relationship between perceptions of about the effect of technological changes on the newspaper industry and feelings about the impact of those changes on journalists' job roles was not found among journalists at newspapers with circulations of more than 250,000.

Job role changes and organizational identification

The third and fourth hypotheses draw upon elements in H1 and H2, assessing the relationship between the newspaper journalists' feelings about the

impact of changes on their job roles and the extent of their organizational identification.

H3 (Newspaper journalists who have negative feelings about the impact of technological changes on their job roles will be more likely to have lower organizational identification) was tested by correlating feelings about technology-related changes on journalists' job roles and the journalists' identification with their newspapers. As detailed in the previous section, journalists were asked to indicate on a seven-point scale their feelings about how well technology has helped them perform 11 job roles. The summed mean was 53.75 out of 77 (SD=12.98).

Organizational identification (OI) was measured with two questions developed by Bergami and Bagozzi (2000). In one question, participants' perceptions of their organizational identification were measured by asking them: "Please indicate to what degree your self-image overlaps with the newspaper's image." Their level of agreement was measured on a seven-point scale in which 1 was not at all and 7 was very much. The mean score on this question was 4.55 (SD=1.54).

The second question measuring OI presented participants with a figure containing eight rows of circles that progressively drew closer together and overlapped. Each row represented a varying level of organizational identification (See Appendix 2 for the figure). Journalists' perception of their organizational identification was measured by asking: "Imagine that one of the circles on the left in the rows below represents your own self-definition or identity and that the circle on

the right represented your newspaper's identity." They were instructed to choose the row that best represented their feelings; the options were far apart (1), close together but separate (2), very small overlap (3), small overlap (4), moderate overlap (5), large overlap (6), very large overlap (7), and complete overlap (8). The mean score on this scale was 4.43 (SD=1.65).

To establish a single OI score, the responses to each question were summed to create a maximum score of 15 (the first question had a seven-point scale and the second had options of 1 through 8). The mean score on this summed scale was 8.98 (SD=2.85; Cronbach's $\alpha=.75$).

A correlation of feelings about the effects of technological change on journalists' job roles and their organizational identification found support for H3, Newspaper journalists who have negative feelings about the impact of technological changes on their job roles will be more likely to have lower organizational identification, $r(779)=.12, p<.001$, one-tailed.

For some journalists, their feelings about their jobs were influenced not so much by the technological changes themselves as by management's introduction of technology, like one copy chief who wrote: "Technology doesn't make the job of a journalist easier or more difficult. It's management's reaction to how technology should be used and how many people are needed today that has the biggest impact on the job. It is definitely a less satisfying job than it was when I started out." In a depth interview, Journalist 4 also pointed to management itself as a significant

contributor to the problems associated with incorporating new technology in news workers' tasks:

"Those who have been in the industry for decades and decades who are leading these news organizations, they have to say very early what the strategy is and keep a consensus and build a team around what they're doing, to stand behind it and update it as necessary. But that's not necessarily what's happening. A lot of news organizations, they're just flying by the seat of their pants, just doing whatever they can for that day with the time they have. And that's why I think ... news organizations are just making even more problems for themselves with that type of mentality."

Journalist 1, himself a manager, said in a depth interview that he also is frustrated with leaders' lack of vision for how to use technology effectively and how to shift away from the economic models that no longer work:

"In this profession at this point ... we are still, to some extent, trying to manage with the same playbook that they were teaching us in 1974. I mean that is the underlying issue at the end of the day. A lot of things that worked for us very successfully for a long time just don't work anymore. And it is that grappling with does work and what doesn't work, and it is the letting go, sometimes, that is the toughest."

In the fourth hypothesis, economic changes are the focus of the relationship between newspaper journalists' feelings about changes on their job roles and organizational identification (H4: Newspaper journalists who have negative feelings

about the impact of economic changes on their job roles will be more likely to have lower organizational identification). Feelings about the effect of economic changes on job roles were reported in the previous section; these feelings were measured in a matrix question that asked how well economic changes permitted the newspaper journalists to perform certain job roles. The question used a seven-point scale in which not well (1) and very well (7) were the endpoints. The mean summed score was 34.81 out of a possible 77 (SD=14.72). Organizational identification was measured as it was described for H3, by summing the scores of two OI questions. The summed mean was 8.98 out of 15 (SD=2.85).

A correlation of feelings about economic changes on newspaper journalists' job roles and their organizational identification found support for H4 (Newspaper journalists who have negative feelings about the impact of economic changes on their job roles will be more likely to have lower organizational identification), $r(795) = .20, p < .001$, one-tailed.

Journalist 3, who worked at a small newspaper, explained in a depth interview that his decline in organizational identification was linked to changes in his job roles that came as a result of a recent ownership change. His newspaper, held by a corporation, was sold to private owners, causing a shift in the approach workers are now expected to take: "With the change in ownership, it's much more of a personal reflection on the owners, and so now it's more of a 'Hi, I'm part of a small business that's providing a service for money, as opposed to being part of a larger news organization.'" Being part of a larger news organization, he explained, gave

him the sense that objectivity was expected in the newsroom. Now, that is not the case. (He also explained that the corporate ownership sold the newspaper because it was one of the few in the company that had turned reasonable profits recently, making its sale more lucrative.)

Another journalist—a columnist at midsize newspaper—wrote in her survey that layoffs and other cuts had negatively affected the quality of the newspaper, hampering news workers’ abilities to cover stories that should be covered and serve as watchdogs for the public: “The layoffs/economic trauma and the way our newsroom leadership has managed them makes it extremely difficult for anyone in our newsroom to do a good job at newspaper journalism. We can’t cover the news, we can’t watchdog, we can’t even correct typos and actual errors before they’re published.”

Newspaper journalists’ feelings toward managers who have inflicted economic hardship on them and their coworkers may have been best summed up by a reporter who wrote in the survey: “It feels like you’re working sometimes for a parent that isn’t satisfied with the all ‘A’ report card, and doesn’t have time to look back to successes or failures because they’re so hell-bent on just surviving.”

Research questions 8 and 9 examined the possibility that the journalists’ feelings about the effects of industry changes on their job roles and the extent of their organizational identification, as predicted in H3 and H4, could have been influenced by the type of job they held and the size of their newspaper. To examine RQ8 (How are feelings about industry changes on newspaper journalists’ job roles

and the extent of their organizational identification affected by journalists' job type?) job type was held constant to determine its impact, if any, on those feelings.

Results showed that whether comparing frontline workers or managers, statistically significant relationships between feelings about technological changes affecting job roles and journalists' organizational identification disappeared: frontline workers (Cramer's $V=.09$, $p=.43$) and managers (Cramer's $V=.17$, $p=.06$).

When economic changes were examined, statistically significant relationships between feelings about economic changes affecting job roles and journalists' organizational identification also disappeared for frontline workers (Cramer's $V=.12$, $p=.13$) but the relationship remained for managers (Cramer's $V=.15$, $p<.01$).

Thus, RQ8 (How are feelings about industry changes on newspaper journalists' job roles and the extent of their organizational identification affected by journalists' job type?) found the significant relationship between journalists' feelings about the impact of technological changes on their job roles and their organizational identification did not hold when job types were examined. In other words, the significant relationship disappeared for both groups. For perceptions about economic changes in the industry and feelings about the effect of those changes on their job roles, the relationship did not hold for frontline workers but it did for managers.

To examine RQ9 (How are feelings about industry changes on newspaper journalists' job roles and the extent of their organizational identification affected by

journalists' status as workers at newspapers of various circulation sizes?)

circulation size was held constant in order to determine its impact, if any, on feelings.

Results showed that among journalists in the three circulation groups, statistically significant relationships between feelings about technological changes on job roles and OI remained only for workers at midsize newspapers ($\tau\text{-}b=.14$, $p<.05$; $\gamma=.24$, $p<.05$). The relationship for journalists at smaller newspapers was not significant ($\tau\text{-}b=.06$, $p=.17$; $\gamma=.11$, $p=.17$), nor was it significant for journalists at larger newspapers ($\tau\text{-}b=.23$; $p=.08$; $\gamma=.36$, $p=.08$).

Similarly, results showed that participants' feelings about the impact of economic changes and OI remained statistically significant at midsize newspapers ($\tau\text{-}b=.30$, $p<.001$; $\gamma=.47$, $p<.001$) and was close to significance at smaller newspapers ($\tau\text{-}b=.08$, $p=.05$; $\gamma=.12$, $p=.05$). It did not remain significant at larger newspapers ($\tau\text{-}b=.03$; $p=.82$; $\gamma=.05$; $p=.82$).

Therefore, RQ9, How are feelings about industry changes on newspaper journalists' job roles and the extent of their organizational identification affected by journalists' status as workers at newspapers of various circulation sizes?, found that circulation size was not a factor for journalists at midsize newspapers in the relationship between feelings about technological and economic changes on their job roles and their organizational identification—the relationship remained statistically significant. However, for journalists at the smaller and larger newspapers that relationship did not hold for feelings about the effects of

technological and economic changes on their job roles and their OI. In other words, the relationships found between feelings about the impact of technological and economic changes on the participants' job roles and their OI was not found among journalists at small and large newspapers.

To summarize the findings of this chapter so far, the four hypotheses were supported, indicating newspaper journalists who have negative perceptions about technological and economic changes in the industry will be more likely to have negative feelings about the impact of those changes on their job roles. Additionally, the support for the hypotheses confirmed that newspaper journalists who have negative feelings about the impact of technological and economic changes on their job roles will be more likely to have lower organizational identification.

The research questions associated with these hypotheses (RQ6-9) indicated that the size of the newspaper the journalists worked at could affect their perceptions about the effect of technological changes in the industry's principles and the effect of those changes on their job roles. Additionally, the circulation size of journalists' newspapers and their job types might affect feelings about the impact of technological and economic changes on their job roles and organizational identification.

The potential effect of professional identification

The literature suggests that for journalists and other professionals, identification with their profession may be greater than with their organization. However, no recent studies have examined the potential influence of professional

identification on journalists' organizational identification, especially in the context of recent changes in the industry and the effect of those changes on journalists' feelings about their jobs and the profession. Because of this lack of empirical research, a research question (RQ10) was posed: How will newspaper journalists' professional identification affect the relationship between their feelings about industry changes on their present job roles and the strength of their organizational identification?

To assess this question, three variables were used. First, journalists' feelings about their job roles and the extent of their professional identification were treated as independent variables to determine if they were separately related to the dependent variable, organizational identification. Journalists' feelings about their job roles were measured in the previous hypotheses with scales that measured how well technological and economic changes had enabled them to do their jobs. Participants' scores on each of the two scales were summed into a single variable.

Professional identification was treated in this step as another independent variable. It was measured with two questions like the ones that measured organizational identification in H3 and H4, except that participants chose the option that best represented the overlap of their self-image or identity with that of the newspaper profession. In the first question, journalists chose their answer from a seven-point scale anchored by "not at all" (1) and "very much" (7) in regard to the extent to which there was an overlap in how they saw themselves and the newspaper profession. For the second professional identification question, they

were presented with the same figure of progressively overlapping circles as with the OI question, which had eight choices ranging from “far apart” (1) to “complete overlap” (8). (See Appendix 2 for the figure.) The scores of each question were summed to create the professional identification variable. The summed mean for professional identification was 9.15 out of 15 (SD=2.82; Cronbach’s α =.68).

Organizational identification, the dependent variable, was measured with the same summed score as applied in H3 and H4, in which journalists were asked two questions that reflected the extent of overlap in their own self-image or identity and that of their newspaper.

Bivariate regressions were performed to evaluate how well organizational identification could be predicted from the independent variables—job role feelings and professional identification. The correlation between feelings about the effect of technological and economic changes on job roles and the participants’ organizational identification was statistically significant, $r(695)=.20, p<.001$. The regression equation for predicting organizational identification from job role feelings was $Y'=6.89+.02*X$. The r^2 for this equation was .04; 4% of the variance in organizational identification was predictable from feelings about the effects of technological and economic changes on job roles. This is a weak relationship. The 95% confidence interval for the slope to predict organizational identification from job role feelings ranged from 0.02 to 0.03; thus, for each 1-point increase in job role feelings, organizational identification increased by about .02 and .03. Next, a correlation was run between professional identification and organizational

identification, $r(917) = .71, p < .001$. The regression equation for predicting organizational identification from job role feelings was $Y' = 2.43 + .72 * X$. The r^2 for this equation was .50; 50% of the variance in organizational identification was predictable from professional identification. This is a very strong relationship. The 95% confidence interval for the slope to predict organizational identification from professional identification ranged from .67 to .76. Thus, for each 1-point increase in professional identification, organizational identification increased by .67 to .76.

Because such a strong relationship was found between professional identification and organizational identification, professional identification was tested as an intervening variable in the relationship between newspaper journalists' feelings about the impact of industry changes on their job roles and their organizational identification. Based on the previous tests, correlations between job role feelings-organizational identification and professional identification-organizational identification were statistically significant. To test professional identification as an intervening variable, it also had to produce a statistically significant relationship with the other predictor variable, job role feelings:

$r(695) = .19, p < .001$. Since this correlation between the predictor variables, $r = .19$, did not indicate high multicollinearity, the analysis could proceed.

In the overall multiple regression predicting organizational identification from feelings about changes on job roles and professional identification $R = .69$ and $R^2 = .48$. When both job role perceptions and professional identification were used as predictors, about 48% of the variance in organizational identification could be

predicted. The adjusted R^2 was .48. The overall regression was statistically significant, $F(2, 693)=315.57$, $p<.001$. Complete results for the multiple regression are presented in Table 7.4.

Table 7.4

Predicting organizational identification from job roles perceptions and professional identification

Variables	Organizational identification	Feelings about job roles	Professional identification	<i>b</i>	β	sr^2_{unique}
Feelings about job roles	.20***			.01**	.08	.01
Professional identification	.69***	.19***		.67*	.67	.44
			Intercept	2.07		
Means	8.98	88.97	9.14			
SD	2.85	23.25	2.82			
					$R^2=.48$	
					$R^2_{\text{adj}}=.48$	
					$R=.69^{***}$	

*** $p<.001$; ** $p<.01$; * $p<.05$

Journalists' feelings about the impact of technological and economic changes on their job roles was significantly predictive of their organizational identification when professional identification was statistically controlled: $t(693)=2.69$, $p<.01$. The positive slope for feelings about job roles as a predictor of organizational identification indicated there was about a .01 increase in organizational identification for each unit of increase in job roles perceptions, controlling for professional identification. The squared semipartial that estimated how much variance in organizational identification was uniquely predictable from feelings about job roles was $sr^2=.01$. About 1% of the variance in organizational

identification was uniquely predictable from job roles perceptions when professional identification was controlled.

Professional identification was also significantly predictive of organizational identification when feelings about the impact of recent changes on job roles was statistically controlled: $t(693)=24.03, p<.001$. The positive slope to predict organizational identification from professional identification was approximately $b=.67$. In other words, there was about a two-thirds of a point increase in organizational identification for each one-point increase in professional identification. The sr^2 for professional identification (controlling for feelings about job roles) was .44. Thus, professional identification uniquely predicted about 44% of the variance in organizational identification when the job role perception variable was controlled.

The conclusion from this analysis is that the original correlation between feelings about the effect of technological and economic changes on newspaper journalists' job roles and organizational identification ($r=.20$) was partly (but not entirely) accounted for by professional identification. The correlation between job roles and organizational identification decreased but remained significant when controlling for professional identification ($pr=.10$). When professional identification was statistically controlled, job role perceptions uniquely predicted one percent of the variance in organizational identification.

This supports the interpretation that the relationship between feelings about the effect of recent changes on job roles and organizational identification was

partially mediated by professional identification. The correlation in the multiple regression between professional identification and organizational identification ($r=.69$) decreased only slightly when controlling for job roles ($pr=.67$) and remained statistically significant. One possible interpretation of this outcome is that job role feelings and professional identification are slightly redundant as predictors of organizational identification; to the extent that job roles and professional identification are correlated with each other, they compete to explain some of the variance. However, each predictor was significantly associated with organizational identification when the other predictor variable was controlled.

Interviews with many of the journalists who completed the survey supported the notion that identification with the newspaper profession can overlap with and affect organizational identification. Journalist 3, who reported moderate identification with his organization and high identification with the profession, was very to-the-point about the connection, saying “being a part of a newspaper enables me to do what I do.” Journalist 7 was similar in her remarks: “I think I am tied more to the idea of being a newspaper journalist at *any* paper.” She went on to say that being a newspaper journalist “is more than a job, and it is even more than a career. It is a calling.”

In other interviews, journalists talked about the impact of economic changes across the industry on their feelings about the profession. Journalist 4, a reporter at a midsize newspaper, said these feelings of job insecurity and an overall glum

outlook on the future of the industry are forcing her to re-evaluate her choice to work in newspapers:

“So all these things, these cost pressures on the industry, I think it’s forcing people out like me, who would love to stay in the field and have some longevity but feel like, ‘OK. It’s time to grow up. I want to buy a house. I want to have some type of reasonable retirement.’ And staying within the field for maybe five years longer may be five years too long. I should move on to something related and more lucrative.”

She is 26, and like some other young journalists is struggling with whether to remain in the field. Younger journalists, however, did not have lower identification with the profession than older journalists. This is likely because many older journalists are also fearful of the industry’s future. Some, like Journalist 2, are just hoping to hold on until retirement. He said, “I hope journalism lasts through until I retire. I hope I can do quality journalism for another three or four years before it is all gone.”

Others were more optimistic about the future of journalism, if not the future of newspapers. Journalist 5, who had lower identification with the newspaper profession than with his newspaper, said in a depth interview that he is more highly identified with the overall journalism profession:

“Being a journalist today is awesome ... because the changes in technology and the options you have available for ways to tell stories, and to tell stories incrementally, and engage the readers. And the opportunities for, I don’t

know, being more essential even than before to the community. I mean that is just through the roof, when you take out the necessity for a particular medium.”

¹ Journalists who marked their job title as “other” were not included in this test or subsequent job-type tests since their status could not be determined.

² Each variable was divided into the three ordinal groups that were detailed for RQ6-RQ9 in Chapter 5. Responses regarding the effect of technological and economic changes upholding the industry’s principles were recoded into ordinal categories: Disagree (1-3), Moderate (4-5), and Agree (6-7). The summed responses on the impact of technological and economic changes on journalists’ job roles were recoded into ordinal categories: Low (33 or less), Moderate (34-49), and High (50 or more). The summed organizational identification responses were recoded into ordinal groups: Low (8 or less), Moderate (9-11), and High (12 or more).

Chapter Eight

Results: Industry change, status threat, and professional identification

This chapter uses two hypotheses and six research questions to investigate the role of professional identification in the context of journalists' perceptions about changes in the industry and threats to the profession's status. The hypotheses examine the relationship between survey participants' perceptions of the effect of technological and economic changes on the profession and their perceptions about threats to the profession's status, as well as the relationship between those perceived status threats and the extent of the journalists' professional identification. The research questions explore the factors that contribute to participants' perceptions about professional status threats; the research questions also explore whether the journalists' job types or circulation size of their newspapers impact the relationships found in the hypotheses.

Industry change and professional status threat

H5 (Newspaper journalists who have negative perceptions about changes in the industry will be more likely to perceive the status of the profession has been threatened) was tested by correlating perceptions about industry changes and status threats to the profession. To assess perceptions of industry changes, the two questions used in Chapter 7—one question each about technological and economic factors—were again used to measure journalists' perceptions about such changes in the field. The questions asked survey participants to indicate their level of

agreement with statements about technological and economic changes in the newspaper industry helping to uphold its principles. Each statement measured on a seven-point scale of strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7). The scores from the two seven-point scales were summed to measure perceptions about changes in the industry. The mean score was 6.11 out of 14 ($SD=2.46$; Cronbach's $\alpha=.61$).

Perceptions about professional status threat were assessed with the question: In what regard do you think the public holds the newspaper profession today? Participants were asked to rate the question on a seven-point scale from low regard (1) to high regard (7). The mean score was 3.18 ($SD=1.37$) on this scale. As discussed in Chapter 2, measuring others' regard for a group is one way to assess status threat. Group members' beliefs about what outsiders think of their group is what Dutton et al. (1994) referred to as construed external image. If the group's image is threatened by others' perceptions, group members will feel their status has been challenged and are likely to react in a variety of ways that will reassure themselves of the value and standing of their group (Elsbach & Kramer, 1996).

A correlation of perceptions about changes in the industry and public regard for the newspaper profession found support for H5, Newspaper journalists who have negative perceptions about changes in the industry will be more likely to perceive the status of the profession has been threatened, $r(922)=.31, p<.001$, one-tailed. Journalist 3 was among those who saw a negative public perception of newspaper journalists, saying:

"The public appreciation of what newspapers do has changed. There's a lot

more criticism, a lot more stereotypes where papers are all liberal, newspapers distort the news. You just sort of wish newspapers would push back more, defending what we do.”

Two research questions, RQ11 and RQ12, explored journalists’ perceptions of public regard and were used to enhance the findings of H5. RQ11 was an open-ended question on the survey and asked the participants to explain why they think the public holds the newspaper profession in the regard they indicated. The question read: What reasons do newspaper journalists give to explain their perceptions of the public’s regard for their profession? The responses were coded into four dominant categories that emerged when journalists explained their perceptions of the public’s regard for the newspaper industry: changes in media technology, changes in media economics, changes in professional principles, and changes in public trust & attitudes.¹ Within each group, the responses were categorized by whether they reflected a negative or positive opinion and are shown in Table 8.1. Responses such as “I don’t know” or neutral responses were placed in the “other” category.

Table 8.1

Journalists' perceptions of public regard for the newspaper profession

	Negative v. positive	Perception categories
Changes in public trust & attitudes		53
Negative	41	
Positive	12	
Changes in professional principles		17
Negative	14	
Positive	3	
Changes in media technology		14
Negative	14	
Positive	0	
Changes in media economics		10
Negative	10	
Positive	0	
Other responses	6	6
	<hr/> 100	<hr/> 100

Note. n=808. Percentages are based on respondents' first response in explaining their perception of the factors that explain public regard for the newspaper profession.

Of all of the journalists in the survey, 41% felt the public's trust of newspapers and their attitudes toward the newspaper profession were negative. Their responses included beliefs that the public doesn't value newspaper journalism; that citizens' political views are so polarized that they have a negative regard for news that does not confirm their opinions; and that the public believes there is a liberal bias in newspapers. Another common reflection of these sentiments was that people tend to lump all media together under a broad negative perception, which drags down public regard for newspapers. As one reporter

explained in the written comments: “I believe the public sees the talking heads on 24-hour cable news channels and mistakes that digestion of the day’s events as journalism.” Another reporter wrote:

“They don’t understand the role of the media as a watchdog. They have a ‘shoot the messenger mentality’—if they don’t like what they’re hearing or reading they think the media is making it up or spinning a story. They believe the media is biased toward the liberal viewpoint. They confuse entertainment with media.”

One columnist outlined several points about changes in the audience that amounted to a lack of value for the reporting done at newspapers:

“They don’t protest when newspapers die. They don’t renew subscriptions for the newspaper they buy. They won’t pay pennies for online news. They don’t see that ‘getting news for free’ is a death knell for a ‘free press’ as we have known it. I remark all the time that ‘Google doesn’t have any reporters; where do you think their ‘news’ comes from?’”

But not all of the audience-attitude responses were negative. Twelve percent of journalists—most of whom work at small to midsize newspapers—believe that public sentiment toward newspapers is favorable. One of the journalists in this group, Journalist 8, said the objectivity newspapers offer is welcomed by members of the public wary or worn out from polarized news: “The explosion of blogs, pundits on TV, that’s less and less journalism and more somebody screaming.”

But most of the other journalists in this category qualified their statements, explaining that they were referring to “their” public: the readers of their newspapers. A publisher at a small-circulation newspaper wrote:

“Community newspapers—small dailies and weeklies—are generally held in high regard in their communities. Readers rely on community newspapers to give them local news, information and advertising that is not available from any other source. It's not available in the big metro daily newspapers. It's not available on TV, and it's not available on radio. Community newspapers are vital to a community, and generally speaking citizens respect community newspapers. Citizens still feel a sense of ownership to community newspapers. They may complain from time to time, but that complaining is because they care about ‘their’ newspaper and ‘their’ community.”

Journalists 8 and 9, also workers at small-circulation newspapers, said their newspapers enjoy prestige in the community, even if the newspaper industry as a whole does not. They explained, respectively, “We give readers something they can’t get anywhere else,” and “we’re ‘the’ paper.”

Among the other changes journalists listed in their responses, 14% said they believe the profession has hurt itself by abandoning its watchdog and other functions and through highly publicized ethics violations at large newspapers (such as plagiarism and falsified reporting at publications including *The New York Times*) that hurt the newspaper industry as a whole. In his survey response, a managing editor explained: “We haven't done enough to distinguish ourselves as protectors of

the public who successfully challenge institutions that need challenging. ... We rarely pull back the curtain to show how things are broken.”

Journalist 5 was one of the handful of journalists who wrote in his survey response that there is “a disconnect over what work is important to journalists and what’s important to the community.” He elaborated in his interview, explaining that journalists are so resistant to changing their approaches to storytelling and packaging the news that newspapers appear staid to the public. Journalist 12 also wondered in his depth interview if journalists had lost sight of their audience, asking, “I wonder, ‘who are my readers?’ ... Who are we writing for?”

Journalists who mentioned technological changes (14%) and economic changes (10%) in their responses were overwhelmingly negative. They pointed to the need to publish information quickly on the Internet as leading to an increase in inaccurate and otherwise incomplete reporting that damaged the public’s regard for newspapers, such as a copy editor who wrote:

“The use of social media and Web sites to beat the competition sometimes leads to inaccurate or incomplete information being released. The haste to get the news out there hurts credibility when the information is reported before it’s been fully confirmed.”

Other journalists wrote about changes in technology that allowed non-journalists to act as gatekeepers, a key role of disseminating information that news professionals once held almost exclusively. Many felt that the entrance of bloggers

and others onto the information-dissemination market affected public perception of journalism, including a reporter who explained:

“The free-wheeling nature of the Web allows people to pretty much ‘publish’ whatever they want, with very little regard for facts, truth or responsibility ... Therefore, newspapers appear staid and stuck on their ‘old rules’ ... We still try to live by the rules of proof, proof again and standing by what we write, as well as admitting to and correcting those instances when we're wrong.”

Others wrote about the impact of technology demands on their jobs, saying the quality of their newspaper, and newspapers in general, had been damaged by demands of producing more material. More journalists, however, wrote about economic changes in the newspaper industry had lessened the quality of their products and led to greater public disillusionment with the profession. Of the 10% of journalists who listed economic issues as the first item in their responses, their responses are reflected in the statements of a copy editor who wrote: “A decline in newspaper quality tied to economic decisions by ownership. People notice when we produce a less-substantial product, misspell their names, cut their favorite features and no longer cover their favorite teams,” and a reporter who wrote: “With money crunched, [the public] wants more quality for their money while newsrooms are fighting to keep enough employees to handle the workload.”

Research question 12 (How do journalists rate public perceptions of the newspaper profession’s performance of certain job roles?) examined the

participants' perceptions of public regard on several of the items used in measuring job roles in previous hypotheses. This research question served to further illustrate the findings for H5 (Newspaper journalists who have negative perceptions about changes in the industry will be more likely to perceive the status of the profession has been threatened). To measure RQ12, participants were asked to indicate "How good of a job do you think the public believes the newspaper profession is doing" in nine areas such as acting with autonomy, helping people, and covering stories that should be covered. The responses were based on a seven-point scale of not well (1) to very well (7). The mean scores of each of the nine items are listed in Table 8.2. Only two of the means for the nine job roles were above the seven-point scale's midpoint of 4: getting information to the public quickly (4.61) and giving ordinary people a chance to express themselves (4.24). In comparison, some of the top items journalists chose on the list of important job roles—such as getting stories covered that should be covered, verifying facts, and being objective—were among the lowest-scoring items when journalists were asked about their perceptions of the public's regard for how well the newspaper profession was executing those job roles.

Table 8.2

Public regard for the newspaper profession's performance on job roles

	M	SD
Getting information to the public quickly	4.61	1.60
Giving ordinary people a chance to express themselves	4.24	1.55
Being a watchdog for the public	3.97	1.58
Helping people	3.93	1.44
Providing analysis and interpretation of complex problems	3.85	1.56
Verifying facts	3.64	1.59
Covering stories that should be covered	3.48	1.43
Acting with autonomy	3.42	1.54
Being objective	3.13	1.51
Summed mean of items	34.33/63	10.13

Note. Response scale measured how good of a job participants thought the public believes the newspaper profession is doing on each role, ranging from 1 (not well) to 7 (very well). Participants were not required to answer each item, so $n=907-913$.

Cronbach's $\alpha=.89$

Professional status threat and professional identification

H6 (Newspaper journalists who perceive their professional status has been threatened will be more likely to have lower professional identification) was tested by correlating perceptions about public regard for the newspaper profession and the extent of newspaper journalists' identification with their profession. As with H5, public regard for the profession was assessed with the question: "In what regard do you think the public holds the newspaper profession today?" Responses were scaled from low regard (1) to high regard (7). The mean was $M=3.18$ ($SD=1.37$).

Professional identification was measured using the same two questions as in RQ10 that asked journalists to indicate the extent of their own self-image or identity with that of the newspaper profession. One question was on a seven-point scale and one was eight points. The scores of the questions were summed, and the participants' mean total was 9.14 out of 15 ($SD=2.82$).

A correlation of perceptions about professional status threat and the extent of professional identification found support for H6, Newspaper journalists who perceive their professional status has been threatened will be more likely to have lower professional identification, $r(918)=-.13, p<.001$, one-tailed.

Research questions 13 and 14 examined the possibility that the journalists' perceptions about industry changes impacting the profession's principles and perceptions about threats to the profession's status in H5 could have been influenced by the type of job they held and the size of their newspaper. To answer RQ13 (How are perceptions about industry changes and professional status threat affected by newspaper journalists' job type?), job type was held constant in order to determine its impact, if any, on perceptions.

Results showed that whether comparing frontline workers or managers, statistically significant relationships remained between journalists' perceptions about the effect of technological and economic changes on industry principles and about threats to the profession's status: frontline workers (Cramer's $V=.21, p<.001$) and managers (Cramer's $V=.24, p<.001$).¹

Therefore, RQ13, How are perceptions about industry changes and professional status threat affected by newspaper journalists' job type?, found job type did not affect newspaper journalists' perceptions about the impact of industry changes on the profession's principles and their perception of threats to the status of the profession through public regard for the newspaper industry.

To examine RQ14 (How are perceptions about industry changes and professional status threat affected by newspaper journalists' status as workers at newspapers of various circulation sizes?), circulation size was held constant in order to determine its impact, if any, on those perceptions.

Results showed that among journalists in the three circulation groups, statistically significant relationships between perceptions about the effect of changes in the industry on its principles and about threats to the profession's status remained in the first two circulation groups, but not the third: smaller newspapers ($\tau\text{-}b=.29, p<.001$; $\gamma=.49, p<.001$); midsize newspapers ($\tau\text{-}b=.24, p<.001$; $\gamma=.43, p<.001$) and large newspapers ($\tau\text{-}b=.11, p=.40$; $\gamma=.23, p=.40$).

Some of these workers at small and midsize newspapers may have felt like Journalist 2, who believed journalists at larger-circulation newspapers did not experience threats to the profession's status as acutely as they did. Journalist 2 was clear in his disdain: "When I go to the grocery store, I run into people who know me. ... I have never wanted to work at a big newspaper, because I don't think you have any accountability whatsoever if you work for the *New York Times*, for example."

Journalist 11, who works at a large-circulation newspaper, indicated that journalists at these larger publications may be insulated from experiencing threats to their status because of a belief that “we cover news that’s national, more consequential than a local paper.”

Thus, RQ14, How are perceptions about industry changes and professional status threat affected by newspaper journalists’ status as workers at newspapers of various circulation sizes?, found the significant relationship between the perceived effect of changes in the newspaper industry on the profession’s principles and perceived threats to the profession’s status was not found among journalists at large newspapers (ones with circulations of more than 250,000).

Research questions 15 and 16 examined the possibility that participants’ perceptions about status threats to their profession and the extent of their professional identification in H6 could have been influenced by the type of job they had and the size of their newspaper. To examine RQ15 (How are perceptions about professional status threat and professional identification affected by newspaper journalists’ job type?), job type was held constant in order to determine its impact, if any, on the perceptions. Results showed that in comparing frontline workers and managers, the statistically significant relationship between perceived threats to the newspaper profession’s status and professional identification did not remain: frontline workers (Cramer’s $V=.07$, $p=.26$); managers (Cramer’s $V=.10$, $p=.16$).

The finding for RQ15, How are perceptions about professional status threat and professional identification affected by the newspaper journalists’ job type?, then

is that for frontline journalists and newspaper managers, perceptions about professional status threat were not related to professional identification.

Finally, to examine RQ16 (How are perceptions about professional status threat and professional identification affected by newspaper journalists' status as workers at newspapers of various circulation sizes?) circulation size was held constant in order to determine its impact, if any, on the perceptions.

Results showed that whether comparing journalists at any of the three circulation sizes, the statistically significant relationship did not remain between perceived threats to the status of the newspaper profession and journalists' professional identification: small publications ($\tau\text{-}b=.07, p=.06$; $\gamma=.12, p=.06$); midsize newspapers ($\tau\text{-}b=.09, p=.11$; $\gamma=.16, p=.11$); and large newspapers ($\tau\text{-}b=.15, p=.19$; $\gamma=.25, p=.19$).

Therefore, RQ16, How are perceptions about professional status threat and professional identification affected by the newspaper journalists' status as workers at newspapers of various circulation sizes?, found the significant relationship disappeared for all three groups.

In summary, H5 and H6 were supported in their predictions about journalists' negative perceptions about changes in the industry and perceptions of professional status threat, and journalists' perceptions of threats to the status of their profession, and the extent of their professional identification.

The research questions in this chapter, RQ11-16, gave greater detail about these findings, including that journalists explain the public's regard for their

profession in four general ways and that overall, they believe the public has low regard for how well they perform nearly all of the job roles that newspaper journalists perform. Additionally, the types of jobs journalists hold did not seem to affect the relationship in H5, and circulation size did not seem to help explain the relationship in H5 between perceptions about changes in the industry and about threats to the status of the profession. Similarly, circulation size and job type did not seem to help explain the relationship in H6 between perceived professional status threats and professional identification.

¹ Responses were coded based on the participant's first answer to the question.

² Each variable was divided into the three ordinal groups that were detailed for RQ13-RQ16 in Chapter 5. Responses regarding the effect of technological and economic changes upholding the industry's principles were recoded into ordinal categories: Low (6 or less), Moderate (7-9), and High (10 or more). Public regard responses were recoded into ordinal categories: Low (1-3), Moderate (4-5), and High (6-7). The summed professional identification responses were recoded into ordinal groups: Low (8 or less), Moderate (9-11), and High (12 or more).

Chapter Nine

Discussion

This chapter discusses the major findings of this national survey of newspaper journalists supplemented with follow-up depth interviews in the context of a transformed industry landscape that is staggering under the weight of onslaughts from many fronts:

- Business models built on advertising revenue that is now drying up or going elsewhere
- Circulations that continue to fall
- Profit margin declines that result in cutting back or eliminating staff and resources
- Gaps in coverage as staff sizes shrink
- New technology that must be integrated into products by workers who are already stretched thin
- Increased competition from other media, blogs, and other sources that draw the audience's attention
- An audience and sources that use technology to bypass journalists as gatekeepers
- Public disillusionment with the media

Specifically, this chapter will discuss the major findings and their contributions to the literature and profession by focusing on who newspaper journalists are today, industry changes and their effect on newspaper journalists'

job roles, changes in journalists' job roles and their effect on organizational identification, explanations of organizational identification and professional identification, and the effect of public regard and status threats on identification.

U.S. newspaper journalists today

One of the contributions of this study is that it provides an updated portrait of who newspaper journalists are today in this transformed media landscape. The most recent major national research on journalists was the *American Journalist* study in 2002 that included several types of news professionals, including journalists at newspapers, magazines, television stations, and radio stations (Weaver et al., 2007). It analyzed journalists as a whole, although the authors did examine daily newspaper journalists separately in some instances. Half (50%) of the news workers in the *American Journalist* were journalists at daily newspapers. A profile of daily newspaper journalists today was developed because of the substantial changes that have occurred in the industry since the *American Journalist* research was conducted in 2002.

Despite the fact that newspaper journalists in this research were surveyed via a Web-based survey and journalists who represented all media in the *American Journalist* study were surveyed by telephone, many of the findings closely reflect the data collected in the *American Journalist* study. A few differences are suggested.

Some of the similarities included the breakdowns of frontline workers and managers. Here, among the 927 randomly selected journalists who completed surveys, 58% of the newspaper workers were reporters and other frontline

journalists; the *American Journalist*, which surveyed a random sample of 1,149, reported the same percentage of journalists who were nonmanagers (Weaver et al., 2007). Journalists in the two studies also rated their job roles in similar ways; of the items on both scales, journalists' watchdog functions, ability to get information to the public quickly, and desire to avoid stories in which content was not verified all received high rankings, as did providing analysis and interpretation of complex problems. Additionally, almost all (93%) of the journalists in this study had received a college degree, which mirrors the 92% of daily newspaper journalists reported in the *American Journalist*. About two-thirds of the daily newspaper journalists in both studies had majored in a journalism-related field.

Half of the newspaper journalists in this survey (50%) earned less than \$45,000 each year, similar to the median annual income of \$42,851 reported by daily newspaper workers in the *American Journalist*. And as with the *American Journalist*, women reported making less than men—in this study, almost two-thirds of women (62%) earned less than \$45,000, while only 45% of men did so. Female journalists in the *American Journalist* survey earned a median income of \$37,713 to men's \$46,780. In both studies, women tended to be a bit younger than men and have fewer years of experience in the profession. About one-third of the journalists in both studies were female.

The group of journalists in this research reported slightly less racial diversity than in the *American Journalist* but that difference was within the sampling error: Here, 2% were African-American, 2% Hispanic/Latino, 1% Asian-American, 0.5%

Native American and 94% were Caucasian or other (93% were Caucasian and 1% selected “other.”) Those rates, respectively, were 4%, 3%, 1%, 0.6%, and 87% in the *American Journalist*. (It should be noted that the *American Journalist* also measured Jewish as a separate racial/ethnic group, whereas this study did not. Six percent identified themselves as Jewish in the *American Journalist* study.) More recent data from the American Society of News Editors (2010) found 13% of workers at daily newspapers are minorities, suggesting that future studies might oversample minority journalists to increase their diversity.

The greatest variation in demographic information between this research and the *American Journalist* study was among the youngest and oldest age groups. However, because the *American Journalist* authors did not break down age categories according to medium, age categories cannot be compared directly. Almost one-quarter (22%) of the newspaper journalists were 34 or younger, which is less than the one-third (34%) reported of all journalists in the *American Journalist* findings. Twenty percent of the journalists in this study were between the ages of 35 and 44; more than one-quarter (28%) were in that age group in the *American Journalist* study. Thirty percent of the journalists in this study were 45 to 54, with 28% in that category in the *American Journalist*. More than one-quarter (27%) of the newspaper workers in this research were 55 and older, whereas slightly more than 10% of news professionals were in that group in the *American Journalist*. The median age of newspaper journalists in the present study was 47, and it was 41 in the *American Journalist*.

Journalists in the two studies also appeared to differ in their reported job satisfaction. In 2002, 83% of the daily newspaper journalists said in the *American Journalist* survey that they were “very satisfied” or “fairly satisfied” with their jobs. Today, only 63% reported being at least somewhat satisfied with their jobs, as reflected by their responses of 5 to 7 on a seven-point scale. What this suggests is that newspaper journalists today—while they remain fairly similar to the journalists who were working in 2002 during the *American Journalist* study—appear to be less satisfied with their jobs today. These feelings may be linked to journalists’ workloads. This study found most newspaper journalists work more than 40 hours per week and believe technological and economic changes in the industry and at their organizations have resulted in a greater workload. The *American Journalist* did not report journalists’ hours worked but recent studies by Beam et al. (2009)—who were among the authors of the *American Journalist*—and Reinardy (2009b) found that many journalists today say they are working more hours to meet increased work responsibilities that are largely the result of layoffs and technology changes.

The reasons for the apparent change in job satisfaction may be many, but this research and other recent data suggest greater demands placed on newspaper journalists due to technological and economic changes may be influencing elements. Future research could apply job satisfaction theories—such as Herzberg’s two-factor theory (1966)—to better understand the factors that shape feelings of job satisfaction and how recent changes in the newspaper industry have affected workers’ feelings. Not only would such research provide updated tests and

expansion of theories such as Herzberg's, it can be conveyed to newsroom managers to show that by better managing the introduction of changes to workers' jobs, journalists are more likely to accept the changes and incorporate them into their daily routines. This can promote greater job satisfaction, and ultimately lead to higher morale and productivity.

Industry change and the effect on job roles

In addition to updating the portrait of newspaper journalists, this study provided insight into the perceptions and impact of technological and economic changes. In fact, one of the first major findings of this study was that newspaper journalists who have negative perceptions about technological and economic changes in the industry will be more likely to have negative feelings about the impact of those changes on their job roles. As Journalist 12 noted, the newspaper industry today is in the midst of "a perfect storm" in which the technological changes and demands on journalists are magnified by a worldwide recession that has hit newspapers especially hard—leading to thousands of layoffs and buyouts, as well as forced unpaid furloughs and little funding to provide training or resources to help implement the new technology. Journalists' negative reactions to these technological and economic changes may feed off of each other, driving down their perceptions of the effect of those changes on their jobs and, ultimately, their connection to their employers and the industry.

In the survey, participating journalists rated the importance of several job roles that were based on ones used in the *American Journalist* studies (Weaver et

al., 2007). These results were reported in Table 6.2 and among the top items were getting stories covered that should be covered, being objective, being a watchdog for the public, getting information to the public quickly, staying away from stories where factual content cannot be verified, and providing analysis and interpretation of complex problems. In comparison, the effect of technology changes meant that of the items in that group only getting information to the public quickly, getting stories covered that should be covered, and being a watchdog were rated as doing fairly well in helping newspaper journalists perform their jobs. Staying away from stories where factual content cannot be verified, providing analysis and interpretation of complex problems, and being objective were last on that list.

Journalists' job roles fared even worse in regard to the effect of economic changes; none of the items received mean scores high enough to be considered favorable. Among the lowest-scoring items were getting stories covered that should be covered, providing analysis and interpretation of complex problems, and being watchdogs.

These findings illustrate journalists' feelings that technological and economic changes are dampening their abilities to perform some of the main tenets of the profession. Although comparatively speaking, journalists had better feelings about technological changes than economic ones, the negative feelings about the effect of technology changes on their jobs and the industry's principles were amplified at small and midsize newspapers. Publications such as these have historically had workers who perform a variety of functions, moreso than at larger newspapers

whose newsrooms tend to have employees specializing in certain facets of news production. Small and midsize papers, which had fewer staff members and resources before the economic downturn seem to be even more pressed now after cutbacks, forcing journalists who were already doing a lot to take on even more work as their organizations struggle to introduce new technology.

An interesting finding from the survey was that journalists were fairly negative in their perception about the impact of technology changes on the newspaper profession's principles, but on the whole they were more open to accepting those changes in their own jobs. Despite fears that some of the technology changes were hampering their job roles, such as avoiding stories with unverified content, seven of their 11 mean scores on the seven-point scale were above 5. But when they were asked about the effect of those changes on the industry's principles, journalists were more negative. One possible explanation of this may be a variation of the third-person effect (Davison, 1983), in which individual journalists believe they themselves are not particularly adversely affected by technological changes and continue to uphold the profession's standards but do not believe the same is true of other journalists. This was exemplified in the comments of the reporter who rated technology changes as being mostly helpful in her job but gave a poor score to the effects of technology on the profession's principles. Her feelings about her coworker's unethical use of technology (the social networking site Facebook, in particular) to get quotes for stories may have led her to believe other journalists are

using technology in ways that breach professional standards and drag down the industry's principles.

Changes in job roles and the effect on organizational identification

Another major finding of this research was the effect that circulation size could have on the relationships found between journalists' feelings about the impact of technological and economic changes on their job roles and their organizational identification. Although these relationships were supported in tests among all of the journalists in this study, when circulation size was controlled the statistical significance was lost for small- and large-circulation groups but remained for midsize newspapers.

This could be for a variety of reasons, but suggests that news workers at midsize publications may feel they have borne the brunt of the technological changes instituted by their companies. In comparison, journalists at smaller newspapers already may be more adept at performing multiple tasks because their organizations have fewer people and are more accepting of technology changes, especially if they are seen as helping them perform their tasks. Conversely, it may also be that smaller newspapers do not have the resources to introduce many technological changes and thus workers are not as affected by them. Larger newspapers may not have imposed as many technological changes on their workers as midsize papers because the larger papers generally have more workers who specialize in specific tasks. For some journalists, the issue seemed to center on how the technological changes were handled by management, like the copy chief who

wrote that the problem wasn't with technology itself but with management's handling of the introduction of new technology-related tasks.

Perhaps not surprisingly, workers at midsize papers also seemed the most likely to have negative feelings about the effect of economic changes on their job roles and to have lower organizational identification. The relationship found between those variables—feelings about economic changes and organizational identification—for all journalists in the survey disappeared at small and large newspapers when circulation size was controlled. Small newspapers, according to the latest State of the News Media report, fared better than other newspapers in terms of their circulation and advertising numbers because they provide local news and information that readers can't get elsewhere (Pew Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2010a). While workers at these smaller newspapers have still faced economic changes, they apparently have not been as widespread as at papers with greater circulations.

Large newspapers, while hard-hit by economic changes, still have far more newsroom workers than other publications, which may leave their workers feeling somewhat insulated from economic changes in the industry. In their survey comments and interviews, workers from the small and large newspapers also seemed more likely to draw on the prestige of their publications to help them balance their negative feelings about the effect of economic changes at their newspapers. Small-circulation newspaper workers talked about their publications being integral in their communities because they are the only source for local news

and advertisements, and large-circulation news professionals referred to the importance of their work on a national level. Midsize newspaper workers literally seemed to get lost in the middle—too large to cover one community exclusively, thus competing with other media for the audience's attention and advertisers' dollars, but too small to attract a widespread audience and national advertisers.

This is not to say that small- and large-circulation newspapers have buffered their employees against changes resulting from economic decisions; of the journalists who provided comments at the end of the survey, about half wrote about the detrimental effect of economic changes on their jobs and the industry. It may be that journalists at the smallest and largest news organizations are simply better at invoking cognitive coping mechanisms that allow them to maintain higher organizational identification in the face of economic changes.

Among all journalists, one of the most demoralizing elements of economic changes has been layoffs and other cost-cutting measures. As Shah (2000) noted, workers who lose colleagues through downsizing are likely to experience a decline in their identification with the organization. In this research, almost half of the journalists said they were friends with several to almost all of the journalists in their newsrooms who had been let go in the past two years. Losses such as these can increase feelings among survivors that their own jobs are less fulfilling and secure (Brockner et al., 1993). Because these losses are not isolated to certain organizations but spread across the industry, it can affect journalists' organizational

and professional identification, as was indicated in interviews with journalists and reported in Chapter 7.

For managers, these findings paint a dreary picture and they might infer they have workforces that are largely resistant to change. This is not the case, especially concerning the incorporation of technology in the newsroom. Many workers did report that technology has helped the quality of their work, and these feelings likely would have been greater without the impact of economic changes occurring at the same time. Journalists indicated in their interviews and survey comments that they were somewhat willing to accept an increase in their workloads related to technology if the quality of their work improved. As previously mentioned, Journalist 4 typifies this mindset with her use of social media tools and other technology in her storytelling. She gleans story ideas and sources from Twitter and Facebook, and because of her previous experience working in television, she is comfortable using video in her reporting. Other journalists, like Journalist 7, were more jaded about technology but see benefits in the long run because multimedia products may draw readers and advertisers to newspapers' Web sites, ultimately helping "to finance more meaningful journalism."

Additional newsroom implications from the findings in this section include an illustration of the need for better management of change introduction. Workers indicated they will respond more positively to changes—such as in technology—if the usefulness of these changes in doing their work is communicated effectively. When journalists can see the potential for improving their work with these changes,

they are more likely to be amenable to them. Obviously, it is more difficult to garner support for further economic changes when those changes are likely to be further cutbacks. Managers must present this news as openly as they can, fielding workers' questions and allaying their insecurities. In many of their responses, workers' sentiments seemed to be derived from frustration with management and a sense that management did not care about the extra work employees had to take on as a result of downsizing decisions.

For researchers, the findings in this section show that journalists still hold professional job roles—such as being watchdogs for the public and getting information to the public quickly—outlined in previous research like Sylvie & Witherspoon (2002) as being very important, despite the changes the industry has undergone and continues to face. In fact, journalists may tie importance to these roles because they are seen as a lifeline in troubling times. The roles are considered something to hold on to and connect with as journalists struggle with personal economic hardships and greater workloads as a result of changes at their organizations and across the industry. More research is needed to assess these possibilities.

This project also examined the ways in which journalists are incorporating new technology into their work to improve it. Journalists reported using social media like Facebook and Twitter to research stories, as well as to promote them and get feedback from readers; what's more is that they largely believe these tools enable them to produce better journalism. These findings can help inform research

from other theoretical perspectives—such as uses and gratifications, diffusion of innovations, gatekeeping, and agenda setting—on journalists’ motivations for using such technologies and their effect on the audience.

Explaining organizational identification

Central in this research was exploring newspaper journalists’ identification with their organizations. Today, newspaper journalists report having fairly moderate organizational identification, compared to Russo’s (1998) research that reported high identification. However, these studies cannot be compared directly because Russo’s work was a case study; it is not possible to determine if organizational identification has declined.

Journalists offered several explanations of the connections they feel toward their newspapers, some of which were drawn from the publications’ adherence to professional principles. Among these news workers was Journalist 10, a columnist at a large-circulation newspaper, who said his publication’s commitment to public service is a great source of pride for him and is valued by the community. He said he believes the community holds the newspaper in high regard because of its commitment to its watchdog role of holding officials accountable.

News workers at smaller newspapers, like Journalists 8 and 9, also referred to the importance of those publications in their towns. Residents in these communities rely on the newspapers to spread local news, giving the workers at those publications a sense of purpose and importance. On a similar note, Journalist 11 works at a large-circulation newspaper and, in Chapter 8, said she values her

position because her newspaper covers national news, which is “more consequential than a local paper.”

These journalists’ responses may signal they are using these explanations to maintain their sense of self-continuity. Self-continuity, or maintaining a sense of self, enables individuals to feel secure in their groups and without it, identification can be impeded (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). As illustrated, some journalists appear to manage their self-continuity as members of their organizations by focusing on the public-service elements of their jobs as a way to reassure themselves of the prestige and distinctiveness of their work, at papers large and small alike. For these journalists, their organizational identities are strengthened because they have chosen to derive some of their self-continuity from the important work they believe is being done at their respective publications.

But many more of the survey responses and interview discussions pointed to changes that are causing journalists to feel less connected to their newspaper organizations. Many of these changes were related to economic decisions at newspapers that appear to be breeding uncertainty in the newsroom. As more positions are eliminated and resources slashed, journalists are increasingly uneasy about the financial viability of their employers and their own employment (Wilson, 2008). Such cuts can leave journalists feeling the quality of the journalism they produce has been hindered. When asked in the survey to rate how well economic changes had enabled them to perform certain job roles, journalists overwhelmingly reported a negative impact. Some, like Journalist 4, said they cannot cover stories

that should be covered because their coverage areas are shrinking as they lose manpower.

These feelings of frustration contribute to the uncertainty journalists feel about the stability of their organizations and are compounded by further uncertainty created by technological changes. For many journalists, the stress of working at a short-staffed newspaper is made worse by additional responsibilities to perform tasks such as blogging, shooting video, and providing continual updates on the Web. The frontline workers—reporters, photographers, copy editors, and designers—usually are the ones tasked with integrating mandated changes such as these in the day-to-day course of their work and expressed frustration with assignments that seem to change at the whim of management. It is not that they don't want to change, they said, but that they are regularly instructed to take on new work with little to no training or communication of the goal of such work, to then have those instructions change soon after. Journalist 4 is among the journalists who have become quite adept at incorporating new technology into their work because it improves the quality of their work; nonetheless, as explained in Chapter 7, she joins her colleagues in bristling at new edicts that change the tasks she is assigned because she feels management doesn't have a clear vision of technology should be used to improve the product.

As these concerns illustrate, journalists are faced with challenges on many fronts as they do their jobs. This amplifies the uncertainty they feel, which hinders identification (Hogg & Terry, 2001).

The implications of these findings for the newsroom are many. In their interviews, several journalists talked about the good work—stories that provide helpful information or reveal injustices—being done at their newspapers, which helps define them personally as journalists at that organization. Even when they were disheartened by pay cuts and layoffs at their newspapers, journalists in interviews and in the open-comments section of the survey talked about the strong ties they feel toward the people with whom they work and the work they do. This suggests that journalists compartmentalize their organizational identification into multiple groups. They have negative feelings toward corporate owners and managers who have inflicted economic hardship on them and their coworkers, such the reporter wrote in the survey that it felt like working for a parent who was never satisfied because they were so consumed with surviving.

At the same time, she praised her colleagues for winning more than three dozen awards from the state press association. Like Journalist 1, she felt a great sense of connection to the people on her level in the organization, but not for the decision-makers. In the end, she rated herself as low on the organizational identification scales. Newspapers that want to increase workers' OI—which can have several benefits to the organization, including increased morale and productivity—need to focus on building the relationship between workers and organizational decision-makers. While workers cannot be expected to welcome pay cuts and more work, communication with them about the changes being made and reassurances for the future would help in building identification with the

organization, which can contribute to workers' job satisfaction and intent to remain with the company.

In some cases, journalists drew on their identification with the profession to help them identify with their organizations by focusing on the how working at the newspaper permitted them to meet journalistic norms. Organizations can use this crossover compensation to build identification by stressing how workers exemplify traits like being watchdogs through the organization. Just as some journalists drew on their commitment to the profession to explain their organizational identification, others bolstered their sense of the profession's prestige in the eyes of the public by drawing upon their organization's public service and positive feedback from the community. This too can contribute to greater identification with the organization.

Explaining professional identification

Nearly all of the journalists in this research had attended college; two-thirds majored in journalism or a related field. Nearly two-thirds regularly worked at the campus newspaper. Through these experiences, budding journalists learn what is expected of them—they learn how to *be* journalists (Schudson, 1978; Weaver et al., 2007). In their interviews, the journalists who had majored in journalism or a similar field in college or worked at a newspaper while attending classes all referenced those experiences when asked how they became newspaper journalists. They talked about their early experiences learning about accuracy and the importance of details, and they talked about viewing the newspaper profession as a calling.

They also talked about being drawn to the principles of the profession. In interviews and in the comments sections of the survey, several journalists talked about the Watergate era of journalism as a time when the public needed journalists and held them in high regard. They cited performing a public service as one of the top reasons they were drawn to journalism and as one of the reasons they remain today. Almost all of the journalists in the survey rated getting stories covered that should be covered as an incredibly important journalistic job role, followed in importance by being objective and being watchdogs for the public. These ratings reflect journalists' commitment to the public-service aspect of journalism and also show where their identities may be vulnerable.

Most newspaper journalists did not think the public holds a high opinion of their industry, although workers at larger newspapers did have a slightly higher perception of public regard. In written comments in the survey, some journalists said they believe public regard has dropped because the industry does not do enough to uphold its watchdog function and other principles. Others despaired over a lack of public appreciation for the information provided by journalists, such as the columnist mentioned in Chapter 8 who wrote that the audience does not “see that ‘getting news for free’ is a death knell for a ‘free press.’” Other concerns about the industry included the impact of technological and economic changes, and how those changes are affecting journalists' ability to fulfill the principles of the profession—ultimately, how they are able to live their lives as professional journalists. For example, many of the journalists were concerned that the profession today is a shell

of what it once was and placed the blame on corporate owners and managers. As Journalist 2, who spent much of his career at corporate-owned newspapers before becoming the managing editor of a family-owned daily, explained, the fear of layoffs and buyouts at the hands of corporate owners have imperiled newspaper journalists' ability to uphold the tenets of their profession.

Journalists, already uncertain about the sustainability of the newspaper profession, are likely to struggle with developing strong self-continuity. As a result, their identification with the profession is likely to suffer. For some, like Journalist 12, doubt about the purpose of his profession has begun to creep in, wondering who, exactly, are the "public" for whom he is writing. To compensate, it seems that some journalists focus on aspects of the profession that remain the same today as when they initially were attracted to the field. Journalist 10 listed several tenets that he believes still drive the profession, and among them are the importance of being watchdogs, acting in the public interest, being honorable, and serving as truth-tellers. Likewise, as Journalist 8 said, the nonbiased journalism provided by newspapers is even more in demand today because of the scarcity of that type of information. By concentrating on the intrinsic aspects of the job that attracted them, journalists are reducing the uncertainty they feel about being members of the journalism profession.

Still other journalists are finding a different way to build their sense of self—they are largely divorcing their self-worth from being members of a particular news organization or even from the newspaper profession. Instead, they brand

themselves as journalists who often work across platforms, like Journalist 4 who said she doesn't think of herself as a newspaper journalist. This fear of limiting herself is tied to her desire—and is shared by others like her—to be seen as a valuable member of a larger profession considered more attractive than being a worker at a particular organization or a member of a struggling profession.

A complicating factor for journalists, their managers, and the researchers who study them is the apparent overlap of news workers' professional identification on their organizational identification. A challenge for future research is untangling journalists' professional and organizational identification. Newspaper journalists' identification levels appear nearly the same in surveys and RQ10 illustrated the high degree of overlap in these two types of identity, but when their feelings are further explored in interviews the differences become more clear. Journalists invoke various cognitive measures to maintain identification, such as focusing on the professional roles they are able to perform by being members of their organization when their psychological connection with the organization is shaken by economic changes. By engaging in this identity enhancement, workers may also develop subsets of their identification so that "the organization" to one journalist may be viewed negatively as the corporate owners and another journalist may consider it to be the people he or she works with closely and therefore has a higher connection to "the organization." Such crossover effects should be studied further to parse out journalists' various identity schemas. Furthermore, these effects may be heightened

because of the instability of the newspaper industry today, and should be studied in other professions that are facing times of crisis.

Effect of public regard and status threat on identification

Several elements have contributed to declines in public regard for the news media. In a recent report from the Pew Project for Excellence in Journalism (2010b), almost three-quarters of Americans said they think the media is biased in its coverage. News such as this highlights the divide between public perception and journalists' intent and has been reported in other studies, such as one by Heider, McCombs & Poindexter (2005) that found similar job roles as were used in this study were rated high by journalists but low among the public. In this survey, journalists rated being objective as among their most important job functions. But the journalists also recognized that the public doesn't see it that way; being objective was the lowest-rated item in terms of journalists' perceptions of public regard for their work.

Dutton et al. (1994) referred to members' beliefs about what outsiders think of the group as construed external image; they went on to explain that when this image is positive, it strengthens members' identification with the group. In the case of newspaper journalists being studied here, they believe their profession has a poor construed external image. On a seven-point scale, journalists' mean score of the public's perception of the newspaper profession was 3.18. While this alone is an interesting finding, a more major finding comes from the journalists' explanations of their responses to the public-regard question.

Many of the journalists in the survey used an approach described by Tajfel and Turner (1986) as trying to create distinctiveness for the group—here, the newspaper profession—by redefining the situation. Instead of feeling that they, the newspaper profession, had acted in ways that violated public trust and deserved to be held in low regard, many pointed to the public’s dissatisfaction with other media as carrying over onto newspapers and said that the audience itself had changed. More than two-fifths (41%) of journalists offered negative answers about the public, such as that the public doesn’t value newspaper journalism anymore and lumps it together with other media. The journalists also wrote that the public is more polarized today and believes that journalistic reports that do not promote a particular agenda are biased against them.

In some cases, journalists blamed these changes on opinionated “talking-heads” media such as cable news pundits. Others stressed the accuracy and ethics used in professional newspaper journalism to set themselves apart from what they saw as inaccurate or incomplete information on broadcast programs, blogs and social media. Still others wrote that readers don’t appreciate newspapers anymore and don’t recognize that most of the news they get online comes from original reporting done at newspapers.

By developing these various explanations, journalists are attempting to manage threats—most of which are related to technological and economic changes in the industry—that they perceive as challenging the status of their profession. Those who are the most adept at creating plausible distinctions reinforce their

sense of self-continuity and reported higher identification with the profession. Some, like the publisher at a small daily newspaper, said he believes public regard for the newspaper profession is high and then qualified his answer in the comment section by explaining that he was referring to community newspapers. He didn't just separate newspapers from other forms of media, he focused on newspapers like his that provide local news to their communities because that service is one he believes the public wants and appreciates. By shifting the emphasis to public regard of community newspapers—a subset of the newspaper profession—he is able to maintain a positive perception of the industry and his place in it. Not surprisingly, he also reported having high professional identification.

But by and large, most of the journalists in this research did not believe the public holds the newspaper profession in particularly high regard. Comments from journalists about the detrimental effects of technological changes and economic decisions illustrate the correlation between journalists who believe changes in the industry are not helping the profession uphold its principles and who perceive the status of the profession has been threatened because of low public regard. At small- and midsize-circulation newspapers, this was especially true. It may be for myriad reasons, including that journalists at these papers noted with far more frequency that they interact with their readers on a regular basis. They believe their readers are more invested in the local newspaper than larger ones, and therefore provide more feedback. As a couple of journalists noted, they usually only get that feedback when someone is unhappy about something that appeared in the paper, which may

have influenced their perception of the public's regard for the profession. Some, like Journalist 2, may have resented the prestige that larger newspapers enjoy, saying workers at those publications remain largely anonymous to their readers.

Interestingly, journalists at these smaller two groups of newspapers who felt the status of the newspaper profession had been threatened by low public regard were not more likely to have lower professional identification than their larger-newspaper counterparts. Additionally, frontline workers were not more likely than managers to experience professional status threats and lower professional identification. The statistically significant relationship between perceived status threats and lower professional identification disappeared when circulation size and job type were controlled. This suggests a factor or factors other than these are contributing to the relationship between perceived threats to the status of the profession and lower professional identification. One possible influence is that some newspaper journalists may be shifting their identification from the newspaper profession to the larger journalism profession. The journalists' responses show they believe the newspaper profession is not highly regarded by the public, suggesting a weak construed external image. Perhaps as a result, they are beginning to distance themselves from the newspaper profession. Journalist 5 can be counted among this group; in trying to explain the complexity of his feelings, he wrote in his survey about the "disconnect" in what journalists and the public believe is important. He went on to say in his interview that he is feeling less tied to the newspaper industry because of its staid approaches to storytelling and packaging the news, and so his

identification with the newspaper profession has sharply declined. He has transferred more of his self-identity to that of being a journalist in the broader profession. His feelings tie to larger implications for the newspaper profession: As it loses readers—ones who will pay for their news, that is—its journalist members also believe their industry is losing relevance to the public for a variety of reasons. Although many journalists have developed explanations or justifications that help them cope with their perceptions of a poor public regard, their identification with the profession is paying a price. Not only is the newspaper profession losing the public it depends on, it is losing its journalists as well. To curb this tide, the profession needs to re-examine the question of who is the audience and re-engage with them to help workers see the importance and impact of their work on the public.

This situation also presents an interesting opportunity for research. It is possible that in response to certain types of perceived status threats, journalists will invoke different responses that assert the distinctiveness of their work and assuage feelings of status decline. Additionally, certain types of perceived status threats may be linked to declines in identification with the newspaper profession, and that journalists might transfer their identification to a stronger sense of connection to the larger journalism profession or even to their individual organizations. Examining questions such as these will provide a better understanding of how journalists manage their multiple identities in the face of status threats, which could ultimately help to retain workers in the field.

Methodological contributions & recommendations

This study received 927 completed responses from journalists at daily newspapers across the U.S., which is among the largest known recent studies on this population. Gathering this number of responses enables a more comprehensive and generalizable analysis to be developed of daily newspaper journalists, as opposed to many of the anecdotal reports that have been used to illustrate the present state of the newspaper industry and the mindset of its workers. This, in turn, can help inform future research on journalists and aid newsroom managers as they develop their human-resources management plans.

The response rate of 19% is similar to that of other research on journalists using Web-based surveys (Cassidy, 2007; Dailey, Demo & Spillman, 2005; Jeong, 2009). That rate might have been increased if other response-building strategies had been used, such as sending the journalists a letter via the U.S. mail service prior to the email invitation, explaining they would soon receive the survey link via email and encouraging their participation, as was done in the Daily et al. (2005) study. Participation rates might also have been higher if the journalists had been contacted via telephone, with the researcher encouraging their participation and fielding any questions.

The journalists' names were drawn from an online database of journalists' contact information; at newspapers, this information consisted mostly of reporters and editors. Future research should attempt to include a greater number of editorial workers, although it should be noted that 58% of the journalists in this research

were frontline workers—reporters, photographers, copy editors, and similar workers not in leadership roles—and the same percentage of journalism workers in the *American Journalist* study also were not managers (Weaver et al., 2007). This suggests the present findings are generalizable based on the similar breakdown of job types among journalists in both studies.

In the initial email invitation, journalists learned that if they completed the survey within two days they could enter a drawing to win a \$100 VISA gift card. More than half of the responses to this survey were received in that time—although a direct link cannot be made to the offer of the gift card and the number of responses, it can be inferred that the gift card drawing served as a motivation for some of the journalists since more than 80% entered the drawing. Based on questions the researcher received after the initial invitation, a reminder sent the morning of the drawing's deadline informed journalists they could also enter the name of a nonprofit or other group to receive the gift card if the journalist's number was drawn. A few days later, journalists who had still not responded to the survey received an email from the director of the School of Journalism at the University of Texas at Austin encouraging their participation and an additional 230 surveys were completed. A handful of the journalists noted in their remarks at the end of the survey that the director's letter motivated them to take the survey. Previous research conducted at the University of Texas at Austin had indicated this approach would be helpful in increasing the response rate (Huang, 2007; Jeong, 2009).

In the survey itself, some of the questions regarding the importance of job roles were similar to those posed in the *American Journalist* study, but the response options were different (Weaver et al., 2007). Seven-point scale responses were used in this research, as opposed to ordinal responses in the *American Journalist*, to allow for greater statistical analysis of the data. Additionally, the present survey assessed journalists' feelings about those job roles in relation to recent changes in the industry, which provided empirical findings instead of the anecdotal ones offered in the *American Journalist* research. Beyond asking questions about layoffs, however, the present study did not include detailed questions on the types of economic changes journalists have faced lately. Future research should include questions that address the impact of furloughs, buyouts, and attrition, as well as reduced budgets for newsroom supplies and travel.

As noted, this research used job role items similar to those in the *American Journalist*, and then factor-analyzed those 11 items to discover they could be grouped into three dimensions. Future research could explore some of the underlying issues in the industry in the context of these dimensions.

Future research should also further investigate the factors that may affect journalists' feelings about changes in the industry and their jobs, as well as the impact of these changes on their identification with their organizations and the profession. Although each of the hypotheses was supported, controls on job type and circulation size suggest other factors may influence those feelings. Thus, future

research should test these relationships by controlling for factors such as organizational tenure and professional tenure.

Because this research coded only the journalists' first responses in their explanations of why they believe the public holds newspaper journalists in a certain regard, future research should examine the totality of the journalists' statements by coding for each item (changes in the audience, profession, media technology, or media economics) listed in the explanation. Analyzing these additional responses may provide more insight, but survey participants' first responses to open-ended questions are generally regarded as the best representation of their thoughts on the subject.

Similar to the Heider et al. (2005) study, future research should examine how the public regards the job roles performed by newspaper journalists and compare those responses to the ones offered by journalists in this research to explore whether a disconnect remains between what the public believes the press should be doing and what journalists believe is important.

In this research, journalists' perceptions of public regard for the newspaper profession were used to measure status threats to the profession. In the future, additional measures could be added such as in the Spears, Doosje & Ellemers (1999) and Tausch, Hewstone, Kenworthy, Cairns & Christ (2007) studies that asked participants to compare themselves with an outgroup in a series of dimensions. In this case, newspaper journalists could be asked to compare their

performance of journalistic job roles to the performance of bloggers or television reporters, for example.

Finally, this survey—while providing information that indicated a significant overlap in newspaper journalists’ organizational identification and professional identification—does not help to parse out why the overlap exists. The depth interviews with journalists help in this regard by providing some insight into journalists’ feelings toward their organization and the profession. Among this insight was the possibility that journalists have multiple meanings for what constitutes their newspaper organization—for some it was their immediate colleagues and managers and for others it was the corporation that owned the newspaper. These two conceptualizations indicate a more precise definition is needed in future research. Similarly, some journalists initially said in their interviews that they had considerable identification with their newspaper but after follow-up questions remarked that they were more tied to the idea of a being a journalist and that their organization was just the vehicle that allowed them to be a journalist. This also suggests that as Russo (1998) found, journalists have higher professional identification and apply some of those feelings to their organizations as well. It is not possible to ascertain from this research whether the overlaps and differences in identification are illustrating the emergence of multiple meanings of organizational and professional identification that have not been previously measured and future research should investigate how journalists manage their multiple identities.

In closing

At various times in its past, journalism has been tested by tough economic times or by new technology, but those two challenges have never collided with such force as they have today. Media corporations once flush with cash could have more easily—and more reasonably—integrated new technology into their newsrooms with sufficient training and outside consultation if not for the recession and economic crunch at these companies. Instead, news organizations have depleted manpower and other resources and are struggling to incorporate technology by adding to the responsibilities of the workers they have left. As evidenced in this research, this reality of newspaper journalism today has left many workers unhappy with their work and concerned for the future of the profession they have chosen.

Professions like journalism ascribe to notions that their work supports democracy through the central role conceptions of contributing to an informed society and serving as watchdogs on officials and institutions (Beam et al., 2009; Sylvie & Witherspoon, 2002). Because news professionals are socialized—largely through their educational and on-the-job training—to believe their work is a calling, they tend to internalize the profession's values and integrate the connection they feel to their work and job roles into their self-identity (Russo, 1998). Social identity theory helps explain how individuals develop ties to an organization and profession (Ibarra, 1999; Pratt, 1998). For identification to occur, individuals must feel the group is prestigious and distinctive (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). In addition, the group must contribute to uncertainty reduction by helping members make sense of their

own identity and establish a sense of continuity in their identity. As newspaper journalists struggle with the dilemmas facing their profession and organizations today, they negotiate their identities based on these elements.

This research found that newspaper journalists today have moderate levels of identification with their profession and organization, compared to Russo's (1998) smaller study that found high identification with both groups. In each of the studies, newspaper journalists had slightly higher professional identification than organizational. Journalists in the present research indicated concerns that technological and economic changes have had a negative impact on the profession's ability to maintain its principles. In comments at the end of the survey and in follow-up depth interviews, the journalists said they often were frustrated with the additional responsibilities they incurred with the introduction of new technology and that those feelings were compounded by the economic reality of having fewer people in the newsroom to take on these new tasks. Still, many saw benefits to using technology in the course of their work—such as getting information to the public quickly—and felt that in some instances the use of technology improved the quality of their work, such as adding links to online stories and providing continual updates online.

The vast majority of journalists, though, believed economic changes are pulling the profession away from its principles and are impeding their ability to perform their jobs. In fact, they said that their most important job role—getting stories covered that should be covered—was the chief victim of economic changes.

They said cuts in coverage, staff, and other resources have hampered the quality of their products and further alienated readers.

Not surprisingly, newspaper journalists who had negative perceptions about changes in the industry and the effect of those changes on their jobs also had lower organizational identification. While the newspaper journalists' feelings about their job roles and OI were significantly correlated, an even greater correlation was found between organizational and professional identification. This suggests that journalists do indeed experience a great deal of overlap in the two types of identification. In interviews, several journalists explained that their identification with the newspaper profession is the source of much of the identification they experience for their newspaper. They are committed to living the life of a journalist, and the newspaper is the entity that enables them to pursue that life.

Professional identification also was examined for its links to journalists' perceptions about changes in the industry and threats to the profession's status. Journalists predominantly had negative perceptions about industry changes and perceived the status of the profession was in jeopardy due to low public regard for it. Journalists offered several explanations for the public disillusionment with their profession, many of which were direct and indirect results of economic and technological changes in the industry as well as changes in the audience itself. The journalists rated public regard for how well newspaper journalists act with objectivity and autonomy—two of the bedrock principles of journalism—as the lowest items on a list of job roles. Next on that list was journalists' perceptions that

the public does not think they are doing very well covering stories that should be covered. Journalists who perceived the status of their profession had been threatened were more likely to have lower identification with the profession.

By and large, newspaper workers have accepted that aspects of new technology are now part of their jobs and are attempting to balance those tasks with others they already perform. But their frustration with technology changes has been compounded by economic cutbacks, creating tension in the newsroom and lingering questions about the future of the industry. Older workers say they're merely hoping to hold out until they can retire while many younger ones are making plans to leave newspapers because they don't see them as businesses that can sustain their careers.

The present research also contributes to social identity theory in several ways. First, it confirms that newspaper journalists are similar to other professional workers such as veterinarians in the Johnson et al. (2006) study who tend to experience greater degrees of identification with their profession than with their organization, and that there is a great deal of overlap between the two types of identification. Second, this confirmation comes at a time when the profession is in transition, its members facing change across several dimensions of their jobs and confronting challenges to the very nature of what makes them "journalists." In response to these changes and challenges, newspaper journalists are renegotiating their professional identities to focus on the elements that make their work distinctive from others they consider to be non-journalists. Third, as a result of the

present situation in newspapers, some workers are broadening their professional identification beyond an exclusivity with the newspaper profession and to the entire journalism profession, enabling them to maintain a deeper connection with the values and principles that attracted them to the field.

Finally, the larger theoretical contribution of this work extends beyond newspaper journalists to suggest how workers of other professions in crisis will attempt to manage their identities. As seen here, some will tighten their focus on the intrinsic appeal of their jobs. By concentrating on the elements that attracted them to the profession and confirming their belief that the profession still represents those elements, individuals will reduce the uncertainty they feel about being members of a group that is being threatened and will be able to maintain their self-continuity. Others will manage perceived threats to their profession by shifting their definition of “the profession” to a smaller subset or larger collection—whichever group they believe is a better representation of the values and behaviors that constitute their revised definition of the profession. In doing so, they are seeking to rebuild the prestige and distinctiveness their profession has lost due to its crisis. Another defense against threats to a profession’s prestige and distinctiveness may be to widen the crossover effect of organizational identification and professional identification; this time drawing on their organizational identification, individuals will attempt to boost their feelings about being members of the profession by focusing on the pride and pleasure they derive from working at a particular organization, which is part of the larger profession.

These cognitive coping responses help workers maintain their professional identities in times of crisis and outline a new avenue for research in social identity theory as more professions face not only the introduction of technological changes that are dramatically shifting the ways workers perform their jobs, as well as the integration of economic changes necessitated by a global recession that has shifted the ways that corporations, industries, and even governments do business.

Appendix 1. Survey invitation and reminders

Initial invitation (Sent Feb. 23, 2010)

I'm a former newspaper journalist working on my doctoral degree in the School of Journalism at the University of Texas at Austin. I am researching recent changes in the newspaper industry and how they may have affected your job, and I'm hoping you have about 15 minutes to answer some questions in a short survey.

Your identity and responses will be kept confidential. I know you are busy, but this research can help working journalists like you so I hope you can spare a few minutes of your time.

At the end of the survey, you can register for a drawing of a \$100 VISA gift card if you complete the questions by 11:59 p.m. CST Thursday (Feb. 25).

If you wish to receive a link to the survey through a different email account, please contact me at a willard@mail.utexas.edu. This project has been approved by the Institutional Review Board at UT-Austin and more information is available by accessing the survey link below or by contacting me at the above email address.

Your survey is available here:

[Survey link]

Or copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:

[Survey link]

Follow the link to opt out of future emails:

[Link]

Thank you, and have a great day!

Amber Willard Hinsley

Doctoral student

School of Journalism

University of Texas at Austin

First reminder (Sent Feb. 25, 2010)

Two days ago, you received an email request to participate in a survey I'm conducting about how recent changes in the newspaper industry have affected journalists' work.

Tonight is the last chance to enter the drawing for a \$100 VISA gift card if you complete the survey. (The deadline is 11:59 p.m. CST.) If you prefer to complete the survey without entering the drawing, you can leave that space blank at the end of the survey. Alternately, you can write in the name of a charity or other organization to receive the gift card if you are selected as the winner.

If you don't have time today to complete the survey, it will remain open through the end of next week (March 5) but the gift card opportunity ends tonight.

As a former journalist at community sections of the Los Angeles Times, I know you're busy but I hope you can spare about 15 minutes to answer some questions in the survey link below. Journalists at newspapers large and small across the nation have responded, and the research I'm compiling at the University of Texas-Austin will help illustrate how recent changes – good and bad – have affected the ways newspaper journalists do their work.

If you would like to receive a link to the survey through a different email account, please contact me at awillard@mail.utexas.edu. This project has been approved by the Institutional Review Board at UT-Austin and more information is available by accessing the survey link below or by contacting me at the above email address.

Thank you!

Amber Willard Hinsley
Doctoral student
School of Journalism
University of Texas at Austin

Follow this link to the Survey:

[Survey link]

Or copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:

[Survey link]

Follow the link to opt out of future emails:

[Link]

Note from director of School of Journalism (Sent March 2, 2010)

Dear Colleague:

As a career journalist, I know how busy you are in your professional life and how little time you have for taking on anything extra.

We would be very grateful, however, if you would spare us the 15 minutes it will take to answer the survey that you recently received from Ph.D. student Amber Willard Hinsley. (I have asked Amber to send this note to you from her email account.)

Amber's work is important for us all – journalists, citizens and academics alike. A former newspaper journalist herself, Amber is now exploring how recent changes in the business have affected newsroom jobs and newspapers' ability to report and publish the news.

Journalists at newspapers across the country have recognized the significance of this study and have completed the survey. We hope you will do us the favor of joining them.

A link to your individual survey is below. Your responses will be kept confidential and you will not be asked to identify your newspaper or its ownership.

Thanks very much in advance for helping us in this important work.

Best regards,

Tracy Dahlby, Director
School of Journalism
University of Texas at Austin

Follow this link to the Survey:

[Survey link]

Or copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:

[Survey link]

Follow the link to opt out of future emails:

[Link]

Final reminder (Sent March 4, 2010)

I wanted to send a final reminder about your opportunity to participate in a survey examining how recent changes in the newspaper industry have affected journalists' work.

As a former journalist at community sections of the Los Angeles Times, I know you're busy, but I hope you can spare about 15 minutes to answer some questions in the survey link below. Journalists at newspapers large and small across the nation have responded, and the research I'm compiling at the University of Texas-Austin will help illustrate how recent changes have affected newspaper journalists' work.

The survey closes at 11:59 p.m. CST Friday (March 5). Your responses will be kept confidential, and you will not be asked to identify your newspaper or its corporate ownership.

If you would like to receive a link to the survey through a different email account, please contact me at awillard@mail.utexas.edu. This project has been approved by the Institutional Review Board at UT-Austin and more information is available by accessing the survey link below or by contacting me at the above email address.

Thank you!

Amber Willard Hinsley
Doctoral student
School of Journalism
University of Texas at Austin

Follow this link to the Survey:

[Survey link]

Or copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:

[Survey link]

Follow the link to opt out of future emails:

[Link]

Appendix 2. Survey consent & instrument

Thank you for your interest in my research project on newspaper journalists and their perceptions of changes in the industry and their jobs. This type of research is designed to benefit working journalists like you, and I hope you will complete the questions.

Your responses will be kept confidential, and you will not be asked to identify your newspaper by name or the company that owns the newspaper.

This page provides details about the research project, and is required by the University of Texas. Once you have read the information, please choose the participation option at the bottom of the page to begin the survey.

Thanks!

Amber Willard Hinsley

Title: Newspaper journalists' perceptions of changes in the industry and their jobs

Conducted by: Amber Willard Hinsley

Faculty sponsor: Dr. Paula Poindexter

Department: School of Journalism, University of Texas at Austin

Telephone: (512) 471-1845

Email: awillard@mail.utexas.edu

The information below provides details about the research project in which you have been asked to participate. Please read the following information as you decide whether to participate, and if you have any questions, please contact the researcher, former journalist and doctoral student Amber Willard Hinsley, via email at awillard@mail.utexas.edu.

The purpose of this study is to better understand journalists' perceptions of changes in the newspaper industry and their jobs, and how these changes might affect their feelings about the profession and their news organization. Journalists who participate will not be asked to name the newspaper where they work, nor the company that owns the newspaper. Journalists' identities and responses will be kept confidential.

Journalists who participate will spend 15 to 20 minutes completing an online survey. There are no risks associated with this activity.

Your participation in this online survey is entirely voluntary—you can decline to participate by closing this screen on your Web browser now or at any time once you begin the survey.

At the end of the survey, you will also have the opportunity to volunteer to explain some of your responses in a telephone interview with the researcher. Again, your responses will be kept confidential. Further details about the interview, including a consent form similar to this one, will be provided to volunteers if they are selected to participate in an interview.

The records of this study will be stored securely. Only authorized persons from the University of Texas at Austin and members of its Institutional Review Board have the legal right to review the research records and will protect the confidentiality of those records to the extent permitted by law. All publications will exclude any information that will make it possible to identify you as a subject.

If you have questions about the research project now or later, want additional information, or wish to withdraw your participation, contact the researcher at the phone number or email address listed at the top of this page.

If you would like to obtain information about the research study, have questions, concerns, complaints or wish to discuss problems about a research study with someone unaffiliated with the study, please contact the IRB Office at (512) 471-8871 or Jody Jensen, Ph.D., Chair, The University of Texas at Austin Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects at (512) 232-2685. Anonymity, if desired, will be protected to the extent possible. As an alternative method of contact, an email may be sent to orisc@uts.cc.utexas.edu or a letter sent to IRB Administrator, P.O. Box 7426, Mail Code A 3200, Austin, TX 78713.

If you have read the information above and agree to participate, please choose the “Continue” option below. By clicking on the link, you will have given your consent to participate. If you do not wish to participate, please close this window in your browser.

[o Continue to survey](#)

Thank you for participating in this research project. To begin, I'd like to get some general information about your current job, but will not ask you to identify your news organization or corporate ownership.

1. Which position below best describes your current job?

- (1) Reporter
- (2) Columnist
- (3) Copy editor
- (4) Designer
- (5) Copy editor and designer
- (6) Photographer
- (7) Online/multimedia content producer
- (8) Copy chief
- (9) Head designer
- (10) Photo editor
- (11) City/metropolitan editor
- (12) Section editor
- (13) Managing editor
- (14) Editor in chief
- (15) Publisher
- (16) Other

2. Is your newspaper published four or more days per week?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No [end survey]

3. What is the approximate circulation size of your newspaper?

- (1) 10,000 or less [end survey]
- (2) 10,001-25,000
- (3) 25,001-50,000
- (4) 50,001-100,000
- (5) 100,001-250,000
- (6) 250,001-500,000
- (7) More than 500,000

4. How long have you been working full-time at your newspaper?

- (1) less than 6 months
- (2) 6-11 months
- (3) 1-2 years
- (3) 3-4 years
- (4) 5-7 years
- (5) 8-10 years
- (6) 11-15 years
- (7) 16-20 years
- (8) 21-25 years
- (9) more than 25 years
- (10) You don't work full-time at the newspaper [end survey]

5. About how many hours per week do you usually work at the newspaper?

- (1) Less than 30 hours per week
- (2) 31-40 hours per week
- (3) 41-50 hours per week
- (4) 51 or more hours per week

6. About how many journalists work full-time in your newsroom today?

- (1) Fewer than 10 journalists
- (2) 10-19 journalists
- (3) 20-29 journalists
- (4) 30-39 journalists
- (5) 40-49 journalists
- (6) 50-59 journalists
- (7) 60-69 journalists
- (8) 70-79 journalists
- (9) 80-89 journalists
- (10) 90-99 journalists
- (11) 100 or more journalists

7. About how many employees, if any, do you supervise as part of your job?

- (0) None
- (1) 1-3 employees
- (2) 4-6 employees
- (3) 7-9 employees
- (4) 10-14 employees
- (5) 15-19 employees
- (6) 20-24 employees
- (7) 25 or more employees

Now I'd like to ask some questions about your feelings toward your job.

8. All things considered, how satisfied are you with your job?

- | | | | | | | |
|------------|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Not at all | | | | | | Very satisfied |
| satisfied | | | | | | |

9. Please indicate to what degree your self-image overlaps with your newspaper's image.

(In other words, how much overlap is there in how you see yourself and how you see your newspaper? To what extent do you define yourself through your employment at the newspaper?)

- | | | | | | | |
|------------|---|---|---|---|---|-----------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Not at all | | | | | | Very much |

10. Where do you think you'll be working in two years?

- (1) At your newspaper
- (2) At a different newspaper
- (3) At a different news organization
- (4) Somewhere else that's not a news organization
- (5) You don't plan to be working in two years

11. Please rate the extent to which you agree with the following statements:
Each journalist's job entails general roles that may reflect some elements in the newspaper profession. How important is it to you that you as a newspaper journalist are able to...

	Not important						Very important	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
A. Have the chance to develop a specialty	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
B. Exercise autonomy over your work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
C. Have the opportunity to help people	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
D. Have the chance to influence public opinion	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
E. Be objective	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
F. Get stories covered that should be covered	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
G. Get information to the public quickly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
H. Provide analysis and interpretation of complex problems	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
I. Avoid conflicts of interest	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
J. Stay away from stories where factual content cannot be verified	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
K. Give ordinary people a chance to express their views	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
L. Be a watchdog for the public	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

Now I'd like to move on to asking some questions about your feelings toward the newspaper profession.

12. A previous question asked about the overlap in your self-image and the image of your newspaper. Now, I'd like you to please indicate to what degree your self-image overlaps with the newspaper profession's image.

(In other words, how much overlap is there in how you see yourself and how you see the profession? To what extent do you define yourself through your employment in the newspaper profession?)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all						Very much

13. The newspaper industry has undergone some significant changes recently, including the introduction of new technology, which have received varied responses from journalists. How do you feel about the following statement:

You think recent technological changes in the newspaper industry are helping to uphold its principles.

Strongly agree							Strongly disagree
7	6	5	4	3	2	1	

14. The newspaper industry has also undergone some significant changes recently in relation to its economic standing. How do you feel about the following statement?

You think recent economic changes in the newspaper industry are helping to uphold its principles.

Strongly agree							Strongly disagree
7	6	5	4	3	2	1	

I'd like to switch topics a bit and look at changes in the industry and their effect on your job.

15. Thinking back to the general list of job roles you rated a couple of minutes ago—ones that asked about the importance you place on things like having autonomy over your work and being able to help people—have any technological changes to your job affected how well you are able to perform those roles, either in helping you achieve them or providing challenges?

(1) Yes, technology has changed how well you can perform your job roles.

(2) No, technology hasn't changed how well you can perform your job roles.

[Skip next question]

16. How well have changes in technology enabled you to perform your job roles as a journalist in the following ways...

	Not well						Very well	Doesn't apply to your job
A. Have the chance to develop a specialty	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	0
B. Exercise autonomy over your work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	0
C. Have the opportunity to help people	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	0
D. Have the chance to influence public opinion	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	0
E. Be objective	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	0
F. Get stories covered that should be covered	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	0
G. Get information to the public quickly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	0
H. Provide analysis and interpretation of complex problems	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	0
I. Avoid conflicts of interest	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	0
J. Stay away from stories where factual content cannot be verified	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	0
K. Give ordinary people a chance to express their views	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	0
L. Be a watchdog for the public	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	0

17. Again thinking back to that list of job roles, have any economic changes at your company affected how well you are able to perform your job roles, either in helping you achieve them or providing challenges?

(1) Yes, economic issues have changed how well you can perform your job roles.

(2) No, economic issues haven't changed how well you can perform your job roles. [Skip next question]

18. How well have economic changes enabled you to perform your job roles as a journalist in the following ways...

	Not well						Very well	Doesn't apply to your job
A. Have the chance to develop a specialty	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	0
B. Exercise autonomy over your work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	0
C. Have the opportunity to help people	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	0
D. Have the chance to influence public opinion	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	0
E. Be objective	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	0
F. Get stories covered that should be covered	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	0
G. Get information to the public quickly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	0
H. Provide analysis and interpretation of complex problems	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	0
I. Avoid conflicts of interest	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	0
J. Stay away from stories where factual content cannot be verified	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	0
K. Give ordinary people a chance to express their views	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	0
L. Be a watchdog for the public	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	0

19. Has your newspaper laid off any newsroom workers in the past two years?

(1) Yes

(2) No [Skip next two questions]

20. About how many newsroom workers have been laid off in the past two years?

- (1) Fewer than 10 workers
- (2) 10-19 workers
- (3) 20-29 workers
- (4) 30-39 workers
- (5) 40-49 workers
- (6) 50-59 workers
- (7) 60-69 workers
- (8) 70-79 workers
- (9) 80-89 workers
- (10) 90-99 workers
- (11) 100 or more workers

21. Did you consider any of those laid-off workers to be your friends?

- (1) Not really
- (2) A few
- (3) Several
- (4) Many or almost all

22. As a result of recent economic changes (which may include budget cuts, layoffs or buyouts, or reduced resources) at your newspaper, how has your workload changed?

- (1) Your workload has increased.
- (2) Your workload has stayed about the same.
- (3) Your workload has decreased.
- (4) Your newspaper hasn't introduced any economic changes lately.

23. As a result of recent technology changes (which may include the introduction of new equipment or additional duties related to new media) at your newspaper, how has your workload changed?

- (1) Your workload has increased.
- (2) Your workload has stayed about the same.
- (3) Your workload has decreased.
- (4) Your newspaper hasn't introduced any technology changes lately.

24. If you regularly do the following things as part of your job at the newspaper, how do they affect the quality of the work you produce?

	Makes the quality much worse					Makes the quality much better			Not part of your job
A. Write or edit breaking news updates for your newspaper's Web site	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		0
B. Write or manage a blog	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		0
C. Write or manage Twitter posts	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		0
D. Write or manage posts on Facebook or similar sites	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		0
E. Post stories or photos on your newspaper's Web site	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		0
F. Monitor or respond to readers' online comments	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		0
G. Use Twitter as a reporting or research tool	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		0
H. Use Facebook or similar sites as a reporting or research tool	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		0
I. Shoot or edit videos	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		0
J. Gather or edit audio files	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		0
K. Create online-only stories or content	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		0
L. Rewrite headlines to make them more 'Web friendly'	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		0
M. Add links to stories	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		0
N. Create photo galleries or slide shows	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		0
O. Provide continual online updates of stories or photos	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		0

25. On a typical work day, how often do you use social media such as Twitter, Facebook or Flickr as a journalistic tool? (Not for personal reasons while at work)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all						All the time

26. When you use social media as a journalistic tool, which kind of account do you use most often:

- (1) Personal account
- (2) Newspaper organization's account
- (3) Other type of account
- (4) You don't use social media in your work [Skip next question]

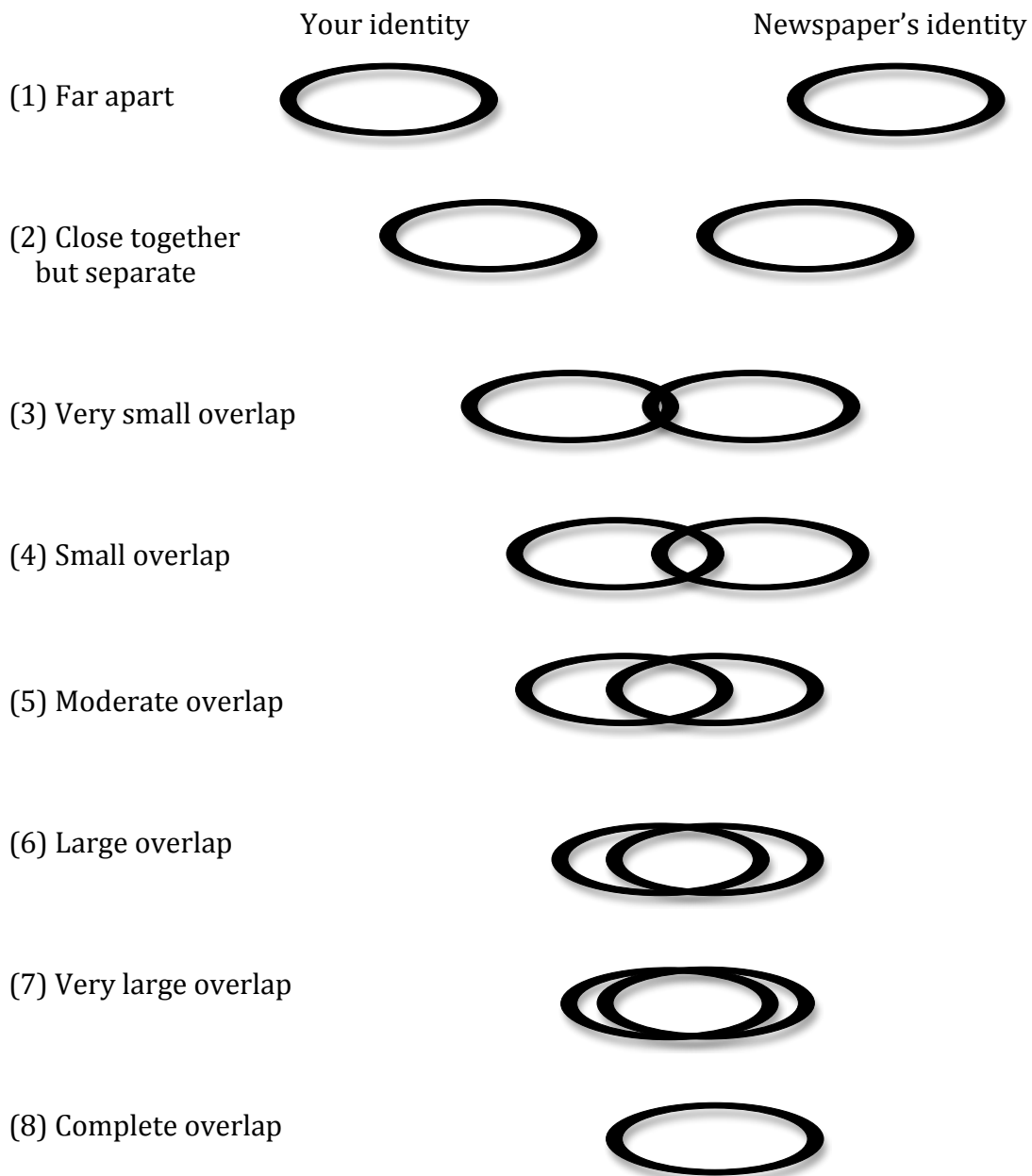
27. With regard to how you use social media as a journalistic tool, to what extent do you use social media to:

	Hardly ever						All the time	Not part of your job
A. Provide breaking news	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	0
B. Provide political/public affairs news	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	0
C. Monitor the competition	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	0
D. Find sources	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	0
E. Get story ideas or research stories	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	0
F. Get reader feedback	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	0
G. Connect with the community	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	0
H. Share your work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	0
I. Share the work of your newspaper	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	0
J. Establish your expertise as a journalist	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	0
K. Drive traffic to your work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	0
L. Drive traffic to your newspaper	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	0
M. Build your personal brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	0

Now I'm going to show you a figure with some options that represent your perception of your identity and the identity of your newspaper.

Imagine that one of the circles on the left in the rows below represents your own self-definition or identity and the circle on the right represents your newspaper's identity.

In the next question, you will choose which row of circles best describes the level of overlap between your own identity and the newspaper's identity.













28. Which row of circles in the image you just saw best describes the level of overlap between your own identity and the newspaper's identity?

- (1) Far apart
- (2) Close together but separate
- (3) Very small overlap
- (4) Small overlap
- (5) Moderate overlap
- (6) Large overlap
- (7) Very large overlap
- (8) Complete overlap

Similar to the previous figure, the one below represents your identity and the identity of the newspaper profession.

Imagine that one of the circles on the left in the rows below represents your own self-definition or identity and the circle on the right represents the newspaper profession's identity.

In the next question, please choose which row of circles best describes the level of overlap between your own identity and the newspaper profession's identity.

	Your identity	Profession's identity
(1) Far apart		
(2) Close together but separate		
(3) Very small overlap		
(4) Small overlap		
(5) Moderate overlap		
(6) Large overlap		
(7) Very large overlap		
(8) Complete overlap		

29. Which row of circles in the image you just saw best describes the level of overlap between your own identity and the newspaper profession's identity?

- (1) Far apart
- (2) Close together but separate
- (3) Very small overlap
- (4) Small overlap
- (5) Moderate overlap
- (6) Large overlap
- (7) Very large overlap
- (8) Complete overlap

Almost done! I'd like to ask a couple of questions about how you think the public views the newspaper profession.

30. Please rate the level of your opinion to answer the following question:

In what regard do you think the public holds the newspaper profession today?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Low						High
regard						regard

31. Why do you think the public feels this way? [open-ended]

32. How good of a job do you think the public believes the newspaper profession is doing in the following areas?

	Not well						Very well
A. Acting with autonomy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B. Helping people	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
C. Being objective	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
D. Covering stories that should be covered	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
E. Getting information to the public quickly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
F. Providing analysis and interpretation of complex problems	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
G. Avoiding conflicts of interest	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
H. Verifying facts	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I. Giving ordinary people a chance to express their views	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
J. Being a watchdog for the public	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Finally, I just have a few general questions about you and your background.

33. How long have you been working full-time in the newspaper industry?

- (1) less than 6 months
- (2) 6-11 months
- (3) 1-2 years
- (3) 3-4 years
- (4) 5-7 years
- (5) 8-10 years
- (6) 11-15 years
- (7) 16-20 years
- (8) 21-25 years
- (9) more than 25 years
- (10) You don't work full-time in the newspaper industry

34. What is the highest level of education you have completed?
- (1) Some high school or less [Skip next two questions]
 - (2) High school degree [Skip next two questions]
 - (3) Some college, or technical school degree
 - (4) College graduate
 - (5) Some graduate or professional school
 - (6) Master's or doctorate degree
35. What was your undergraduate major?
- (1) Journalism or a related mass communication major
 - (2) Communication or a related major
 - (3) Other
36. Did you regularly work at the campus newspaper?
- (1) Yes
 - (2) No
 - (3) Your university didn't have a campus newspaper
37. What is your marital status?
- (1) Single, not living with partner
 - (2) Single, living with partner
 - (3) Married
 - (4) Widowed
 - (5) Separated
 - (6) Divorced
 - (7) Other
38. In which of gender group would you place yourself?
- (1) Male
 - (2) Female
39. In which of the following racial groups would you place yourself?
- (1) White/Caucasian
 - (2) Black/African-American
 - (3) Hispanic/Latino
 - (4) Asian-American
 - (5) Native American
 - (6) Other

40. What was your age on your last birthday? [open-ended]

41. What is your approximate annual salary?

- (1) less than \$25,000
- (2) \$25,000 to \$34,999
- (3) \$35,000 to \$44,999
- (4) \$45,000 to \$54,999
- (5) \$55,000 to \$64,999
- (6) \$65,000 to \$74,999
- (7) \$75,000 to \$84,999
- (8) \$85,000 to \$94,999
- (9) \$95,000 or more

42. Do you have any final comments about the topics covered in this survey? [open-ended]

Thank you! I appreciate your participation!

[If completed before gift card deadline]

If you would like to register for a drawing to a \$100 VISA gift card, please enter your email address and telephone number below so you can be contacted if you win.

When you are done entering that information, or if you don't wish to register, please go on to the next page. [open-ended space]

[If completed after gift card deadline]

If you would like to receive a brief summary of the findings of this survey, please enter your email address below. (Your information will not be used for any other purposes and will be kept confidential.)

When you are done entering that information, or if you don't wish to register, please go on to the next page. [open-ended space]

Thanks again for completing the survey. If you would like to volunteer for the opportunity to talk in greater detail about the subjects covered in this project, you can do so in a short phone interview with me. As with this online survey, your identity and responses in the phone interview will be kept confidential.

It's possible that not everyone who is willing to be interviewed will be contacted, depending on the number of volunteers. Your willingness is appreciated, since it will help to better explain how journalists feel about the changes that have occurred in the newspaper industry and how those changes have affected their jobs.

If you're willing to volunteer for a 15-20 minute phone interview, please provide your email address in the space below so you can be contacted to schedule an interview.

If you don't wish to volunteer, it will not affect your ability to win the \$100 VISA gift card, and you can simply go to the next page to exit the survey. [open-ended space]

Appendix 3. Interview consent & protocol.

Title: Newspaper journalists' perceptions of changes in the industry and their jobs
Conducted by: Amber Willard Hinsley
Faculty sponsor: Dr. Paula Poindexter
Department: School of Journalism, University of Texas at Austin
Telephone: (512) 471-1845
Email: awillard@mail.utexas.edu

The information below provides details about the research project in which you have volunteered to participate. Please read the following information as you decide whether to participate, and if you have any questions, please contact the researcher, former journalist and doctoral student Amber Willard Hinsley, via email at awillard@mail.utexas.edu.

The purpose of this study is to better understand journalists' perceptions of changes in the newspaper industry and their jobs, and how these changes might affect their feelings about the profession and their news organization. Journalists who participate will not be asked to name the newspaper where they work, nor the company that owns the newspaper.

Journalists who participate will spend about 15-20 minutes completing a telephone interview with the researcher. The risks associated with this activity are no greater than in everyday life. Interviews will be recorded in digital files and coded so that no personally identifying information is visible on them. The files will be stored in password-protected digital folders on an online server, and the files will be retained for future analysis.

Your participation in this interview is entirely voluntary—you can refuse to participate at any time by asking to end the interview session and withdraw. There are no benefits or compensation for participation, although interview volunteers previously had the opportunity to register for a gift card drawing.

Your identity and responses will be kept confidential, and the records of this study will be stored securely. Only authorized persons from the University of Texas at Austin and members of its Institutional Review Board have the legal right to review your research records and will protect the confidentiality of those records to the extent permitted by law. All publications will exclude any information that will make it possible to identify you as a subject.

If you have questions about the research project now or later, want additional information, or wish to withdraw your participation, contact the researcher at the phone number or email address listed at the top of this page.

If you would like to obtain information about the research study, have questions, concerns, complaints or wish to discuss problems about a research study with someone unaffiliated with the study, please contact the IRB Office at (512) 471-8871 or Jody Jensen, Ph.D., Chair, The University of Texas at Austin Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects at (512) 232-2685. Anonymity, if desired, will be protected to the extent possible. As an alternative method of contact, an email may be sent to orssc@uts.cc.utexas.edu or a letter sent to IRB Administrator, P.O. Box 7426, Mail Code A 3200, Austin, TX 78713.

Thank you.

Interview questions

I'd like to start off asking you a couple of questions about how you got started in the newspaper industry and how you see yourself as a journalist.

Then I'll move on to some questions that address technological and economic changes in the industry.

1. Tell me a little about how you became a newspaper journalist.
What did you think it meant to be a newspaper journalist?
2. What do you think it means to be a newspaper journalist today?
3. Do you see yourself more as a newspaper journalist or just a journalist?
4. How does working at your newspaper define you as a journalist?
5. What are some of the biggest changes you think the newspaper industry has faced recently?
How do these changes affect the way the public sees the newspaper industry?

6. Thinking about technological and economic changes in the newspaper industry, how have such changes affected your job roles as a journalist?

Have some of the changes made it easier to do your job? How?

Have some of changes made it harder to do your job? How?

7. Are there any tasks assigned to you that you don't consider part of a journalist's job?

What are these tasks?

Why don't you think they're part of what it means to be a journalist?

Appendix 4. Profile of depth-interview participants

Identity	Job type	Circulation size	OI ¹	PI ²	Race	Gender	Age
Journalist 1	Section editor	25,001-50,000	Moderate	Moderate	White	Male	52
Journalist 2	Managing editor	10,001-25,000	High	High	White	Male	62
Journalist 3	Reporter	25,001-50,000	Moderate	High	White	Male	53
Journalist 4	Reporter	50,001-100,000	Low	Low	African-American	Female	26
Journalist 5	Online/multimedia content producer	10,001-25,000	High	Low	White	Male	35
Journalist 6	Other	100-001-250,000	Moderate	Low	Hispanic/Latino	Male	61
Journalist 7	Section editor	100-001-250,000	Low	Low	White	Female	44
Journalist 8	Photographer	10,001-25,000	Moderate	High	White	Male	33
Journalist 9	Reporter	10,001-25,000	Moderate	High	Other	Female	29
Journalist 10	Columnist	250,001-500,000	High	High	White	Male	63
Journalist 11	Reporter	more than 500,000	High	High	Hispanic/Latino	Female	55
Journalist 12	Reporter	50,001-100,000	Moderate	Moderate	White	Male	51

¹ Organizational identification was measured with two questions that had responses of 1 through 7 and 1 through 8, with 1 being the low score for each. The responses to these questions were summed to establish each participant's level of organizational identification. Summed scores of 1 to 8 represented low OI, 9-11 were moderate OI, and 12 or more indicated high OI. See Chapter 7 for greater explanation of the questions, response options, and category breakdowns.

² Similar to organizational identification, professional identification was measured with two questions that had responses of 1 through 7 and 1 through 8, with 1 being the low score for each. The responses to these questions were summed to establish each participant's level of professional identification. Summed scores of 1 to 8 represented low PI, 9-11 were moderate PI, and 12 or more indicated high PI. See Chapter 7 for greater explanation of the questions, response options, and category breakdowns.

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