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## Forces at Work: Workforce Perspectives in Print Journalism Amid Paradigm Shift

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**FORCES AT WORK: WORKFORCE PERSPECTIVES  
IN PRINT JOURNALISM AMID PARADIGM SHIFT**

by

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **FORCES AT WORK: WORKFORCE PERSPECTIVES IN PRINT JOURNALISM AMID PARADIGM SHIFT**

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Old Dominion University, 2016  
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Print newspapers are in an age of disruption that has radically affected readership, news consumption, news production and news distribution. As such, the industry has experimented with new business models that incorporate online, including blog-style reporting, short-format stories, and investigatory reporting via social media. This experimentation could be identified as a Kuhnian pre-paradigmatic phase of a print news industry in crisis. Meanwhile the workforce of print newspapers is experiencing a disruption of identity as what it means to be a journalist has changed in reaction. Exodus of journalists from print newspapers has been both involuntary through layoffs and voluntary as journalists themselves analyze external factors, including economy, technology, social and readership habits, and business practices and models. Amid layoffs and cutbacks, journalists who stay in the print newspaper industry are being asked to do more in newsrooms with less staff, and to do more of their work for online distribution. They see coworkers, some in the industry for decades, subject to early retirement buyouts and layoffs. The decisions to leave aren't made easily, but they are becoming logical as they realize these rising industry trends have altered the print journalism industry, and it is no longer the kind of journalism they signed up for.

Findings in this thesis confirm that the workforce agrees with prior research that factors contributing to newspapers' decline include online/digital technology, changes in advertising and competition, changes in readership, changes in newspaper ownership/management, and

economic factors. This mixed methods study of journalists and former journalists has found that these factors have contributed to a 66.8% reduction in overall perception of stability over participants' career-spans. Follow-up interviews of survey participants examined turning points in careers, and found a majority of journalists reported feelings of instability about the future of their careers as a result of the instability of the overall newspaper industry. Job change and opportunity correlates to perception of greater stability, and generational review of the findings revealed that Baby Boomer journalists had greater perception of stability at the start of their careers and have experienced a greater increase in perception of instability as their careers progressed than younger generations. Analysis of these and other findings considers what's at stake for the workforce of print newspapers amid a disruption in the established paradigm.

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This thesis is dedicated to Chad Boykin.

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## CHAPTER I

### PROJECT FRAMEWORK

#### INTRODUCTION

I spent about 10 years working professionally in journalism. But I got out. I'd lost hope in a future in newspapers that once was filled with potential for professional growth and continued education.

I worked at a high school paper before studying journalism at a state university. In high school, I didn't see my future in journalism, but by college I considered myself a journalist and committed to that career. I worked for the university newspaper and spent the summer after my junior year interning at my hometown newspaper. After graduation, I applied to and earned a position at the local newspaper in the city surrounding the university, where I spent a handful of years splitting shifts between designing pages in the morning and reporting at night. Ultimately I worked my way up to a local editor position. I learned that I was good at leading people, encouraging them to dig deeper for a story or bring their design up to a better level. I applied for, and earned a copy-editing position with a mid-size market daily publication that was launching an alternative subsidiary publication. It had a larger readership than the local paper I had been working for and was a step up in my career. It was 2006 and this is what I had learned in journalism school was the normal evolution of a career – start at a small-market, earn a post to a mid-market en route to a major publication such as the New York Times or Washington Post. It was an exciting next step in my early career, and I felt lucky to be moving up.

However, it wasn't long before the lessons of the school failed me. The new position was copy editing but entailed more than that. The interview required showcasing design skills, as well as traditional editing skills, to prove that I could fit in with a start-up's non-traditional

newsroom where each journalist held multiple skills in visual arts, language arts and creative brainstorming. The job and the project were evidence that more was being asked of journalists during the 2000s than before. In my mind, it was a challenge to be a part of the future of the print newspaper industry. It would require creativity in producing content as the industry transitioned to and took on new life online. We sponsored and participated in events in the community. We built a brand for this new publication and readers started to recognize and seek out the paper. After two years doing what felt like was a dream job, the economy collapsed. Retailers and companies who had spread their advertising budgets across radio, direct mail, online and print, now had to be more selective in advertising. Soon thereafter, we were told in October 2008 that the start-up would be shut down by the end of the year.

I faced a decision to go back to a smaller market, attempt to get in at another midmarket with just a couple years of experience or find a new career altogether. Facing a reality that print newspapers were struggling combined with the fact that I wanted a stable career, I left journalism. I work in a different industry now. While I haven't given up freelance editing for print publications, I no longer consider myself a journalist. It's from this perspective that, seven years later, I view the continued decline of the print newspaper industry. I know from my own circle of friends that I'm not the only one who has gone through this type of story. However, our workforce hasn't been studied in the way the economic contributors in the decline of newspapers, or the Internet disruption have. What factors influenced my decision to leave a career I spent more than ten years learning and adapting to professionally? How did my identity change in just a few years? As a creative mind, how has my leaving the industry disrupted the potential for the future of newspapers? And, if I'm not the only one, what else is at stake for an industry that continues to displace its workforce as more newspapers nationally close each year?

## THEORETICAL FORMULATIONS

### Paradigm shift

Thomas Kuhn (1996) establishes an understanding of a cycle of change that takes place when established practices and techniques no longer support the problems that arise within an industry. His paradigmatic cycle for scientific revolution described science, but it can also be applied to social scientific studies. In short, he identifies cyclical phases of change that must take place in order to have universally accepted normal practices, which he calls paradigms. That is, “normal science” comes about only through trial and error, attempts, failure, re-invention, dissention, anomaly, collaboration, acceptance of new that converts new into normal. A norm must exist for all practitioners of any science or industry to have context for how things are supposed to be done to earn credibility. Established practices in journalism can include formal education, named-source reporting, factual accountability through layers of professional editing, strict adherence to publication deadlines, and use of Associated Press Style, to name a few. Knowing and applying these practices places a reporter, for example, inside the culture of newspaper journalism. Print newspapers as a source of trusted, factual community information is the long-held norm for news consumers. The Internet as a new source of news presents what Kuhn could identify as an anomaly to the norm of print newspapers. Anomaly is the first phase in paradigmatic change, in that it presents an alternate to the norm. While anomaly may first exist in the background, if anomaly continues to present itself and is resisted by the norm, it can disrupt the accepted practice and throw an industry into crisis. Kuhn identifies crisis as an “essential tension” to scientific research (1970, p. 79) in that it leads to new practices in a pre-paradigmatic phase, and ultimately potential normalization of new practices.

Alfred Hermida (2013) uses Twitter to apply to print journalism a theory of modern/industrial paradigm and postmodern/postindustrial/knowledge society paradigm developed by Lankshear and Knobel (2011). Hermida describes print journalism's culture of exclusion that prevents full integration and leveraging of the affordances of online news production. Print newspapers arose during a time of restricted access to expensive machinery of news production and publication, making it a stable and fixed product with a specific purpose. It created a hierarchy of professional news identification, gathering, filtering, processing and publishing that was difficult to change because it was restricted to a few.

Seen through the lens of new literacies, journalists have a mind-set rooted in the modern industrial period. As a wide body of research indicates, newsrooms have predominately adapted digital media to existing norms and practices, rather than taking on the affordances of new forms of communication that challenge established ways of working ... By and large journalism practices have become more technologized, with reporters doing old things in new ways, rather than negotiating the transition to a post-industrial knowledge society (Hermida, 2013, p. 364).

Hermida identifies here how print newspapers have found themselves in crisis by operating within their established norm of news production. For most, that means a structure of boots-on-the-ground reporting, writing a story, submission to an editor, layers of copy editing, all prior to publication. Incorporation of digital has come only within these established norms. Readers who have become used to participation with news alerts through social media no longer rely on newspapers' established methods of one-sided news production. Hermida argues that online affords participatory methods of news production and distribution that most print newspapers have yet to fully take advantage of. Those who have are in a pre-paradigmatic phase of

discovery and experimentation.

### Journalistic role conception

The history of journalism's professionalization dates more than a century ago. Michael Schudson details a brief history in his 1973 work *Discovering the News*, which recognizes colleges offering a standardized journalism education as early as the 1800s. In 1904 Joseph Pulitzer endowed the Columbia School of Journalism. Walter Lippmann wrote a series of essays, recurring news articles and books in the 1920s and 1930s about the need for objectivity and advocating professionalization. In his most seminal book, *Public Opinion* (1922), he suggests that interpretation of facts can be subjective, and a professional press offers objectivity for the interpretation of facts. Robert McChesney (2012) also outlines the development and need for professional training in journalism:

Under professionalism, news would be determined and produced by trained professionals and the news would be objective, nonpartisan, factually accurate and unbiased. Whether there were 10 newspapers in a community or only one or two would be mostly irrelevant, because trained journalists – like mathematicians addressing an algebra problem – would all come up with the same news reports. There were no schools of journalism in the United States (or world, for that matter) in 1900. By the 1920s all the major journalism schools had been established and by 1923 the American Society of Newspaper Editors was formed and had established a professional code for editors and reporters to follow (p. 683).

Ida Shultz (2007) explains that professional training instills journalists with skills that afford objectivity, a news judgement that is framed by values of timeliness, relevance,



identification, conflict, sensation, and what Shultz identifies as doxic news value that isn't taught but gained through journalistic experience. This doxa is "a set of professional beliefs which tend to appear as evident, natural and self-explaining norms of journalistic practice" (p. 194). The former values of timeliness, relevance, identification, conflict, and sensation can be taught in journalism school. The latter, journalistic doxa, is understood through participation in the newsroom, observing operations, and experiencing culture. Doxa can vary among newsrooms and environments, and young journalists gain doxic news value through interaction with tenured journalists and editors, and that offers an exclusivity of the journalism profession.

Lippmann, in his 1931 essay *Two Revolutions*, discusses the press's stages of development to this ideal of objectivity and professionalization: first is government control, second is political party control, third is commercial, and last would be professionalization and institutional objectivity. Schudson (1973) credits and then furthers Lippmann's argument for the rise of objectivity in journalism by linking what he called a revolution in American journalism to scientific development in the 1800s. This era witnessed new technological developments (printing press), changes in readership (growing literacy) and priority given to data-gathering and democratic processes over previous empirical and religious notions. All of this afforded an evolution into modern forms of communication and socialization that allowed the news to progress through Lippmann's stages into professionalization and objectivity. W. Lance Bennett (1996) agrees that objectivity is a key norm that has developed in journalism, but offers that it is just one of "three not-always-compatible normative orders: norms about the journalism profession (e.g., objectivity, fairness); norms about the proper role of the press in politics (e.g., promoting political accountability by informing citizens about their elected officials), and the normative constraints of the business side of news organizations (reporting stories efficiently and

profitably).” Bennett says that these norms anchor journalistic roles and decisions, but because they aren’t always compatible, one norm can outweigh another at any point and influence news selection, production and business decisions.

In the U.S. case, it seems clear that the normative balance has tilted away from the responsibility to provide useful citizen information and toward the economic imperative to appeal to commercial audiences with entertaining stories. One implication of this normative shift is that cost-saving and audience-maximizing measures weigh in favor of even more standardized reporting (Bennett, 1996, p. 382).

These fundamental ideas and norms result in Schudson’s 2011 definition of contemporary journalist as “the business or practice of regularly producing and disseminating information about contemporary affairs of public interest and importance” (p. 3). But he, like Bennet, acknowledges commercialization as a dominant force in modern journalism, and he questions whether that commercialization has reduced journalism’s public importance. He cites evidence that professionally instilled and trained news judgment “is growing less and less protected from commercial concerns” (2011, p. 112) and finds an “erosion of management regard for professional values in journalism” (2011, p. 115). But he stresses the importance of journalists – as reporters and producers of news – to the institution of the press as primary over any other demand.

The desire of journalists to produce news according to their own best judgement can be a significant constraint on commercial motives. Professional values do not always triumph, of course, but as long as journalists are needed to report the news, they will have a measure of power in media organizations ... Economics matters indeed – but only because its force can crush the spirit of journalists who come to work with much more

than profit in mind. Sometimes journalism still wins, not because virtue trumps greed but because journalists build the newsroom culture on which the entire organization depends (Schudson, 2011, p. 115-116).

### Career-span

For this research, I employ “life course theory” as Glen Elder (2014) applies it to careers, thereby applying his study in “career-span.”

Life course refers to an age-graded sequence of events and social roles that is embedded in social structures and history. ... The life course also represents a theoretical orientation, a type of theory that guides research in terms of problem identification and formulation, rationales of design, variable selection, and explanatory analysis (Elder, 2014, p. 2634).

This notion of career-span is not wholly new, but Elder applies his life-course theory to the field of occupational communication by identifying trajectories and turning points. For example, occupational communication investigates links between the duration of each job and transitions between jobs across successive years as they relate to a specific domain of work or career. Elder elaborates:

Each work trajectory is patterned by a sequence of jobs of varying duration and transitions between jobs, along with occasional episodes of unemployment. A single work transition may entail little or no change or produce a turning point – a redirection of the life course through changes in situation, meaning, and/or behavior (2014, p. 2635).

Career redirection comes at turning points, moments of change that resonate with the individual and bring about conscious or unconscious new trajectory for his/her career. Sometimes turning

points are deliberate in response to a situation, and often they are subtle changes behaviors or meanings. Job change may be desired over time and attained proactively, reactively forced, or come logically as a result of changed meaning or behavior of workforce in industry. Essentially, job change may indicate career turning points, but so do changed perception, changed behavior, and changed meaning of what it means to perform a specific job function.

Members of any workforce are linked by their membership with workers and shared practices within an industry. This helps define their job function and identity. Their career decisions come in response to industry trends, an industry's history, interaction with coworkers and personal life. These factors bleed into one another as an industry's present state factors into human agency and decisions for career. Analysis of print newspaper industry trends – such as declining advertising revenues, introduction of the Internet, and declining readership – by its workforce can result in learning new skills, changing roles, and changing careers. All can be turning points in career-spans, but only are logical decisions made by the journalist. Applying this theory to understand what both constitutes a paradigm shift and its implications requires understanding of personal dynamics of individuals and their career span, as well as understanding of the workforce and system dynamics of the occupational industry.

Janet Giele and Glen Elder (1998) “articulate what they believe to be an implicit four-part paradigm that has emerged from the past several decades of life course research. Location in time and place refers to history, social structure, and culture. Linked lives are the result of the interaction of individuals with societal institutions and social groups. Human agency is embodied in the active pursuit of personal goals and the sense of self. Timing covers the chronologically ordered events of an individual's life that simultaneously combine personal, group, and historical markers” (p. 2).

## Critical case study

Bora Zivkovic (2010) argues that science and journalism have always had parallel definitions that center around communication, and so examining the journalism industry with scientific methods is logical. Science is a process of discovery about how the world works, and the communication of that discovery is essential to the scientific process. And so science in many ways is journalism, which he says is similarly a discovery of what's new and the communication of that news to an audience. Both professions often have been coupled with explanation to the public.

Science is communication of “how the world works”. A scientist is anyone who can say “I understand something about the world, you don't, let me explain it to you.” ... Note that I wrote “science is communication.” Yes, science is the process of discovery of facts about the way the world works, but the communication of that discovery is the essential last step of the scientific process, and the discoverer is likely to be the person who understands the discovery the best and is thus likely to be the person with the greatest expertise and authority (and hopefully ability) to do the explaining (Zivkovic, 2010, para. 9-11).

Science is journalism. Or journalism is science as journalists became skilled – and later trained – in the art of storytelling of factual discovery and events for mass consumption. The two fields have fundamentally the same mission of communication and explanation of things others don't know. Zivkovic goes on that science and journalism have separated in the 20th Century as science communication has targeted its own communities of specialized scientists, and has become limited to reporting what's been discovered, often foregoing explanation for the discovery's meaning. This separation of industries and industrial development may also account

for Hermida's argument that newspapers have stopped evolving along Kuhn's paradigm shift, and that they are stuck in a pre-paradigmatic phase, where experimentation is happening but most traditional newspapers are merely overlaying Internet's affordances onto existing newspaper structure over the past 30 years, rather than moving more swiftly to embrace a new norm.

Bent Flyvbjerg's (2011) critical case study allows "logical deductions" from scientific case studies, and application of those deductions to the greater field:

A critical case can be defined as having strategic importance in relation to the general problem. ... to formulate a type of generalization that is characteristic of critical cases, a generalization of the sort. If it is valid for this case, "it is valid for all (or many) cases." In its negative form, the generalization would be, "If it is not valid for this case, then it is not valid for any (or only few) cases" (p. 307).

He suggests that case study of a sample membership at critical turning points – in the case of this thesis, of turning points of career-span – allows for generalization of the findings to the larger population. Flyvbjerg applies this critical case study to paradigmatic cases: Case study is how we determine where in Kuhn's paradigmatic cycle any given science is. Review of the membership of print journalism, for example, finds that the industry has experienced a crisis phase and is entrenched in pre-paradigmatic phase as some newspapers, and other groups of journalists, experiment with new business models for news publications to re-stabilize the industry.

Flyvbjerg says that there is no way to predict what a new normal will look like while the paradigm is in crisis, but suggests that study of specific cases of experimentation by the workforce performing the job function in pre-paradigmatic state can help researchers understand the foundation on which a new normal ultimately will arise. The workforce experimenting in a

pre-paradigmatic phase is the same workforce that will have to understand the more stable and fruitful of the experiments and accept the successes as new normal:

Thomas Kuhn has shown that the basic skills, or background practices, of natural scientists are organized in terms of “exemplars,” the role of which can be studied by historians of science. ... (in order to) highlight more general characteristics of the societies in question. Kuhn has shown that scientific paradigms cannot be expressed as rules or theories. There exists no predictive theory for how predictive theory comes about. A scientific activity is acknowledged or rejected as good science by how close it is to one or more exemplars, that is, practical prototypes of good scientific work. A paradigmatic case of how scientists do science is precisely such a prototype. It operates as a reference point and may function as a focus for the founding of schools of thought (Flyvbjerg, 2011, p. 308).

The journalists working in the newspaper industry identify and address the crisis through changed behaviors and practices. Newspaper executives are cutting staffs and reducing paper in response to decreased revenues and subscriptions. In newsrooms, fewer people are producing content that is more often distributed online first. Full-time professional editorial jobs at daily newspapers have fallen below 40,000 for the first time since the American Society of News Editors began taking the newsroom census back in 1978. Changes in these behaviors and practices are detailed more in later sections, but important to note here is that even at big-city print news publications and corporate-run news companies, the business model being used by newspapers is failing almost everyone who relies on its success – owners, editors, reporters, investors, and ultimately readers (Nichols and McChesney, 2009). The country’s great regional dailies – the Chicago Tribune, the Los Angeles times, the Minneapolis Star Tribune, the

Philadelphia Inquirer – are in bankruptcy. Denver’s Rocky Mountain News closed down. The Virginian-Pilot in Norfolk, Va., has been up for sale for nearly a decade. Readers can find other news sources, but journalists face voluntary and involuntary career turning points amid this crisis.

Identification and analysis of these pivotal moments in newspaper journalists’ careers amid a paradigm shift in the newspaper industry – i.e. paradigmatic case study – allows us to make generalizations. Throughout I am particularly interested in documenting journalists’ feelings of displacement and their outlook on the instability of their workforce in a changing industry. Flyvbjerg acknowledges that there is not a singular methodology to identify what constitutes a critical or paradigmatic case, but that identification of such requires examination of critical cases, or in this case, individual experiences in critical moments of career change within a larger industrial change. Having each participant in the study reflect on his or her own career and discuss each individual career’s turning points on their own merits through open-ended questions leverages their experiences with their own workplace successes and challenges. Throughout, this method helps identify critical cases for each interviewee. Importantly is the fact that this is not simply something that affected a few journalists here and there. Instead, toward the end of this study I provide analysis that underscores a common set of concerns and experiences among those self-identified journalists that illustrate their critical cases. Finally, this study, as I will note numerous times, is not intended to be the authoritative last word on the change. This study aims to begin an academic conversation about journalism and journalists that has yet to start: How are journalists negotiating a changing business paradigm that has yet to solidify what it considers a new model?



## PURPOSE

The print newspaper industry is in crisis. The industry is undergoing a paradigm shift as profitability, sustainability and readership are all on decline. As David Sasaki notes,

In the U.S. a major newspaper closes down just about every week. Those that haven't closed down yet are all losing money. There is no single major newspaper in the U.S. right now that isn't losing money. The question isn't if the old model of journalism will die out, but when (2009, para. 13).

The current age involves more than just a disruption of the newspaper industry's ability to be profitable. This is not a blip that is hurting a bottom line. Instead, it is a disruption of readership, news consumption, news production and news distribution as the industry has gone online. Finally, it is also a disruption of what it means to be a journalist. Thomas Kuhn (1996) describes this disruption of long-accepted practices, identity and equipment as a paradigm shift. The disruption has come about over time as several factors external to methods of news production have impacted the industry's ability to continue along the same status quo. Rise of the Internet has influenced readers' ability to get up-to-the-minute news. It has afforded newspapers an ability to break news faster, and use print publication as in-depth follow-up. It has opened new doors for reporters gathering information as citizens have adapted to social media and blogging to post their own perspectives on news events as they unfold. Competition for both online and direct-mail advertising has impacted newspapers' traditional business model for earning revenue to sustain news production. As well as demand for journalists' to learn new skills to adapt to these technological affordances, declining revenues have hindered hiring and job security for journalists.

Chris Daly (2009) puts forth a theory of change in the field of U.S. journalism that makes sense of its 300-year history as an economic enterprise, a business that mirrors broader changes “sweeping through the general economy,” by placing it in context of tension between the “imperatives of the new business model and the prevailing culture of news” (p. 148-149). A recent example of economy influencing news took place between the 1960s and 1990s, when newspapers consolidated into larger media companies, for example Gannett, which owned *USA Today*, and The Washington Post Company, which owns *The Washington Post* as well as *Newsweek* magazine. Competition from these conglomerations brought consolidation of newspapers in many markets, which influenced the culture of news production and distribution as many small-market newspapers were bought out or closed. The United States had 1,611 general-circulation daily newspapers in 1990 – 14 percent fewer than it had in 1940 (Stephens, 1994). These organizations operated on a business model of advertising revenues that funded news staff salaries, printing, and distribution costs. The economic recession of the 2000s has contributed to the stifling of that business model, and advertising revenue for print newspapers has been cut in half since 2008, falling to \$18.3 billion in 2014, from \$34.7 billion (Barthel, 2015).

Amid this crisis in the newspaper industry, newsroom staffs continue to shrink in response. Because salaried employees with benefits cut into a publication’s profits, more newspapers are finding ways to employ fewer journalists. The results are shrinking publication getting smaller with few advertising supporting content space. According to the American Society of News Editors’ Newsroom Employment Census, after falling 11% in 2008 and 6% in 2012, overall newsroom employment was down 3% in 2013 – the most recent year for which figures are available – to 36,700. (Barthel, 2015) The industry’s employees have fallen below

40,000 for the first time since the American Society of News Editors began taking the newsroom census back in 1978. Those who are still employed are being asked to do more to produce and edit multimedia content for multiple platforms of publication. Robert McChesney (2012) captures this point when he states that, “At the heart of too many of the emerging corporate online journalism undertakings is an understanding that the wages paid to journalists can be slashed dramatically, while at the same time workloads are increased to levels not seen for generations, if ever” (p. 686).

No solution to stabilize the future has been established: There is no new normal. Instead, experiments vary from non-profit-backed newspapers to digital-only news outlets to hybrid community-funded and corporately affiliated newspapers. Sufficient evidence of sustained success in any of these new business models has not yet been found, but a pre-paradigmatic state allows for any new model to enter the field. Until more time has passed to determine long-term viability, the print-newspaper paradigm continues to shift. As a result, the workforce is also forced to shift. This shift manifests in changing skillsets, additional and altered definition of journalism, new job roles, and more. These can be both subtle and significant turning points in careers. This is not the print journalism industry that many older journalists signed up for. Today’s print journalists are often identified as members of Richard Florida’s “creative class” (2002, 2012), a sociological class of people who produce new forms or designs that are readily transferable and useful and those who work in knowledge-industries that create solutions to specific problems. As Florida notes, “What [the creative class is] required to do regularly is to think on their own, apply or combine standard approaches in unique ways to fit different situations, exercise a great deal of judgment, and perhaps even try something radically new from time to time” (p. 38-39). Younger journalists may be more up to date on their skills as members

of the Creative Class, but they also suffer the instability of a print newspaper industry in a pre-paradigmatic phase. For others, the demand to adapt their creativity even more to learn digital skills is too great. Both young and old face turning points in their careers where they must either commit to the changing industry and still face the possibility of layoff as newspaper cutbacks continue. Or they must decide how to leverage their creative skills outside of print journalism and take a leap to leave the industry all together. This thesis seeks to capture these critical career turning points, and examine them from a print-journalism career-span perspective.

## PROBLEM

Print journalism is in a pre-paradigmatic stage renegotiating its status in a digital environment and is witnessing professional journalists and non-professionals use trial and error experiments with alternatives to traditional newspapers. In the Kuhnian tradition, experiments are anomalies, but because a new normal has not been established, the old traditional print model also hasn't died completely: "the decision to reject one paradigm is always simultaneously the decision to accept another" (p. 77, 1996). No single alternative to print newspapers has solidified readership as a new status quo. Indeed, the paradigm shift is still taking place as various schools of thought arise and test new models of news production. The rise of online news and citizen journalists is shifting the industry from the paradigm of print media, professional reporters and editors, and physical newsrooms. Advertisers have diversified and spread their shrinking budgets among multiple news platforms. Business models that were once successful in a prior news era are not as profitable and no longer sustainable. The result of the crisis and move into pre-paradigm has been a displaced workforce of journalists who could be key to a new future for a new news industry. Instead, they have been devalued, demoralized, laid off, relocated, and some

have abandoned the industry altogether in favor of exercising their creative skills in another industry. What's at stake is what it means to make a living as a professional journalist. On the extreme ends of this crisis are journalists who are creating new identities online or at different publications. Others are abandoning their identity as a journalist altogether as they seek employment outside the industry, resulting in a loss of creative minds from an industry that has an unclear future. Unfortunately, the workforce has been understudied in this paradigm shift. Former journalist-turned-author-researcher Scott Timberg identified the problem in his 2015 book *Culture Crash*:

Journalists themselves also have downplayed the story. In fact, the media – businesses that have been decimated by the Internet and corporate consolidation, as surely as the music industry – have been mostly reluctant to tell the tale of this erosion. Some newspapers, of course, have offered responsible coverage of the mortgage meltdown and the political wars over taxes and the deficit. But it's harder to find in the pages of our daily newspapers stories about people who lose their livelihoods, their homes, their marriages, their children's schooling because of the hollowing-out of the creative class and the shredded social safety net (p. 17-18).

The goal of this study is to better understand what has happened to this population of laborers as this paradigm shift has taken place. My aim is to contribute to the discussion the voices of laborers and their experiences. Indeed these experiences have too often been ignored by a body of literature more concerned with the economic, social and political factors that have contributed to this shift. This study will identify journalists' and former journalists' attitudes and behavioral reactions to the shifting industry of print journalism at various points of their career. Putting the workforce perspective into context of the newspaper crisis requires review of existing

research of the contributing factors of the crisis. Paul Starr (2009) summed up the state of the industry in a cover story for *New Republic*:

Even before the recession hit, the newspaper industry was facing a mortal threat from the rise of the Internet, falling circulation and advertising revenue, and a long-term decline in readership, as the habit of buying a daily paper dwindled from one generation to the next. The recession has intensified these difficulties, plunging newspapers into a tailspin from which some may not recover and others will emerge only as a shadow of their former selves (p. 28).

As Starr addresses in his overview, plenty of research has identified economic issues facing the newspaper industry, technological and social competition, and obstacles that laborers face during organizational development. . This prior research, however, merely sets a stage for the paradigm shift as it is concerned with the identification of red flags. These researchers have opened the door for study of journalists' who are questioning the established paradigm and ultimately will be instrumental in bringing about the next established norm of the industry. The newspaper crisis is resulting in changing practices, processes and structure of the newspaper industry, none of which are yet normalized.

#### Economic downturn

The heart of study of economic contributions to the newspaper crisis is loss of advertising dollars that have funded news reporting, editing and printing since the early 20th Century when advertising overtook subscription revenues. Newspapers are businesses, and when businesses face falling revenues, they take action to cut back on the biggest expenses. In essence, fewer ad dollars mean less money to pay for editorial staff, actual paper and investigative reporting that takes time to develop sources and build a story. Researchers have studied reasons for decreases

in advertising revenues that include competition for finite dollars from advertisers, the early 2000s recession, and flawed business models that focus on profitability over news value or production.

John Nichols and Robert McChesney (2009, 2011), primary researchers of economic issues that have impacted the newspaper industry, assert that the recession and resulting loss of advertising dollars merely facilitated the downfall of newspapers' fundamental flaw that newspapers, a community service, should not be corporate-run businesses. They relate the decline in ad funding and splintering of coverage back to the era of incorporation and conglomeration of news media, which started in the 1970s and saw brief profitability. It was an age in which businessmen ran newspapers, not editors or publishers. As is the case with all businesses, without profitability, businessmen rather than editors had no choice but to lay off staff or shutter their newspapers. To quote Nichols and McChesney, "In a nutshell, media corporations, after running journalism into the ground, have determined that news gathering and reporting are not profit-making propositions. So they're jumping ship" (2009, p. 11).

McArdle (2009) puts the crisis of print journalism entirely on the shoulders of dwindling advertising that long supported newspapers as businesses:

Journalism is not being brought low by excess supply of content; it's being steadily eroded by insufficient demand for advertising pages. For most of history, most publications lost money, or at best broke even, on their subscription base, which just about paid for the cost of printing and distributing the papers. Advertising was what paid the bills. To be sure, some of that advertising is migrating to blogs and similar new media. But most of it is simply being siphoned out of journalism altogether. Craigslist ate

the classified ads. eHarmony stole the personals. Google took those tiny ads for weird products. And Macy's can email its own damn customers to announce a sale (para. 5).

Norris (2000) agrees that the loss of advertising is the root of the problem, but acknowledges that falling profits were the introduction of competitive markets for both readership and advertising dollars:

All these developments have had a major impact upon the profitability and economic viability of the print sector. The conventional explanation for this phenomenon is the rise of alternative news sources, whether radio in the 1920s, television in the 1950s or the Internet in the 1990s, all of which are believed to have gradually displaced the traditional role of the printed press (p. 2).

#### Technological/social competition

The Internet has offered competitive markets for advertising dollar, which would be bad enough for the newspaper industry. At the same time the Internet has also offered both a new marketplace for citizen journalists and an ever-splintering readership. While these trends have overlap with other research concerns, they merit review separate from the economic factors of the newspaper crisis. McChesney (2012), who purports the Internet's destruction of newspapers' traditional business model "by giving advertisers far superior ways to reach their prospective consumers," (p. 685) also agrees that the Internet gives consumers many more options for news consumption. Smart phones have helped make that content available non-stop, round-the-clock; and according to Gabe Mythen (2010) social media has allowed citizens to move from positions of audience and sources of witness information to positions of recorders and creators of news. Mythen credits technological convergence and the development of an interactive media environment for the growth in citizen journalism and user-generated content. Further, non-



professionals producing news are changing the definition and barriers to entry into the news world. This will be addressed more in the next section.

Two schools of research have arisen to explore the impact of changing readership trends with the introduction of online news content as alternative to print media: One faction identifies opportunities for complementary relationship between traditional, professional reporting and online citizen commenting (social media and blogs); and another of displacement of traditional news outlets due to the rise of Internet news consumption. Regardless of complement or displacement, most researchers agree that that much online news, especially blog-style sites, offers “little reporting, and still less of it subject to any rigorous fact-checking or editorial scrutiny. Other than news aggregators such as Google News – which link to articles from publications that still derive most of their revenue from print – the most successful news sites are oriented to specialized audiences” (Starr, 2009, p. 29). C.W. Anderson (2010) suggests that while online bloggers do less to report the news than traditional publications, they do more to create community conversation and broaden the reading audience for the news, which changes readership habits: “While they may not have provided much additional reporting, local blogs reframed the story in ways that both reflected and shaped the direction of the community conversation” (p. 299). Anderson identifies a journalist-blogger relationship:

Key local bloggers jumped on the story once it appeared in print; most coverage in the blogosphere linked back to the newspaper story (to such a degree that they even largely ignored the online-only story produced by a newspaper columnist); and most of the blog coverage contained little “original reporting” in the traditional journalistic sense of the word. That said, a more qualitative appraisal showed that this “classic” story of news diffusion was more complex than it initially appeared. Local blogs reframed the story and

broadened the conversation. Some bloggers did, indeed, do original reporting. The editorial deliberations of one journalist–blogger demonstrated the complexity of online news judgments (p. 299).

As online citizen reporting on social media becomes more normalized, institutional expectations also are placed upon reporters to break news online and then also to have followers there that the reporters can carry over to the print product where the news item is explored in-depth.

Credibility, once imparted from the newspaper institution is now brought from the reporter himself/herself. They must establish credibility and readers online that are then monetized by the institution by attracting the readership to their print product, where enterprise news still takes place.

Ana Rosa Del ÁGuila-Obra, et al. (2007) have found that original news still is most often produced by traditional, print journalists and reporting for print newspapers. Their study calls attention to the growing distinction between news-content creation and new forms of content distribution online that mostly reproduce, repackage, summarize and link to traditional news outlets' online sites. "New media of online blogs and web content aggregators add value by essentially being more convenient, specialized, and more efficient than the other media," especially for growing readership with new digital habits. The key value of the Internet is in fostering "the emergence of new intermediaries in this industry." (p. 197) Whether in complement to or in competition with print media, no one doubts that readership habits are changing, and this change contributes to what statistics show are fewer readers actually picking up print newspapers. In 2015 alone daily print newspaper circulation fell 9% below 2004 averages, their greatest declines since 2010 when circulation had fallen nearly 11%. (Barthel, 2016). Further, newspapers that don't keep up with these Internet offerings for content

distribution suffer loss in readership revenues. Fewer readers supporting print means fewer jobs for real reporters in physical newsrooms that generate original copy and support online content.

### Workforce obstacles

In a nutshell, roughly 30 percent less labor and resources are going into producing the news today than there was in 2000. McChesney further argues that this is even more stressful when one considers that on a per capita basis, perhaps half of the amount of labor goes into producing news than 25 years ago (McChesney, 2012, p. 684). This section looks to identify the challenges facing the newspaper industry's shrinking workforce amid a pre-paradigmatic phase of paradigm shift.

In recent years, the very definition of what it means to be a journalist has changed as reporting roles have grown to incorporate photography and video. And in the bigger picture, the professional boundaries of journalism have loosened to incorporate citizen journalists who have not had formal journalism training. At least one recent study has found that citizen content has made gains so that some consumers don't make distinction between the credibility of professional- and citizen-written material. (Sonderman, 2012) In his study on Wall Street's white collar worker, Joseph Fitzpatrick (1948) made observations of the rising white-collar worker that hold true to today's climate:

The white collar worker was considered to be doing a more important job than the men in the factories; he required a better academic education and more refinement and, in many ways he was considered to be on a higher social level than non-white collar workers (p. 99).

Fitzpatrick goes on to observe that “everyone has academic training now; everyone can read and write and take an office job” (p. 100). To this end, what once was a commodity of writing and reporting training that allowed young journalism graduates to earn their way into the news industry has become standardized practice of university education, and thus the specialization of professionalism is being eroded. Following professional training, print journalists often worked their way up an informal hierarchy of experience – working at local or hometown newspaper, graduating to a mid-market, regional paper, and then once credibility and reputation were gained, it is onto larger markets, magazines or other national publications. Traditional community, regional, national and international news outlets that once carried exclusivity of audience consumption an opportunity to establish credibility for journalists are dwindling. And in their place are growing outlets for online audience consumption, where the established requirements of professional journalism are not enforced, and in some readers’ eyes, not needed for credible news and storytelling.

In a study of journalists’ job satisfaction, Fiona McQuarrie (1999) found that “satisfaction with employment (which includes such issues as opportunity to hold a steady job, the relationship between the amount of work and the amount of pay, the opportunity for advancement, and the opportunity for accomplishment) increases with length of current employment.” This suggests that the insecurities that have developed from this paradigm shift in the newspaper industry and that have resulted in staff reductions and newspaper closures directly impact job satisfaction. They may also contribute to journalists leaving the industry in search of stability. Florida’s work on the creative class recognizes the role of economic circumstances as well as values and attitudes in individual identity. (2012, p. 37) Economic instability has the ability to shake the identities and perceptions of the role journalists play in the institution of news

production. But the creative skills they've learned and honed provides them resources to choose to stay in the industry, adapt and be a part of creating the new future of newspapers, or choose to leave the industry and apply their skills in another field, he says. As Florida notes, "Creative class workers, even in the hardest-hit fields have the skills and education that allow them to switch jobs and even careers when required" (Florida, 2012, p. 54).

Many journalists who have left the field have found work in news-related industries, such as public relations. They and others who have abandoned print newspapers now leverage their writing, editing and design skills through part-time work with newspapers, non-profits, and their own online blogs or followings on social media. Years, and sometimes decades, spent in news gathering and production has served as a platform for journalists and former journalists who are instrumental in the pre-paradigmatic/experimental phase of testing options. This labor force has explored alternate news distribution models that may be free, like providing Twitter feeds that focus on news or popular culture; they may be low cost, like blogs or web sites; or they may be community-funded through crowd-sourcing to build companies of investigatory reporters who produce and post online and sell their stories to other online news sites or print publications. These new entry points to news reporting and distribution experiment with potential future newspaper/news production business models. None has set a standard for profitability, sustainability, reliability or other measures of success yet to be called a new normal science. But the barriers to entry once identified as formal journalism education and willingness to do boots-on-the-ground reporting, are gone as careers are now being made – albeit in case-by-case experiments – online in news production, which can be reposted by larger online news outlets, such as CNN or Huffington or Drudge, that serve more as news feeds than independent sources of news.

Many of those who have exited the newspaper industry are doing so after years or decades as workers. In these cases, unique challenges arise in changing jobs mid-life. According to Mendenhall, R., Kalil, A., Spindel, L. J., & Hart, C. D. (2008):

The often abrupt separation from work triggers identity issues related to positions of privilege and social locations. Sample members interpret the events surrounding job termination as a lack of employer loyalty. As a result, they begin their new job search with a “free-agent” mentality. Their interactions with potential employers, head hunters and other unemployed colleagues lead them to conclude that although certain aspects of their social location (race, gender and class) usually create opportunities, their middleage status places them in a stigmatized group. In response, they seek to downplay markers of age like the year they graduated from school and their total years of experience. The need for this “self-degrading” strategy and its shortcomings (limited re-entry) solidifies their perceptions that the new economy holds many risks, even for those accustomed to varying levels of privilege. Therefore, sample members make mastering the “new risk economy” a developmental goal (p. 195).

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES

Statistical analysis and iterative coding were used to address seven research questions and to explore three hypotheses regarding turning points in print journalism careers. This study was interested in using a theoretical lens of career span (Giele and Elder, 1998) to view and project the insider’s perspective of the pre-paradigmatic newspaper industry, in order to understand how the changes taking place in the industry are influencing journalists’ careers, creating turning points in career spans, and ultimately impacting career trajectory. Two limitations have been identified

to previous research on the state of the newspaper industry. First, that most of the research presented have viewed the newspaper industry from the outside-in, exploring factors including technology and economy that are external to the industry to give context to the industry's crisis and pre-paradigmatic states. Second, prior studies conducted on newspaper professionals and cited above (Mendenhall, R., Kalil, A., Spindel, L. J., & Hart, C. D., 2008; McQuarrie, 1999) have looked at job satisfaction and re-entry to the job market, but they have not addressed the state of the newspaper industry from the newspaper professional's perspective. Thus, this study focuses on professional journalists' perception of the industry and its future, as well as their role in the industry. Using the career span lens, ideas of disruption of institutional norms, changing stability of employment, and speculation about an uncertain future are explored.

#### Research questions

1. What is the relationship between print journalists' career trajectory and their perspective on the stability of the newspaper industry?
2. What external factors do print journalists and former journalists pinpoint as reasons for changes in the newspaper industry?
3. How has the outlook on the future of the newspaper industry changed over the career-spans of current and former print journalists?
4. Are there common points of change in journalists' careers that impact their outlook on the future of the newspaper industry? And is there a relationship between those points of change in journalists' careers and factors studied of economic, social or technological changes outlined by previous researchers?

5. How has journalists' emotional outlook of the future of the newspaper industry changed at turning points of their careers?
6. How have journalists' behaviors and practices changed to reflect the external changes in the industry, including economics, advertising, technology and online, and readership?
7. Do the survey data and interview research support or devalue the argument that the newspaper industry is undergoing a paradigm shift?

### Hypotheses

1. Survey participants currently employed in the newspaper industry perceive the newspaper industry to have more stability than those not currently employed in the newspaper industry.
2. Survey participants who still consider themselves journalists today perceive the newspaper industry to have more stability than those who do not still consider themselves journalists.
3. Longer careers in the newspaper industry will directly correlate to perception of greater stability of the newspaper industry than shorter careers.

### METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Elder (2014) says a “career line” or career paths are “defined by the aggregated work histories of employees. They are structured by industry sectors and the labor market. An individual’s work-life varies by the career requirements of the marketplace and firm. It also may vary by the worker’s family life, an integral dimension of his or her life course. On the developmental level, both negative and positive changes in work have psychological consequences, as in feelings of self-efficacy” (p. 2635). The proposed study uses both



quantitative and qualitative methods to gather data about journalists' and former journalists' career decisions and changes as well as their perspectives on the future of newspapers over the course of their career-span.

## Methods

I began with a survey and administered it to a convenience sample of known associates who were encouraged to share this with associates who meet the criteria of current or former employment as a newspaper journalist in a specific mid-sized market (i.e. regional newspaper) on the East Coast. The goal was to generate a larger, snowball sample of their known associates and generate a significant sample of current and former newspaper professionals who have worked at a newspaper (print or digital) in that region. I have limited the professionals to this geographic area so that, through repeated the application of this method to similar mid-market-size markets and journalists, I may generalize finding of members of this print newspaper workforce, which operates differently than small-market and major-market forces. Mid-market journalists are newspaper professionals who often work at stepping-stone publications – publications that they work after experience at smaller, hometown newspapers and before employment at major-market newspapers, such as The Washington Post or The New York Times. Because I have known newspaper contacts that have or do work in the target region, I drew on this convenience sample to build a snowball sample. Using Kraemer and Theimann (1987) as a guide to find a moderate effect at an 80 power on a one-tailed t-test with one independent variable with two conditions and one dependent variable, a convenience sample of at least 60 is required. I sent the survey to approximately 80 known associates and received 77

responses. My expectation was a response rate higher than typical surveys because I do know many of the people I asked to participate personally.

From those survey responses, I obtained a volunteer sample of 43 respondents who were willing to participate in a formal set of interviews to cull the qualitative data I need for a more descriptive analysis.

### Quantitative research procedure

I gathered quantitative data via an online survey, administered via Survey Monkey. The online survey instrument (Appendix A) includes an introduction to include a brief overview of the study as well as their rights concerning participation. The instrument asked participants their age, sex, level of education, length of journalism career in years, current occupation and industry in which they work. Furthermore, I asked about their perspective of the stability of the newspaper industry at the start of their career and today; the influences on their career (including their early childhood experience); their work at student newspapers and promotions/demotions, their readership habits vis a vis daily local, national, international and online news media; and their beliefs about the manner in which changes in economics, society, advertising and technology have contributed to the changes in the newspaper industry. I sent a link to the survey to would-be participants via email and social media with incentive that participation earned them entry in a drawing for three gift cards for \$25 each.

I ran quantitative statistical analysis using SPSS software on dependent variables of demographic information as related to independent variables of categorically answered questions, such as self-identification as a current or former journalist and positive or negative perceptions of the future of print newspapers at various career points. I looked for correlations

among categories to determine statistical relationships between perspective of stability of the industry and length of career, for example.

#### Qualitative research procedure

I contacted volunteers from the survey for follow-up interviews, which last on average 30 minutes each. Each began with an introduction including a brief overview of the study as well as their rights concerning participation (Appendix B). I obtained more details about participants' specific careers, contributions to industry changes and perception of the industry. Prior to beginning the conversation, I asked participants to refrain as much as possible from using specific names of companies and people to preserve anonymity. I asked them to recall moments of change over their journalism career – including first promotion, a time of technological change and a recent change – and to describe feelings about their career path and perception of the future of the newspaper industry. They also were asked a similar set of demographic and career-span questions as the survey instrument.

I used an iterative analysis to identify emergent codes and themes among the interviewees' points of career change, as well as consider how those thematic categories and analysis interact/continue the conversation begun by the aforementioned external researchers. My hope is to codify commonalities of changed perspectives among similar moments of career change among journalists that may coincide with the patterns of change identified by researchers who have analyzed newspapers' recent history for external contributions to the crisis and decline of the industry. I also hope to identify themes, beliefs, relationships of change and in vivo language of change among members of newsrooms. I will analyze these themes for significance and contribution to the field of research already constructed.

## SUMMARY

All research on the crisis of newspapers has been done from the outside, analyzing external factors, including economy, technology, social and readership habits, and business practices and models. The goal of this study is to gain an insider's perspective in order to make an argument that the newspaper industry is undergoing a paradigm shift, as evidenced by changes in behaviors, practices, and identity of the members of the institution of the press. The evidence was produced both quantitatively – numerically through results of a survey administered to both journalists and former journalists working across media platforms – and qualitatively – through themes that arise in interviews of a sample of the journalists and former journalists who participated in the quantitative study. Chapter II details the participants, design, and findings of the quantitative instrument. Further, it begins a discussion on the results, their evidence of a paradigm shift and their implications for future research. Chapter III details the qualitative research methodology and participants. It identifies themes of journalists' and former journalists' career trajectories and begins a discussion of how these themes arise because of and in contribution to greater industry changes. Chapter IV qualifies the dual-research method and weaves the two prior chapters' discussions into thesis that the newspaper industry is amid a paradigm shift, entrenched in a pre-paradigmatic phase without clear direction or leadership toward a new normal for an institution that has been a part of community living, popular culture, and politics for centuries.

## CHAPTER II

### QUANTITATIVE STUDY

#### INTRODUCTION

This thesis employs both quantitative and qualitative methods to gather data about journalists' and former journalists' career decisions and changes as well as their perspectives on the future of newspapers over the course of their career-span. The overarching hypothesis of this thesis is that print journalists' are making decisions about their careers as a result of larger changes taking place in the newspaper industry that has led to disruption in the stability of the industry. Glen Elder on "career lines" and career paths (2014) says this about career decisions:

A "career line" refers to pathways that are defined by the aggregated work histories of employees. They are structured by industry sectors and the labor market. An individual's work-life varies by the career requirements of the marketplace and firm. It also may vary by the worker's family life, an integral dimension of his or her life course. On the developmental level, both negative and positive changes in work have psychological consequences, as in feelings of self-efficacy (p. 2635).

The state of crisis in newspapers, as defined in the previous chapter by economic and technological factors, has led to workforce changes. Some journalists have found themselves working in an industry that they no longer know how to succeed in, and therefore they have branched out to leverage their creative and entrepreneurial skills in outside industries in an attempt to renormalize their careers amid crisis. Others are attempting to rationalize crisis as the new norm, adapting to economic and technological changes by accepting fewer salary dollars, learning new skills, and experimenting with new production and distribution methods. This latter group is actively participating in the pre-paradigmatic exploration of the print newspaper

industry. Elder's research supports that "Individual lives are not merely shaped by social institutions or the larger environment. They are also constructed through the choices and plans people make" (P 2636). I test this hypothesis in two ways – by using both quantitative and qualitative methods to gather data about journalists' and former journalists' career decisions and changes as well as their perspectives on the future of newspapers over the course of their career-span. I address the quantitative survey methods and research in this chapter. Chapter 3 covers the qualitative research.

Because the study of journalists' perspectives in the current state of the industry is largely uncharted by previous research, this research is somewhat exploratory of trends and themes in effort more fully understand the state of the industry from insiders' view. Therefore a significant portion of the survey instrument discussed in this chapter was dedicated to descriptive statistics of the survey sample. I bring to my research a deeply embedded ethnographic lens and set of practices that come from my own experience in the newspaper industry and my decision to leave it. For that reason, there is potential for bias in seeking out feelings and experiences similar to those I have experienced that has resulted in a perspective of the future of the newspaper industry as unstable, and with limited opportunity for advancement and continuing education. That perception, however, is not without hope that creative, professionally trained and experienced journalists will build a future that includes the key values of print newspapers as a community-based communication tool that spreads information and culture through coverage of local politics/elections, sports and events. Beginning with a quantitative method, I hoped to limit bias and find objectivity in results.

The quantitative survey method numerically measures perception of stability of the newspaper industry at the start of each participant's career and their perceptions today. Using

correlation testing and between-group differences testing, I analyzed the numeric levels of perceived stability against career experiences, including length of career, as well as incidents promotions, demotions, and layoffs. The findings successfully show that the perspectives of workers regarding the stability of the newspaper industry today are lower than they were that at the start of their journalism career (Appendix A). There is much opportunity for additional study, and so I believe the goal of exploration of the sentiments and perspectives was successful.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What is the relationship between print journalists' career trajectory and their perspective on the stability of the newspaper industry?
2. What external factors do print journalists and former journalists pinpoint as reasons for changes in the newspaper industry?
3. Do the survey findings help confirm or deny that the newspaper industry is undergoing a paradigm shift?

## HYPOTHESES

1. Survey participants currently employed in the newspaper industry perceive the newspaper industry to have more stability than those not currently employed in the newspaper industry.
2. Survey participants who still consider themselves journalists today perceive the newspaper industry to have more stability than those who do not still consider themselves journalists.

3. Longer careers in the newspaper industry will directly correlate to perception of greater stability of the newspaper industry than shorter careers.

## PARTICIPANTS

I began with a survey that administered to a convenience sample of known associates who were encouraged to share this with associates who meet the criteria of once being employed in a mid-market newspaper journalist in a specific Mid-Atlantic region. The goal was to generate a larger, snowball sample of their known associates and generate a significant sample of current and former newspaper professionals who have worked at a newspaper (print or digital) in the region. I limited the professionals to this area so that I can generalize the findings that apply to mid-market-size journalists. This labor force operates differently than small-market and major-market forces. Mid-market journalists are newspaper professionals who often work at stepping-stone publications - publications that they work after experience at smaller, hometown newspapers and before employment at major-market newspapers, such as The Washington Post or The New York Times. Because I have known newspaper contacts that have or do work in Southeastern Virginia, I will draw on this convenience sample to build a snowball sample. Using Kraemer and Theimann (1987) as a guide to find a moderate effect at an 80 power on a one-tailed t-test with one independent variable with two conditions and one dependent variable, a convenience sample of at least 60 is required. I garnered 77 responses from 81 requests via email and social media. My expectation was a response rate is higher than typical survey response because I do know many of the people I asked to participate personally. My expectation was demographic characteristics of the subjects to be approximately 50% male and 50% female. I expected ages of respondents between 23 and 70. Because I was using some known associates



and a snowball sample, I knew there was no way to predict many other demographic variables, including how far the reach of the survey, geographically, the respondents would report living, and how many of them would still reside in the mid-market sample area.

## DESIGN

Using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation, as well as T-test and ANOVA between-groups differences testing, I analyzed the numeric levels of perceived stability against independent variables that included career experiences, length of career, and age they first identified themselves as a journalist. The T-tests and ANOVAs were post-test only, between subjects design; however, I did ask about perceptions at the start of careers and perceptions today. Participants addressed both questions during a single survey taken all at one time. Because I knew from the descriptive statistics that perception of stability of the newspaper industry decreased for the entire sample, there was an expectation that additional testing would find key dependent variables for the group that correlate with that decrease, including relationships between stability and length of career, and stability and instances of promotion and demotion.

## PROCEDURES

I gathered quantitative data via an online survey, administered via Survey Monkey. The online survey instrument (Appendix A) includes an introduction to include a brief overview of the study as well as their rights concerning participation. I administered the instrument to a convenience sample of known associates who were be encouraged to share this with associates who meet the criteria of once being a newspaper journalist in the Hampton Roads region. Because I have known newspaper contacts that have or do work in Southeastern Virginia, I will

draw on this convenience sample to build a snowball sample. The instrument asked participants their age, sex, level of education, length of journalism career in years, current occupation and industry in which they work. Furthermore, I asked about their perspective of the stability of the newspaper industry at the start of their career and today; the influences on their career (including their early childhood experience); their work at student newspapers and promotions/demotions, their readership habits *vis a vis* daily local, national, international and online news media; and their beliefs about the manner in which changes in economics, society, advertising and technology have contributed to the changes in the newspaper industry. I sent a link to the survey to would-be participants via email and social media with incentive that participation earned them entry in a drawing for three gift cards for \$25 each.

I ran quantitative statistical analysis using SPSS software on dependent variables of demographic information as related to independent variables of categorically answered questions, such as self-identification as a current or former journalist and positive or negative perceptions of the future of print newspapers at various career points. I looked for correlations among categories to determine statistical relationships between perspective of stability of the industry and length of career, for example.

#### Independent variable

My independent variables were crafted with Elder's (2014) life course theory in mind: "Both timing and individual choices occur in specific historical times and places, as expressed in the principle of time and place: the life course of individuals is embedded in and shaped by the historical times and places they experience over their lifetime." (p. 2636) Interval-level independent variables were years of experience, age, percent of income generated from print

media today and age first identified himself or herself as a journalist. Categorical independent variables were gender, whether they currently work in journalism, whether they still consider themselves a journalist today, whether they still work in print journalism, experience of a promotion in the past 10 years, experience of a pay raise in the past 10 years, experience of feelings of instability about your employment in the past 10 years, experience of forced retirement in the past 10 years, experience of a layoff/termination in the past 10 years, whether they believe online content / Internet / new technologies is a key contributor to changes in print journalism, whether they believe changes in advertising/competition for advertising dollars is a key contributor(s) to changes in print journalism, whether they believe changes in newspaper ownership / management is a key contributor to change in print journalism, whether they believe economic factors / changes in the economy is a key contributor to change in print journalism, and whether they believe social changes/demographics of readership/changes in consumption is a key contributor to change in print journalism.

#### Dependent variables

My conceptual definition of my dependent variable, perception of stability in newspaper industry, was selected as a basic measure of confidence in newspapers. I asked for participants to measure it both at the start of their career and today, and measured on a 1 to 7 Likert scale. I selected the term stability because it connotes strength, health, things that are unchanged, like a business industry that has a history that dates to the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. Merriam-Webster's definition of stability includes the quality or state of something that is not easily changed or likely to change. (2015) Using years of birth as outlined in by Strauss & Howe (1991), Baby Boomers are those born between 1943 and 1960, Generation X was born 1961-1981, and Millennials are

1982-2003. For many journalists and former journalists in the Baby Boom generation and even Generation X, they first identified themselves as such in the era that saw journalists Woodward and Bernstein help bring about the downfall of corrupt political leaders during the Watergate scandal in the White House. The industry had a connotation of power and authority for holding community leaders accountable. That connotation is built into the history of the industry and remained unchanged for centuries, an example of stability of an industry. Using only one question for the dependent variable allowed targeted analysis of the concept of stability, but it did remove ability for a reliability check of the perception of stability of the newspaper industry.

## DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Survey respondents were ages 24 to 66. Using years of birth as outlined by Strauss & Howe (1991), Baby Boomers are identified as ages 55-72, and made up 17.8% of all survey responses. Generation X is ages 34-54, and comprised 58.9% of survey responses. Millennials are ages 14-33, and were 23.3% of survey responses. There was a nearly 50-50 split between genders of respondents, 47.4% female and 51.3% male, with 1 person identifying as other. The majority of the respondents (59.7%) reported to have Bachelor's degrees, with about a third (33.8%) reporting Master's degrees. Less than 7% total reported any other educational achievement. Nearly 58% of respondents reported being married, and about 55% reported having children. 72.7% of respondents reported still living in the mid-size market region selected for the initial survey sample qualification. 27.3% reported living outside of the region, but had worked previously in the sample region per the requirements for participants to pass along the survey in the snowball sampling.

**Table 1.** *Demographic information of survey participants*

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
<i>Age (N=77)</i>		
Average Age	42.4	
Minimum	24	
Maximum	66	
<i>Generation (N=77)</i>		
Millennial	17	23.3%
Generation X	43	58.9%
Baby Boom	13	17.8%
<i>Gender (N=76)</i>		
Female	36	47.4%
Male	39	51.3%
Other	1	1.3%
<i>Highest educational degree achieved (N=77)</i>		
Less than high school degree	0	0.0%
High school degree or equivalent (e.g., GED)	2	2.6%
Some college but no degree	2	2.6%
Associate degree	0	0.0%
Bachelor degree	46	59.7%
Master's degree	26	33.8%
Doctorate	1	1.3%
<i>Still resides in sample market (N=77)</i>		
In region	56	72.7%
Out region	21	27.3%
<i>Marital status(N=76)</i>		
Single	24	31.6%
Married	44	57.9%
Divorced	7	9.2%
Other	1	1.3%
<i>Has children (N=76)</i>		
Yes	42	55.3%
No	34	44.7%

Professionally, about 58% of respondents reported to currently work in a journalism field, while only 46% of respondents reported to currently work in print journalism. However, about 78% of all respondents still consider themselves journalists. Of all survey respondents, the average percent of income generated from employment in print journalism is 42%. The average length of the respondents' journalism career was reported to be 17.6 years, with a high of 44 years and a low of 1.5 years. The average age all respondents first identified themselves as journalists was 20, with a low of 9 years old and a high of 35 years old. Nearly 10 percent first identified themselves as a journalist under the age of 15. Another 27.4% first identified in high school (through age 17); 32.9% identified in college (through age 21); 13.7% identified in the early career (through age 24); and 16.4% did not identify until age 25 or older.

**Table 2.** Professional demographic information of survey participants

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
<i>Works in a journalism field (N=76)</i>		
Yes	44	57.9%
No	32	42.1%
<i>Works in print journalism (N=76)</i>		
Yes	35	46.1%
No	41	53.9%
<i>Age did first identified self as a journalist (N=75)</i>		
Average age	20	
Minimum	9	
Maximum	35	
Never	1	
under 15 / middle school	7	9.6%
ages 15-17 / high school	20	27.4%
ages 18-21 / college	24	32.9%
ages 22-24 / early jobs	10	13.7%
ages 25+	12	16.4%
<i>Length in years of journalism career (N=76)</i>		
Average	17.6	
Minimum	1.5	
Maximum	44	
1-5 years	14	18.7%
6-10 years	10	13.3%
11-15 years	16	21.3%
16-20 years	8	10.7%
21-25 years	8	10.7%
26-30 years	10	13.3%
31+	9	12.0%
<i>I still consider myself a journalist. (N=74)</i>		
Yes	58	78.40%
No	16	21.60%

**Table 2. Continued**

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
<i>Hours per week (on average) spent working in print journalism (N=75)</i>	
Average	20.9
Minimum	0
Maximum	60
<i>Percent of current income generated from employment in print journalism (N=74)</i>	
Average	42.1
Minimum	0
Maximum	100

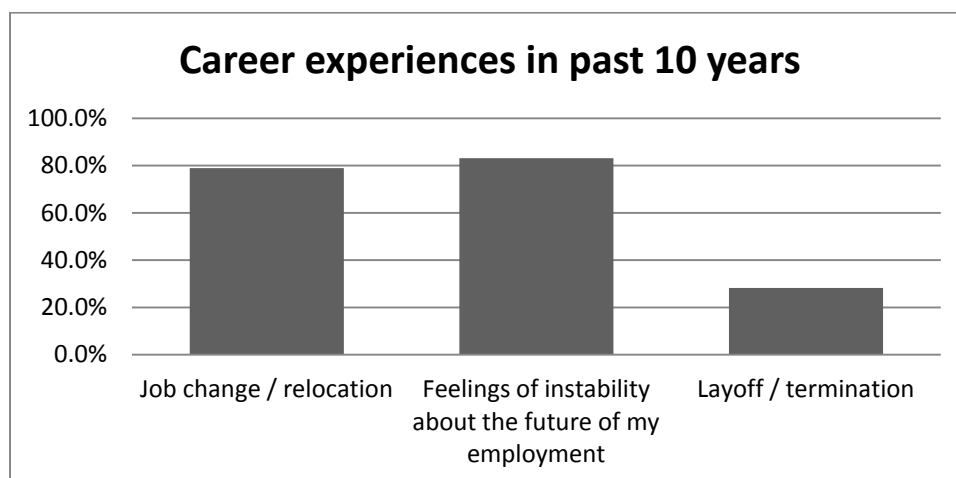
## RESULTS

**RQ1:** *What is the relationship between print journalists' career trajectory and their perspective on the stability of the newspaper industry?*

A majority of all respondents (83.1%) reported feelings of instability about the future of their employment in the past 10 years, while 78.9% have experienced a job change or relocation in that time. Only 49.3% reported a promotion in the past 10 years, but 77.5% have experienced a pay raise during the same timeframe. More than a quarter of respondents (28.2%) reported a layoff or termination in the past 10 years. A small number, 2.8% reported to have experienced a forced or early retirement in the same timeframe.



**Figure 1.** Career experiences identified by survey participants. (N=71)



When asked their perception of the stability of the newspaper industry at the start of their careers, on a scale of 1 to 7, the average response of all survey participants was 5.58. Asked their perception of the newspaper industry today, on the same scale, the average response of all survey participants was 1.85, a difference of 3.73 points and a reduction of 66.8% perception of stability.

**Table 3.** Perceptions of stability in the newspaper industry (Scale, 1-7) by survey respondents (N=74)

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**Variables Rating**

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*Perception of the stability of the newspaper industry at the start of career*

Average rating 5.58

*Perception of the stability of the newspaper industry today*

Average rating 1.85

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Reliability measure using Cronbach's Inter-item Alpha Reliability Coefficient of these two questions about stability actually found a negative result of  $-.373$ , which says that these two questions could not be combined into a single stability measure. Later attempts to find a correlation between these two stability measures using ANOVA testing also failed. There is no relationship to perception of stability at the start and perception of stability today for survey participants. Considering the means of  $5.58$  on a  $1-7$  scale at the start and  $1.85$  today, this supports that overall, everyone in the study had a perception of less stability today than at the start of their careers. These questions should be, and have been for purpose of this study, treated as separate dependent variables.

T-tests were used to investigate Research Question 1 by looking for statistically significant differences between two conditions of independent variables – earned a promotion in the past 10 years, earned a pay raise in the past 10 years, experienced a job change in the past 10 years, feelings of instability about employment in the past 10 years – on the perception of stability of the newspaper industry at the start of participants' careers as well as on the perception of stability of the newspaper industry today. There is a statistically significant difference between the perceptions of stability of the newspaper industry of those survey respondents who have experienced a job change in the past 10 years ( $M=5.36$ ) and those who have not changed jobs ( $M=6.28$ ),  $t(72)=2.45$ ,  $p<.05$ . These results suggest that those who have changed jobs in the past 10 years have a more positive perception of the stability of the newspaper industry than those who have not changed jobs.

One-way between-subjects ANOVA testing also found statistically significant relationship among independent variable of generations and the dependent variable of survey participants who reported that promotions contributed to their development as a professional

journalist,  $F(2,61) = 13.598$ ,  $p < .05$ , and demotions contributed to their development as a professional journalist,  $F(2, 47) = 7.518$ ,  $p < .05$ , in the past 10 years. Logically, this could suggest that those who have lived and worked longer – in any industry – are more likely to have experienced career changes of promotion and layoffs or terminations.

Other lifespan and career span measurements were done with ANOVA testing, starting with comparing the effect of the independent variable of generation – categorized as Baby Boomers (ages 55-72), Generations X (34-54), and Millennials (14-33) – on the dependent variables of perception of stability in the newspaper industry at the start of their career and perception of stability in the newspaper industry today, both of which were measured on a scale of 1-7. There was a statistically significant difference among the categories that represented the independent variable generations on means for the dependent variable perception of stability in the newspaper industry at the start of their careers,  $F(2, 67) = 33.002$ ,  $p < .05$ , and for the change in outlook between the start of their career and today,  $F(2, 67) = 15.880$ ,  $p < .05$ . In addition, the difference between their perceptions at the start of their careers and today also appear to be generationally related. The difference between the categories that represented generations was not statistically significant for the dependent variable perception of outlook today,  $F(2, 67) = 1.297$ ,  $p > .05$ .

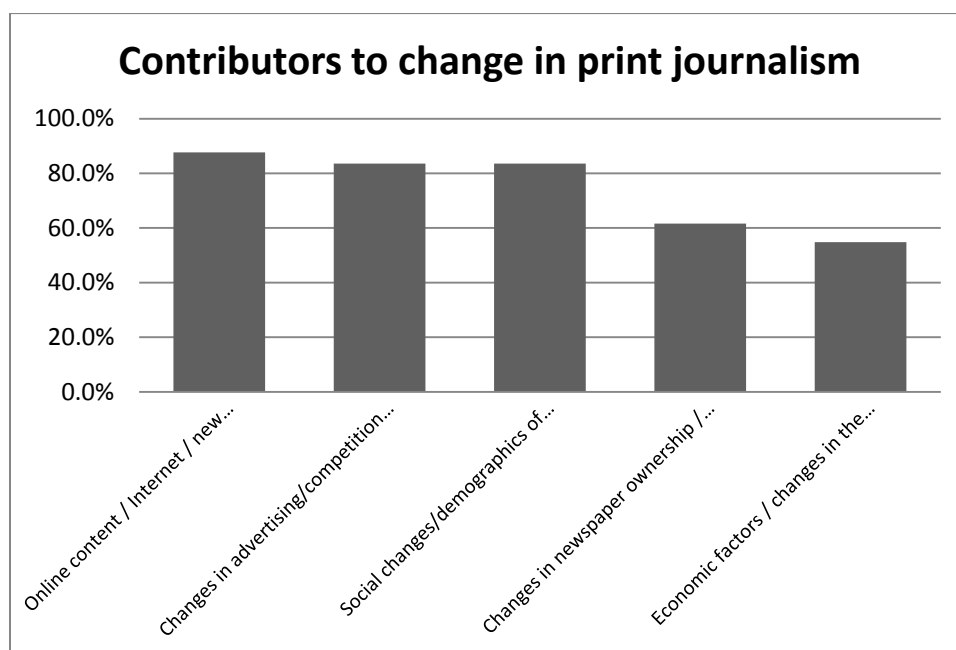
Further, ANOVA testing was used to find statistically significant effect of the independent variable of generation on the dependent variables of readership habits. There were statistically significant differences between the categories of the independent variable generations and dependent variables as follows: reporting that daily newspaper readership contributed to their development as a professional journalist,  $F(2, 66) = 3.821$ ,  $p < .05$ ; and reporting of online news sites contributed to development as a professional journalist,  $F(2, 66) =$

5.558,  $p < .05$ . There also was a statistically significant difference between the categories of the independent variable generations and dependent variable of high school educational experience as contribution to their careers,  $F(2, 65) = 6.497$ ,  $p < .05$ .

**RQ2:** *What external factors do print journalists and former journalists pinpoint as reasons for changes in the newspaper industry?*

Asked about categories of key contributors to changes in print journalism (Figure 1), 87.7% agreed that online content/Internet/new technologies contributed; 83.6% agreed that changes in advertising/competition for advertising dollars contributed; 83.6% also agreed that social changes/demographics of readership/changes in consumption contributed; 61.6% agreed that changes in newspaper ownership/management contributed; and 54.8% said economic factors / changes in the economy contributed.

**Figure 2.** *External contributors to change in print journalism identified by survey participants. (N=73)*



Regarding their own readership habits, 47.4% of respondents still read a local print newspaper daily. Just 12.3% of survey respondents read a national print newspaper daily. And a mere 7.5% read an international newspaper daily. Digitally, the numbers become more significant regarding daily readership of “print” news: 75.4% read a digital version of a local newspaper; 89.5% read a digital national newspaper; and 72.3% read a digital international paper. And 68.1% of respondents read at least one news aggregator website daily. More than 70% of respondents consider social media a regular news source. The response rate on these readership questions, however, dropped from an average of 73 responses per question to an average of 59 responses per question. This could be indicative of lack of regular newspaper readership by the journalists and former journalists in the study. The questions were phrased to check whether they read a digital and/or print version of local, national, and international newspapers. There was no option for neither, and so a lack of a response could be indicative of a neither response or a skipped question.

**Table 4.** *Readership habit responses from survey participants*

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
<i>Reads at least one local newspaper daily (N=57)</i>		
Digital	43	75.4%
Print	27	47.4%
Other	5	8.8%
<i>Reads at least one national newspaper daily (N=57)</i>		
Digital	51	89.5%
Print	7	12.3%
Other	7	12.3%
<i>Reads at least one international newspaper daily (N=40)</i>		
Digital	29	72.5%
Print	3	7.5%
Other	9	22.5%
<i>Reads at least one news aggregator site daily (N=72)</i>		
Yes	49	68.1%
No	23	31.9%
<i>I consider social media (i.e. Facebook) one of my regular news sources (N=71)</i>		
Yes	50	70.4%
No	21	29.6%

**H1:** *Survey participants currently employed in the newspaper industry perceive the newspaper industry to have more stability than those not currently employed in the newspaper industry.*

Using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient, I looked for significant correlation between interval-level dependent variables of perception of stability at the start of participant careers and perception of stability today, and the independent variables of percent income generated from print journalism, and age the participant first identified himself/herself as a journalist. The percent of current income generated from employment in print journalism positively correlates to interval-level participant perception of stability of the newspaper industry today, such that greater percent of current income generated in print journalism today, the more stable the participant perceived the newspaper industry to be today,  $p < .05$  (e.s.=72). Higher percent employment in the newspaper industry appears to support a more stable outlook on the industry.

Also in the employment category found in data analysis include age in years that the participant first identified himself/herself as a journalist negatively correlates with length of journalism career, such that the older the participant was when he/she identified himself/herself as a journalist, the shorter his/her career,  $p < .05$  (e.s.=73). This may not indicate anything about choice of length of career as much as it suggests that making a decision later in life to become a journalist limits the opportunity to have a very long career when compared to those who considered themselves journalists before formal journalism education. Also, age in years positively correlates to length of journalism career in years, such that the older the participant, the longer their journalism career is/was,  $p < .05$  (e.s.=72).

T-tests also were used to attempt to find support for Hypothesis 1 by looking for statistically significant differences between two conditions of independent variables – currently employed in journalism, still considers self a journalist, current works in print journalism – on the perception of stability of the newspaper industry at the start of participants' careers as well as on the perception of stability of the newspaper industry today. A statistically significant difference was found between the perceptions of stability of the newspaper industry today of those survey respondents who still work in print journalism ( $M=2.09$ ) and those who do not work in print journalism ( $M=1.64$ ),  $t(72) = -2.133$ ,  $p < .05$ . Contrary to the findings above regarding percent of income generated from print journalism, there appears to be a negative relationship between those who say they still work in print journalism and perception of outlook on the newspaper industry, such that those who still work in print journalism appear to have less positive outlook on the future of newspapers. Additional research would be needed to clarify these two conflicting results, however, those who work part-time in print journalism, which was not asked, may affect it. Those who identified as working in any journalism field did not have a statistically significant relationship to perception of stability in the print newspaper industry, and neither did those who still consider themselves a journalist.



**Table 5.** *Significant findings of quantitative research*

<b>Independent variable</b>	<b>Dependent variable</b>	<b>p value</b>	<b>Indications</b>
Percent of current income generated from print journalism employment	Perception of stability of newspaper industry today	$p < .05$ (e.s. = 72)	The greater percent of current income generated in print journalism today, the more stable the participant perceived the newspaper industry to be today
Age participant first identified himself/herself as a journalist	Length of journalism career	$p < .05$ (e.s. = 73)	The older the participant was when he/she identified himself/herself as a journalist, the shorter his/her career
Age	Length of journalism career	$p < .05$ (e.s. = 72)	The older the participant, the longer their journalism career is/was
Currently employed in journalism	Perception of stability of newspaper industry today	( $M=1.64$ ), $t(72) = -2.133$ , $p < .05$ .	Those who still work in print journalism appear to have less positive outlook on the future of newspapers

**H2:** *Survey participants who still consider themselves journalists today perceive the newspaper industry to have more stability than those who do not still consider themselves journalists.*

Approximately 78% of participants in the survey still considered themselves journalists, while professionally only about 58% of respondents reported to currently work in a journalism field. Only 46% of respondents reported to currently work in print journalism. Still considering themselves a journalist did not correlate to any different perception of stability in the newspaper industry at the start of their careers nor today. Perceptions of stability appear to change independently of changing identity as a journalist.

**H3:** *Longer careers in the newspaper industry will directly correlate to greater perception of stability of the newspaper industry.*

Again using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient, significant findings are that length of journalism career in years positively correlates to interval-level perception of stability at the start of the career, such that the longer the career, the more stable the participant perceived the newspaper industry to be at the start of their career,  $p < .05$  (e.s. = 74). Further, age in years positively correlates to interval-level perception of stability at the start of the career, such that the older the participant, the more stable the participant perceived the newspaper industry to be at the start of their career,  $p < .05$  (e.s. = 70). These findings support the hypothesis that longer careers correlate to greater perception of stability in the newspaper industry at the start of their careers. This, along with correlation to older participants correlating to more stability at the start, suggests that people who started their careers earlier historically felt that the industry was more stable. History suggests that the newspaper industry was more profitable prior to the 2000s, and thus would have sustained a larger workforce. So, those who began their newspaper careers prior to that appear to have acknowledged that profitability and workforce opportunities, which may be interpreted as stability. No correlation could be established between length of journalism career in years and interval-level perception of stability of the newspaper industry today. Lack of correlation here and with age, along with overall lower mean for perception of stability today, all suggest that all ages of participants generally find the newspaper industry today less stable.

No correlations could be established with significance between perception of stability of the newspaper industry at the start of participants' careers and perception of stability of the newspaper industry today; age in years and perception of stability of the newspaper industry today; age in years the participants first identified themselves as journalists and perception of stability of the newspaper industry at the start of their careers; and age in years the participants

first identified themselves as journalists and perception of stability of the newspaper industry today.

## DISCUSSION

### Interpretation

As the American proverb goes you can take the boy out of the country but you can't take the country out of the boy. While only about 58% of respondents reported to currently work in a journalism field, and only 46% of respondents reported to currently work in print journalism, the majority, about 78% of respondents, still consider themselves journalists. This may be grounded in the professionalization that is linked to the journalistic role. The years of formal education and training, as well as on-the-job skill development has engrained a journalistic role onto these participants. Their removal from the field of journalism may not actually remove the role from their identity. Employment in print journalism also accounted for less than half of overall income on average. Additional testing found no statistical significance between age or length-of-career as a factor in whether the respondent still considered himself or herself a journalist. Further, no relationship was found between perception of stability and whether the respondent still considered himself or herself a journalist, which does not support Hypothesis 2. These findings suggest an overwhelming perception of an unstable industry from those who are or once were employed in it. This is further evidenced by the 68.8% drop in overall perception of the stability of the newspaper industry from the start of his or her career to today, as well as lack of relationship between and reliability of the two questions that asked for a numerical evaluation of the perception of stability at the start of their careers and then today.

Following is a discussion of the results of this survey, guided by the research questions and hypotheses presented at the beginning of this chapter, that, along with interviews conducted and detailed in Chapter 3, do confirm my overall hypothesis that changes in journalists' careers influence their perspective on the stability of the newspaper industry, at least for the mid-market sample collected, even if not all hypotheses were supported. The findings open the conversation around workforce perspective in the newspaper industry. I believe the results to be strong enough to make generalizations of the same sentiments to other mid-sized markets of print journalism. I expect among the sample taken from survey respondents for interviews to find non-journalism professionals applying their skills in advertising and marketing fields, and in part-time blogging and reporting, for example. An argument then can be made that there has been a change in the practices, behaviors and very definition of journalist and journalism, and those changes allows for many creative class professionals who are no longer working in traditional journalism fields, including print, to still see themselves still among the ranks of journalists either through formal or informal part-time work or creative application of their journalism skillset to a new profession or industry.

As outlined in the introduction, Glen Elder (2014) suggests that career paths are “defined by the aggregated work histories of employees. They are structured by industry sectors and the labor market. ... On the developmental level, both negative and positive changes in work have psychological consequences, as in feelings of self-efficacy” (p. 2635). And so it is a logical conclusion that a change in definition of journalist also impacts the perception of efficacy – defined in this study from workforce perspective as stability – of the newspaper industry by those who once did or still do identify themselves as a journalist. That is to say that the professionals and once-professional journalists no longer feel that either they can succeed in the

newspaper industry or that the industry can no longer support a career for them in traditional news production. In this section I offer an overview of how the significant – and insignificant – findings answer the research questions outlined in the beginning of this chapter. I also build a case for this argument, which continues into Chapter 3, of changing behaviors, practices and definition and offer evidence that the newspaper industry is undergoing a paradigm shift.

Regarding the relationship between print journalists' career trajectory and their perspective on the stability of the newspaper industry, this research has determined that with few exceptions, everyone who is and has been in the industry and who participated in this survey sees the newspaper industry as less stable today than at the start of their careers. Out of 75 responses to the questions about perception of stability at the start of their careers and perception of stability today, only two people reported that the stability today was greater than that of when they started their careers. One person's perception of the stability of the industry stayed the same over the career span. Of those three, two were Millennials and one was a Generation Xer. This could be because Millennials, born after 1981 and coming of age professionally in the mid- to late-2000s, broke into the journalism as the economy collapsed. As their careers continue, attempts at economic restabilization have created more opportunity for their continuing careers, also creating an increased perception of the stability of the industry as a whole. Among those who still work in print journalism, however, the perception of stability of the newspaper industry was actually rated lower overall than those who are no longer in print, which was a surprising finding and does not support Hypothesis 1. This suggests that current "insiders" to the newspaper industry have greater feelings of instability because they continue work in an industry from which they may be laid off at any time. Additional research may help understand why they choose to stay in newspapers, and hypotheses may include perceived lack of other skills,

inability to find employment in other industry or other factors. But a majority of all respondents (83.1%) reported feelings of instability about the future of their employment in the past 10 years. But also discovered was that those who have changed jobs in the past 10 years have a more positive perception of the stability of the newspaper industry than those who have not changed jobs. Again, additional research may help understand more causation for this.

The economic recession that started in the mid- to late-2000s provides a timeline that would support many journalists' perception of instability for reasons outlined in Chapter 1, including reduction in print advertising and profit models that resulted in reduction of staff at many news organizations. I believe these results regarding perceived instability to be strong enough to generalize to other journalists experienced in similarly sized mid-markets. Several of the participants in this survey are employed in major markets now – I know this, having followed up with eight of them for interviews for the next chapter – and still have that same perception of a less-stable industry today than when they started. Indeed, it's possible to infer, though it is inconclusive without further testing, that a survey of major markets may find similar results.

There is a statistically significant difference between the perceptions of stability of the newspaper industry of those survey respondents who have experienced a job change in the past 10 years ( $M=5.36$ ) and those who have not changed jobs ( $M=6.28$ ),  $t(72)=2.45$ ,  $p<.05$ . These results suggest that those who have changed jobs in the past 10 years have a more positive perception of the stability of the newspaper industry than those who have not changed jobs

Generational breakdown of perception of stability in the newspaper industry at the start of their career found differences among the categories. ANOVA testing alone does not allow conclusion that older generations of journalists felt that their careers were more stable in the newspaper industry. It can tell us only that there are relationships among the generations and

stability at the start of their careers. However, along with statistically significant age findings that the older the participant, the more stable the participant perceived the newspaper industry to be at the start of their career, we can infer that older generations appear to have been more positive in their perception of stability of the newspaper industry at the start of their careers than younger generations. Baby Boomers, born between 1943 and 1960, would have entered the newspaper workforce at a time when print journalists brought out the Watergate scandal. The industry at that time really was the “fourth estate,” a term ascribed by Thomas Carlyle who considered print journalism so important to the foundation for democracy and truth that it was considered a fourth branch of government. (Thussu, 2008). Newspapers at that time were keeping politicians in check, investigating and reporting on crime, and respected and relied on in the community. Generation X, born between 1961 and 1981 entered the industry during and after the time of significant profitability in newspapers and before significant layoffs hit the workforce. Millennials, born after 1981 through present, are entering an industry that has fallen from that reputation and has experienced widespread layoffs in its workforce and closure of many publications. Kuhn (1996) identifies a paradigm shift as a disruption of accepted practices, identity, behaviors, equipment, etc. These findings that younger generations feel less stable about entering the newspaper industry is a key indicator that a paradigm shift is taking place in the industry. Journalists exiting the print field and journalists’ overall perception of growing instability of print newspapers both point to a shifting industry. That there is no certain future for print journalism suggests the shift is still in a pre-paradigmatic phase. The “normal” that was newspapers for Baby Boomers has been impacted by anomalies, influenced and correlated to economics, finances, readership, and technology. That normal is all but gone, and Kuhn’s crisis

phase has given way to experiments with online news sites, blogs, citizen journalism, cell-phone reporting, etc.

Further confirmation around age was found, in that the older a survey respondent was when he/she identified himself as a journalist, the less stable they perceived the newspaper industry at the start of their careers. And the longer the career, the more stable the participant perceived the newspaper industry to be at the start of their career, which supports Hypothesis 3. I suspect this is related to the generational and age findings that older survey respondents would have reported in the survey longer careers, and so the findings may be duplicative. A reliability test of these findings would be to use this same survey for longitudinal studies and administer it to the same or a similar population at intervals of time. However, regarding perception of stability of the newspaper industry today, there were no significant relationships to generation, age in years, length of journalism career, or age participants first identified themselves as journalists. This confirms what was suggested in the introduction of this section: Nearly everyone who responded to the survey believes that the newspaper industry is less stable today than it was at the start of their careers. This is further supported by a lack of relationship between perception of stability of the newspaper industry at the start of participants' careers and perception of stability of the newspaper industry today.

Considering identification as a journalist, the data shows that the average age all respondents first identified themselves as journalists was 20, with a low of 9 years old and a high of 35 years old. Nearly 10% first identified themselves as a journalist under the age of 15. Most found their journalist identity in high school or college, combined 60%. About 16% did not identify until age 25 or older. Analysis of this data against length of career found that the older the participant was when he/she identified himself/herself as a journalist, the shorter his/her



career. Age in years also positively correlates to length of journalism career in years, such that the older the participant, the longer their journalism career is/was. This could be the results of a couple of things: It could be that people in their 30s and 40s have already gotten out of the newspaper industry, and so report shorter careers; it also could mean that older people, who are nearing or already retired, spent their entire careers in the industry. It could be some of both. Further research could target Generation X and Millennial journalists' expectations about length of career.

Asked about the categories of key contributors to changes in print journalism outlined in Chapter 1, a majority of journalists and former journalists surveyed agreed that factors contributing to the crisis in print newspapers included Internet and new technologies, changes in newspaper ownership and management decisions, changes in the economy, changes in readership and news consumption, and workforce obstacles such as layoffs. This is important that insiders to an industry agree with the outsider perspectives on change cited by prior researchers including McChesney (2011, 2012), Nichols (2009), Mythen (2010), Sonderman (2012), Sasaki (2009), and others. Specifically regarding readership habits, 83.6% of respondents believe that readership changes have contributed to changes in print journalism and that currently less than half of respondents themselves admit to reading a daily print newspaper. Less than half of respondents read a local print newspaper daily, even fewer read a national print newspaper daily, and still fewer read an international newspaper daily. Digitally, the data supports broader news consumption, for example regarding daily readership of "print" news: 75.4% read a digital version of a local newspaper; 89.5% read a digital national newspaper; and 72.3% read a digital international paper. And more than half read at least one news aggregator website daily. Not quite three-fourths of respondents consider social media a regular news source.

Glen Elder's 2014 research, however, says that "Individual lives are not merely shaped by social institutions or the larger environment. They are also constructed through the choices and plans people make." Those who have changed jobs or relocated in the past 10 years (78.9% of survey respondents) have a more positive perception of the stability of the newspaper industry than those who have not changed jobs. I explore this more in interviews in Chapter 3, but these survey findings may suggest that career opportunity is related to feelings of stability. I did not ask whether the job changes may have removed them from the newspaper industry. Interestingly, the data show that the greater percent of current income generated in print journalism today, the more stable the participant perceived the newspaper industry to be today. But there was no relationship between the respondent still considering himself or herself a journalist and perception of stability today. So, even though 78% of the participants still consider themselves journalists, actual employment in the print newspaper industry makes a positive difference for perception of stability of the industry. This could be because considering yourself a journalist may not equate to actual employment in the field.

### Limitations

All questions in the survey were voluntary, and the introduction advised participants that they could skip any question for any reason. A total of 77 people took the survey, but the response rate on most questions was less than that, with some question averaging only 59 responses per question. That sample size then also limited the power of significance in some between-groups testing. For example, in the ANOVA testing, the sample size of the generations was not evenly divided. In order to have higher power of significance, distributions of 30 people in each of the three generational categories would have been ideal. In this case, the sample size

overall was limited to 76 survey responses and only about 73 people who answered each of the dependent variable questions, plus or minus 3 people per response. The distribution favored Generation X (43 people), and was less than 30 people in each of the Millennial (17 people) and Baby Boom (13 people) generations. I theorize this result was a product of sampling and availability within the industry population. That is, I used email and social media to spread the survey link, and fewer Boomers may be on social media. Also many Boomers have been offered buyouts, and may not still be connected to the primary group I requested responses from. Fewer Millennials may be entering the newspaper industry today.

Using a snowball sample is a limitation because it is not a random sample of the population and can make the findings less generalizable. Finally, having only one question for the dependent variable removed ability for a reliability check of the perception of stability of the newspaper industry. An alternate design should have included multiple questions to measure the perception of stability at the start and current points in their careers in order to use Cronbach's Inter-item Alpha Reliability Coefficient to check for reliability of the dependent variable of stability.

#### Future Research

Asked about categories of key contributors to changes in print journalism, I asked participants to select rather large buckets of changes – online content/Internet/new technologies, changes in advertising/competition for advertising dollars, social changes/demographics of readership/changes in consumption, changes in newspaper ownership/management, and economic factors / changes in the economy. As mentioned in Chapter I, researchers of external factors of change have identified these external categories. 87.7% have agreed that new online

practices were factors. In Chapter III, I discuss interview participants' responses to a question of times of technologic change in their career. Using this one large code as an example, further studies could be done on journalists' perspectives specific to any one of these large categories. Each is opportunity to dive further into journalists' perception of contribution of change and impact of that change on their career spans.

Another opportunity I see from these results is to find out why people have left the newspaper industry or journalism all together. A little more than half of the people surveyed (57.9%) still work in a journalism field, and a little less than half (46.1%) work in print journalism. Why did they leave? Some were forced into retirement or layoff, according to the survey, but combined retirements and layoffs/terminations were less than a third of all respondents (30%), which suggests that at least 27.9% of those who responded chose to leave the field. Why? The interviews discussed in Chapter 3 offer some insight, but not everyone interviewed has left the newspaper industry, so a study focused solely on that may add to the Creative Class conversation started by Richard Florida & reviewed in Chapter 1. On the alternate side, research could explore why journalists don't leave. This survey found that among those who still work in print journalism the perception of stability of the newspaper industry was actually rated lower overall than those who are no longer in print, suggesting that current newspaper journalists have greater feelings of instability because they continue work in an industry from which they may be laid off at any time. Additional research may help understand why they choose to stay in newspapers.

## SUMMARY

The goals set out at the start of this survey, to explore the perspectives of journalists and find tangible statistics for the perception of the stability of the industry, were met. The data gathered here lend support my argument that the newspaper industry is undergoing a paradigm shift, and it begins to extend the conversation about the state of the industry by contributing an insider perspective to the body of literature more concerned with the external perspective – economic, social and political factors. The data presented here also confirms the external factors identified by the researchers outlined in Chapter 1. Every major bucket of external factors of contribution to the changing industry theorized by those researchers – online content/Internet/new technologies, changes in advertising/competition for advertising dollars, social changes/demographics of readership/changes in consumption, changes in newspaper ownership/management, and economic factors / changes in the economy – was confirmed by a majority of survey responders. They confirm that most journalists experience feelings about instability about the future of their employment. They confirm that journalists are leaving the industry, by choice and by force. All of this supports an argument that there has been a change in the definition of journalist and journalism, and if this change in definition of journalist and journalism can be qualified, it further supports an argument that the print journalism industry is undergoing a paradigm shift as it sees changes in the workforce’s perceptions, mindsets, behaviors, professional practices and their own readership habits.

The next chapter opens more discussion through interviews of 8 survey participants about what's at stake in this unstable industry. The interviewees talk about the changing roles of the professional journalist, an ultimately the definition or what it means to make a living as a journalist in this day and age, as well as offer some insight on why they may have abandoned

their identity as a journalist all together as they seek employment outside the industry. They add understanding of the population of newspaper laborers in this paradigm shift by diving into journalists' and former journalists' attitudes and behavioral reactions to the shifting industry of print journalism by asking them about their experiences throughout their careers.

## CHAPTER III

### QUALITATIVE STUDY

#### INTRODUCTION

Scott, a 41-year-old reporter interviewed for this thesis, summarized his and other journalists' awareness of a change in the newspaper industry with the following anecdote:

I know there was, again around, um, you know, 2006, 2005, 2006, 2007, the editor of the paper I worked at had said that he had noticed that maybe within the last 10 years, there had been a change in attitudes about the newspaper. And that it was no longer a requirement for professional people to subscribe to a daily newspaper. And the example that he gave was in his neighborhood he's got a lawyer on one side, or a doctor on the other, or something like that, right one a little cul-de-sac. And every morning, every, you know, every morning he goes out and gets his newspaper, the driveways on each side of him, professional, educated people, do not get the newspaper. And it, and it, and that wasn't necessarily the Internet taking over or anything. That was just, in his mind, uh, that was, that there came a time in America when professional people stopped getting the newspaper. And why that was, is that just, it, they didn't care, or they, you know, uh, there may be not, may be hard to find a good reason behind it exactly, but I still think about that, and I agree with it" (Scott, 41).

I entered this qualitative research portion with a few research questions in mind. The goal was always to gather an overall perspective of the newspaper industry over the career span of the journalists and former journalists I interviewed in order to find evidence to prove or disprove my thesis that the newspaper industry is undergoing a paradigm shift. I found quantitative evidence in Chapter 2 that journalists' perspectives on the stability of the newspaper industry have

changed over their career-spans. As a former journalist myself, my outlook on the industry became more negative over my nearly 10-year career. And though I work part-time editing, I no longer consider myself a journalist. I do, however, hold hope for newspapers' future as one based in the continual need for their service as a public good. I don't know what the balance or integration of digital components ultimately can bring for print, but I do believe digital is underutilized in newsrooms as an information source. My interviews with other journalists and former journalists have generated evidence of changing behaviors and practices of what we have called journalism. Furthermore, the interviews help identify turning points in career-spans that have prompted change in their roles and identities as journalists, and in some cases decisions to leave their positions at print newspaper due to incongruence with prior concepts of traditional newspaper work. Giele and Elder (1998) state that understanding careers and career-spans require also understanding the tensions that surround their careers and roles as influential to the turning points in them:

When one asks about turning points in which one's life took a different course from the way it had been going, respondents often answer in terms of changing attitudes and feelings or personal development rather than in terms of redirecting their lives. This suggests that one might focus on the acquisition of a changed perspective on self, or events and circumstances in the life course that led to such a changed perspective ... If we want to understand occupational or marital careers better, then we need to examine those turning points. In most instances, we will be dealing not with points in time but rather with increasing tensions in an occupied role and/or increasing attractions of other possibilities (p. 205).



I asked the interviewees to describe points of transition and change in their lives, in order to identify themes in the career-spans that may have altered their perspectives of the newspaper industry. I first developed research questions based on prior research of the newspaper as an industry, and then modified the questions amid analysis of the workforce perspective uncovered in the interviews.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How has the outlook on the future of the newspaper industry changed over the career-spans of current and former print journalists?
2. Are there common points of change in journalists' careers that impact their outlook on the future of the newspaper industry? And is there a relationship between those points of change in journalists' careers and external factors studied of economic, social or technological changes as outlined by previous researchers?
3. How has journalists' emotional outlook of the future of the newspaper industry changed at turning points of their careers?
4. How have journalists' behaviors and practices changed to reflect the external changes in the industry, including economics, advertising, technology and online, and readership? Do those behaviors support or devalue the argument that the newspaper industry is undergoing a paradigm shift?

## PARTICIPANTS

From the 77 survey responses, I obtained a volunteer sample of 35 respondents who were willing to participate in a formal set of interviews to cull the qualitative data I need for a more descriptive analysis. For purposes of time, I limited the number of interviews I wanted to conduct to no more than 10. My goal was to send out 12 requests for interviews, hoping I would get 8-10 positive responses for participation.

**Table 6.** *Identifying interview participants from volunteers, and actual turnout*

	<b>Regional affiliation</b>		
	<i>Survey percent</i>	<i>Request percent</i>	<i>Actual participation</i>
In Region	72.7%	66.7%	75.0%
Out of Region	27.3%	33.3%	25.0%
<b>Generation</b>			
	<i>Survey percent</i>	<i>Request percent</i>	<i>Actual participation</i>
Millennial (b. 1982-present)	23.3%	16.7%	12.5%
Generation X (1961-1981)	58.9%	58.3%	62.5%
Baby Boom (1943-1960)	17.8%	25.0%	25.0%
<b>Still identify as journalist</b>			
	<i>Survey percent</i>	<i>Request percent</i>	<i>Actual participation</i>
Yes	78.4%	75.0%	87.5%
No	21.6%	25.0%	12.5%
<b>Currently works in a journalism field</b>			
	<i>Survey percent</i>	<i>Request percent</i>	<i>Actual participation</i>
Yes	57.9%	58.3%	75.0%
No	42.1%	41.7%	25.0%
<b>Currently works in print journalism</b>			
	<i>Survey percent</i>	<i>Request percent</i>	<i>Actual participation</i>
Yes	46.1%	41.7%	62.5%
No	53.9%	.3%	37.5%
<b>Gender</b>			
	<i>Survey percent</i>	<i>Request percent</i>	<i>Actual participation</i>
Male	47.4%	41.7%	50.0%
Female	51.3%	58.3%	50.0%
Other	1.3%	0.0%	0.0%
<b>Education</b>			
	<i>Survey percent</i>	<i>Request percent</i>	<i>Actual participation</i>
Less than high school degree	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
High school degree or equivalent	2.6%	0.0%	0.0%
Some college but no degree	2.6%	0.0%	0.0%
Associate degree	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Bachelor degree	59.7%	75.0%	75.0%
Master's degree	33.8%	25.0%	25.0%
Doctorate	1.3%	0.0%	0.0%
<b>Years of experience</b>			
	<i>Survey percent</i>	<i>Request percent</i>	<i>Actual participation</i>
Average years	17.6%	20.6%	20.5%

I began narrowing by selecting in- and out-of-region participants, knowing that out of region participants would be harder to schedule. I wanted to tackle that demographic first. I defined “in region” as those survey participants still living in the mid-sized market identified as the area of study. My goal is to get perspectives on a specific mid-sized market in hopes to draw conclusions that may be applicable to other newspaper markets of similar size. 72.7% of survey volunteers were in region. 27.3% were out of region. I identified 4 out-of-region participants, which is approximately 33.3%, knowing that those would be the most difficult to get commitment and to set up. I identified 8 in region participants, which is a lower percent than responded to the survey, but with the expectation that I would be more successful in gaining commitment from those nearer to me geographically. Among each of those two categories - in region and out of region - I split the requests 50% each for those participants who identified as still working in print journalism and not working in print journalism. I did this so that I wouldn't have a biased sample about those who may have left the industry under uncertain circumstances. Using years of birth as outlined in by Strauss & Howe's 1991 book *Generations*, I looked at the sample as a whole and selected a representation of generations for interviews. Baby Boomers, born between 1943 and 1960, are identified as ages 55-72, and made up 17.8% of all survey responses. Generation X, born 1961-1981, is ages 34-54, and comprised 58.9% of survey responses. Millennials, 1982-2003, are ages 14-33, and were 23.3% of survey responses. For my twelve interview requests, Baby Boomers were 25%, Generation Xers were 58.3% and Millennials were 16.7% of requests sent. Those who agreed to participate were 12.5% Boomers, 62.5% Generation X, and 12.5% Millennial.

**Table 7.** *Demographic information of interview participants*

<b>Pseudonym</b>	<b>Carla</b>	<b>Eric</b>	<b>David</b>	<b>Elizabeth</b>	<b>Jessica</b>	<b>John</b>	<b>Amanda</b>	<b>Scott</b>
<b>Age ID'd as journalist</b>	18	26	12	19	22	17	18	23
<b>Age (current)</b>	52	36	57	24	35	64	43	41
<b>Generation</b>	Gen X	Gen X	Boom	Millennial	Gen X	Boom	Gen X	Gen X
<b>Years journalism experience</b>	30	11	30	2	8	41	25	17
<b>Gender</b>	F	M	M	F	F	M	F	M
<b>Works in journalism</b>	Yes - full time	Yes - full time	Yes - part time	Yes - full time	No	No	Yes - part time	Yes - full time
<b>Works in print</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
<b>Considers self a journalist</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
<b>Education</b>	Bachelors	Masters	Bachelors	Bachelors	Bachelors	Bachelors	Masters	Bachelors
<b>Income bracket</b>	90K+	90K+	40K-60K	20K-40K	40K-60K	90K+	40K-60K	40K-60K
<b>Lives in/out of sample region</b>	OOR	OOR	In	In	In	In	In	In

## METHOD

The interviews took approximately 30 minutes each, and were conducted in November and December 2015. Each began with an introduction including a brief overview of the study as well as their rights concerning participation (Appendix B). I obtained more details about participants' specific careers, contributions to industry changes and perception of the industry. Prior to beginning the conversation, I asked participants to refrain as much as possible from

using specific names of companies and people to preserve anonymity. I asked them to recall moments of change over their journalism career - including first promotion, a time of technological change and a recent change - and to describe feelings about their career path and perception of the future of the newspaper industry. They also were asked a similar set of demographic and career-span questions as the survey instrument.

Using a critical discourse analysis, I coded the interviews from macro to micro – in the macro sense within the context of larger industry trends, and in the micro sense within individual perceptions of their own careers. I approached the material using perspectives including technological, workforce, class, and economics. These perspectives align with those outlined by researchers of the external influencers of newspaper industry – Internet and social competition, workforce obstacles, and economic issues McChesney (2011, 2012), Nichols (2009), Mythen (2010), Sonderman (2012), Sasaki (2009), etc. I examined the interview participants' responses to perspectives on the print newspaper industry. Glen Elder (2014) suggests that each turning point and key moment in a career can impact their individual identity as well as their outlook on the industry:

Each concept – trajectory, transition, and turning point – applies to levels of the life course, from macro to micro: (1) institutionalized pathways may be defined on the macro level by social policies of the state or firm; (2) within these pathways, the individual works out his or her life course through choices and lines of action; and (3) the individual's own course of development and aging, which may be expressed in terms of self-confidence or intellectual competence. These multiple levels are illustrated by an examination of worklife (p. 2635).

I examined their career changes as they were influenced by industry changes. And I examined their change in identity as journalists and their perception of what it means to be a journalist. Any one career transition for a journalist also can be influenced by what's going on in the context of the history of the newspaper industry. Examination of interview responses from the perspective of crisis in print newspapers identified previously, I find evidence for my argument that newspapers are undergoing a paradigm shift as exemplified by interview participants' noted changes in behaviors and practices, their identification of incongruence with previously accepted processes, changes in outlook on the industry, and a perception of change in what it means to be a journalist today.

Initially I transcribed the interviews and identified high-level codes that aligned with prior research on external factors indicative of crisis in the industry, which gave perspective on these changes from inside the industry's workforce. Reading, rereading and reading with purpose for coding and themes, I identified exemplars of these changes, and bucketed additional identifiers of a paradigm shift in the newspaper industry. Looking at these things from journalists' perspective offers evidence of behavioral change from the practitioners of journalism. Further, interview participants offer support that the external factors have influenced career change, and did identify perception of change of what it means to be a journalist. My hope was to identify commonalities of changed perspectives during similar moments of career change among journalists that may coincide with the patterns of change identified by researchers who have analyzed newspapers' recent history for external contributions to the crisis and decline of the industry. I analyzed these themes for significance and contribution to the field of research already constructed. Bent Flyvbjerg's (2011) critical case study allows "logical deductions" from the case studies to the greater field. Identifying commonalities from journalists and former

journalists in this study allows generalizations about the workforce perspective of the newspaper industry's crisis. And their practices and perceptions can be used to make the case for a paradigm shift taking place in the industry today.

Also, in completing the transcription portion of the research, I found an additional need to consider the responses through an emotional-communication lens, as many of the participants included language of emotional connection to their careers and the changes taking place in the industry. To quantify the occurrence of emotional terminology surrounding times of career changes, I used NVivo software to supplement my textual analysis of the participants' perceptions of the value of newspapers and the future of newspapers at the start of their careers and at the time of the interviews. NVivo testing assisted in identification of commonalities in emotional terminology and level of positivity at turning points of participants' careers, which I could then extrapolate to qualify perception of change and impact to career decisions. All of the themes found through coding are defined in Table 8.



**Table 8.** *Defining themes of journalists' views of the newspaper industry*

<b>Themes</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>Workforce obstacles</b>	Combines discourses regarding workplace issues, employment and career, Creative Class, education, performing journalism, and connects them to discourses from prior research discussed in Chapter 1.
<b>Economic factors and business practices</b>	Combines discourses regarding business model, business performance, profit and finances, economy, news production, politics, and connects them to the discourses in prior research.
<b>Social and technological topics</b>	Combines discourses on readership, Internet and technology issues, and connects them to the discourses in prior research.
<b>Future of newspapers</b>	Describes perception of the future of the industry at the start, end, and at points of career change. Also explores speculation around the industry's future.
<b>Definition of journalism/being a journalist</b>	Describes narratives of changing identity of journalist and definition of doing journalism, thus supporting the argument that the newspaper industry is in crisis and undergoing a paradigm shift.
<b>Value of newspapers</b>	Describes perceptions of changes in value from the start of careers, through turning points, and at the end of careers.
<b>Emotions</b>	Describes narratives of emotional connection to the newspaper industry, print news production and newspaper value.

#### EXEMPLARS

After identifying initial themes, I considered responses to each research question within these themes as entry points for further analysis and overall discussion. Few additional themes did populate through consideration of answers to each research question, specifically RQ3, which asks for discussion around how these participants demonstrate a paradigm shift in the

industry. For each research question, I have summarizing the participants general responses and feelings. Appendix C includes a full list of exemplars from which the summaries below were drawn. Appendix D is a compilation of all interview transcripts from which the exemplars were taken. Discussion surrounding these answers and exemplars follows below.

***RQ1:** How has the outlook on the future of the newspaper industry changed over the career-spans of current and former print journalists?*

To answer this question, I compared each participant's answers about their perception of the future of newspapers and their perception of the value of newspapers at the time of their first job, with their answers about their perceptions of the future and value at mid-career points, including a first promotion or job change, a change that involved the internet and a recent change, and then also after asking them to describe their current position or job title. A lot of these answers cross more than one of the themes outlined above, and parts of these responses will be used to consider how the perceptions of the laborers in this industry fit in with discourse created by prior research on the external factors contributing to the changes in the newspaper industry in Research Question 2. For RQ1, I was merely concerned with comparing and contrasting the perceptions at the start of each participant's career and after time and experiences of their career have lapsed.

Following is an overview of each generational category, including names and details of those interviewed, common traits of their career experiences, significant differences in their experiences, and interview quotes that exemplify those experiences. These descriptions and quotes are drawn from exemplars detailed in Appendix C, which were taken from full interviews

located in Appendix F. Following the exemplars is more detailed discussion around each research question.

#### Baby Boomers (born 1943-1960)

At the times John and David, entered the newspaper industry, they both had perceptions of a booming future for an industry that were “engrained nationwide” (David, 57). John, 64, went so far as to say “It looked like newspapers could change the world.” At the starts of their careers, the Internet wasn’t even on the horizon, and these two enjoyed two to three decades of stability before any indication of a struggle in the newspaper industry. Their career experiences, however, have resulted in both leaving the industry within the past 10 years. John is now employed writing and editing for a non-profit organization, and David is a technical writer. Both expressed a decline in their perception of the value and quality of newspapers, and agreed that technology turned the job into something neither of them was prepared to incorporate into their roles:

I feel like there’s a future of news, of newsgathering and reporting, but I’m not at all optimistic about newspapers as a medium. I think they’re in trouble. I don’t know, and frankly, I don’t know anybody who’s still in newspapers having fun. It was fun when I was doing it. ... One of the conclusions I came to toward the end is that the Internet really turned everyone into a wire service reporter, that there was a sense that you had to go somewhere, see something, and immediately stop and file. And that’s not what I signed up for. I didn’t mind doing it every now and again, election night I got a good rush from, and that’s essentially what you’re doing on election night, but I didn’t want to do that every day (John, 64).

### Generation X (born 1961-1981)

Many of Carla's perceptions aligned with Boomers, as she is 52 years old and falls just 3 years short of being in the Baby Boom generation. Unlike both John and David, who have both made decisions to get out of the newspaper industry all together, Carla continues to work full-time as an editor at a print newspaper, and has experienced more industry changes in her recent career. Carla and Amanda, 43, both shared the sentiments of John and David in that they said the future of newspapers not only wasn't in question, but wasn't a thought, at the starts of their careers.

I can't say, honestly, that I thought much about it at that time. It felt like there were opportunities. There was, you know, I fully expected to get out of college and be able to find a job and have a career and that it would last for years and years. It wasn't, everything that came later wasn't even a blip on the horizon, so, I didn't have any reason to question the future. The future seemed very bright. Newspapers were making lots of money (Carla, 52).

Especially for Amanda, who grew up in Washington D.C., she said she had a perception that may have biased her early career that everyone read a newspaper, and all newspapers were as great as The Washington Post. They acknowledged they were entering a competitive field, but expected to earn a long career: "I didn't think that the future of newspapers was in jeopardy" (Amanda, 43). Even Scott, age 41, said the future looked "great."

Eric and Jessica, who are a few years younger at ages 36 and 35, respectively, entered the industry a few years later than the others above, which also was a few years further into the declining profitability of print newspapers in the early and mid-2000s. Even 5 years seems to have made a difference in perception of the future of the newspaper industry at the starts of their

careers, as these two indicate no less value to newspapers but more noticeable instability as they entered the journalism field:

The future was hard to see at that point, to be honest. But, ah, it was starting its decline. It was not as dour as it is today. I still foresaw, I think I foresaw a better future at that point than I do today (Eric, 36).

While it took John and David until later in their careers to feel the impact of the decline, it was sooner in their careers that these Gen Xers saw the decline and felt the impact to their careers. Jessica, 35, said she realized early that she may have actually made a mistake in choosing a journalism career:

Had I known in college what I learned just several years later when I was actually in the industry, I probably wouldn't have picked a journalism degree, because you kind of went in and you're like, oh, this is great, and you've got this awesome career. And then you get into it, and you see, it's going downhill fast. And then you're at this critical turning point where this is, wow, no longer a very valid career.

Jessica's realization was not hers alone, but hers was the soonest in proximity to the start of her career. Over the course of their careers, all of these Generation Xers reported to have questioned their journalism choices, but at various turning points, which are addressed more in RQ2. For Scott, who is still employed as a reporter at a print newspaper, it has occurred only when he's felt plateaued with his learning and growth in the industry. For all of the others, however, it has come at moments of economic disruption and workforce changes. Ultimately, Jessica and Amanda also left full-time print newspaper employment. Jessica left newspapers all together and now works in public relations – though she still considers herself a journalist because she's using her same writing and editing skills to generate news. She also is responsible for multi-media distribution

of that news. Amanda's freelance work is published primarily in online publications, and she supplements her income with teaching.

Regardless of current employment, the sentiments of every one of the Gen X interviewees juxtaposes acknowledging the declining quality and readership of print newspapers, but then also maintaining the belief in the value of credible news gathering that is at the heart of professionally trained journalists and longstanding print newspaper institutions. Their expressions of the future of newspapers vacillate between hope for the future and resignation for the current state of crisis. Jessica and Carla exemplify this internal dialogue and debate:

I'm kinda torn because the original believer in me still wants (newspapers) to still be there. But I think the realistic person sees it dead. And it's so, as somebody who now works on the opposite side, where I'm pitching the stories to the media and also buying the ads to support my piece. ... Let's be realistic. One shot in a print newspaper, to hope somebody reads it, when you're readership is down, your product is down, that's crazy for me the way I look at it. But you're going to sell me a digital ad at, like, half the cost because you still don't see the value in that component. It's that same spot, where you just go, you're dead. You're dead. And you still haven't caught up. ... So, do I see a death of it? Yeah, I do. It's just when are they finally going to realize it's dead? But the death of it is still in the paper product. I think a newspaper will always be there but I think that the investigative story is gone. I think the hard-hitting news, gone. ... our society has changed in the way it consumes information. The information that's available to them, and newspapers are too late to jump on board (Jessica, 35).

Carla notes that,

I have to believe, I want to believe, and I do believe that there will always be a need for the kind of work that we do. And I think the Internet has proved that point. You have all of this noise out there, all of these talking heads. And people do come to newspaper sites, newspaper websites, you know because, even though they rag on us, they also trust that professional journalists trying to vet things, are trying to, you know, they're not just passing along fodder. They're actually going out there and doing reporting. So, I mean, that has value. I think there are plenty of people willing to pay for that. I don't think we've figured out how to leverage that completely (Carla, 52).

Further confusing their outlooks is consideration of what this means for the ways news is generated, distributed, and ultimately the ways news is consumed. Important to these perceptions of the decline in viability of newspapers is an observation that newspapers were late to adapt to the affordances of Internet technology in news distribution. Some argue that the affordances of online technology still haven't been incorporated to newsrooms that have not changed the business model or way of doing things. Instead, many newsrooms have kept their existing structure for reporting and editing, and have used the Internet only to supplement their distribution. The impact of technology and Internet is discussed more in Research Question 3, as a key influencer to career turning points for interviewees across generations. The results of late or failed adaptation of Internet and continued lagging advertising dollars from companies and retailers who have updated their business models to include a heavy online element have been a reduction in revenue, further resulting in forced reduction in expenses that include a thinner product produced by fewer people. Thus the interviewees express concern about the future of print newspapers and question their survival at all. Amanda and Eric articulate these feelings, which include frustration and surprise that the industry has yet to find a path to greater stability:

I feel there is almost no future for newspapers. I feel that newspapers have not evolved with the times. I feel like they're still trying to fit an old model and trying to make it work. I'm very frustrated with newspapers. I think they've made very little progress. They've put up paywalls, which I don't think is the answer. They cut, cut, cut to the core. I don't think they have any sense of what to do" (Amanda, 43).

If we're looking at daily newspapers, I think it's still pretty bleak. I don't think it's good. I, ah, don't think anyone has solved the riddle of how you replace the ad dollars you lost on the Internet. With lower cost online, yeah, I think it's going to move to a more subscription model. I'm surprised no one has come up with that magic bullet yet (Eric, 36).

#### Millennial (born 1982-present)

Just one interview participant came from this generation. Elizabeth, 24, acknowledged a "tenuous" perception of the industry at the start of her career, but hopeful because she still felt that newspapers were valuable because they provide two things: Local news not often found online and credibility in a digital age where "everyone is shouting and giving an opinion." Her perception also was boosted by her thought that she had found a position with a newspaper that had a reputation of stability:

The place I was employed at had pretty good prospects. Um, all the people I interviewed with seemed to think the newspaper was rosy and bright. They hadn't really been affected too much by, um, job cuts and things that other newspapers had. And the fact that they had a full-functioning copy desk, just really impressed me because a lot of other places,



their copy desks were bare-bones and they were combining copy editors and designers and that wasn't the case at this place (Elizabeth, 24).

Not long after she was hired, she said the news editor instrumental in her hiring was offered a severance package and left the company. Her perception was that he was laid off because it came at the same time of layoffs of several other newsroom employees. She said there were a couple rounds of them, and that changed her role from a copy editor at that newspaper to also become a wire editor and online news producer, a role that included reporting and web posting. Weathering that, she said has changed her perspective on the outlook of the newspaper industry today.

Though she still sees the need for newspapers and local news, there's an issue of publication and distribution that is jeopardizing the future of newspapers:

I'm not super optimistic. I think the mid-sized ones are gonna really struggle because people might need to read about a council meeting story, but they're not always the most captivating story out, and so I think they kind of get lost in the shuffle of whatever. When you see everything else on Facebook, you know, cats versus city council. I can't blame people who would rather see the cat video, so I'm not sure that, I don't know, that, you know, that the value, again is necessarily, that people necessarily see the value there (Elizabeth, 24).

### Career Turning Points

**RQ2:** *Are there common points of change in journalists' careers that impact their outlook on the future of the newspaper industry? And is there a relationship between those points of change in journalists' careers and external factors studied of economic, social or technological changes as outlined by previous researchers?*

Common points of change identified included the introduction of the Internet into newsrooms, which called on journalists to engage with new technologies, and learn/apply new technological skills to their existing roles. Other points of change came during times of layoffs, cutbacks and/or downsizing to newsrooms that sprang from monetarily based executive decisions. Interview participants differentiated between factors external to the newsroom, like Internet, economic-driven financial changes often cited as controlled by newspaper-industry executives, and changes in readership habits, from factors inside the newsroom, such as workforce layoffs and journalists' decisions to leave the industry. Both external and internal factors contributed to changed job roles and turning points in careers of the interviewees.

When talking about initial introduction of any change (cutbacks, layoffs, introduction of the Internet to the newsroom), interviewees often chose language that distanced themselves from the decision-makers who introduced the change:

They started to require us to post our own stories online, which was unheard of prior to that. It was just, um, you know, you go through a couple layers of editing and then it would go up online. But then, um, you know, you got to the point where you were required to put your story in there, or online, and then it would get read afterwards. ... We were not only required to be the content people. We were required to be the, ah, mechanics behind the system. So we were required to start posting our own stories. Um, which is, I think anyone would recognize that as somewhat dangerous though. You know, everyone needs an editor. Everyone needs an editor, and there's a lot of consternation around that. You know, we didn't have a choice. And that's, I think that was a seminal moment there in my career. And then at the same time social media on the rise. [*sic*] So, that's when we all started to, you know, many of us started to realize the value of

Facebook and Twitter, and how much traffic they brought to the website. And how, you know, I think maybe a year after, this is probably 2009 or so, um, that the victim from the newspaper was we are no longer a print-first product. We are an online-first product (Eric, 36).

In this example, Eric identifies “they” as the authority of the executive-level decision to have reporters post print newspaper stories online on their own and before any editing. He clearly questioned the decision, and suggests that the newspaper workforce was not consulted in the change. Instead he and his coworkers were left to understand the reasons for it on their own and adapt to it – or not. He describes reactionary impact for his role and uses a term of victimization of the print newspaper product at the hands of his editors and executive decision-makers. As a result he and the other members of the print newspaper workforce felt obligated to reconcile it to their careers on their own and make their own decisions to stay or leave in reaction, without consultation with any of the decision makers. This us-versus-them mentality permeates the turning points described below.

### Introduction of Internet

As demonstrated with the example above, which was specific to the Internet, but also exemplified the interviewees’ reactions to change, there was confusion associated with communication of the decisions to incorporate digital technology to newsrooms. Further, even though it didn’t fundamentally change their business model of generating revenue through advertising, they saw it as a change in the way they do journalism:

Once we started publishing our own stories online, and people really focused on chasing the clicks, as it were, staying on top of it, competing with, you know, the rest of world. It

wasn't the same job. You know, you're not spending 2 or 3 days on a story anymore.

You're pumping out stuff all the time. And then, you know, it just changes the way you think about your job, I think (Eric, 36).

The incorporation of the Internet changed the perception of their role, how they performed their jobs, and that impacted their identity as a journalist. Rather than focusing solely on the story, there was focus on how, and how quickly, the story would be distributed. This demand for a change in role demanded mindset shift in the workforce from performing a singular role of news producer or news editor to performing multiple roles of producer and editor and distributor. This demand for role change took place at that same time that it became increasingly unclear what digital technology meant for the future of print newspapers – especially the future of newspaper profitability:

I think, there was a period there, where there was, um, I'm trying to place it in time, but, you know, that shift of, we're not going to, we have to put stuff online. We have to think online first. That is our future, and we have to build an audience there, and the money will come later. You know, that became the sort of, you know, we're still waiting for that last part. But, so, I think that was the biggest change for me, trying to change the culture of the place so that it would not be print-centric. So that the room would start to, you know, see themselves, really more of an AP news wire, more of the TV, you know, we're going to bust in at any moment, and we're going to break news and we're not going to be these, like, somebody walks in works toward 5 o'clock deadline and that's the thing they do all day (Carla, 52).

A key point to note is that the newspaper industry collectively dove into digital technology without a plan for profitability or updated business model. Technology was overlaid on the

existing newsroom structure to offer additional tools, but that did not truly change the fundamental method of newspaper production. And as a result, newspapers continue to lag behind online news coverage. Gen Xer Scott, 41, notes how both Facebook and Twitter are primary news sources for many Americans, especially younger generations who use social media as a constant method of communication through their days:

Facebook is the newspaper now. Um, it just happens to be very, very local, and everyone in America is on Facebook; most people are on Facebook all the time. On their computers, on their phones, morning, noon, and night, when they wake up in the middle of the night they look at Facebook. At their office all day, they're on Facebook. On their phone anywhere, the airport, you know, sitting on the toilet they're on Facebook. ... Maybe years ago a newspaper would be like that. If you, if that when the newspaper came, you were really excited to get it. It was your only connection to the world. And if you were at a bar or restaurant, you would want to read a newspaper. You're in the bathroom you've got a newspaper. If you go to somebody's house, there's a paper. You're like, "Oh, can I read that? Can I take that?" (Scott, 41)

Scott also says:

You see video or you see blogs that are quick-hits. But I don't really see anybody who's being successful with what they're trying. I mean, you're getting beat by Twitter. You can't keep up with Twitter, so I guess I'm not sure why you're trying to. I just think you have to come at it, and I'm not saying I have the answer, but you have to come at it with a different approach (Scott, 41).

## Economic challenges

In speaking about economic and financial issues related to print newspapers, the interviewees' use of "us versus them" language was prominent. In the print newspaper narrative told by the journalists and former journalists interviewed, the people making financial decisions to keep print newspapers afloat were not a part of the same workforce as the journalists. The decision-makers were painted as an executive team running the newspaper corporation. These executives became accustomed to 20%-plus profit margins of newspapers' prime. Alternatively, the interviewees portrayed the members of the workforce as victims of the executives' recent decisions to reduce expenses to maintain their profits by "rightsizing, as they called it, or downsizing" (Carla, 52):

I'm just completely pissed off that smart people were running these newsrooms, and I say publishers and owners, who, you know, you could see the tsunami coming. It's like, come on, how stupid are we really? ... The last paper I worked at went for 8 years without raising the cost of the paper. And you knew that the model had to change. You knew that the subscribers had to pay more in freight. It had to come. It had to be. It was just, like, come on. They did not prepare. They didn't adapt well. And then the people who paid the price were the people on the front lines. And that's, it just shouldn't happen, you know. We should've been smarter than that. We should be more of a, more invested now, because it should matter more (Carla, 52).

The interviewees expressed frustration for a lack of a business plan that adapted to the technological changes outlined in the prior section. Because the corporations did not adapt, they were forced into reactive measures of reducing the number of sections to save on paper, cutting

staff, which also reduced coverage and which runs in contrast to newspapers' fundamental role of public service.

There were media buyouts, um, I think it was 11 or 13 people lost their job, or were laid off. And then we had a number of other number people leave and their jobs weren't replaced. Ah, and that's when I think everyone around me, including me, and even at other newspapers started to realize that this was not a short term, ah, blip. This was the start of something, ah, that was very serious, very saddening, and very, I guess, depressing. And, um, you know, I think we all came to the realization that nothing was going to be the same after that (Eric, 36).

Newspapers now experiment with paywalls, or pay-per-story views of online content, but that has been only mildly successful as early Internet adapters are used to free information online, not paying per click. At age 64, John is the most tenured of the interviewees, and his observations of his journalism career, which ended about 10 years ago when he moved into working for a non-profit corporation, was simple: "Information isn't free." There are costs associated with news gathering, writing, reporting, investigating, editing and publishing. But in an online environment, readers often expect to get their news for free. Lack of a proactive plan to create revenues for a once-print-based news business online has prohibited widespread acceptance of paywalls and other subscription methods by online readers:

Perhaps a few at the top, the New York Times-es of the world, the Washington Posts of world will be able to pull that off, but I worry about ... those good, solid, mid-size newspapers, how are they going to make it over the long-term. And again, I think that much of what went wrong is the industry's own fault for not thinking through before they made these changes (John, 64).

David also lamented print newspapers' slow adaptation to online business models that would support a revenue stream for the newspaper company:

Most newspapers really made a huge mistake with news being available online for people, and newspapers didn't know, well, a couple things they didn't know. They didn't know how to tie advertising to it, so they blew a huge revenue opportunity. And after they started putting their news online, they tried to figure out a way, how do we backtrack and make people pay for it. So, it blew up in their faces (David, 57).

Turning around the economic downfall of print newspapers and restoring the viability to a newspaper industry in crisis is still uncertain. The new normal of the paradigm shift is not yet established. The experiments taking place online that include paywalls, subscriptions, crowd-funded print products and non-profit partnerships are examples of the trial-and-error methodology taking place. This moment of experiment is part of the pre-paradigmatic phase described by Kuhn (1996), as the industry seeks a new normal. Many of those interviewed expressed certainty of the current instability but hope for a future in which the fundamental public service value of newspapers survives. The format for that survival is unclear.

I have to believe, I want to believe and I do believe that there will always be a need for the kind of work that we do. And I think the Internet has proved that point. You have all of this noise out there, all of these talking heads. And people do come to newspaper sites, newspaper websites, you know because, even though they rag on us, they also trust that professional journalists trying to vet things, are trying to, you know, they're not just passing along fodder. They're actually going out there and doing reporting. So, I mean, that has value. I think there are plenty of people willing to pay for that. I don't think we've figured out how to leverage that completely. ... You know, I'd like to believe,



because I believe it, that good journalism is good business. That I think you can make a really profitable place out of it. I think we're all still trying to figure it out. And like I said, I wish that some of these companies would have more of a public service motive to them. I mean, I could see, I could see newsrooms becoming non-profits, or partnering with universities, you know, have it not be so bottom-line driven (Carla, 52).

### Readership changes

Readership trends are very much entwined with Internet and economic issues detailed above. For example, in context with the Internet, readers have gotten used to finding information online and for free. Multimedia and multi-platform distribution of media inundates news consumers with up-to-the-minute updates. Smart phones have helped make that content available at consumers' fingertips, and social media allows consumers to contribute to news distribution.

We aren't using them for things we used to use them for. We don't use TV Guide. We don't look at the newspaper for movie listings. When the kids went to school, you had to get that issue with the school bus, you don't do that anymore. You go online. So, I think a lot of the things we used to use them for, we find ourselves, we don't rely on them anymore (Amanda, 43).

Newspapers don't need to provide the same information they provided to the public 50 years ago. They serve the same public, but the public's access to information has changed, and so the product needs to evolve to compliment the multimedia consumer:

So, you have to come at it a different way. I think that you have kind of an aging, white, male workforce that continues to run how things are done and that thinking cannot uphold. Nobody under 40 is looking at newspapers. There are so many alternatives to them that are frankly better. As a sports person, why do I want to read your story the next

day? Your boring game story, I've already read and seen the press conference. I've read 10 stories that are better than yours ... you need to bring something else to it. Not the same story I read yesterday (Amanda, 43).

Examining readership in context with economic issues, journalists and former journalists observed tension between needing to grow readership to boost subscription revenues and reduced coverage of the community that would draw in readers and boost subscriptions. Carla, 52, pinpointed this as a "catch-22" tension of dependent conditions that contradict each other and prevent an escape from the current crisis of print newspapers:

You know, it's a terrible catch-22: You're relying on readers to have to pay the fee, and then you cut the newsroom and your product obviously gets worse and people drop your subscription, so, it's a terrible catch-22.

To rise above these challenges, journalists and print newspapers can no longer merely report the same news. Print newspapers must reach readers through conversation with news that also is communicated via other media. Because newspapers are not THE source of news anymore, print newspaper producers must offer a new contribution to readers' multi-platform consumption. Some of the journalists and former journalists suggest that newspapers should leverage their strengths of in-depth, credible, investigative reporting as well as the long-form publication format of print, which offers layout and design to interest readers and which accommodates narrative, statistics and images in a combined presentation. This long-form can explore news and follow-up with in-depth analysis to news already reported in short-form online.

You have to know how to reach readers. You have to know how to balance the, ah, daily churn for the web. You have to be quick, but you also have to add something to the

conversation that is unique, and backed by strong reporting. And that's journalism (Eric, 36).

### Workforce obstacles

"These last years, the last, I guess it would have been the last seven years of my career were more heartbreaking than just, I could never have imagined how hard that would be. And it's just terrible. It's terrible because people are not just losing their jobs, they're losing their careers. You know, having to let people go when they're in their 50s, or 60s even, um, it's miserable, just miserable. And, you know what, it does make me angry, and I wouldn't be surprised if some of the people, I mean, I still, I feel like I have a little PTSD. I get flashbacks (Carla, 52).

The impact of the changes and challenges discussed thus far in this chapter on the journalists' and former journalists' career trajectories cannot be overstated. This section examines how the observations and experiences of introduction of the Internet, economic challenges and readership changes have influenced the decisions made by the print newspaper workforce regarding their careers in the industry.

At the time of the interview, Elizabeth, 24, said she had already made a decision to voluntarily leave the print newspaper publication where she had been working, even though she had not yet secured other employment:

Three months after I got there, a couple of the people who were involved in my hiring process were let go. The news editor at that time who had spoken up very highly for me and who was, you know, instrumental in helping me get hired there, he was let go. So, um, he had been there a really, really long time, so that was pretty shocking. So, that was

three months in. And then about a year later, about half our copy desk was let go, along with other positions around the newsroom. I think it was a 25% decrease overall, across the board. Um, just because our finances were bad. Um, after that, a lot of people left voluntarily. Our editor in chief left. Um, our managing editor left. And, you know, even now people continue to trickle out, leave for other jobs in journalism or other jobs.

They're kind of dropping like flies (Elizabeth, 24).

The decision to leave was a conscious and voluntary one for Elizabeth. She had worked hard at her place of employment to diversify her skills, and no longer considered herself capable of just being a copy editor. She learned to select stories from national and international news wires, she learned web production and she improved her reporting skills. When asked about her future, Elizabeth said she had accepted the likely outcome that her career in print newspapers would come to an end. Shortly after turning in her notice, however, she did find a full-time job with a larger-market print news publication.

Elizabeth's story exemplifies how many of the former journalists interviewed came to their decisions to leave the industry. If they themselves weren't laid off, they viewed the choice to leave that publication or the industry all together as a logical one after seeing so many coworkers suffer an involuntary layoff or buyout. Scott, 41, who is still employed in print newspapers, described the industry's turnover he has witnessed as a "bleeding wound."

Turnover in management I have experienced, which is kind of disheartening. And this isn't directly me, but the shop that I work for now, like many other places, is having turnover like, it's like a bleeding wound. You know, it's just like boom, boom, boom, like every week or two now, there's almost there's, there's a stream of announcements, and, um, for all kinds of reasons journalists at different levels decide that they're leaving

journalism, or they're moving to different outlets, um, in some cases. And then, of course, we have a ton of layoffs that you hear about, which was one of several big rounds of layoffs that have happened since 2008 (Scott, 41).

Scott and other interviewees who have stayed at the publications and in the industry didn't seem to be free of feelings of suffering that can prevent them from getting ahead and moving on:

I've been through five layoffs, five rounds of layoffs. So, you know, I had tremendous survivor's guilt. I was ready to take the bullet myself because I had, I mean, I was an empty nester last summer; my youngest went to college, so I had been putting away money. I felt like, you know what, take me. I'm happy to go at this point because that's not why I went to journalism school was to figure out how to lay people off, you know. And, um, I just didn't see the commitment to keeping the product, the newsroom strong. ... I got talked into staying in the business awhile. I don't regret that. It's great to be in the business. But, you know, it's nice here where there haven't been layoffs in a while. Company's making money. At least, it's not growing the newsroom, but there's no, you know, there's no cloud over it either (Carla, 52).

In addition to the guilt and loss, those who are left behind also are left carrying a workload that used to be spread among a larger number of staffers. Elizabeth and Carla used variations of the term "battlefield promotions" to describe the sudden increase in workload: "There's no one else here to wire edit, so you're going to learn how to do it, like, right now" (Elizabeth, 24). The interviewees also described a demand to spend less time on a single story or project as their responsibilities increased and demands for online posting grew ever more immediate. The end result is description by every interviewee of an industry in a crisis and a

future that is unclear at best and unstable to the point of dissolution at worst. But despite these turning points in their careers that have changed their outlook on the industry and that have taken some of them out of the industry, none of the interviewees expressed regrets for their careers in print journalism. In fact, it is the opposite:

There are probably some journalists that would think it's a very dark time for journalism right now. There are probably some that are positive, and they're probably the younger ones. But it is, you know, it is a, it is a career that has, you know, as far as the newspaper industry goes, become a little bit more unsettling with time, and it's kind of sad that there was once, you know, um, you know, it was once a grand situation is now not so much. ... I've got a farewell email from a staffer who left us right here at my desk. ... he was saying he was lucky. You know, his career, it coincided (with) the golden age of journalism in America when there were a lot of resources, there were large staffs, you could do a lot of investigative watchdog journalism, and, you know, 'feisty, fearless reporting' is the phrase he used. Um, so, you know, I'm thinking I was lucky because I got to go on that whole ride, realizing now that things kind of suck, at least compared to that. So, I have a lot of faith that that can be turned around, but I think that newspaper companies need to acknowledge it and kind of address it head-on, and promote themselves and what they do (Scott, 41).

**RQ3:** *How has journalists' emotional outlook of the future of the newspaper industry changed over their career-spans?*

When I first started this project, I didn't include a research question targeting the emotional connection people feel to their work. I expected there would be change in the outlook of the stability of the newspaper industry over their careers, as identified in exemplars above,

from which I could review for commonalities through close textual analysis. I asked about feelings about the industry, but I expected responses would be more based in factual observation of industry changes. After going through the interviews, however, I couldn't ignore the emotional element present in many responses when asked about industry changes and outlook on theirs and newspapers' future. Further, the interviewees' emotions seemed change as their careers experienced turning points. For that reason, I used NVivo to code emotions at specific points of careers, which is a deviation from the narrative-exploration done through thematic coding of the responses to the other research questions. In order to bracket the sense of emotional states at points of career turning points and to strip the narrative element, I looked not for themes, but words that indicate an emotion in context of the career point. The set of responses at each career point are arranged as word clouds below at moments of first job, first job change/promotion, change that involved the internet, recent change, and outlook today. With those bucketed emotional extractions per career point, I used a word-frequency analysis on the responses at each career point. Most common emotional words were found at each of the following points:

- First job: good, exciting
- First job change/promotion: good, worried, confident
- Change that involved the Internet: worry/worried, good, confident
- Recent change: heartbreaking, comfort, confident, disheartening
- Future of newspapers: sad, worry/worried, really, uncertain

The weighted frequencies of the emotion words in the responses can be presented in the form of word clouds:

Figure 3. First job emotion-word frequency





Figure 4. Job change/promotion emotion-word frequency



Figure 5. Job change that involved the Internet emotion-word frequency





Figure 7. Future of newspapers emotion-word frequency



***RQ4:** How have journalists' behaviors and practices changed to reflect the external changes in the industry, including economics, advertising, technology and online, and readership? Do those behaviors support or devalue the argument that the newspaper industry is undergoing a paradigm shift?*

Every interviewee worked at a print newspaper, and every interviewee at some point in their careers questioned whether they could or would continue employment in print newspapers. Some stayed, and some left the industry. Neither decision was easy for the interviewees. Indeed, both decisions are acknowledged by the interviewees as logical conclusions.

I see young journalists here, and I fear for whether five, 10 years from now, they're still going to be in this business because, are we giving them a reason to be in this business? I was able to have a career. I could see, even without promotions, I could see cost-of-living raises. I could see, you know, 401(k) plans. I had pensions at two of the papers that I worked at, you know. I, you know, I could support my family. These guys, especially the most talented people, they have options. They can go off to other industries. And I just don't see the corporations here buying into the idea that they really need to do their best to hold on to these people. So that's, I'm very scared for the future of journalism now because of that. Passion will only take you so far. You know, you've got to pay a mortgage. You've got to put your kids through school. And I hate to think of people having to make that choice (Carla, 52).

To define paradigm shift in the newspaper industry, I found exemplars in interview participants' responses that indicate changed behaviors in print newspaper production; deviation from previously accepted processes and procedures; journalists expressions of incongruence with their prior understanding of how the print newspaper industry operates; and ultimately changes

to their identities as journalists and definition of what it means to be a journalist. These demands adapt to news processes and carry a new journalist identity with confidence specifically led to decisions regarding the interviewees' careers. They either continued adapting and fighting to maintain newspaper employment or they opted to leverage their creative skills and professional training in other industries.

#### Changed behaviors/practices/job function

The changes described above – introduction of the Internet to newsrooms, changes in workforce makeup that came after economic downturn – and the resulting emotional toll on journalists all combined and contributed to an overall change in the behaviors, practices and job function of journalists. The interviewees described how they gradually started feeling the impact, for example when they were asked to have stories ready to post online immediately after covering an event or story. Amid those quick-post immediate needs, they also had to carve out time for long-form enterprise stories that earn reputation and build brand for a reporter or editor. But then it came a point when they were forced into change: to learn web production to post their own stories online, to cover more beats and produce more work due to smaller staffs, and to perform multiple job functions. Failure to do so meant the industry would move on past them. Thus, those who wanted to, adapted to their new scenarios. Those who didn't or couldn't were either asked to leave or chose to leave:

I was at a very small newspaper, where it was, you were publishing six stories a week.

You were publishing five, you know, a story each day plus one for the weekend. When I moved to the next newspaper, I was, I would have to do maybe 2 to 3 stories per week. I would be able to do very smart stories, in depth. And then, you know, once we started

publishing our own stories online, and people really focused on chasing the clicks, as it were, staying on top of it, competing with, you know, the rest of world. It wasn't the same job. You know, you're not spending 2 or 3 days on a story anymore. You're pumping out stuff all the time. And then, you know, it just changes the way you think about your job, I think. ... And it's, you know, it's somewhat depressing, but I think you realize that if you want to stay in the game, then you have to adapt. You have to change with the times. And so you have to, ah, you know, I'm still very much a journalist, so I think that, you know, it was do or die. And a lot of people died (Eric, 36).

As discussed in the prior section, Elizabeth benefited from her newsroom's layoffs in that the smaller staff demanded that she learn additional skills of web production and wire editing. As a 24-year-old journalist in her first job, learning new skills was perceived as an opportunity to have an advantage in application for her next job. Older journalists had a different vantage point. Instead of seeing the turning point as an opportunity for their own careers, the turn pointed them in a direction away from continued employment in journalism:

I could see when I got out it was a good opportunity for those younger people because the technology was changing. You know, the Twitter, I don't do any of that. You know, the Twitter stuff and all that stuff, they know how to do that, and I was like, let them have it because I'm not interested in all that. I'm not interested in doing my news that way, so, and they're thriving with it, although they're having to deal with very difficult circumstances in terms of the workload (David, 57).

John, David, Carla, and Amanda range in age from 64 to 43 and are the oldest of the interviewees. They identified changes to news production that preceded the Internet and also impacted the way they did their jobs, including television broadcast news and pagination

(computer-based page design that replaced paper). These impacted news production, but neither had as great an impact to the fundamentals of news gathering and distribution – and journalistic role – as the recent changes from the Internet, economy, readership, and workforce.

It became more technical, and I think it was probably about that time, from a, from a copy editing standpoint, copy editing became more than just about the words. Um, you sort of had some mental struggles, I think, especially the older guys because I was still pretty young at that time, the older guys had to start questioning, you know, what am I doing, why am I here, because I'm just a, um, you know, I've become a technical processor, a page processor kinda guy rather than someone who's really worried about the configuration of the words and the structure of the sentences and are we using the right words. And I really think that in today's, but, and the Internet has taken it in a whole different direction, the quality of the writing's not that important anymore. It used to be it was all about the writing. Now, with the Internet, it's all about getting it out there the fastest. It really doesn't matter if it's that well written. It doesn't seem to matter. Now, I think there's a lot of newspapers that are trying to hang onto that with bare-bones copy editing staff and I think they're killing them (David, 57).

#### Expressions of incongruence with their prior understanding

Prior to the Internet, a newspaper was a print publication. Deadlines for publication were singular for a single edition. The job could be performed in an 8-hour workday. The hierarchy of news production consisted of reporters, news editors, copy editors and page designers. A news story flowed from the reporter through the hierarchy to publication. Since the Internet, breaking news can appear on multiple platforms, including online, television and print. What readers find



on each of these platforms isn't the same, and instead collectively tells a story that a reader can choose to consume as in-depth or as shallow. The very terms and meaning of newspaper and news have become more ambiguous with digital and print format, which confuses journalists in how to define the work they do. Scott and Eric explain:

If you had just, just a website, would you call your, I think, could you call yourself an online newspaper? But I like using the phrase newspaper, or the word newspaper, because it means the press, and that's different than all the other shit that's on the internet that's written by somebody who is not the press. And all of the other stuff is, generally, you know, often not trustworthy or wrong. Then you have things like, um, Huffington Post. Like what is that exactly, an online newspaper, or an online news outlet? You know, I don't think that they would call themselves a newspaper necessarily, but they, you know, it's called The Post (Scott, 41).

Eric also notes:

I don't know, I don't know what the future is any more, frankly. I don't know what the future of print is. I mean, there's always going to be a need for, ah, you know, reported content. I hate the word content, but for quality journalism, there's always going to be a need for it (Eric, 36).

In addition to the ambiguity of what news actually means and what it looks like across media platforms, there is confusion in how to leverage these new platforms to stop newspapers' economic decline in a new print-and-digital era – an era that is more becoming digital-and-print. Carla used the metaphor of “throwing spaghetti at the wall” to describe the number of business practices that have been tried to make build readers online, draw them into the print product, and to make money on both digital and print news.

You know, we went crazy with video at first. We tried to out-YouTube YouTube, and that didn't work. Um, a lot of time and effort on things that weren't getting a lot of time and effort from an audience. So, I don't know. I don't think we've totally mastered it yet. I don't think we've figured out what's the right way to use our resources. I think it's still a lot of spaghetti on the wall in some cases, trying to figure out. You know, you don't really want to replicate the paper necessarily, but you do have, you know, how do you plan for the day where there is no printed product, and that audience is still looking for those kind of in depth stories, or, you know, what's the model we can create on a website that makes sense and is inviting. So, I don't know. I think we're still finding our way (Carla, 52).

In addition to the new practices, new terminology has been introduced to the print newspaper industry that is indicative of the demand of incorporation of Internet to print, and business practices that once would have been shunned as revenue streams are now embraced:

Newspapers have had to change their whole mode of advertising. I mean, it used to be sacrilegious to put an ad on your front page and this sort of thing. They've had to, um, throw away all those ideas and pretty much cater to, how we're gonna make money has to come first. ... I interviewed to be the sports editor in [CITY NAME REDACTED]. I didn't get the job, but one of the questions they asked in that interview was, they asked me something about, we expect all of our editors to be able to monetize their content.

And at that time, I didn't even know what that question meant. I mean, monetize content, what are you talking about? Um, I think that's probably one reason I didn't get the job (David, 57).

### Definition of journalism / identity as journalist

I like doing journalism. I like learning new things and improving. And, so, as long as I'm doing that, I can find a place to do journalism, even if I have to move jobs or if something happened. If I ever got laid off in journalism, you know, downsizing or something. You know, I feel confident that I would be able to find something else. So, it changes things a little bit, though, because, um, you're uncertain on will I stay with my current employer, and how long will I be ... should I, should I be looking for something else? Should I be looking at a different line of work or a different aspect of journalism? So you kind of, I, I, I kind of wonder, you know, am I making the right move by just working every day? Or should I, you know, should I be making a move to leave? Um, my personal position is pretty good. You know, so a lot of things that happen to the overall organization don't necessarily, you know, come down on me, other than it's sad to see the standards slip, or it's sad to see people leave (Scott, 41).

Scott's explanation of his internal debate and dialogue sums up the identity crisis taking place for journalists. They acknowledge the journalism talent they have crafted, and enjoy doing it when it's just about doing the work, for him reporting but for others copy editing or designing. But doing the work is complicated by the pressures of economic elements that have led to layoffs, more responsibilities of multiple jobs due to smaller staffs. And so, these journalists question whether they still have the abilities to do journalism. Are they doing the right thing staying in the industry and adapting to the pressures? Do they want to adapt to the new digital demands?

It seems like a lot of jobs now, you need, like, social media skills, which I have some but I don't have a ton, and I'm not really interested in learning a whole lot, honestly. So, I'd

like to think I have what it takes to succeed as a journalist, but maybe not what journalism is defined as now. ... Writing quickly, getting it on social media to share, and still getting it accurate and fair but at the same time doing it in a way that is bite sized and understandable in 30 seconds for people (Elizabeth, 24).

Instead of being just a reporter, a role in which he was struggling to get to “the higher level,” Scott succumbed to the demands to learn multi-media:

You know, I’m having trouble getting to the higher level that I’d like to get to. So part of why I did do, um, learn how to, you know, shoot and edit video was to have another skill. So, as I see these job ads or this demand for reporters who can do more than write, I wanted to be able to say I can do that. I can actually shoot and edit a video or take photos. And at the same time I was trying to do a lot of, you know, as much enterprising reporting as I could, but also having more of a mixed, um, bag of tricks I guess, as a journalist.

Those new skills changed his identity as a journalist. No longer is he just a reporter, but he’s a photographer, videographer and web producer. Those who did not stay on at newspapers and adapt, instead found ways to leverage the same journalism and creative skills to earn other employment.

I still consider myself a journalist, but not by journalists’ standards. So, my measure of success for journalism had changed to that extent because it wasn’t the same measurements. It was more, OK, how can my background in journalism help me become this PR person that I know needs to happen. And it was interesting, too, because at that point, when all these papers were doing layoffs, and everybody was leaving, most people went into PR field because that’s what they were equipped for. So it wasn’t unheard of to

be doing a new job and run across somebody you knew from a paper who was now doing PR at another firm (Jessica, 35).

Amanda also left print newspapers full-time, and ventured into freelance and online news production:

I have a blog that I coproduce with someone that's a very meaty blog that's very well respected as a niche market. It's a women's basketball blog. ... It's not traditional news gathering, but it has some elements of that. I mean, I have relationships with 13 Division I schools. That's something I've learned, that I took those with me, that those don't belong to the paper. So I started that, my partner and I started that, long before. It's going on five or six years. Are we making great money on it? No. Has it helped me get jobs? Yes. ... there are a lot of blogs out there that are, frankly, trash, but this is blog that has two people who worked in the industry for close to 50 years. So we bring a professional approach to it. And because of how it's received both locally, regionally and at some point nationally, I think that helps me think of myself still as a journalist (Amanda, 41).

## DISCUSSION

### Career-span observations

As demonstrated in Chapter Two's research, almost without exception, all journalists' perceptions of stability of the newspaper industry have decreased on a numeric scale over time. The qualitative study outlined in this chapter confirms journalists' perception of change in certainty of a stable future for the newspaper industry, in that their outlook is less certain now for print newspapers than it was at the starts of their careers. It further adds intensity via description of that changed perception. Interestingly, the millennial journalist interviewed and the two Gen

Xers in their 30s acknowledged uncertainty and tenuousness at the starts of their careers but chose them anyway. Both of the 30-plus-year-olds, Jessica and Eric, said they knew the print newspaper industry was starting a decline at the beginnings of their careers. Jessica said that if she knew it would have gone downhill as quickly as it did during her early career, she likely would not have chosen to pursue print journalism. Eric suggested that the future was “dour” – though less so than today – and the value of newspapers was never in question at the start of his career, even if the stability was. These youngest of the interview panel all expressed continued decline through their careers, with both of the 30-something Gen Xers exploring employment out of print newspapers, and one actually leaving the industry.

At the start of their careers, at least half of all interview participants – John, David, Carla and Amanda – indicated that they never considered the future of the newspapers at the start of their careers. They all said it wasn’t talked about, wasn’t in question, or wasn’t on anyone’s radar. John, the oldest of the interview panel, did acknowledge a small threat from broadcast that he said he never considered an issue. All of these participants are age 41 and older, some in Generation X and some Boomers, and would have experienced the Watergate Era in childhood, a time in which the press truly acted as a public servant and watchdog of political corruption in the federal government.

I was a great believer. I mean, this would have been ... not too far from Watergate, and the value of newspapers was, you know, um, I’d like to believe that I was in a very important industry. I was making a huge difference in the world. There was a huge public service component to being a journalist. I still believe that (Carla, 52).

The starts of their careers would have been influenced by this as well as by the rise of conglomeration of newspapers through the 1970s and ’80s that suggested stability and

profitability for owners. Neither of these adjectives is used to accurately describe industry anymore. Carla, Eric, and Scott suggest that watchdog and project/enterprise reporting, both of which are more in-depth and require more time to investigate – are not found anywhere but newspapers but are actually more rare to newspapers now than they once were. Carla and Eric also express significant concern about the reduction in the public-service that community newspapers offer.

I think that in theory the value is higher than it's ever been, because there's so much clutter out there, and, ah, accessible to everybody. You have novices, a lot of people with no journalism background who are producing content. I will call that content. And they're drawing a lot of eyeballs. And no one is doing the type of in-depth journalism, reporting, and day-to-day watchdogging that newspapers are. So I think the value is more important than it's ever been. In practice, the value is questionable because all of the newsrooms have been so gutted. And, ah, people, you know, it's rare that you have somebody who's able to spend a lot of time on a project today. And those projects are the things that have impact, not only for the publication itself, but for public, and, you know for the government, for, ah, you know, society (Eric, 36).

Part of their concern is rooted in statistics and staffing numbers: Layoffs have resulted in fewer people on staff to actually perform journalism, and so less time can be allocated to longer project periods to investigate details of a story versus focus on getting stories out quickly. The other root cause of reduced watchdog reporting is that layoffs often target the highest salaries in a newsroom to make biggest impact to the budget, which results in a reduction in overall experience of a newsroom staff that teaches and supports younger journalists navigating the complexities of sources and research of investigative journalism.

Seeing peers and elders alike laid off from their newsrooms carries emotional consequences for those who keep their jobs. Interview participants express feelings of sadness, depression but also used terms like Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and survivor's guilt.

I've been through five layoffs, five rounds of layoffs. So, you know, I had tremendous survivor's guilt. I was ready to take the bullet myself because I had, I mean, I was an empty nester last summer; my youngest went to college, so I had been putting away money. I felt like, you know what, take me. I'm happy to go at this point because that's not why I went to journalism school was to figure out how to lay people off, you know. And, um, I just didn't see the commitment to keeping the product, the newsroom strong (Carla, 52).

As mentioned earlier, 24-year-old interview participant Elizabeth witnessed the news editor who helped hire her get laid off just months into her employment. After layoffs, others in the newsrooms started to leave voluntarily, actively seeking employment at other newspapers and in other industries all together. For these members of the creative class, they feel forced to leave of their own volition rather than being forced out unprepared. Journalists started their careers having fun, loving to learn by chasing a story, getting feedback through editors, who also recognized leadership and editing talent in young reporters to build succession plans for their papers. As their careers progressed, most of them lost the positivity and fun of their work. Uncertainty and sadness replaced the fun and potential for the future. In their moments of career uncertainty and sadness, every one of the journalists and former journalists interviewed reported that they had considered leaving print newspapers and journalism all together. Jessica explains her decision to leave:



When I left, I left because of layoffs. Because it was, OK, our company's getting ready to sell, we're downsizing, we're struggle, it was because of layoffs. But the interesting thing is, when I was, before I was laid off, I had kinda gone back and forth for several months, is this still the industry for me? ... When the layoffs happened, it was the best thing that could've happened because it forced me out of something I could see coming. And it forced me to be in a different role. But kinda like we were talking about earlier, I had the skillsets to just roll right over into another industry and be completely fine (Jessica, 35).

Five of the journalists interviewed actually sought work outside of the journalism industry that would allow them to leverage their writing and editing skills. Four of them transitioned to other industries, and earn income in technical writing, education, and public relations; two of the four employed in other industry still work part-time in journalism, with only part-timing in print newspapers. Three of the four employed in other industries still consider themselves journalists, which suggests that if given the choice to stay in print newspapers with a stable career, they would stay. Carla, Scott and Eric, all of whom are still employed full-time in journalism, used terms of luck to describe their current feelings of employment in print and online news production. Rather than feeling that they've earned their positions in the industry, they express feelings of luck to have it.

I'm one of the luckier ones, without a doubt. There's no question in my mind. The fact that I'm still a journalist; I have so many friends who are not journalists anymore. Um, your heart you'll always be a journalist, but they're, you know, working in other fields (Carla, 52).

No one expressed regrets for their decisions, but no one expressed certainty in their journalism future. More common was expression of resentment in management decisions that

resulted in layoffs, as well as managements' failures to take ownership of how they've chosen to do business based on profitability, instead putting up positive façade through publication of making the product more efficient to better serve readers.

Through the middle portions of all interview participants' career spans, when most were faced with these layoffs, was a rise of terms of worry and change in confidence level of their career. Uncertainty breeds exploration of ideas and identity, and that was evident in longer responses from all participants when asked about how they felt about the future of the industry and whether they felt equipped to be successful in their careers moving forward. Certainty and confidence expresses themselves in firm, short answers to questions about the starts of their careers and feelings about the industry at that time. In contrast, in questions about the future, the complexity and length of the answers to how they feel about the future increased for almost all participants. Some of that likely comes from each participant gaining experience in the industry, understanding business and industry trends, growth out of youthful naivety, etc. and being better able to explain the context surrounding the changes they experienced in their careers. But some of may be because tenuous futures are harder to describe in words, and explanations of feelings and emotions become more complicated. As Elder suggests: "In most instances, we will be dealing not with points in time but rather with increasing tensions in an occupied role and/or increasing attractions of other possibilities" (2014, p. 205). That is, the turning points of these participants' career spans are influenced by weakening economy around them, witnessing layoffs of coworkers, declining readership, confusion about their changing role forced by the Internet, etc. These increasing tensions escalate to career decisions, and the interviewees understand the impact to their careers through their explanations of their changing attitudes, emotions, perspectives and the tensions they negotiate as they are asked to adjust and accommodate to

change coming from external factors and internal industry decisions. Ultimately some are attracted to other industries and other career possibilities.

The entire sample group expressed uncertainty about the future of the print newspaper industry. Differences arose among the present and future values they perceive in the print news product. Two of the group – David and Amanda – expressed such uncertainty in the value that it was hard for them to see any future of the print newspaper industry. David goes so far as to expect a firm death of print newspapers in his lifetime:

I'd say by 2030, printed newspapers won't exist anymore. I just can't imagine they will. Although, maybe they will in those smaller communities where you've got people who were born in a town of 1,500 people and they never leave and that's what they're used to. ... all these parents are sending their kids to college to take journalism. ... they ought to give these parents, do you realize that your kid is going to come out of college and unless they've got all these multimedia skills, they're going to have to take a job in 2015 making about 25 or 30,000 a year because that's just, the pay scale of newspapers has just gone back so far (David, 57).

Regarding journalists who are employed in the print industry, David says he feel bad for those who are middle-aged and making enough money and earning benefits to support a family, but unlikely to get raises and who often feel ill-equipped to seek employment that will earn them similar pay and benefits in an outside industry. He calls them trapped, and then also says that the print newspaper industry does not offer anything for young journalists either. Jessica and Carla express similar sentiment that there is nothing for print newspapers to offer young, talented journalists who have the flexibility to find employment online or through freelance opportunities. On the other end of the value scale, Carla, Scott, and Eric all agree that print newspapers are

extremely valuable but they also collectively expressed uncertainty of what the future of print will look like. Jessica falls in between these two sets in her certainty of the value of news, saying she is only hopeful for the value, and also unsure whether that value is fully leveraged in either print or online products today. All of them see a future for news gathering, but the collective concern is whether that will be reported as online content or whether a print product will survive. Some see print as only an outlet for follow-up or enterprise-type stories that explain rather than break news. But there also is optimism – for example, demonstrated by Carla, who describes belief that there must be a future in newspapers, where in-depth and investigatory reporting is relevant.

While considering the future of print newspapers, one key difference arose among the interviewees about what kinds of newspapers will survive. Those that speculated about size – Elizabeth, Jessica, David, and Amanda – agree that newspapers serving mid-sized markets are likely to die out. Evening papers are an example of the newspaper industry once successful enough to sustain multiple editions, only to see those disappear in the 1980s when the demand waned. The interviewees speculate about the next type of newspaper to disappear. Elizabeth believes the large ones will survive, and Amanda also said that those large-market papers have the staffs and profits still to investigate, experiment and make use of their web presence to build their brand & readership reach. Jessica and David suggest that small-sized newspapers are more likely to survive because they serve a community that cannot get their local news online because no one else is reporting on community events and goings-on. Amanda, who acknowledges the success of large-market papers, also sees the smaller locals, which “have a ton of value” because they cover communities that are overlooked in national outlets. Both arguments have logic, and each interviewee gave an example of a successful newspaper in that market. In Scott’s point of

view, he suggests that online news outlets for journalists may be the only realistic future, and speculated about the term “newspaper” and its application to online news sites that could be considered “online newspapers.” Considering his point, none of the interviewees disavowed the still-fundamental public need for news gathering. Carla called it a public service, and made the case when she said “we’re still telling people things they wouldn’t be getting from anywhere else.” That centers the argument of whether there is still value in journalism. Eric, too, makes the point that the world will always need “reported content,” and newspapers offer value in differentiating quality content from clutter.

But recognizing the need for journalists does not answer the question about a sustainable outlet for the news in these changing times of Internet growth and real economic hardships that have resulted in cutbacks to staffs and fewer journalists even gathering news, let alone printing it or selling it freelance to online news organizations. John, who has 41 years of print journalism experience said he started to feel that journalists were becoming news gatherers when newspapers first started posting stories online: “The Internet really turned everyone into a wire service reporter, that there was a sense that you had to go somewhere, see something, and immediately stop and file.” All agree there is value in news, but that there are fewer journalists, fewer full-time opportunities to get paid to gather news, and to Scott’s point, more incidents of citizen journalists catching news on cell phones, and part-time journalists submitting Freedom of Information Act petitions to release information, and fewer trained professionals doing the investigative reporting that built the industry in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

## Impact of the Internet

I asked the interviewees about a change in their job or role that was specific to the Internet, expecting to hear responses that indicated the Internet as a pivot point to many careers. What I found as Internet came up in response to not just that question but mixed into other questions throughout the interviews, is that introduction of technology was a key point of confusion about how these journalists do their jobs and how print newspapers would weather the future. Internet was a point of confusion, point of worry, and point of change in workplace expectations as reporters were expected to prepare and often post stories online, editors were expected to edit for shorter online content, and online-dedicated positions arose.

It was the first time we were going to use the Internet to send stories. I remember these ridiculously long training sessions and steps, and all you were doing was sending an email. But it was like, ‘What do you mean?’ I mean, it was a very difficult process. And you still had to find, we’re overseas, and I mean, we spent, you know, we went a couple different places overseas in Paris and Portugal, and the first thing we would do is go into the hotel room and see if the phone thing came out of the back. It’s like, do they have anything. It was a cumbersome process. That’s what we worried about. You know, instead of worrying about the content of the story. The first thing was how am I going to be able to transport it (Amanda, 43).

All of the journalists and former journalists interviewed expressed understanding of the demands for them to adapt their skills to meet the technological requirements of an industry continuing to move online. But not all of them believed they could do that successfully while employed at a print newspaper. Those who could and did – Eric, Scott, Carla, Elizabeth –

continue employment in the print newspaper industry. Those who did not, John and David, sought alternate employment all together.

I could see when I got out it was a good opportunity for those younger people because the technology was changing. You know, the Twitter, I don't do any of that. You know, the Twitter stuff and all that stuff, they know how to do that, and I was like, let them have it because I'm not interested in all that. I'm not interested in doing my news that way (David, 57).

Then there are those who exemplify Richard Florida's identification of "creative class" (2012), a sociological class of people who have production, design and creative problem-solving skills developed in knowledge industries that are readily transferable and useful in other arenas and industries. Jessica and Amanda have both gotten out of print newspapers and leveraged their creative skills of reporting, editing, and online production in application in other industries. As mentioned, Jessica now works in public relations, and Amanda supplements freelance reporting by teaching. These two and those who have stayed in the industry understand the value of their individual skills as well as the need to build an individual brand, rather than merely attach themselves to the brand of the print product they work for. The latter isn't enough of a competitive advantage anymore, and many institutions now seek individual brands to strengthen their online institutional presence.

Use of multiple platforms – online and offline – for branding and news production has terminology that differentiates between short-form journalism (online, think blogging) and long-form journalism (often print, think enterprise stories). It also has prompted terms like click-bait, which describes short-form sensational online postings designed to induce readers to share the link to their site in the hopes to draw additional readers to other content once they arrive. The

push for more short-form stories online, coupled with cutbacks to newsroom staffs, have forced journalists into roles not just of news producers but disseminators of news content online.

Reporters are also videographers and bloggers, getting the early Tweet or YouTube video up with a blurb of content before they even draft a full-fledged story. Little time is left for traditional long-form investigative journalism. The journalists interviewed disagree with the value of a shorter format. Some accept it as what readers are interested in, and have adapted their work, though all those interviewed agree that the investment of online publishing has yet to pay off in profits or strong readership results on par with prior print figures. Those who could not accept it chose to leave the industry. John and David, both in the Baby Boom generation decided they did not want to adapt to new technology and, in John's words, "short-change" readers. It became an obvious choice for these two to leave the industry as this was not journalism as they knew it, and not journalism as readers used to know it since cutbacks to editorial pages and feature sections. Jessica, a "Generation X" journalist, expressed concern about a dumbing down of society that came with shorter stories. While she said she believed in making online work, she also acknowledged that "I don't think your traditional journalist exists anymore." Jessica left the print (and online) newspaper industry after seeing several peers laid off. Print newspapers still prize enterprising and investigative journalism, and so journalists who want to set themselves apart and earn promotion to larger markets, with presumably bigger staffs, must work longer hours to investigate and write those longer-form, quality pieces that gain more attention than a quantity of short-form blog-type online postings. Newspapers that employ journalists unwilling to put in that extra time for the salary dollars go without enterprising and investigative content that used to be central to their product. This posed challenges for Scott and Eric, both of whom



continue to work as reporters but both of whom have questioned their journalism careers and whether they would be able to continue them.

### How journalism is performed

I don't think your traditional journalists are still alive and well, per se. I think they've morphed so much. ... imagine, like, your crusty guy who couldn't wait to break that story about the corrupt city council. Now, while he's getting the information, he's also Tweeting about it, sending something to somebody to get up on Facebook so that they can get the hit first. You're getting so much more bits and pieces because now they have to be not just a reporter and gatherer of facts and disseminator of information, but they have to be the disseminator of information from the time they think there might be an issue all the way out. And then not only are they sitting there with their pen and their paper like they used to be, but now they have to have a camera and have their smart phone to record the clips so that hopefully if it goes viral, ok great. They have so many more hats that I don't think your traditional journalist exists anymore (Jessica, 35).

At issue for many of these journalists was the ability to generate sustainable income in a new online news world. Eric is able to do it full-time and considers himself a successful journalist, though he acknowledges that he is one of the few of his graduate class to be gainfully employed in the industry. Amanda makes a part of her living producing online content, but also requires supplementing that online income with teaching jobs because the freelance work is inconsistent. Amanda says she doesn't believe newspapers have "any sense what to do" to build a profitable online model, with few exceptions of big-market international papers. Those who are still in the industry, like Elizabeth, Scott, Carla, are more constructive with the future. Carla uses

the term believe, and Scott says he has “faith that that can be turned around.” Scott speculates the way it might look online, and Carla hypothesizes a future for print newspapers in public service either through partnership with non-profits or universities. Those who are no longer in the industry, like Jessica and David possibly John, use terms like dead and see a point in the future where there will no longer be newspapers. Those who have found employment outside the industry may be more resigned to give up on the future because it is not a requirement for sustaining their careers. They have found a way to leverage their skills as members of Florida’s Creative class, but they may not have considered creative options for the futures of newspapers in the way that those still actively seeking employment in the industry are. Those who are still employed in the industry may be more likely to compromise tradition for creativity to sustain news production in online and in print, working with new models that combine both. Meantime, they’re building their own brands, and no longer rely solely on the credibility of the institution as their credibility. They acknowledge the change in the industry, that fewer jobs are available and more papers are closing, and so they look to build their own skills to be marketable in the future at an online news producer or as a freelancer. They look to make themselves stand out as not indispensable but as less dispensable in the newspaper industry, for example as boots-on-the-ground reporters making less in salary dollars than editors.

Part of Kuhn’s paradigm shift is acknowledging anomalies that threaten normal practices. All of these participants acknowledge moments in their career where they realize things aren’t how they once were – i.e. deviation from the normal, previously accepted practices of the print-newspaper industry. But their uncertainty of the future shows there is no new norm yet established. In Carla’s words, they’re still “throwing spaghetti on the wall.” Eric’s explanation of him being one of only two journalists from his first job still in the industry, and one of only a few

he graduated with in the industry, in some ways exemplifies the anomaly of journalists being forced to adapt their skillset to the change. He still defines himself as a reporter, but sees himself as few among his peers who choose to stay in full-time employment and who have worked their way up to a \$90,000-plus salary in a major market over only the past 10 years. His journalism job, however, bridges between online and print. He says they break news online and follow-up with enterprise reporting in print to explain and analyze the trends. Their print publication is not daily. Scott, on the other hand, considers himself a reporter and works in a still-primarily print product that publishes daily and also posts his stories online. Scott is still the norm of traditional print newspaper reporting and acknowledges that some readers still want that. But he knows fewer people want that and struggles with the definition of a newspaper if it is actually online. Can a newspaper be a newspaper without actual paper? Others, including Eric, expressed concern over the term “news content,” which often is used for online news. In fact, after Eric used the term content, he clarified it to mean quality journalism. Presumably, this group does not see content as connoting the same credibility of newspaper journalism that historically has a vetting process via editors and copy editors who ensure factual reporting and compliance with century-old guidelines outlined by the Associated Press Stylebook. Online news content often does not have style guidelines but is most concerned with making news available via initial post, sharing, and spreading that can (but does not necessarily) facilitate dialogue.

Online news content often does not have style guidelines but is most concerned with making news available via initial post, sharing, and spreading that can (but does not necessarily) facilitate dialogue. Only sometimes is it followed-up in longer format online or in print. In fact, only sometimes is the online content generated by journalists. For every cell phone video or alert posted to a news site or Twitter by a boots-on-the-ground journalist, there are videos and blurbs

from standers-by and event participants that do as much to generate news that trends and spreads online. For some journalists, the main thing is the public service that newspapers offer, and discourse is generated about whether online news outlets can provide a similar informational public service. The tension surrounding this issue and expressed by many of these journalists, is whether the short-form, unedited format of online provides the same public service as a formal news outlet or whether the industry has compromised the public service that newspapers offer a community. Can online news serve the same role as print? And is there a sustainable model for the future of newspapers online?

Printing news on paper is going to come to an end at some point I would think, but it may be a while. So, if you look at like music, we don't generally put our music on compact discs or cassette tapes anymore. It can be loaded right into the device that we are going to use to listen to it. Journalism is like that right now in a lot of ways, too. But there's still enough people that want to get it on paper that you can't just stop doing that, or you would lose a lot of money (Scott, 41).

Adding to the tension of this discourse for the journalists and former journalists interviewed is resentment for executive management for making decisions only to sustain a profit margin, rather than considering the people, the future and the public service. Cutbacks to staff, reduction in actual paper by removing content, and increased focus on stories that act as click-bait – i.e. popular, sensational stories that lure online readers to the site in hopes that they'll read the public service stories that are not promoted elsewhere and increase online advertising revenues.

Others in this study could be defined as experimenters with the norm of traditional news reporting: Amanda still considers herself a journalist, but works in a freelance capacity for

several online publications, co-operates a sports blog, and she supplements her income through teaching. In her freelancing capacity, she still sees herself as a reporter and journalist, but does not consider her blog traditional news gathering. This is an alternative journalistic role and lifestyle that has been embraced by many journalists still interested in staying in the industry but who cannot, choose not to pursue, full-time employment in the industry. She, like many others, is not just a reporter of news, but also a disseminator of news, which once was the function of the newspaper. Instead, she leveraged what she learned in print and became a member of the creative class by serving both roles without the aid of a news institution to assist in dissemination of information. As a result of this and previously mentioned successful anomalies in news reporting, the norm of newspapers' Kuhnian paradigm is thrown into crisis, and print journalism has entered a pre-paradigmatic phase where new ideas, behaviors, and practices in journalism are rising that are incongruent with the prior norm.

As these journalists and former journalists express in their uncertainty of the future, a new normal has not yet been established. Journalism hasn't found THE key to leveraging online availability of news. They haven't solved the puzzle of driving online readers to their news site. Unlike local print newspapers, which everyone previously had come to understand as THE source of information, and which they understood came at a price, online is full of free information. Newspapers' traditional methods of gathering readers and having readers fund news production through subscription and purchases at newspaper advertisers won't work online. Just publishing news isn't enough to sustain production in a digital age. Newspapers experiment with shorter stories that can be published quickly online to break news and sometimes tease to longer versions in print. These short stories often go unedited, but as mentioned before, they draw readers' eyes to click through more stories, thus boosting ad views. And now, rather than just

thinking about the content of the story they will produce, journalists now are forced to consider multiple methods of news production and how to best transmit the message to maximize readership of it, which previously had been editors' and designers' concerns. While important to in a digital news age, consideration about content distribution detracts from reporters' focus on story content, and sometimes inhibits likelihood that they'll go further in-depth in the investigation of the story. Staffing cuts that placed responsibility for content on fewer people also prevented proactive watchdog reporting instead of reactive reporting on breaking news. This business model isn't working for print as it compromises all previously established modes of sustaining newspapers – economics, news production, and staffing – with no apparent news industry gain other than at the bottom line. Worse, a sustainable business model has been an afterthought to the experimentation online by newspaper companies. Readers are used to free content and most find it on non-news industry-run sites rather than pay online subscription rates. Participants recognized some successful news sites and business models, including a few large-market papers and ProPublica, an online non-profit news producer that focuses on public-service investigatory reporting. These are the successful exceptions or anomalies in the current industry, not the norm.

#### Emotional toll

RQ3 took the concepts of change identified in RQ1 and RQ2, and then looked at the frequency of word choice, specific to emotions at the career turning points identified – first job, first job change or promotion, job change involving the internet, recent job change, and current outlook on the future of the print newspaper industry. Examining the findings of these mixed methods together, we find more positive and hopeful terminology and sentiment at the start

versus the current outlook's terminology. The outlook on the future of newspapers at the points of their first job and first promotions/big assignments were largely positive, as demonstrated by key words that include potential, incredibly/highly/extremely valuable, exciting, love, fun, positive, opportunities and hopeful. Even in expressions of hesitation, for example, acknowledging a start to the decline of the industry, there were expressions of confidence and value. As careers advanced, specifically regarding job change that involved the internet, the positively emotional key words became overshadowed by more negatively emotional indicators, including worry, concern, frustration. The positive words were still present, but much smaller in relation to frequency of use: enjoy, enthusiasm and good. General responses included acknowledgement for the value and need for news gathering, but the outlet for this largely centered on expectation for continued rise of online news sites. Negative terminology and sentiment increased even more when asked about their recent job changes (disheartening, heartbreaking, died, security, miserable) and outlooks on the future of newspapers today (no future, sad, worry, uncertain and not so optimistic).

Regarding the future today, every respondent's answer included negative emotions, adjectives, and identifiers: "bleak," "pessimistic," "frustrating," "tragic," "struggle," "worry," "come to an end." Many of them, however, also included positive identifiers: "good journalism is good business," "I've reached the level of full success," "trustworthy," "believer." The complexity of answers about the future increased for most interviewees with the question about today's perspective on the future. It's difficult for any of the participants to be resigned to a bleak future. Those who did use that type of terminology tempered it when asked about value. Even if their mindsets are negative about the future of print newspapers, they are positive about the value of news reporting, news content and news distribution to communities. Because there is no new

norm of newspapers or news content established, dual-outlook of both positivity and negativity seems fitting to describe an uncertain future. There is certainty in the need for news gathering, however, there is more uncertainty about the form that will take. This uncertainty bleeds into the interview participants' confidence in their identities as journalists, and their feelings of being insiders to Thomas Carlyle's "fourth estate" (Thussu, 2008), an industry that has such an established history of public service that it was considered a fourth branch of government. Amid all this uncertainty, there were no expressions of regret to being a part of the industry at any point in their careers, whether they were removed from it by layoff, changed careers voluntarily, or continue working for print or digital newspapers. Noted among all participants, however, was a lack of alignment with the company they work for. Some – including Carla and Eric – say they are happy to work for a company without a dark cloud over the newsroom and that seems to value its employees. However, many of these journalists and former journalists described resentment for newspaper executives as a collective group of decision-makers who have run newsrooms like businesses without consideration for the people or the value their businesses provide to their communities.

### Limitations

I selected a representative sample of survey participants for interviews (see Table 4). Those who actually agreed to participate did not fully represent the overall survey sample in every category. For example, the Millennial generation was underrepresented in interviews (23.3% of survey respondents, and 12.5% of actual interview participants). Generation X was slightly overrepresented. Those who still identify themselves as journalists were overrepresented in interviews (78.4% in surveys, and 87.5% in interviews). In contrast, those who no longer identify as journalists were underrepresented. The same was true of those who currently work in



journalism (57.9% in surveys, 75% interviews) and those who work in a print journalism field (46.1% surveys, 75% interviews). As a result of the interviews not providing a direct representational sample from the surveys, some of the conclusions drawn here may not be true to conclusions that could be drawn by studying any one generation, for example, or a representative sample that more closely aligns to the generational representation of the survey. Duplication of this test in another mid-sized market may assist in verification of these conclusions. Other concerns may arise from the mix in current employment. Asking hindsight questions about career-span can be blurred by present circumstances. Those working in a large market newspaper now may reflect on their careers differently than those working outside of the industry. Perspective over years can be difficult to pin down. Was the sample size large enough to recognize differences that may have come up in the perspectives of these in comparison to those who still work in the mid-market? There were many other themes that came up during the research analysis, including education, credibility of newspapers, and possible solutions for the future. For time, I could not address all of these themes here, but they are opportunities for future study of this same data set.

## SUMMARY

The journalists and former journalists who have worked in a mid-sized market confirm that their behaviors, practices, skillsets, expectations and perceptions of the newspaper industry have changed over the course of their careers. Most of them started in this industry with expectations of a long career, and all of them feel that the print newspaper industry affords a less certain future now than it did when they began. Key turning points in their careers were the introduction of the Internet to their newsroom practices as well as layoffs of themselves or the

coworkers. The former changed readership habits, which forced print newspapers to reconsider what they were doing. Adaptation to new technologies in the newsroom meant new skillsets and then ultimately even changed roles in news production. Rather than print newspaper reporters and editors, they all agree they were asked to work in a more short-form, online-first publication. Print publication became secondary and a location for long-form follow-up. Many of interview participants here expressed initial uncertainty and lack of confidence in the changes in behaviors, skills and practices they were asked to perform, though through the years, those who have remained in the industry have adapted to the requests and become more comfortable with these new concepts. Those who were not comfortable in it, made logical decisions not to get left behind and instead left the industry.

In the aftermath of the transition to an online environment, these interviewees indicate that their financial stability waned. Some credit lack of a business model for making money online. However, the economic downturn of the late 2000s was also instrumental. The latter saw cutbacks in print advertising and was perceived by the participants as forcing executive decisions rooted in improving fast-eroding newspaper profits by attacks to the largest expense line item: people. Every journalist and former journalist interviewed said they experienced layoffs to at least one of the publications they worked for in their careers, one person remembered 5 rounds of layoffs in hers. Economic factors that resulted in layoffs also brought about obstacles to the remaining newsroom workforce as they were expected to produce as close to the same amount of work as before the layoffs, now with a smaller staff. On top of that, they were producing and distributing work in ever-new ways via online technologies that demanded continuing education at the same time as some of them experienced shaken confidence in the future of their own

careers. This environment led to a second round of logical decisions by many journalists to leave the industry before they were asked to leave their current employment in another layoff.

Some of these journalists and former journalists made educated decisions to leave an industry they had considered a career to place their creative skills in other industries. Other journalists stayed because they felt trapped in that less-stable career for feelings of ill preparedness to support a family by starting at the bottom of a new industry. The evidence gathered in these interviews supports a perspective from inside the print newspaper industry aligns with prior research identified key areas of external change that impacted the industry – technology, readership, economics and workforce obstacles. These interviews highlight key turning points of journalism careers that changed professional behaviors, practices and identification. The incongruence with prior concepts of traditional newspaper work caused an exodus of labor from the industry through both voluntary and involuntary measures. The print newspaper workforce is positioned differently now as focus has shifted to competition in a digital era, and many print publications are not yet fully equipped for the competition.

## CHAPTER IV

### CONCLUSION

The thesis examined the crisis in the print newspaper industry from a workforce perspective and found evidence of a disruption in the overall newspaper industry paradigm in the significant number of changes in behaviors and practices of the workforce, as well as in the uncertainty in the future of the print newspaper industry felt by all members of the workforce interviewed. Researchers have confirmed that the business model of print newspapers is not as profitable as it once was. The survey and interviews conducted for this thesis have confirmed that economic changes in the industry have resulted in disruption of the workforce as cutbacks and layoffs have been employed in effort to re-stabilize the downturn in financial security of the industry. The Internet has been influential in creating competition for the advertising dollars that formerly sustained the industry. It also has influenced change in readership habits as news consumers become accustomed to free information available around-the-clock online, thus demanding change in how newspapers produce content and how the workforce performs journalism. Combined, this is in age of disruption of readership, news consumption, news production and news distribution, and the industry is moving from chaos into a pre-paradigmatic phase of experimentation with new business models that incorporate online, including blog-style reporting and investigatory reporting via social media.

Meantime the workforce of print newspapers is experiencing a disruption of identity as what it means to be a journalist changes. Amid the layoffs, cutbacks and demands to adapt to the evolving industry, more journalists are making voluntary decision to leave the print news industry in favor of leveraging their creative skillsets in other fields. Those who have stayed behind in print newspapers are left using different skills than they once did to survive. The role of journalist that has been defined over a century by objectivity and professionalization is highly

imbalanced by the economics and technological change taking place in the industry, and the journalist-created culture embedded in the print newspaper industry is giving way to greater weight placed on management and executive-driven values.

This industrial setting and potential turning points in journalism careers were the context for the survey and interviews conducted in this research to gain perspective of journalists and former journalists in a mid-major print newspaper market. Both a survey instrument and interviews were conducted for a couple of reasons. First a snowball sample of survey participants increased the diversity of the pool of voluntary participants for interviews. Second, multi-method data sets will serve as a broad foundation for future research as most prior research has been done on the paradigm shift in the industry and very little has been done on the disruption to the print newspapers workforce amid the shift. The parameters for the sample population were set for participants to work or have worked in a specific mid-major-sized market in order keep a relevant base for experience but then also to generalize findings from this research to other mid-major-market journalists. Mid-market journalists are newspaper professionals who work at medium-size city publications that often act as a stepping-stone between small, hometown newspapers and employment at major-markets such as Los Angeles, New York, Chicago and Washington D.C.

## KEY POINTS

The print newspaper industry is unstable, and almost all journalists and former journalists who participated in this research agree – especially when compared with their perceptions of more industry stability at the starts of their careers. They identify the instability on numerical scales, in their descriptive terms of uncertainty of the industry’s future, and in their emotional

reaction to the changes they've witnessed in newsrooms and around them in the workforce. Detailed in this chapter are summaries of key points gleaned from the research that offer context for the crisis in print newspapers from the workforce perspective and brief discussion of each of the points in context of the industry's paradigm shift. I consider what's at stake for an industry in paradigm shift, and how that impacts the career-spans of its workforce as more newspapers across the country close each year – for example, Tampa Tribune in 2016 and Rocky Mountain News and Baltimore Examiner in 2009, to name just a few.

#### External Factors are Linked to Career Trajectory

Research outlined in Chapter 1 has built a foundation for the current state of crisis in the print newspaper industry. Nichols & McChesney (2009, 2011) describe economic and business factors, Mythen (2010) and Anderson (2010) detail technological factors, Starr (2009) has studied social and readership factors, Barthel (2015) was cited for ownership and management factors, and Sonderman (2012) and McChesney (2012) begin discourse for obstacles that confront workforce in the changing industry. There is no one proverbial magic bullet that has caused the downturn of the print newspaper industry. These factors all have contributed to change in the print newspaper industry, and it happened over years as competition for advertising dollars rose, Internet offered diverse (and free) methods for reporting news to readers, industry owners failed to adapt timely to this change and ultimately reactively instituted cuts to the print product and layoffs to workforce to make up lost revenues. Successful large-market newspapers and experimental print-and-digital or digital-only news outlets have adapted their business models to include online advertising revenues and lower-cost online news production and distribution. Those that haven't changed – and those in smaller markets slow to incorporate

online trends – continue to struggle or have closed all together. This research considers how this struggle and these factors, which I call external factors, have influenced change for people and careers inside the industry.

A survey instrument conducted for this thesis initially confirmed that journalists and former journalists do consider these same factors influential in changes to the print newspaper industry. In fact, in addition to acknowledging the factors, they also admit to their own lack of readership of local, national and international print newspapers daily, but broader news consumption of a digital version of local, national and international newspapers. More than half of participants also read at least one news aggregator website daily. Subsequent interviews ultimately generated more discourse around financial/economic downturn, management decisions, and technological factors. Readership and ownership did come up, but they were less prevalent in interview responses. Overall, it was difficult to extract any of these influential factors singularly for analysis because management decisions that impacted the workforce (layoffs, for example) were discussed with and linked to economic issues. Further, technology was linked to readership issues and economy as participants speculated about revenue was to be made – specifically how revenues COULD be made when information was given away free.

It's important to again note how workforce perspectives align with prior research on these external factors, but this thesis goes further to explore how the workforce is impacted by these factors – how journalists internalize the external factors through their career decisions. Every journalist and former journalist interviewed recognized the rising trends of online news and need to update their skills to developing technology. But key to the research is that not all of them wanted or believed they could do that successfully to continue full-time employment in the print newspaper industry. Want and belief can influence career trajectories differently, and

further complicating these want- and belief-based workforce decisions are management decisions that impact the career trajectories of journalists – for example, cutbacks to the print product and management decisions to layoff journalists who had committed to adapting their skills to stay competitive in the industry. The industry is shifting, and not just because the workforce is positioned differently in response to a singular influence like technology. The workforce is actually analyzing rising and reducing trends of the Internet, readership, advertising dollars, economy, workforce obstacles, etc., and making conscious decision about their careers.

Once-traditional print newspaper careers – exemplified by reporting in a small market, building a portfolio of clips, earning a position in mid-market, building a portfolio of clips, and someday striving for large-market newspaper employment – have been replaced by many lateral moves within a single market, adaptation to digital skillsets in demand, changes in media distribution from print to print-and-online, changes in role as new positions are created to accommodate web production and videography. Increasingly career turning points that would have taken a journalist from a small market to a mid-major are instead moving journalists from print journalism to digital journalism or moving them away from news businesses all together. Most significant to the concerns expressed by the journalists and former journalist interviewed is a perceived reduction in the public service that community newspapers offer by the changing landscape of the industry and their roles within it. They agree with William Bennett's (1996) assessment that commercialization and commodification of U.S. news is outweighing the value of public interest, and management concerns for journalistic roles and values are continuing to erode in favor of profitability. All of this may mean that journalists no longer possess as much power to create culture in the news organization.



Layoffs have resulted in fewer people on staff, and so fewer resources are available for reporting and investigating in the community. In place of these investigative pieces published in print often are superficial versions of these same stories quickly posted online – if they get covered at all. The perception of reduction in the watchdog role of newspapers is that layoffs often target the highest salaries in a newsroom to make biggest impact to the budget which results in a reduction in overall tenure of a newsroom staff that had served as teachers and support for younger journalists. Witnessing peers and elders being laid off prompted at least three of the eight interview participants – two from Generation X and one Baby Boomer – to voluntarily leave the print news industry all together. These decisions further reduce the workforce. They are as much logical deduction from industry events as they are emotional decisions made in sadness or guilt for surviving the round of layoffs, or in stress of insecurity about whether they could be next. This paints a picture of the narrative of instability current “insiders” to the newspaper industry have and that influences their career trajectory.

This instability and the changes to role outlined here also are reflected in a change to journalists’ identities as the term newspaper no longer carries the same decades-old traditional definition, and the term journalism now includes digital news production and online content. A journalist who once defined himself by his long-form, boots-on-the-ground investigative reporting, for example, now has his time limited for investigation by requirements to produce shorter versions of stories to post ahead of the investigative piece. He now may also post content online himself. Being asked to cover more beats as newsroom staffs have shrunk further limit time for investigation and long-format writing. Much of what the journalists interviewed here previously defined as successful performance of journalism to advance their careers has changed, even as they’ve worked to achieve the own goals established by their beliefs in the traditional

definition. John, 64, spent more than 40 years working in print newspapers. He left the industry about 10 years ago:

One of the conclusions I came to toward the end is that the Internet really turned everyone into a wire service reporter, that there was a sense that you had to go somewhere, see something, and immediately stop and file. And that's not what I signed up for. I didn't mind doing it every now and again; election night I got a good rush from, and that's essentially what you're doing on election night. But I didn't want to do that every day.

#### Influence of Instability on Workforce Decisions

At the starts of their careers, the older half of the interview participants, ages 43-66, indicated that they never considered the future of newspapers. They said it wasn't an issue, wasn't in question and so there was no need to consider or talk about it. Statistically, the older generations reported to have been more positive in their perception of stability of the newspaper industry at the start of their careers than younger generations. In childhood they would have understood the newspaper industry as a public servant and community watchdog, influenced by their observations of *The Washington Post's* investigatory coverage of the Watergate Scandal of the 1970s. Further, they would have observed the rise of significant profitability of newspapers at the starts of their careers as newspapers were consolidated into publishing companies that owned multiple media outlets, and revenues from print advertising dollars were high. But it wasn't just Generation Xers (born 1961-1981) and Baby Boomers (born 1943 to 1960) who reported a decline in their perception of stability of the industry today as compared to the starts of their careers. Even Millennials, born after 1981 and entering a newspaper industry at a time when it

already has experienced widespread layoffs in its workforce and closure of many publications, reported an overall decline in perception of stability in the survey.

When asked in interviews about these feelings of instability over their careers, all of the factors reviewed above were cited and discussed. Introduction of the Internet often was a point of confusion and worry for their careers as it led to many changes in newsrooms, news reporting and distribution, and with many expectations of their job function. News production and distribution began to go online, and journalists' roles changed to include that. At that same time and following introduction of the Internet, journalists also have been subject to layoffs and cutbacks in print newspaper content. The turning points of these participants' career spans are understood through their explanations of these changes, as well as their changing attitudes, emotions, and the tensions they negotiated as they were asked to adjust and accommodate to new definition of journalist and journalism. The decisions made by the print newspaper workforce in reaction to these changes varied from taking buyouts offered by newspapers' executive management and leaving amid layoffs, to adapting to new demands with new skills to continue employment in the print newspaper industry, to taking their journalism skillset to other industries in frustration with and fear of the instability.

When asked about their perceptions over the past 10 years, most survey respondents confirmed feelings of instability about the future of their employment amid these changes. But the survey also found that those who did change jobs in the past 10 years mitigated their feelings of instability and actually have a more positive perception of the stability of the newspaper industry today than those who have not changed jobs. Additional research may help better understand causation for this, but this correlation suggests that career opportunity is related to feelings of stability. I did not ask whether the job changes may have removed them from the

newspaper industry, and further study may help identify feelings of job satisfaction inside and outside of print newspaper employment. But interestingly, the data show that the greater percentage of current income generated in print journalism today, the more stable the participant perceived the newspaper industry to be today.

### Evidence for Paradigm Shift

In his seminal work, The Structure of Scientific Revolutions, Thomas Kuhn (1996) identifies an exploratory process of scientific revolution. He dispelled theory that science develops in a linear fashion, and instead it develops in cycles as established norms or paradigms are replaced through experimentation and pre-paradigmatic phases on the way to a new paradigm. It's from this theory that a paradigm shift is understood as a disruption of accepted practices, identity, behaviors, equipment, normal, etc. Alfred Hermida (2013) argues that newspapers are stuck in a pre-paradigmatic phase, where experimentation is happening but most traditional print newspapers are overlaying Internet's affordances onto existing newspaper structure. This thesis has uncovered multiple findings that signify a disruption of the print newspaper paradigm, including findings that younger generations feel less stable about entering the newspaper industry than their older counterparts did when they entered, and that journalists with decades of experience are voluntarily leaving the industry because they no longer feel they have the skillset to be succeed. This is evidence that the situation today for Millennials entering the newspaper industry is different than it was a generation ago for Generation Xers and two generations ago for Baby Boomers. Journalists exiting the print field, and perception of growing instability across all members of the industry further point to a shift in the established paradigm of print journalism. That there is no certain future for print journalism suggests the shift is still

emerging. The “normal” that was print newspapers – offering watchdog public service delivered daily on doorsteps for Baby Boomers in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s – has been impacted by anomalies over the past two decades of lagging advertising revenues, digital competition for readership, and slow adaptation to technology that assists news production and distribution. The once-traditional business model of newspapers is not working, and the workforce has been stripped by layoffs, lack of hiring, cutbacks in publishing, and demands for digital skillsets. That normal has been overlaid and disrupted by new practices, behaviors and changing identities of journalists. Kuhn’s “crisis” phase is under way, and none of the journalists and former journalists interviewed have a confident or clear picture of the future of newspapers. In one interviewee’s words, they’re “throwing spaghetti on the wall” in a pre-paradigmatic phase in attempt to find a new normal.

As detailed in the prior sections, the job function of print journalists has adapted to demands for digital news distribution, which further demonstrates changed practices of the workforce in the print journalism industry. Those who have stayed and continued to be successful print journalists have had to create a brand that includes an ability to earn followers online to draw traffic to a news site and to a print newspaper. The reputation of the print institution, with rare large-market exceptions, is no longer enough to draw readers regularly online:

Obviously the definition of such has changed incredibly since 2005. ... In days gone by the key was to build up resume and good clips of in-depth reporting, right? And that’s what you were focused on, solely on doing good journalism. Here, I think, the key to, ah, staying power in the industry, there are a number of additional, ah, strengths or, um, core competencies that you need to possess. It’s not just doing great journalism anymore.

You've got to be able to build a brand online. You've got to be able to build a following. You have to know how to reach readers. You have to know how to balance the, ah, daily churn for the web. You have to be quick, but you also have to add something to the conversation that is unique, and backed by strong reporting. And that's journalism (Eric, 36).

Eric began his career as a reporter for a traditional, small print news publication. He said he always liked business and spent three years honing his business-reporting skills. He said that having a specialty niche, like business reporting, could make him more marketable in the future. He moved up to a mid-sized market, and planned to spend another 3 years there continuing to improve his reporting skillset. It was there that he first felt the impact of the external forces outlined above. He said Internet was introduced, and he was asked to post stories directly online, before a story went through editing, which he recognized not only as a change, but as a risk in retaining news value and factual credibility. "None of us really liked it. But I think all of realized this was going to be something of the future." At the same publication, he experienced managerial decisions for newsroom layoffs, and he saw many of his coworkers left without jobs. What started as a newsroom staff of 120 people was down to 63 when he made a decision to leave that publication voluntarily. It forced more work on him, and offered less time for the enterprising stories that make for award-winning presentation clips to earn a large-market job. He said it lengthened his planned 3 years with the publication to 4 years before he felt he had accumulated a good portfolio. He ultimately did earn a position at a major metro-area newspaper: "And, ah, never thought I'd leave that job. But things continued to deteriorate at that major-metro newspaper. And, ah, the future was bleak at best." At that time, he considered leaving the print newspaper industry all together. He had a family by then, and wanted stable

employment. It was only “by a magic stroke of luck, something else better came along,” and he was able to stay in print newspapers, but now working at an online-and-print business publication in the large-city market. They break news online and follow-up with in-depth stories in print.

Eric’s case is representative of the demand to adapt to new practices, behaviors and equipment of a changing newspaper industry. He still considers himself a newspaper reporter and journalist, but it’s with an updated skillset that was difficult to put into practice amid shrinking staffs. He questioned his future and his ability to succeed as a journalist. In addition to layoffs, friends he graduated college with started to leave the industry voluntarily. Members of Richard Florida’s Creative Class, his friends (and four of the eight journalists interviewed for this research) have leveraged their creative skills in other industries, no longer working full-time in newspapers. Uncertainty and sadness replaced the fun and potential for the future of an industry with an antiquated business model, and only experimentation with new news models to show. The publication where Eric now works uses paywalls to earn revenues for the news business – forcing readers to pay to read individual stories or purchase a subscription. He said he likes that business model for stability, but online is full of free news that offers competition to their publication. Just publishing news isn’t enough to sustain production in a digital age. Building a brand, loyal readers and offering something that resonates with readers is challenging. Rather than just thinking about the content of the story they will produce, Eric now must consider multiple methods of news production and how to best transmit the message to maximize readership of it across platforms, which previously had been editors’ and designers’ concerns.

Changes to behaviors and practices have prompted new terminology. If the terms they previously used to describe their work have changed, the way they understand what it means to

be a journalist also has changed. The notion of a newspaper was a physical paper product delivered or purchased at a news stand. Now that it's online, can it still be a paper or *The Post*? Is news posted online or is it reported or blogged? Those words carry different meanings, connotations, and levels of credibility. Is it credible news if it's a short-form blurb and absent of Associated Press Style? What if it just shows up in a list on BuzzFeed? Eric differentiated between reported news from online content. News comes from a credible source; content is available anywhere from anyone. The tension that existed a century ago around professionalization of news and objectivity as duty to the public is emerging again in contemporary journalism as the industry is entrenched in pre-paradigmatic experimentation with citizen journalism, blogs and profitable news production. Another term of change cited in interviews was click-bait, a term of quick-reported sensationalism that does not require the in-depth investigation that built longstanding newspaper empires like *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times*. A push for more short-form, click-baity stories online, coupled with cutbacks to newsroom staffs, have forced journalists into roles not just of news producers but disseminators of content online. Reporters are bloggers and videographers, getting the early Tweet or YouTube video up with a blurb of content before they even draft a full-fledged story. New roles have changed the identities of the journalists interviewed, and some of them did not feel comfortable adopting a new identity.

Clearly there were a lot of pressures in the industry, a lot of things going on in the industry that I wasn't particularly comfortable with. As you probably already could have guessed, including the movement toward shorter, more concise, short-form journalism. I wasn't a big fan of that. I thought it sold readers short and I still do (John, 64, who now works in marketing for a non-profit).



## SUMMARY

The goal of this research was not an exhaustive study of journalists' perceptions. It was meant to use case study of journalists and former journalist to address a need for the human element of study on an industry amid paradigm shift that was absent from prior research. The narratives and emotional states during moments of career change that were presented here provide foundational evidence that the print newspaper workforce perceives instability in the industry, and what they've experienced on the road to instability has shaken their identities as journalists. New practices in newsrooms and new business practices at corporate-run newspapers have forced the workforce to question many things: their ability to stay competitive in a digital era, their ability to sustain employment through layoffs, ability to sustain an income to support their families, and ultimately whether being a member of a leaner newsroom will offer them enough opportunity to provide the public service they believe is at the heart of the newspaper industry. As a result of the observations of workforce obstacles, readership changes, demand for technological skillsets, and new business practices, journalists are voluntarily changing the trajectory of their careers, often even leaving the industry they spent years training for and in, adding to the paradigm shift.

An argument could be made that newspapers go through periods of tumultuousness. That this time of crisis isn't the first, and its history dates back to the late 19th Century with the rise of yellow journalism, which was a period that also saw civic uncertainty and mistrust in newspapers, after which the industry took a more credible turn and did sustain. Further study of relational turning points and critical incident technique could be used to offer additional examination of journalists' careers to understand the degree of chaos found in the industry amid a layoff at a newspaper, for example. Whether or not the journalist himself or herself was laid

off, it's apparent from this research that the layoffs taking place impact the entire workforce. At issue as the pre-paradigmatic phase of the print newspaper industry wanes is whether enough qualified minds stay committed to the print journalism industry to help establish a new normal on the other side of the shift.

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## APPENDIX A

### QUANTITATIVE SURVEY INSTRUMENT

The purpose of the survey is to learn about journalists' career influences and decisions, as well as perspective on industry-level changes. It will take less than 10 minutes to complete. I understand your time is valuable and in exchange, I will award three \$25 Visa gift cards to three randomly selected participants who choose to provide their contact information at the end. You may abstain from the chance for the gift card.

Participants rights concerning participation:

1. Participation is voluntary
2. Incentives for participation is a chance to win one of three \$25 gift cards.
3. You do not have to answer any questions that you might object to, for whatever reasons. The number of questions you respond to will not influence your chance to win a gift card.
4. You may cease participation at any time.
5. Your email will not be revealed in the write-up of the study.

Demographics

1. Age (numeric answer)
2. Sex (Male, female, other)
3. Highest level of education (high school, associate's degree, bachelor's degree, master's degree, doctorate, none)
4. City and state in which you currently live (fill in the blank)
5. Own or rent your home (own, rent, neither)
6. Marital status (married, single, divorced, other)
7. Do you have children (yes, no)

Occupation

8. What is your current occupation/job title? (Fill in the blank)
9. I currently work in a journalism/media field? (True, false)
10. I currently work in print journalism (true, false)
11. At what age did you first identify yourself as a journalist? (Fill in the blank)
12. What is/was the length of your journalism career? (Numeric fill in the blank)
13. I still consider myself a journalist (true, false)
14. How many hours per week (on average) do you spend working in print journalism?  
(Numeric fill in the blank)
15. What percent of your current income is generated from employment in print journalism?
16. In the past 10 years, I have experienced the following (check all that apply):
  - A. Promotion
  - B. Pay raise
  - C. Job change/relocation
  - D. Feelings of instability about the future of your employment
  - E. Forced/early retirement

#### F. Layoff/termination

17. On a scale of 1-7 (where 1 is unstable and 7 is very stable), please identify your perception of the stability of the newspaper industry at the start of your career.
18. On a scale of 1-7 (where 1 is unstable and 7 is very stable), please identify your perception of the stability of the newspaper industry today.
19. On a scale of 1-7 (where 1 is not important and 7 is very important), please identify the level that your early childhood contributed to your development as a professional journalist.
20. On a scale of 1-7 (where 1 is not important and 7 is very important), please identify the level that your student newspaper experience contributed to your development as a professional journalist.
21. On a scale of 1-7 (where 1 is not important and 7 is very important), please identify the level that your high school experience contributed to your development as a professional journalist.
22. On a scale of 1-7 (where 1 is not important and 7 is very important), please identify the level that your college classes contributed to your development as a professional journalist.
23. On a scale of 1-7 (where 1 is not important and 7 is very important), please identify the level that reading a daily newspaper contributed to your development as a professional journalist.
24. On a scale of 1-7 (where 1 is not important and 7 is very important), please identify the level that reading a daily/weekly magazine contributed to your development as a professional journalist.
25. On a scale of 1-7 (where 1 is not important and 7 is very important), please identify the level that reading an online news site(s) contributed to your development as a professional journalist.
26. On a scale of 1-7 (where 1 is not important and 7 is very important), please identify the level that reading a blog contributed to your development as a professional journalist.

#### Identity

27. On a scale of 1-7 (where 1 is not important and 7 is very important), please identify the level that your first job contributed to your development as a professional journalist.
28. On a scale of 1-7 (where 1 is not important and 7 is very important), please identify the level that your freelance work contributed to your development as a professional journalist.
29. On a scale of 1-7 (where 1 is not important and 7 is very important), please identify the level that your full-time staff position contributed to your development as a professional journalist.
30. On a scale of 1-7 (where 1 is not important and 7 is very important), please identify the level that your promotion(s) contributed to your development as a professional journalist.

31. On a scale of 1-7 (where 1 is not important and 7 is very important), please identify the level that your demotion(s) contributed to your development as a professional journalist.
32. On a scale of 1-7 (where 1 is not important and 7 is very important), please identify the level that layoffs/furloughs contributed to your development as a professional journalist.

#### Readership

33. I read at least one local newspaper daily, i.e. The Virginian-Pilot, The Daily Press (check all that apply)
    - A. Digital
    - B. Print
    - C. Other
  34. I read at least one national newspaper daily, i.e. USA Today, Los Angeles Times
    - A. Digital
    - B. Print
    - C. Other
  35. I read at least one international newspaper daily, i.e. The Wall Street Journal, The Daily Mail
    - A. Digital
    - B. Print
    - C. Other
  36. I read at least one news aggregator site daily i.e Yahoo News, BuzzFeed (check all that apply)
  37. I consider social media (i.e. Facebook) one of my regular news sources (yes/no)
  38. I believe the key contributor(s) to changes in print journalism is/are:
    - A. Online content/Internet/new technologies
    - B. Changes in advertising/competition for advertising dollars
    - C. Changes in newspaper ownership/management
    - D. Economic factors/changes in the economy
    - E. Social changes/demographics of readership/changes in consumption
39. If you would like to be entered into a drawing for three \$25 Visa gift cards to be awarded to three participants, please provide your email address or preferred contact method. Otherwise, you may leave this question blank.
40. If you would be willing to participate in a 30-minute interview with the researcher to answer more open-ended questions regarding workforce perspective in the changing newspaper industry, please provide your email address or preferred contact method. Otherwise, you may leave this question blank.



## APPENDIX B

### QUALITATIVE SURVEY INSTRUMENT

The purpose of the study is to learn how journalists' feelings about the newspaper industry may have changed as a result of career decisions and industry-level changes. The interview will take about 30 minutes, during which I will ask you to recall moments of change over your journalism career and to describe your feelings about your career path and the future of the newspaper industry. I'm going to ask you a number of questions that sound repetitive, but will apply to different stages of your career span. It will become clear to you over.

During our conversation, I ask that you refrain as much as possible from using specific names of companies and people to preserve your anonymity. Instead, please refer to companies by location, market size or other characteristics. People may be referred to as position.

If you have questions about the study, please let me know.

Stephanie Bernat  
 Old Dominion University graduate student  
 sbern010@odu.edu  
 724-513-0549

Participants' rights concerning participation:

1. Participation is voluntary
2. No incentives are offered for participation
3. You do not have to answer any questions that you might object to, for whatever reasons.
4. You may cease participation at any time.
5. Your identity will not be revealed in the write-up of the study.
6. No specific company names will be revealed in the write-up of the study.
7. Recordings of the interview will be transcribed and the transcriptions will be redacted to protect any names, institutions, locations or other identifying information that may have been mentioned during the recorded interviews.
8. During analysis, the recordings will be stored in password protected files to which only the investigators will have access.

Age

Sex

Marital status

Do you have children

Own vs rent home/apartment

Highest educational degree achieved

City/state in which you live

Current occupation/job title

Length of journalism career in years

What is your income bracket?

\$20,000-\$40,000

\$40,000-\$60,000

\$60,000-\$90,000

\$90,000+

Did you receive the survey directly from me or from an associate? If an associate, can you briefly describe your relationship?

At what age did you first identify yourself as journalist?

When did you have your first job in journalism? What was the position/title?

What did you think about the value of newspapers at that time?

What did the future of newspapers look like to you?

(Methodology & strategy of question sequences)

How did you feel about your career at that time and was it clear what you needed to do to succeed?

At this time in your career, do you remember what the future of newspapers looked like to you?

What changes do you remember taking place at that company during your employment and did it change your role?

Tell me about your first promotion/job change or first major assignment. What was the position/job title?

How did you feel about your career path?

At this time how did you know how to succeed as a journalist?

How did you feel about the future of the newspapers and what did that future look like?

What changes do you remember taking place at that company during your employment and did it change your role?

Tell me about a time that you remember a change that involved the Internet at a job. (Ex, networking, online publishing, etc.)

What was your position/job title and did that change impact your position at the company?

How did you feel about your career path at that time?

At this time how did you know how to succeed as a journalist?

How did you feel about the future of the newspapers and what did that future look like?

Have there been any recent changes in your career/position/job?

What was the position/job title?

How did you feel about your career path at that time?

At this time how did you know how to succeed as a journalist?

How did you feel about the future of the newspapers and what did that future look like?

What changes do you remember taking place at that company during your employment and did it change your role?

What is your current position/job title?

How does that connect with or build upon your past career as a journalist?

Do you consider yourself a journalist today - why or why not?  
How do you feel about your career path now?  
Is it clear what you need to do to be successful in the future?  
How did you feel about the future of the newspaper industry?

What did you think about the value of newspapers today?

**APPENDIX C**  
**CHAPTER III**  
**EXEMPLARS, RQ1**

***RQ1:** How has the outlook on the future of the newspaper industry changed over the career-spans of current and former print journalists?*

Baby Boomers

John, age 64

*Perceptions of newspapers' future at start:*

- "Oh, it looked like newspapers could change the world. This was, ah, at the height of the Vietnam experience, it was the time of Watergate, it was a very heady time for someone going into journalism, especially newspaper journalism."
- "It looked pretty good to me. There were always, from the time I started or before, people saying that newspapers were in trouble. At that time, the big threat was thought to be broadcast. Um, of course the Internet was, you know, not even in anybody's imagination at that point, but I thought the future was good for newspapers."
- "I thought they were tremendously valuable. I still do."

*Perceptions of newspapers' future today:*

- "Not good. Um, I, at least newspapers as we now know them, as we have known them, I think there's always going to be a future for newsgathering. Whether it's in the newspaper form, I'm very uncertain about them."
- "I'm pretty pessimistic about it. Again, I feel like there's a future of news, of newsgathering and reporting, but I'm not at all optimistic about newspapers as a medium. I think they're in trouble. I don't know, and frankly, I don't know anybody who's still in newspapers having fun. It was fun when I was doing it. I hope you're not pointed in that direction. ... One of the conclusions I came to toward the end is that the Internet really

turned everyone into a wire service reporter, that there was a sense that you had to go somewhere, see something, and immediately stop and file. And that's not what I signed up for. I didn't mind doing it every now and again, election night I got a good rush from, and that's essentially what you're doing on election night, but I didn't want to do that every day."

- "I'll have to say that I think they're less valuable than they used to be. I think they're less substantive than they used to be. I'm not sure I can name a newspaper today that, in my opinion, is as good as it was 20 years ago. I don't know that I could name one. There's still some good newspapers around, but I don't know that any of them are as good as they were 20 years ago.

David, age 57

*Perceptions of newspapers' future at start:*

- "I didn't really think about it. It was just, um, I could always write. Writing came easy to me. I love sports. I just didn't give it any thought. I knew that's what I wanted to do.
- "I think, more than anything, I just thought it was fun."
- "Newspapers weren't struggling at that time. I mean, newspapers were pretty engrained nationwide. ... We had, we probably had 12 people just on the night sports desk. And then there was the afternoon paper had 2 or 3 others. ... So, at that time newspapers were pretty much booming. I don't think newspapers really hit the downturn until probably sometime in the late '80s. It started, I mean, I guess there was some indication in the late '80s. And then, it might not even have been until the '90s."

*Perceptions of newspapers' future today:*

- “The one guy who took over my job who was my right-hand man, he’s got two kids, I guess the oldest one is maybe middle-school age right now. The youngest one is, you know, elementary age. I worry about people who are sorta trapped, um, but at the same time, I could see when I got out it was a good opportunity for those younger people because the technology was changing. You know, the Twitter, I don’t do any of that. You know, the Twitter stuff and all that stuff, they know how to do that, and I was like, let them have it because I’m not interested in all that. I’m not interested in doing my news that way, so, and they’re thriving with it, although they’re having to deal with very difficult circumstances in terms of the workload. They’re having to make constant, I was in the position a few years before I got out where we would have to decide what content we weren’t going to put in the newspaper anymore because, either, one, we didn’t have the space or, two, we didn’t have the manpower to keep doing it that way. Now they’re having to continue to make those kinds of decisions, and it’s tough cuz you’re having to deal with the public. ... You’re not putting Johnny’s name in the paper anymore. Well, we don’t have the manpower to take all those phone calls anymore. You gotta make those decisions, and you know, I feel bad that they still have to make those decisions. I really, what is this 2015, I’d say by 2030, printed newspapers won’t exist anymore. I just can’t imagine they will.”
- “You know, for, for cities and towns up to 20 or 30,000, 40,000 people, I think maybe those, newspapers can still be valuable there. But once you get bigger than that, ah, unless a newspaper is going to try to figure out a way to serve specific communities, I just don’t know valuable it is. ... And the whole key to it is, the people who really read newspapers every single day are the people who are, like, the age of my parents, they’re

in their 80s. You know, might go back in, I mean, I'm in my 50s and I don't read newspapers every day anymore. I mean, you have, well, when I was teaching school, you bring in a bunch of resources for kids to do some sort of project. You had magazines, you had a computer sitting over there, you had newspapers sitting over here, those kids never picked up a newspaper. They're going to look at the magazines or pull stuff off the Internet. They're not going to find the pieces for their project in a newspaper. ... They have no concept of the structure of a newspaper in terms of the difference between what's on the front page versus the editorial page.

#### Generation X

Carla, age 52

##### *Perceptions of newspapers' future at start:*

- "I can't say, honestly, that I thought much about it at that time. It felt like there were opportunities. There was, you know, I fully expected to get out of college and be able to find a job and have a career and that it would last for years and years. It wasn't, everything that came later wasn't even a blip on the horizon, so, I didn't have any reason to question the future. The future seemed very bright. Newspapers were making lots of money.
- "I was a great believer. I mean, this would have been ... not too far from Watergate, and the value of newspapers was, you know, um, I'd like to believe that I was in a very important industry. I was making a huge difference in the world. There was a huge public service component to being a journalist. I still believe that."

##### *Perceptions of newspapers' future today:*



- “I have to believe, I want to believe, and I do believe that there will always be a need for the kind of work that we do. And I think the Internet has proved that point. You have all of this noise out there, all of these talking heads. And people do come to newspaper sites, newspaper websites, you know because, even though they rag on us, they also trust that professional journalists trying to vet things, are trying to, you know, they’re not just passing along fodder. They’re actually going out there and doing reporting. So, I mean, that has value. I think there are plenty of people willing to pay for that. I don’t think we’ve figured out how to leverage that completely. And, um, you know, I think the question is going to be how much a reporting force there is, how big are these newsrooms going to be as time goes on, you know. There will be newsrooms, it’s just a matter of how muscular they’re going to be, and I don’t know. You know, I’d like to believe, because I believe it, that good journalism is good business. That I think you can make a really profitable place out of it. I think we’re all still trying to figure it out. And like I said, I wish that some of these companies would have more of a public service motive to them. I mean, I could see, I could see newsrooms becoming non-profits, or partnering with universities, you know, have it not be so bottom-line driven. Um, I hope that there are some things like that in our future. So, you know, I believe there’s a future, but, you know, it’s certainly not as flush as it was in the past, and I think it’s still to be defined.
- “So, you think, wow, everybody’s been gutted, and everybody’s been, you know, struggling to get by. And they are, but, there are always those people in every newsroom who are putting in the hours, who are going the extra mile because it’s what they love doing, and, you know, they didn’t do it for a paycheck anyway. So, I mean, there’s still that kind of work being done. I mean, and I still see it here. I still think that people see

that. I mean, the people who are really good readers, the people who still value that kind of thing, I mean, I think the worth is there. I just think we could do more. I think obviously with better resources we could do more, and there's more to do. I'm sure there's a lot of things that are not getting done now that would have gotten done 10 years ago or 20 years ago just because we had more manpower. You know, now you have got to prioritize. You're not doing as much. You know, you're not making as many headlines; you're not digging as deep. But we're still telling people things they wouldn't be getting from anywhere else.

- "I definitely believe we make a difference. There's a metro columnist here who won the Pulitzer, before I worked with her, but, she did a bunch of columns on this prisoner on death row who was clearly innocent, and had been kind of targeted early. They badgered his alibi witness. There was a police officer in charge of the grand jury. It was just this one nightmare after another, and ultimately he was freed. I mean, you know, we make a difference, we obviously make a difference.

Amanda, age 43

*Perceptions of newspapers' future at start:*

- "I thought there was potential. I didn't think newspapers were in trouble, but I did think that, um, it wasn't a field that there were tremendous amounts of jobs. I mean, getting a job was pretty competitive. But I didn't think that the future of newspapers was in jeopardy."
- "I thought they were incredibly valuable. ... They were my main source of news. I grew up in Washington DC, so I thought everybody had a paper as good as The Washington

Post. We were just never, like, a TV family for news. Of course, we didn't have computers. Everybody read the newspaper ... I thought they were great."

*Perceptions of newspapers' future today:*

- "I feel there is almost no future for newspapers. I feel that newspapers have not evolved with the times. I feel like they're still trying to fit an old model and trying to make it work. I'm very frustrated with newspapers. I think they've made very little progress. They've put up paywalls, which I don't think is the answer. They cut, cut, cut to the core. I don't think they have any sense of what to do."
- "Most newspapers are trying to do what they did, with fewer people, and that's frustrating. You don't have to do what you did. I think most sports departments are trying to cover all these beats instead of talking about what are the stories we need to cover. I mean, you can't cover beats anymore. You don't have enough people. So, you have to come at it a different way. I think that you have kind of an aging, white, male workforce that continues to run how things are done and that thinking cannot uphold. Nobody under 40 is looking at newspapers. There are so many alternatives to them that are frankly better. As a sports person, why do I want to read your story the next day. Your boring game story, I've already read and seen the press conference. I've read 10 stories that are better than yours ... you need to bring something else to it. Not the same story I read yesterday. I'm sorry, that's something I'm passionate about."

Scott, age 41

*Perceptions of newspapers' future at start:*

- "It looked great. It looked great."

- “I thought they were extremely valuable for, you know, informing the public and kind of like my chosen profession, so, um, highly valuable.”

*Perceptions of newspapers' future today:*

- “Well, uncertain, and, printing news on paper is going to come to an end at some point I would think, but it may be a while. So, if you look at like music, we don't generally put our music on compact discs or cassette tapes anymore. It can be loaded right into the device that we are going to use to listen to it. Journalism is like that right now in a lot of ways, too. But there's still enough people that want to get it on paper that you can't just stop doing that, or you would lose a lot of money.
- Well, I think that value (of newspapers) is still very good and very strong, but it's been dented significantly from what it was bef... when there was only the newspaper, and then, even, there was no 24-hour cable except maybe Walter Cronkite on your evening news and then there, and then that's it. So, the value, I mean, is still I think, you know, newspapers are very valuable to the public. But I still do, I actually encounter people today who said that they read, you know, my newspaper and like it. And, um, you know I don't want things to continue to get worse still. You know, it's like if we could, you want to hold it where it's at as far as the journalism, and, and so that they still do remain valuable. And I think maybe journalists, you know, need to promote what we do a little bit more than we have in the past. Um, there's just, you know, the press is also under attack by politicians, elected officials probably more maybe than it has in the past. ... let me go back here to, um, John McCain's presidential run. His vice presidential candidate becomes a pundit on Fox News. Part of her whole existence is, part of her whole shpeel is attacking what she calls the “lamestream” media. And this is a phrase that's now

common among a lot of the, you know, a lot of voters, you know, people, politicians. You've got, you know, a lot of the candidates for president on both sides, but on the republican side, like, going after the media is a regular thing that they do. ... So, you know, the press has to, newspapers and the press, in general, have to, constantly kind of, um, not just defend their credibility, but also to explain it, try not to make mistakes and acknowledge them when they do."

Eric, age 36

*Perceptions of newspapers' future at start:*

- "At that point it was, I mean, the future was hard to see at that point, to be honest. But, ah, it was starting its decline. It was not as dour as it is today. I still foresaw, I think I foresaw a better future at that point than I do today."
- "Oh, I thought they were incredibly valuable. Ah, you know, particularly the print product was, ah, was still king in this country at that point."

*Perceptions of newspapers' future today:*

- "If we're looking at daily newspapers, I think it's still pretty bleak. I don't think it's good. I, ah, don't think anyone has solved the riddle of how you replace the ad dollars you lost on the Internet. With lower cost online, yeah, I think it's going to move to a more subscription model. I'm surprised no one has come up with that magic bullet yet. It seems like the Wall Street Journal has perhaps done the best job of this because they got into the game early. The publication at which I'm at, it's all metered paywall. And, ah, I think that's the key."

- “I think that in theory the value is higher than it’s ever been, because there’s so much clutter out there, and, ah, accessible to everybody. You have novices, a lot of people with no journalism background who are producing content. I will call that content. And they’re drawing a lot of eyeballs. And no one is doing the type of in-depth journalism, reporting, and day-to-day watchdogging that newspapers are. So I think the value is more important than it’s ever been. In practice, the value is questionable because all of the newsrooms have been so gutted. And, ah, people, you know, it’s rare that you have somebody who’s able to spend a lot of time on a project today. And those projects are the things that have impact, not only for the publication itself, but for public, and, you know for the government, for, ah, you know, society. I think that, ah, you know, newspapers have lost so many quality people the last few years that, you could, today it’s a quarter the size of one 15 years ago, 10 years ago.”

Jessica, age 35

*Perceptions of newspapers’ future at start:*

- “I thought it looked like successful and long-run career. They had definitely changed from what we used to see in the movies, where everyone was sitting at their typewriter, the secretaries and everyone was smoking and drinking. They weren’t quite that point, but they still seemed such a valuable, like, had I known, had I known in college what I learned just several years later when I was actually in the industry, I probably wouldn’t have picked a journalism degree, because you kind of went in and you’re like, oh, this is great, and you’ve got this awesome career. And then you get into it, and you see, it’s

going downhill fast. And then you're at this critical turning point where this is, wow, no longer a very valid career."

- "I thought they were extremely valuable at that point in time. You could still see them, you could still go places and see them out and about. If you were at the college campus, they were everywhere. If you were, you know, at a restaurant, you would still see them in the news racks. They were extremely valuable. This was before there was a really huge, there might have been an online component, but if there was, it was still so rudimentary that newspapers were still your point of contact. And they were everywhere. ... The interesting thing is that, ah, the point at which I was interning ... that was right when 9/11 hit, too. So, I saw how newspapers, it was an interesting time because you saw how valuable newspapers were with reaching a wide set of people with very timely topics. But you also saw how limited the news that was put out at midnight could've been completely different than what somebody picked up at 6 or 7 in the morning when they read their paper. So you could see, it was like you were standing on a threshold, and it was kind of like, which way was it going to go. You could see the potential for it, and you could also see the downside of it."

*Perceptions of newspapers' future today:*

- "I'm kinda torn because the original believer in me still wants (newspapers) to still be there. But I think the realistic person sees it dead. And it's so, as somebody who now works on the opposite side, where I'm pitching the stories to the media and also buying the ads to support my piece. ... Let's be realistic. One shot in a print newspaper, to hope somebody reads it, when you're readership is down, your product is down, that's crazy for me the way I look at it. But you're going to sell me a digital ad at, like, half the cost

because you still don't see the value in that component. It's that same spot, where you just go, you're dead. You're dead. And you still haven't caught up. ... So, do I see a death of it? Yeah, I do. It's just when are they finally going to realize it's dead? But the death of it is still in the paper product. I think a newspaper will always be there but I think that the investigative story is gone. I think the hard-hitting news, gone. ... our society has changed in the way it consumes information. The information that's available to them, and newspapers are too late to jump on board. And I think it's tragic actually."

- "I don't think the value is there. And I think it's pretty evident when you look at it. Because I don't think the readers find the value there either. Because I think no matter what had happened, if the readers felt that they were still getting a valuable product, they would be behind it. But when you look at a newspaper shrink from, like, six sections a day to like, three, and it's like a pittance compared with what it used to be, it shows you the value is gone. But you can also see the value is gone because when they did their layoffs, they laid off their most valuable people, the people who had the experience, the people who knew how to chase down the stories, who could shape and mold the next generation. They did it to themselves. They shot themselves in the foot at that point. You know, they picked, in my opinion, they picked a paycheck over experience, and that's the worst thing they could have done. And I think when they did that is when the value just disappeared. ... I say they as in the corporate people who ran the papers who made the bad decisions. I think it's the people who sat in an office who were not as in touch with the product or the people who made that product and put their heart and soul into it. They are the people who sat, like, at a table and made decisions without the proper information. Or they looked at it as a basic dollar sign."



Millennial

Elizabeth, age 24

*Perceptions of newspapers' future at start:*

- "Um, a little tenuous, but I thought the place I was employed at had pretty good prospects. Um, all the people I interviewed with seemed to think the newspaper was rosy and bright. They hadn't really been affected too much by, um, job cuts and things that other newspapers had. And the fact that they had a full-functioning copy desk, just really impressed me because a lot of other places, their copy desks were bare-bones and they were combining copy editors and designers and that wasn't the case at this place."
- "I felt that (newspapers) were super valuable. I mean, I mean, the industry was struggling, but I thought, you know, it's still important for people to get their local news, and to be informed about what's going on in the world around them. And, sort of, I was, I was the voice of reason in a digital age where everyone is shouting and giving an opinion. Newspapers are the ones who get it right."

*Perceptions of newspapers' future today:*

- "I'm not super optimistic. I think the mid-sized ones are gonna really struggle because people might need to read about a council meeting story, but they're not always the most captivating story out, and so I think they kind of get lost in the shuffle of whatever. When you see everything else on Facebook, you know, cats versus city council. I can't blame people who would rather see the cat video, so I'm not sure that, I don't know, that, you know, that the value, again is necessarily, that people necessarily see the value there."
- "I still think they're super-valuable. I mean, especially for the local news, the national, I mean, even the national and international news, you know, you still get stories in the

paper that aren't, you know, super publicized on Facebook. Cuz, like, all the news in the world is out there on the Internet. It's just a matter of, are you seeing it? Cuz you can only, you know, how is your news getting to you? ... the newspaper sort of presents that news to you, you know, hey, here's what's important, and you may not be able to find that other places."

**APPENDIX D**  
**CHAPTER III**  
**EXEMPLARS, RQ2**

**RQ2:** *Are there common points of change in journalists' careers that impact their outlook on the future of the newspaper industry? And is there a relationship between those points of change in journalists' careers and external factors studied of economic, social or technological changes as outlined by previous researchers?*

#### Internet

- "It was the first time we were going to use the Internet to send stories. I remember these ridiculously long training sessions and steps, and all you were doing was sending an email. But it was like, 'What do you mean?' I mean, it was a very difficult process. And you still had to find, we're overseas, and I mean, we spent, you know, we went a couple different places overseas in Paris and Portugal, and the first thing we would do is go into the hotel room and see if the phone thing came out of the back. It's like, do they have anything. It was a cumbersome process. That's what we worried about. You know, instead of worrying about the content of the story. The first thing was how am I going to be able to transport it." (Scott, 41)
- "The way our website worked was only a certain handful of people were able to go into it and update or put stories on it. So basically we were up at every night until 11 or midnight, the producer is going in and making sure all the stories get updated on the website. And then that person goes home and then nothing happens until 11 PM the next day. So the website is rolling, unupdated for the most part, as I remember it, for, you know, 24 hours. I remember that some kind of alert that goes out saying ... There's a little bit, I don't remember the exact details anymore, but I think that they allowed either some editors to start having access, and maybe even a reporter could then say to the

editor, 'Hey, it's 3 PM, but I have something; let's put it on our website.' This was a shift to try to you know, uh, get news up at the time that it's up, you know, the time it's happening. Once it's ready to be published, not wait until midnight. So, at one point I was, you know, covering, I think I wrote story about traffic crash, and, you know, our website we site started to have more things, you know, like 330 pm this crash has happened, and somebody noticed it, and I was on the phone with him, and he said, 'I was just looking at your site today and saw that you wrote a story just now. Yeah, it's up there. That's wild. How interesting. Very smart of you guys to do that.' And, of course, it is smart, but, you know, it was, at the time it was something that hadn't always been that way. You know, it took a little while to get to the point of putting news online at various times. So I thought it was cool, you know. I liked doing it." (Scott, 41)

- "I think, there was a period there, where there was, um, I'm trying to place it in time, but, you know, that shift of, we're not going to, we have to put stuff online. We have to think online first. That is our future, and we have to build an audience there, and the money will come later. You know, that became the sort of, you know, we're still waiting for that last part. But, so, I think that was the biggest change for me, trying to change the culture of the place so that it would not be print-centric. So that the room would start to, you know, see themselves, really more of an AP news wire, more of the TV, you know, we're going to bust in at any moment, and we're going to break news and we're not going to be these, like, somebody walks in works toward 5 o'clock deadline and that's the thing they do all day. So, I mean, that to me is no particular moment, but just that whole era where we shifted to being online first, focused." (Carla, 52)

- “One of the conclusions I came to toward the end is that the Internet really turned everyone into a wire service reporter, that there was a sense that you had to go somewhere, see something, and immediately stop and file. And that’s not what I signed up for. I didn’t mind doing it every now and again, election night I got a good rush from, and that’s essentially what you’re doing on election night, but I didn’t want to do that every day.” (John, 64)
  
- “They started to require us to post our own stories online, which was unheard of prior to that. It was just, um, you know, you go through a couple layers of editing and then it would go up online. But then, um, you know, you got to the point where you were required to put your story in there, or online, and then it would get read afterwards. So, it was a slippery slope, and none of us really liked it. But I think all of realized this was going to be something of the future. ... We were not only required to be the content people. We were required to be the, ah, mechanics behind the system. So we were required to start posting our own stories. Um, which is, I think anyone would recognize that as somewhat dangerous though. You know, everyone needs an editor. Everyone needs an editor, and there’s a lot of consternation around that. You know, we didn’t have a choice. And that’s, I think that was a seminal moment there in my career. And then at the same time social media on the rise. So, that’s when we all started to, you know, many of us started to realize the value of Facebook and Twitter, and how much traffic they brought to the website. And how, you know, I think maybe a year after, this is probably 2009 or so, um, that the victim from the newspaper was we are no longer a print-first product. We are an online-first product. And we’ll follow up in print with something more substantive. So, that was a huge shift.” (Eric, 36)

- “Once we started publishing our own stories online, and people really focused on chasing the clicks, as it were, staying on top of it, competing with, you know, the rest of world. It wasn’t the same job. You know, you’re not spending 2 or 3 days on a story anymore. You’re pumping out stuff all the time. And then, you know, it just changes the way you think about your job, I think.” (Eric, 36)
- “I think the biggest thing, and it’s not even the birth of the Internet because it’s been around, but it’s just the power of the Internet. And the power of smart phones and how they’ve made our society so different, so instant and so connected. It’s almost like everything is constantly changing. And if you’re not staying in front of it, if you’re just in the current, you’re behind already. If you’re not in front of it, you’re screwed.” (Jessica, 35)
- “I think what really clobbered the newspaper is Facebook, things like that, but especially Facebook because it really is like local news. Facebook is the newspaper now. Um, it just happens to be very, very local, and everyone in America is on Facebook; most people are on Facebook all the time. On their computers, on their phones, morning, noon, and night, when they wake up in the middle of the night they look at Facebook. At their office all day, they’re on Facebook. On their phone anywhere, the airport, you know, sitting on the toilet they’re on Facebook. ... Maybe years ago a newspaper would be like that. If you, if that when the newspaper came, you were really excited to get it. It was your only connection to the world. And if you were at a bar or restaurant, you would want to read a newspaper. You’re in the bathroom you’ve got a newspaper. If you go to somebody’s house, there’s a paper. You’re like, ‘Oh, can I read that? Can I take that?’” (Scott, 41)

- “I think perhaps, I think the biggest failing here was the collective wisdom of the industry and the, ah, the underestimation of the Internet. And it’s really a, sort of, a sad overture on the state of the industry, and it’s really, you know, in a way it’s depressing that no one could figure out a better way. And so, we’re sort of left with what we’ve got now, and it’s, ah, it’s not even half what it was. And it’s no, I think, you know, I think the autopsy here is, sort of, why couldn’t anyone figure out a better way to retain readers as they migrated from print daily newspaper to their iPhones.” (Eric, 36)
- “I definitely remember training, you know, webinars and email, and school of thought of just writing and reporting isn’t enough anymore. We need to make videos. We need to do things on the internet, but video was especially this kind of big idea: that every writer should start making video. Um, and so a lot of them did, and some of the video was really bad, but they did it anyway because they thought they were supposed to do that.”
- “But I don’t really see anybody, you see video or you see blogs that are quick-hits. But I don’t really see anybody who’s being successful with what they’re trying. I mean, you’re getting beat by Twitter. You can’t keep up with Twitter, so I guess I’m not sure why you’re trying to. I just think you have to come at it, and I’m not saying I have the answer, but you have to come at it with a different approach.” (Scott, 41)
- “When we, we were short-handed, so I started learning web production, um, maybe more quickly than planned. Um, so I would post stuff, or prepare stories, local and wire, for the Internet, and that would be adding photos, adding links, promoting some of those stories on social media. And at the same time, on Friday nights, I would also be the breaking news reporter, so I would be checking in with the dispatchers and writing up any accident, fire stories, crime stories that came in on those shifts, and get them ready quick.



Push them up to our web site. That's, ah, um, that's apparently what people like to read, crime stories." (Elizabeth, 24)

- "We aren't using them for things we used to use them for. We don't use TV Guide. We don't look at the newspaper for movie listings. When the kids went to school, you had to get that issue with the school bus, you don't do that anymore. You go online. So, I think a lot of the things we used to use them for, we find ourselves, we don't rely on them anymore." (Amanda, 43)
- "When I first started, there were lots of projects, lots of long-form journalism projects, spread out over ... days, over the course of a week. And we don't do very many of those anymore. We still have people writing some stories, some longer than others, and they're all, I think, your fair and they get it straight and right and everything. But I've also noticed that we're trying to shift a lot of that to readers on social media, and sometimes stories that are very click-baity, just to try to get those clicks from people." (Elizabeth, 24)

## Economics

- "I'm just completely pissed off that smart people were running these newsrooms, and I say publishers and owners, who, you know, you could see the tsunami coming. It's like, come on, how stupid are we really? ... The last paper I worked at went for 8 years without raising the cost of the paper. And you knew that the model had to change. You knew that the subscribers had to pay more in freight. It had to come. It had to be. It was just, like, come on. They did not prepare. They didn't adapt well. And then the people who paid the price were the people on the front lines. And that's, it just shouldn't happen,

you know. We should've been smarter than that. We should be more of a, more invested now, because it should matter more." (Carla, 52)

- "I'm worried now, about companies, about media companies that aren't really about public service, quite honestly. They're wrapped up in the bottom line, and, you know, this is an industry that made 24, and 25, and 26 percent profit at one point, an obscene amount of money. I mean, when you look at other industries, this industry, I mean, was just living the high life for a long time. And owners, God love them, they made the, they enjoyed the fruits of their labors, and they had a great time there for a while. ... They were newspaper men that became business men. And so, there was still sort of the passion for the work. Then, of course, if you know, we moved into an era where a lot of those family owned places had gone by wayside, and you're owned by corporations that I feel like, in some ways, have taken advantage of this downfall, and have, you know, made us all very bare bones. ... I mean, to really do justice to your coverage, to do the meaningful work; I'm not saying that people aren't trying, and I'm not saying that people aren't succeeding here and there, but I think this company, like all the other ones out there, just got to rightsizing, as they called it, or downsizing. And now they've sort of, they're happily living with that expense reductions. And, um, you know, it's frustrating. It's frustrating to see what's happened and that, you know, people are not reinvesting. You know, the bottom fell out. I realize everyone had to adjust. I'm not naïve. It's a business. I realize, you know, just because it's owned by billionaire people, they're not going to just out of the goodness of their heart, or because they believe in the cause, I realize that. But at the same time, I think you have to get back at some point and reinvest. And that's what worries me. I don't see that happening. I see young journalists here, and

I fear for whether five, 10 years from now, they're still going to be in this business because, are we giving them a reason to be in this business? I was able to have a career. I could see, even without promotions, I could see cost-of-living raises. I could see, you know, 401(k) plans. I had pensions at two of the papers that I worked at, you know. I, you know, I could support my family. These guys, especially the most talented people, they have options. They can go off to other industries. And I just don't see the corporations here buying into the idea that they really need to do their best to hold on to these people. So that's, I'm very scared for the future of journalism now because of that. Passion will only take you so far. You know, you've got to pay a mortgage. You've got to put your kids through school. And I hate to think of people having to make that choice." (Carla, 52)

- "I think a lot of folks that ran newspapers got fat on 18 and 20 percent profit margins, and when could only make 5 or 6 percent, they decided it was time to run. I think, as I alluded earlier, people jumped into the new media without figuring out a real business plan for doing so. And we got people, got readers, hooked on the idea that information is free. Information isn't free. And when we started giving our product away and got people hooked on getting it for free, it's going to be very difficult to get them to pay for it again. And I think that's what people trying paywalls, and trying subscription plans are running into. Perhaps a few at the top, the New York Times-es of the world, the Washington Posts of world will be able to pull that off, but I worry about ... those good, solid, mid-size newspapers, how are they going to make it over the long-term. And again, I think that much of what went wrong is the industry's own fault for not thinking through before they made these changes." (John, 64)

- “You know, I graduated from college in ’85, which sort of places me in time, so you can sort of see, you know, that was years before the Internet even. I was coming up at, at time when the industry was a monopoly and really owners were making lots of money, and newspaper companies were doing very, very well. So, you know, the Internet was when things started to, of course, change. And even then... obviously, the industry totally bungled the advent of the Internet and what it would mean and the whole idea. What the hell kind of business model is it to give away your content. Who does that?! But, um, before all that, it wasn’t even, nobody contemplated the future. It was really about, you know, how to make even more money, and how to, you know, grow the business in that regard.” (Carla, 52)
- “I remember being in meetings where people discussing that the Internet was coming, that various news organizations were getting ON the Internet, that we were getting on the Internet. It was going to be a big thing. I do remember people saying ‘how are we going to make money on the Internet?’ I remember nobody had much of an answer for that, as to how we were going to make money on the Internet. I remember being troubled by that.” (John, 64)
- “Most newspapers really made a huge mistake with news being available online for people, and newspapers didn’t know, well, a couple things they didn’t know. They didn’t know how to tie advertising to it, so they blew a huge revenue opportunity. And after they started putting their news online, they tried to figure out a way, how do we backtrack and make people pay for it. So, it blew up in their faces.” (David, 57)
- “I feel that newspapers have not evolved with the times. I feel like they’re still trying to fit an old model and trying to make it work. I’m very frustrated with newspapers. I think

they've made very little progress. They've put up paywalls, which I don't think is the answer. They cut, cut, cut to the core. I don't think they have any sense of what to do."

(Amanda, 43)

- "But when you look at a newspaper shrink from, like, six sections a day to like, three, and it's like a pittance compared with what it used to be, it shows you the is gone. But you can also see the value is gone because when they did their layoffs, they laid off their most valuable people, the people who had the experience, the people who knew how to chase down the stories, who could shape and mold the next generation. They did it to themselves. They shot themselves in the foot at that point. You know, they picked, in my opinion, they picked a paycheck over experience, and that's the worst thing they could have done. And I think when they did that is when the value just disappeared." (Jessica, 35)
- There were media buyouts, um, I think it was 11 or 13 people lost their job, or were laid off. And then we had a number of other number people leave and their jobs weren't replaced. Ah, and that's when I think everyone around me, including me, and even at other newspapers started to realize that this was not a short term, ah, blip. This was the start of something, ah, that was very serious, very saddening, and very, I guess, depressing. And, um, you know, I think we all came to the realization that nothing was going to be the same after that." (Eric, 36)
- "I think it meant, um, longer hours, first off. At that time, in order to get to a bigger newspaper, which was always the goal, you still had to set aside time to do big-impact pieces. So, you're still working on all that stuff, and then you're carving out other, you have to carve out part of your day to do the, the, the hour-to-hour, day-by-day fill-in-the-

news-hole, and fill in the website, because I think at that point you had to prove that you could, you could, um, you know be relevant on the Internet, online. But you also had to have one foot, you know, one foot in the tub, as it were. You had to have one foot in the water and that, you know, you're still going after the bigger picture, bigger pieces investigative slash, ah, enterprising stories in order to move up. So, you know, my job, my plan of staying there three years turned into four because of that, because I wasn't able to focus as much time and attention on the bigger pieces that get you noticed. And that get you moved along." (Eric, 36)

- "I have a lot of faith that that can be turned around, but I think that newspaper companies need to acknowledge it and kind of address it head-on, and promote themselves and what they do and not go into these, like, 'we're going to redesign our paper to serve you better.' Now we know that there's no more feature section and the metro page is gone and the editorials are now down from four pages to, to, to, every other day. OK, but we're still going to serve you better now, you know? It's, this is just, you know, a new way of doing things. They, they've got to acknowledge and, I mean, maybe communities would be more supportive if they knew there were problems. And you could ask, you know, but when you kind of spin it that way you basically saying, like, 'Oh, it's fine, but nobody should be alarmed.' So that would be another avenue: Do newspapers want to try and engage their communities in helping them a little bit, maybe doing a little bit of a, almost like The New York Times, um, maybe has done with it's your civic duty to give us some money unless you want us to go away. And we hope that you don't, here's why. You know, creating that idea that, you know, you don't have to pay money to get on our

website, but if you wouldn't mind it would help us do this and we have that you like it, you know, and being very promotional like that." (Scott, 41)

- "I have to believe, I want to believe and I do believe that there will always be a need for the kind of work that we do. And I think the Internet has proved that point. You have all of this noise out there, all of these talking heads. And people do come to newspaper sites, newspaper websites, you know because, even though they rag on us, they also trust that professional journalists trying to vet things, are trying to, you know, they're not just passing along fodder. They're actually going out there and doing reporting. So, I mean, that has value. I think there are plenty of people willing to pay for that. I don't think we've figured out how to leverage that completely. And, um, you know, I think the question is going to be how much a reporting force there is, how big are these newsrooms going to be as time goes on, you know. There will be newsrooms, it's just a matter of how muscular they're going to be, and I don't know. You know, I'd like to believe, because I believe it, that good journalism is good business. That I think you can make a really profitable place out of it. I think we're all still trying to figure it out. And like I said, I wish that some of these companies would have more of a public service motive to them. I mean, I could see, I could see newsrooms becoming non-profits, or partnering with universities, you know, have it not be so bottom-line driven. Um, I hope that there are some things like that in our future. So, you know, I believe there's a future, but, you know, it's certainly not as flush as it was in the past, and I think it's still to be defined." (Carla, 52)

- "I'm very impressed with the ProPublica model. The question I would have is whether you can make that in a small setting. Obviously you can get foundation funding and do

big projects, national kind of reporting if you can get national support. But can you do that at a community level and provide the kind of watchdog function that I think is so important, you know, what helped make me want to get into journalism in the first place. I'm not sure the money is out there to support it. ... and can they sustain it over time."

(John, 64)

- You need to get away from the information that you can get on ESPN. You need to be all local. Nobody wanted to listen to me. When I became sports editor, or high school sports editor, I kept telling them we need to stop spending money on stuff that we can get off the wires. We need to quit focusing on, ah, the, people who are interested in the NFL can get more and better information by watching ESPN. You know, why are we spending every Sunday taking entire body, putting together this NFL package. You know, I saw it as we're doing it for ourselves. We're not doing it, cuz nobody's reading it. I mean, there are people who reading it but the people who really want that information, they're getting it somewhere else. So why don't we take all of our resources and gear them toward local. ... But I truly believe you could see where that was going, and I think the newspapers that are still thriving, and I'll see stuff online, where people will write editorials and whatnot, the papers that are still thriving are those local, community newspaper that that's the only place anybody can get the information." (David, 57)
- "Printing news on paper is going to come to an end at some point I would think, but it may be a while. So, if you look at like music, we don't generally put our music on compact discs or cassette tapes anymore. It can be loaded right into the device that we are going to use to listen to it. Journalism is like that right now in a lot of ways, too. But there's still enough people that want to get it on paper that you can't just stop doing that,



or you would lose a lot of money. ... For the short term, I do, I mean if you look at The New York Times, they're doing pretty well I think. Doing great journalism and still, you know, kind of really pushing the need for their newspaper even though a lot of it is online. And The Washington Post is doing, um, pretty well. Then you start to see the downfall of newspapers. And this, and this is the most recent thing would be a good example would be in Chicago where you have Laquan McDonald shot down by a police officer. I think I'm getting his name right, Laquan McDonald. He's shot down by a white police officer. An independent freelance, like journalist, who's driving for Uber, and does journalism, almost, not as a hobby, but, you know, he's not really making money off of it; he's a freelancer. He's working with a lawyer who does pro-bono, Freedom Of Information work for him. Somehow, you know, files a lawsuit and gets a judge to force the city to release this video of this shooting, and this is not only embarrassing, but it, here's the mayor of the city trying to cover this up and working diligently to keep this from public view. ... There's protests in Chicago today calling for the mayor to resign, and this is something that got, that brought about by an independent driver for Uber. This is embarrassing for the Chicago Tribune, a major, large newspaper. And right under their noses is a huge story, and for whatever reason, this is not the fault of the Internet, they just didn't get it; they couldn't do it. You know, they either didn't have the mindset right or the reporters have turned over too much, and they don't have good reporters covering crime. I don't know, but there's an example of 'how is a newspaper going to be relevant, you know, with, if this is how, you know, journalism is operating?' Um, eventually, nobody will think to go to The Chicago Tribune for, for, for, for news. They will think to go somewhere else, or some, someone else will fill the void maybe." (Scott, 41)

- “A lot of politicians to ridicule, criticize the press, which is OK, but it’s just at a point right now I think in history where there’s a lot of, um, you know, that’s very common. Maybe in the future it will be less common, but probably not. So, you know, the press has to, newspapers and the press, in general, have to, constantly kind of, um, not just defend their credibility, but also to explain it, try not to make mistakes and acknowledge them when they do. There’s another issues that’s off topic a little bit, but on that: Brian Williams from NBC. I was, I’m surprised that he’s still on the air as a special correspondent. There’s a big news event, there he is. This guy made stuff up. You know, and this is, this is, this hurts the credibility of all journalism. ... So, you know, that’s hard to, uh, yeah, you, the press, newspapers want to be able to maintain trust and do things that, uh, inspire trust from people. It’s difficult when elected leaders and candidates that a lot of these people really admire are trashing the press, so then you can’t believe it. That’s, that’s an issue.” (Scott, 41)

#### Readership changes

- “What I think most newspapers are trying to do what they did, with fewer people, and that’s frustrating. You don’t have to do what you did. I think most sports departments are trying to cover all these beats instead of talking about what are the stories we need to cover. I mean, you can’t cover beats anymore. You don’t have enough people. So, you have to come at it a different way. I think that you have kind of an aging, white, male workforce that continues to run how things are done and that thinking cannot uphold. Nobody under 40 is looking at newspapers. There are so many alternatives to them that are frankly better. As a sports person, why do I want to read your story the next day?

Your boring game story, I've already read and seen the press conference. I've read 10 stories that are better than yours ... you need to bring something else to it. Not the same story I read yesterday." (Amanda, 43)

- "If you don't have bilingual journalists who can get out there and make connections and go, people need to see themselves in your coverage. If they don't see themselves in your coverage, it becomes very easy to let go of that subscription, and I really, really, really worry about that because I can see in 5 or 10 years, if this trend continues, it just getting worse. ... We used to bring in several candidates for each job. Now we don't do that. We zero in on somebody and say you're good to go. And so we don't have the pools we used to have. We don't even go looking as hard as we used to. And I really do think, in modern America, that's terrible. That is a business issue. That's a really, you know, bad journalism, and bad business if you don't have newsrooms that reflect your community. You know that's always been a struggle, but 20 years ago there was a real effort to do something about it. And it felt like we were making progress, and now it feels like we're going downhill." (Carla, 52)
- "I don't know what their value is. Um, I think largely the smaller locals have a ton of value because, I mean, they cover local news. You're not going to find that stuff on the Internet. And I think maybe the biggest dailies have, because they still have their resources, although many of them have cut back, have some value. But I think the majority of newspapers don't have the resources to break news. And we aren't using them for things we used to use them for. We don't use TV Guide. We don't look at the newspaper for movie listings. When the kids went to school, you had to get that issue with the school bus, you don't do that anymore. You go online. So, I think a lot of the

things we used to use them for, we find ourselves, we don't rely on them anymore.”

(Amanda, 43)

- “Once it became obvious that a large share of our readership was going online and that we weren't getting a large share of money from that. You know, we had that constant push-pull. ... I think, there was a period there, where there was, um, I'm trying to place it in time, but, you know, that shift of, we're not going to, we have to put stuff online. We have to think online first. That is our future, and we have to build an audience there, and the money will come later. You know, that became the sort of, you know, we're still waiting for that last part.” (Carla, 52)
- “I just hate to see, I mean, there are just so many companies out there that leave me cold in the way they approach their business model and the way that they just gutted themselves. You know, it's a terrible catch-22: You're relying on readers to have to pay the fee, and then you cut the newsroom and your product obviously gets worse and people drop your subscription, so, it's a terrible catch-22.” (Carla, 52)
- “You know, you don't really want to replicate the paper necessarily, but you do have, you know, how do you plan for the day where there is no printed product, and that audience is still looking for those kind of in depth stories, or, you know, what's the model we can create on a website that makes sense and is inviting. So, I don't know. I think we're still finding out way.” (Carla, 52)
- “You have to know how to reach readers. You have to know how to balance the, ah, daily churn for the web. You have to be quick, but you also have to add something to the conversation that is unique, and backed by strong reporting. And that's journalism.” (Eric, 36)

- “It’s disappointing to me that newspapers haven’t come up with a plan other than cutting staff to really, to kind of, what’s the word I’m looking for, to make the transition to a new time. I mean, I don’t see how they’re getting younger people interested. And your readers are going to die out. That seems obvious. But I don’t really see anybody, you see video or you see blogs that are quick-hits. But I don’t really see anybody who’s being successful with what they’re trying. I mean, you’re getting beat by Twitter. You can’t keep up with Twitter, so I guess I’m not sure why you’re trying to. I just think you have to come at it, and I’m not saying I have the answer, but you have to come at it with a different approach.” (Amanda, 43)
- “I think that value is still very good and very strong, but it’s been dented significantly from what it was before, when there was only the newspaper, and then, even, there was no 24-hour cable except maybe Walter Cronkite on your evening news and then there, and then that’s it. So, the value, I mean, is still I think, you know, newspapers are very valuable to the public. But I still do, I actually encounter people today who said that they read, you know, my newspaper and like it. And, um, you know I don’t want things to continue to get worse still. You know, it’s like if we could, you want to hold it where it’s at as far as the journalism, and, and so that they still do remain valuable. And I think maybe journalists, you know, need to promote what we do a little bit more than we have in the past.” (Scott, 41)
- “I don’t think the value is there. And I think it’s pretty evident when you look at it. Because I don’t think the readers find the value there either. Because I think no matter what had happened, if the readers felt that they were still getting a valuable product, they would be behind it.” (Jessica, 35)

- “People jumped into the new media without figuring out a real business plan for doing so. And we got people, got readers, hooked on the idea that information is free. Information isn’t free. And when we started giving our product away and got people hooked on getting it for free, it’s going to be very difficult to get them to pay for it again. And I think that’s what people trying paywalls, and trying subscription plans are running into.”  
(John, 64)
- “I remember thinking that the Internet was taking over a little and that printed newspapers were seeming, were starting to look outdated and a little bit old. And maybe, you know, I know there was, again around, um, you know, 2006, 2005, 2006, 2007, the editor of the paper I worked at had said that he had noticed that maybe within the last 10 years, there had been a change in attitudes about the newspaper. And that it was no longer a requirement for professional people to subscribe to a daily newspaper. And the example that he gave was in his neighborhood he’s got a lawyer on one side, or a doctor on the other, or something like that, right one a little cul-de-sac. And every morning, every, you know, every morning he goes out and gets his newspaper, the driveways on each side of him, professional, educated people, do not get the newspaper. And it, and it, and that wasn’t necessarily the Internet taking over or anything. That was just, in his mind, uh, that was, that there came a time in America when professional people stopped getting the newspaper.” (Scott, 41)
- “The future still looked really bright, but it looked more along the lines that people wanted to reconnect with their community and their city and their town. So the emphasis was shifting to not covering as much, like, national news and worldwide news. It was more what was happening at the city council meeting and here’s what the planning

commission was looking at. It was more along that line, and at first I kind of thought I don't understand it. But the more I got into it, the more I realized, OK, this is important and I get the understanding of it." (Jessica, 35)

## Workforce

- "I've been through five layoffs, five rounds of layoffs. So, you know, I had tremendous survivor's guilt. I was ready to take the bullet myself because I had, I mean, I was an empty nester last summer; my youngest went to college, so I had been putting away money. I felt like, you know what, take me. I'm happy to go at this point because that's not why I went to journalism school was to figure out how to lay people off, you know. And, um, I just didn't see the commitment to keeping the product, the newsroom strong. ... I got talked into staying in the business awhile. I don't regret that. It's great to be in the business. But, you know, it's nice here where there haven't been layoffs in a while. Company's making money. At least, it's not growing the newsroom, but there's no, you know, there's no cloud over it either. That was, that was just heartbreaking. I mean, I just, heartbreaking. I cannot, I mean, these last years, the last, I guess it would have been the last seven years of my career were more heartbreaking than just, I could never have imagined how hard that would be. And it's just terrible. It's terrible because people are not just losing their jobs, they're losing their careers. You know, having to let people go when they're in their 50s, or 60s even, um, it's miserable, just miserable. And, you know what, it does make me angry, and I wouldn't be surprised if some of the people, I mean, I still, I feel like I have a little PTSD. I get flashbacks." (Carla, 52)

- “Three months after I got there, a couple of the people who were involved in my hiring process were let go. The news editor at that time who had spoken up very highly for me and who was, you know, instrumental in helping me get hired there, he was let go. So, um, he had been there a really, really long time, so that was pretty shocking. So, that was three months in. And then about a year later, about half our copy desk was let go, along with other positions around the newsroom. I think it was a 25% decrease overall, across the board. Um, just because our finances were bad. Um, after that, a lot of people left voluntarily. Our editor in chief left. Um, our managing editor left. And, you know, even now people continue to trickle out, leave for other jobs in journalism or other jobs. They’re kind of dropping like flies.” (Elizabeth, 24)
- “When I left, I left for pretty personal reasons. ... Plus, they were offering a full year’s pay at that time. In 2008, if you’d been there for 25 years or more, you got a full year’s pay to leave. And I said I’ll take a full year’s pay. ... The buyout was substantial for those who had been there 25 years or more. So you could see where it was going. Plus there were some other people, through the course of years, who were really smart people who had left and gotten out of newspapers. And I started to think, probably 3, 4, 5 years before, that these people are pretty smart and they’re getting out. Um, and these were high management people, so. I just felt like I had gone as far as I could go, wanted to try something different. I could see, I didn’t want to be someone who was laid off with nothing to turn to.” (David, 57)
- “When I first got there, yes, everything seemed great. And then, um, if you recall, the economy, ah, went to hell, and that’s when we started shedding jobs. When I joined that paper, there were 5 business reporters, and, um, by the time I left there was one. I was the



last, last of them. And at that time, that newspaper was covering, you know, all sorts of national news. We had a Washington DC reporter. We had, ah, two reporters in the state capital. Um, we had, you know, several sports reporters who were covering all of the major college athletics. Um, and we were covering all of the major industries on business, too. You know, um, when I first go there, things were great, but shortly thereafter is when things sort of hit the skid. And it wasn't just at my paper, of course. It was all over the place. Um, and also, I noticed that the attrition rate of my peers with whom I went to graduate school, um, more and more of them were out of business by that time." (Eric, 36)

- "There are probably some journalists that would think it's a very dark time for journalism right now. There are probably some that are positive, and they're probably the younger ones. But it is, you know, it is a, it is a career that has, you know, as far as the newspaper industry goes, become a little bit more unsettling with time, and it's kind of sad that there was once, you know, um, you know, it was once a grand situation is now not so much. And, I don't know, actually, I have a, well; I've got a farewell email from a staffer who left us right here at my desk. And I'm trying, you may not want to quote from this, you know, because this is something that was put in writing to a number of people. You know, but he was saying he was lucky. You know, his career, it coincided (with) the golden age of journalism in America when there were a lot of resources, there were large staffs, you could do a lot of investigative watchdog journalism, and, you know, 'feisty, fearless reporting' is the phrase he used. Um, so, you know, I'm thinking I was lucky because I got to go on that whole ride, realizing now that things kind of suck, at least compared to that. So, I have a lot of faith that that can be turned around, but I think that

newspaper companies need to acknowledge it and kind of address it head-on, and promote themselves and what they do ... It's, this is just, you know, a new way of doing things. They, they've got to acknowledge and, I mean, maybe communities would be more supportive if they knew there were problems." (Scott, 41)

- "Now I look back at that first newspaper and there are just two of us in the business, which is unbelievable. I mean, out of the core newsroom, there are just two of us still in the business left. And, ah, and then, you know, when I look at that next newspaper that was 120 people. When I left, it was 63. So, you know, it was cut in half. And when I got the next job, of course, I thought I've made it. So, of course, it did re-energize my career, and I thought this is going to be the time that I can actually settle and in do my best work. And, ah, I was able to do so for almost three years. And, ah, never thought I'd leave that job. But things continued to deteriorate at that major-metro newspaper. And, ah, the future was bleak at best. And once again, fortunately, by a magic stroke of luck, something else better came along, and here I am." (Eric, 36)
- "It's demoralizing when you see, you know, other journalists leaving, and you know, you know, they're not really wanting to go, if their pay was a little bit better, and, or maybe if there was such a good career path on the horizon. ... I feel like right now we're losing a lot more than we would in the past because it's, it's, it's not stable for the future. And there are probably some people that kind of, that just are thinking, 'You know, I don't know how long I'll last or what I'm going to do, but there's nothing else that I can do other than journalism, or that I would want to do.' So they just kind of ride it out. And sometimes those are people that get laid off that, you know, they're, they're at kind of like late- to the middle-part of their career, they might have another 10 years to go, 10 or

12 years, and they have a high salary, and those are people that have gotten laid off in journalism. You know they're out looking for work. That's just, you know, demoralizing, and, uh, has an effect on other people. Um, especially if the companies in question then go out and say things like, 'We're stream, we're, we're reorganizing our newsroom.' And a lot of newspapers have said this, things like this: 'We're reorganizing our newsroom to serve you better, to bring you the news you need in a new, efficient way in the new era.' That's bullshit. What they've done is lay off a bunch of journalists, and then essentially are misleading the public they serve into thinking it's not that bad. Um, you know, no big deal here. We're still going to do all of the local news you want, and that's not true, and it's not how it works." (Scott, 41)

- "It's really made everybody on the copy desk do more. Um, so we started doing, well, I guess at the start of this year we had already been doing web production, but it kind of sped up the timetable for me doing web production, wire editing, so it felt like a battleground promotion. There's no one else here to wire edit, so you're going to learn how to do it, like, right now. So, you know, there used to be a dedicated person who would slot the copy and anymore it's just whoever is free, you know, to slot it. Spending less time on stories, maybe. Like, trying to still be thorough, but having less time to spend on them. Um, so it's been, sometimes you might feel a little rushed." (Elizabeth, 24)
- "I think obviously with better resources we could do more, and there's more to do. I'm sure there's a lot of things that are not getting done now that would have gotten done 10 years ago or 20 years ago just because we had more manpower. You know, now you have got to prioritize. You're not doing as much. You know, you're not making as many

headlines; you're not digging as deep. But we're still telling people things they wouldn't be getting from anywhere else." (Carla, 52)

- "I think there is a problem with, uh, newspapers and the press, uh, backing off of watchdog reporting. And newspapers especially have had problems with, you know, because they're staff is lower than it was, and there's turnover and they may be younger, there's, they seem to be losing a little focus on, um, doing good watchdog investigative reporting. Not losing a little focus, but maybe a lot." (Scott, 41)
- "My boss left journalism to go into a different line of work. It was something that she and her family wanted to do, and she worked at getting a new career and did it, and left. And I liked her. And, uh, so, and I went for a couple of months without a boss, and now I have a new one. That one's not nearly as good as the last one. ... Turnover in management I have experienced, which is kind of disheartening. And this isn't directly me, but the shop that I work for now, like many other places, is having turnover like, it's like a bleeding wound. You know, it's just like boom, boom, boom, like every week or two now, there's almost there's, there's a stream of announcements, and, um, for all kinds of reasons journalists at different levels decide that they're leaving journalism, or they're moving to different outlets, um, in some cases. And then, of course, we have a ton of layoffs that you hear about, which was one of several big rounds of layoffs that have happened since 2008." (Scott, 41)
- "I see young journalists here, and I fear for whether five, 10 years from now, they're still going to be in this business because, are we giving them a reason to be in this business? I was able to have a career. I could see, even without promotions, I could see cost-of-living raises. I could see, you know, 401(k) plans. I had pensions at two of the papers that I

worked at, you know. I, you know, I could support my family. These guys, especially the most talented people, they have options. They can go off to other industries. And I just don't see the corporations here buying into the idea that they really need to do their best to hold on to these people. So that's, I'm very scared for the future of journalism now because of that. Passion will only take you so far. You know, you've got to pay a mortgage. You've got to put your kids through school. And I hate to think of people having to make that choice." (Carla, 52)

- "I'm one of the luckier ones, without a doubt. There's no question in my mind. The fact that I'm still a journalist; I have so many friends who are not journalists anymore. Um, your heart you'll always be a journalist, but they're, you know, working in other fields." (Carla, 52)
- "I was fortunate enough that I had a good severance package when I left the newspaper and so had time with freelance income to find something more permanent. And that really was my goal when I left the newspaper, was to, I was pretty uncertain about freelancing and so I was looking for something I could use my journalism experience and I think I found it." (John, 64)

**APPENDIX E**  
**CHAPTER III**  
**EXEMPLARS, RQ4**

***RQ4:** How have journalists' behaviors and practices changed to reflect the external changes in the industry, including economics, advertising, technology and online, and readership? Do those behaviors support or devalue the argument that the newspaper industry is undergoing a paradigm shift?*

#### Changed behaviors / practices / job function

- “When I took that job, you know, prior to taking that job, I was at a very small newspaper, where it was, you were publishing six stories a week. You were publishing five, you know, a story each day plus one for the weekend. When I moved to the next newspaper, I was, I would have to do maybe 2 to 3 stories per week. I would be able to do very smart stories, in depth. And then, you know, once we started publishing our own stories online, and people really focused on chasing the clicks, as it were, staying on top of it, competing with, you know, the rest of world. It wasn't the same job. You know, you're not spending 2 or 3 days on a story anymore. You're pumping out stuff all the time. And then, you know, it just changes the way you think about your job, I think. ... Well, it wasn't as, it was not “All the President's Men,” you know. I think a lot of journalists watch this movie and think that this is what we want to do. We want to, we want to, you know, I don't want to say that we want to change the world, but, I mean, we want to write the first draft in history, and we want it to be a damn good first draft in history. And now, it's more like, here's a couple of lines. And it's, you know, it's somewhat depressing, but I think you realize that if you want to stay in the game, then you have to adapt. You have to change with the times. And so you have to, ah, you know,

I'm still very much a journalist, so I think that, you know, it was do or die. And a lot of people died." (Eric, 36)

- And I remember, again, when pagination came in, and I didn't know the old way, I didn't know how to do things drawing, um, so I learned the new way, and that became part of my job. I mean, I didn't know anything about layout, but that became part of my job, and I started laying out the food section, the home section, whatever the daily features section. I mean, initially I was just working with words and all of sudden, then I started working with design." (Amanda, 43)
- "It has made me do more. It's really made everybody on the copy desk do more. Um, so we started doing, well, I guess at the start of this year we had already been doing web production, but it kind of sped up the timetable for me doing web production, wire editing, so it felt like a battleground promotion. There's no one else here to wire edit, so you're going to learn how to do it, like, right now. So, you know, there used to be a dedicated person who would slot the copy and anymore it's just whoever is free, you know, to slot it. Spending less time on stories, maybe. Like, trying to still be thorough, but having less time to spend on them. Um, so it's been, sometimes you might feel a little rushed." (Elizabeth, 24)
- "It became more technical, and I think it was probably about that time, from a, from a copy editing standpoint, copy editing became more than just about the words. Um, you sort of had some mental struggles, I think, especially the older guys because I was still pretty young at that time, the older guys had to start questioning, you know, what am I doing, why am I here, because I'm just a, um, you know, I've become a technical processor, a page processor kinda guy rather than someone who's really worried about



the configuration of the words and the structure of the sentences and are we using the right words. And I really think that in today's, but, and the Internet has taken it in a whole different direction, the quality of the writing's not that important anymore. It used to be it was all about the writing. Now, with the Internet, it's all about getting it out there the fastest. It really doesn't matter if it's that well written. It doesn't seem to matter. Now, I think there's a lot of newspapers that are trying to hang onto that with bare-bones copy editing staff and I think they're killing them." (David, 57)

- "As you probably already could have guessed, including the movement toward shorter, more concise, short-form journalism, I wasn't a big fan of that. I thought it sold readers short and I still do." (John, 64)
- "There was a lot of pressure, both related to the Internet and truly before the Internet, to write shorter stories. There was a sense that, already, that the Internet making the limited attention span of our readers even more limited. And that we needed to be quicker, more concise. But in terms of the way I did my job, I didn't see much change there. It was the pressures and what kind of product we were producing that changed." (John, 64)
- "I think what really clobbered the newspaper is Facebook, things like that, but especially Facebook because it really is like local news. Facebook is the newspaper now. Um, it just happens to be very, very local, and everyone in America is on Facebook; most people are on Facebook all the time. On their computers, on their phones, morning, noon, and night, when they wake up in the middle of the night they look at Facebook. At their office all day, they're on Facebook. On their phone anywhere, the airport, you know, sitting on the toilet they're on Facebook. That's not something, you know, that, uh, a newspaper has ever been able to get that much, you know, um, you know, that type of

really, um, attention, I guess. You know, maybe, maybe years ago a newspaper would be like that. If you, if that when the newspaper came, you were really excited to get it. It was your only connection to the world. And if you were at a bar or restaurant, you would want to read a newspaper.” (Scott, 41)

#### Deviation from accepted processes/procedures

- “There were media buyouts, um, I think it was 11 or 13 people lost their job, or were laid off. And then we had a number of other number people leave and their jobs weren’t replaced. Ah, and that’s when I think everyone around me, including me, and even at other newspapers started to realize that this was not a short term, ah, blip. This was the start of something, ah, that was very serious, very saddening, and very, I guess, depressing. And, um, you know, I think we all came to the realization that nothing was going to be the same after that. ... that’s when things started to change with my role. I started to, um, they started to require us to post our own stories online, which was unheard of prior to that. It was just, um, you know, you go through a couple layers of editing and then it would go up online. But then, um, you know, you got to the point where you were required to put your story in there, or online, and then it would get read afterwards. So, it was a slippery slope, and none of us really liked it. But I think all of realized this was going to be something of the future. And, of course, you know, once you lose people and their jobs don’t get replaced, you start having to pick up more work. You don’t go in depth. You don’t get as much time on the subject that you were hired to cover. ... We were not only required to be the content people. We were required to be the, ah, mechanics behind the system. So we were required to start posting our own

stories. Um, which is, I think anyone would recognize that as somewhat dangerous though. You know, everyone needs an editor. Everyone needs an editor, and there's a lot of consternation around that. You know, we didn't have a choice. And that's, I think that was a seminal moment there in my career." (Eric, 36)

- "So, if you look at like music, we don't generally put our music on compact discs or cassette tapes anymore. It can be loaded right into the device that we are going to use to listen to it. Journalism is like that right now in a lot of ways, too. But there's still enough people that want to get it on paper that you can't just stop doing that, or you would lose a lot of money. So, the fu-, you know, I don't, the future, I don't know if you're, if you had just, just a website, would you call your, I think, could you call yourself an online newspaper? But I like using the phrase newspaper, or the word newspaper, because it means the press, and that's different than all the other shit that's on the internet that's written by somebody who is not the press. And all of the other stuff is, generally, you know, often not trustworthy or wrong. Then you have things like, um, Huffington Post. Like what is that exactly, an online newspaper, or an online news outlet? You know, I don't think that they would call themselves a newspaper necessarily, but they, you know, it's called The Post." (Scott, 41)
- "I don't know, I don't know what the future is any more, frankly. I don't know what the future of print is. I mean, there's always going to be a need for, ah, you know, reported content. I hate the word content, but for quality journalism, there's always going to be a need for it." (Eric, 36)
- "Newspapers have had to change their whole mode of advertising. I mean, it used to be sacrilegious to put an ad on your front page and this sort of thing. They've had to, um,

throw away all those ideas and pretty much cater to, how we're gonna make money has to come first. ... I interviewed to be the sports editor in [CITY NAME REDACTED]. I didn't get the job, but one of the questions they asked in that interview was, they asked me something about, we expect all of our editors to be able to monetize their content.

And at that time, I didn't even know what that question meant. I mean, monetize content, what are you talking about? Um, I think that's probably one reason I didn't get the job."

- "When I first started, there were lots of projects, lots of long-form journalism projects, spread out over weeks, I'm sorry, not weeks but days, over the course of a week. And we don't do very many of those anymore. We still have people writing some stories, some longer than others, and they're all, I think, you fair and they get it straight and right and everything. But I've also noticed that we're trying to shift a lot of that to readers on social media, and sometimes stories that are very click-baity, just to try to get those clicks from people." (David, 57)
- "I think it meant, um, longer hours, first off. At that time, in order to get to a bigger newspaper, which was always the goal, you still had to set aside time to do big-impact pieces. So, you're still working on all that stuff, and then you're carving out other, you have to carve out part of your day to do the, the, the hour-to-hour, day-by-day fill-in-the-news-hole, and fill in the website, because I think at that point you had to prove that you could, you could, um, you know be relevant on the Internet, online. But you also had to have one foot, you know, one foot in the tub, as it were. You had to have one foot in the water and that, you know, you're still going after the bigger picture, bigger pieces investigative slash, ah, enterprising stories in order to move up. So, you know, my job, my plan of staying there three years turned into four because of that, because I wasn't

able to focus as much time and attention on the bigger pieces that get you noticed. And that get you moved along.” (Eric, 36)

#### Expressions of incongruence with their prior understanding

- “It was the first time we were going to use the Internet to send stories. I remember these ridiculously long training sessions and steps, and all you were doing was sending an email. But it was like, “What do you mean?” I mean, it was a very difficult process. And you still had to find, we’re overseas, and I mean, we spent, you know, we went a couple different places overseas in Paris and Portugal, and the first thing we would do is go into the hotel room and see if the phone thing came out of the back. It’s like, do they have anything. It was a cumbersome process. That’s what we worried about. You know, instead of worrying about the content of the story. The first thing was how am I going to be able to transport it.” (Amanda, 43)
- “I think that we threw a lot of spaghetti at the wall though with different things. And I think we still do that as an industry somewhat. We sort of overdo it with throwing things out there for people. Unless you use social media to get people to track stuff down, you could overwhelm a site and they’ll never find the three graphs that you put out there about something. You know, we went crazy with video at first. We tried to out-YouTube YouTube, and that didn’t work. Um, a lot of time and effort on things that weren’t getting a lot of time and effort from an audience. So, I don’t know. I don’t think we’ve totally mastered it yet. I don’t think we’ve figured out what’s the right way to use our resources. I think it’s still a lot of spaghetti on the wall in some cases, trying to figure out. You know, you don’t really want to replicate the paper necessarily, but you do have, you

know, how do you plan for the day where there is no printed product, and that audience is still looking for those kind of in depth stories, or, you know, what's the model we can create on a website that makes sense and is inviting. So, I don't know. I think we're still finding out way. At least it feels like we are here. ... It took years, I think, to get to that point. I remember being still shocked once in a while when somebody would say, "Don't we want to hold that back?" No. 'Cuz TV will get it.' Well, guess what, if we put it out there first then we have it first, so, you know." (Carla, 52)

- "I could see when I got out it was a good opportunity for those younger people because the technology was changing. You know, the Twitter, I don't do any of that. You know, the Twitter stuff and all that stuff, they know how to do that, and I was like, let them have it because I'm not interested in all that. I'm not interested in doing my news that way, so, and they're thriving with it, although they're having to deal with very difficult circumstances in terms of the workload." (David, 57)
- "A lot of these job apps, they say they want the same things. You know, they want X number of years of experience. And they want someone to write on deadline, work well with others, who's really good in social media. I don't really get that, I do, but, um, but, you know, who's good with AP Style. So I guess those are the essentials. You know those haven't really changed, I guess, except for the social media part." (Elizabeth, 24)
- "It seems like a lot of jobs now, you need, like, social media skills, which I have some but I don't have a ton, and I'm not really interested in learning a whole lot, honestly. So, I'd like to think I have what it takes to succeed as a journalist, but maybe not what journalism is defined as now. ... Writing quickly, getting it on social media to share, and

still getting it accurate at fair but at the same time doing it in a way that is bite sized and understandable in 30 seconds for people.” (Elizabeth, 24)

- “I think that was the biggest change for me, trying to change the culture of the place so that it would not be print-centric. So that the room would start to, you know, see themselves, really more of an AP news wire, more of the TV, you know, we’re going to bust in at any moment, and we’re going to break news and we’re not going to be these, like, somebody walks in works toward 5 o’clock deadline and that’s the thing they do all day. So, I mean, that to me is no particular moment, but just that whole era where we shifted to being online first, focused.” (Carla, 52)
- “I was worried then, as I’m worried now, about companies, about media companies that aren’t really about public service, quite honestly. They’re wrapped up in the bottom line, and, you know, this is an industry that made 24, and 25, and 26 percent profit at one point, an obscene amount of money. I mean, when you look at other industries, this industry, I mean, was just living the high life for a long time. And owners, God love them, they made the, they enjoyed the fruits of their labors, and they had a great time there for a while. And there was an era when I was coming up when a lot of the owners were newspaper men. They were newspaper men that became business men. And so, there was still sort of the passion for the work. Then, of course, if you know, we moved into an era where a lot of those family owned places had gone by wayside, and you’re owned by corporations that I feel like, in some ways, have taken advantage of this downfall, and have, you know, made us all very bare bones. ... I mean, to really do justice to your coverage, to do the meaningful work; I’m not saying that people aren’t trying, and I’m not saying that people aren’t succeeding here and there, but I think this

company, like all the other ones out there, just got to rightsizing, as they called it, or downsizing. And now they've sort of, they're happily living with that expense reductions. And, um, you know, it's frustrating. It's frustrating to see what's happened and that, you know, people are not reinvesting. You know, the bottom fell out. I realize everyone had to adjust. I'm not naïve. It's a business. I realize, you know, just because it's owned by billionaire people, they're not going to just out of the goodness of their heart, or because they believe in the cause, I realize that. But at the same time, I think you have to get back at some point and reinvest. And that's what worries me. I don't see that happening."

(Carla, 52)

- "I was in the position a few years before I got out (of the industry) where we would have to decide what content we weren't going to put in the newspaper anymore because, either, one, we didn't have the space or, two, we didn't have the manpower to keep doing it that way. Now they're having to continue to make those kinds of decisions, and it's tough cuz you're having to deal with the public. You know they're wanting to know, I can, you used to put this much in the paper, and now you're only putting this much. You're not putting Johnny's name in the paper anymore. Well, we don't have the manpower to take all those phone calls anymore. You gotta make those decisions, and you know, I feel bad that they still have to make those decisions." (David, 57)
- "I think obviously with better resources we could do more, and there's more to do. I'm sure there's a lot of things that are not getting done now that would have gotten done 10 years ago or 20 years ago just because we had more manpower. You know, now you have got to prioritize. You're not doing as much. You know, you're not making as many



headlines; you're not digging as deep. But we're still telling people things they wouldn't be getting from anywhere else." (Carla, 52)

#### Definition of being a journalist / identity as journalist

- "I do a lot of journalistic kind of work, but I would not call myself a journalist. I'm an advocate. I use the same skills in many ways, and I think part of why I was hired is because I have a journalistic background. They wanted someone who had that experience." (John, 64)
- "It's good for journalism to be competitive like that because if you applied for a larger, for, for a job at a better established, uh, newspaper that's just better, and they don't want to hire you that means because they had someone else who was better, more aggressive, better writer, someone that they wanted. They didn't want you, so if you want to get to that level, you have got to keep improving and working at it. Um, you don't get things handed to you. So, you know, at that point I was, you know, well, I was confident, but then also feeling like maybe I'm, again, maybe I'm getting left behind here. You know, I'm having trouble getting to the higher level that I'd like to get to. So part of why I did do, um, learn how to, you know, shoot and edit video was to have another skill. So, as I see these job ads or this demand for reporters who can do more than write, I wanted to be able to say I can do that. I can actually shoot and edit a video or take photos. And at the same time I was trying to do a lot of, you know, as much enterprising reporting as I could, but also having more of a mixed, um, bag of tricks I guess, as a journalist. ... I think there was a time when I felt like my reporting and writing was really good, and then there were times when I felt like I had maybe slipped off, or there's less enthusiasm. Um,

some of that is just maybe getting burned out, from time to time. Working a lot, working too hard, but yeah, especially with doing multimedia work, I felt like this is putting me in good position now because I can write and do other things that a lot of other journalist don't know how to do or don't want to do. The way I did it was we had a, that the newspaper that I was at, the producer who had a multimedia degree ... so I just asked her, 'Could you help me with video stuff?' And she was happy to do it, so it was like getting a multimedia course over several weeks in shooting and editing video with someone who had actually just gone through it. She's younger than me. She's, you know, got a degree in this; she's working with me. So I thought, 'why not utilize that to learn something?' So it was very helpful." (Scott, 41)

- "Like, your crusty guy who couldn't wait to break that story about the corrupt city council. Now, while he's getting the information, he's also tweeting about it, sending something to somebody to get up on Facebook so that they can get the hit first. You're getting so much more bits and pieces because now they have to be not just a reporter and gatherer of facts and disseminator of information, but they have to be the disseminator of information from the time they think there might be an issue all the way out. And then not only are they sitting there with their pen and their paper like they used to be, but now they have to have a camera and have their smart phone to record the clips so that hopefully if it goes viral, ok great. They have so many more hats that I don't think your traditional journalist exists anymore." (Jessica, 35)
- "I have a blog that I coproduce with someone that's a very meaty blog that's very well respected as a niche market. It's a women's basketball blog. ... It's not traditional news gathering, but it has some elements of that. I mean, I have relationships with 13 Division

I schools. That's something I've learned that I took those with me. That those don't belong to the paper. So I started that, my partner and I started that, long before. It's going on five or six years. Are we making great money on it? No. Has it helped me get jobs? Yes. ... there are a lot of blogs out there that are, frankly, trash, but this is blog that has two people who worked in the industry for close to 50 years. So we bring a professional approach to it. And because of how it's received both locally, regionally and at some point nationally, I think that helps me think of myself still as a journalist." (Amanda, 43)

- "I've got a farewell email from a staffer who left us right here at my desk. ... he was saying he was lucky. You know, his career, it coincide ... the golden age of journalism in America when there were a lot of resources, there were large staffs, you could do a lot of investigative watch dog journalism, and, you know, 'feisty, fearless reporting' is the phrase he used. Um, so, you know, I'm thinking I was lucky because I got to go on that whole ride, realizing now that things kind of suck, at least compared to that." (Scott, 41)
- "I help work on, and occasionally report, stories that people are interested in and stories that people, like, information that's important to people. And I make sure that it is factually accurate. That it's fair. That we're not libeling anybody. Um, and putting it out there so that people can be more fully informed, and yeah, you know, what's going on out there so that they can act as they want. ... I think what really matters most for me is that I feel I'm doing something that helps other people and is important in that regard. Whether that's in print or in digital, like, online only, yeah, it'd be OK. It would just be a little less satisfying because I can't quite hold my computer in the same way, in my hands the same way I can hold a newspaper." (Elizabeth, 24)

- “I think I saw my career as being, um, you know having a college degree and student newspaper experience and a good deal of training. And then getting a job at a daily newspaper, a smaller daily newspaper, and thinking this is, you know, currently going to be a lot of fun. But I can also learn a lot, and I want to advance; I want to move to something bigger eventually and move up. So, um, you know it was, yeah, I was very excited to have a job. There was a little bit, you know, some of the standards of this, being a small daily, were not quite what I would have wanted. But just having a job in journalism was great. And I didn’t think it would be a long-term thing. It would be something that I would do for a little while, until I could get a better job.” (Scott, 41)
- “I guess like any young person in college, everybody was preaching about internships and getting as much experience as you could, getting a lot of clips as you could. It was sort of a traditional route, you know, making your way to a small newspaper and using that to get to a bigger paper and so on. And at some point if you wanted to be an editor, you take that, you know, step and move it along, so I felt like I wasn’t really thinking down the road so much. My aspiration was to be a reporter. I was very excited about being a reporter. That was where I thought would be fun, and I would be there for years and life would be grand. You know, and that was its own reward in a way. You know, I fully expected that I would land a job, and that I’d be able to do that. I didn’t have any, you know, I’m sure like kids today, journalism goal, there wasn’t a worry. I mean, I assumed if you wanted it, you could do it. Nothing would really stand in your way.” (Carla, 52)
- “It’s not just a paper-and-pen job anymore. It’s still what same approach to what journalists do but it’s on a different scale. So, you know, while I’m sitting there, trying to

figure out how to send something out to a newspaper, I'm also thinking, well, hey, if I make a video of this, I can send it out to so-and-so, and if I can get it to viral. So it's still many hats, it's just to a different audience." (Jessica, 35)

- "I like doing journalism. I like learning new things and improving. And, so, as long as I'm doing that, I can find a place to do journalism, even if I have to move jobs or if something happened. If I ever got laid off in journalism, you know, downsizing or something. You know, I feel confident that I would be able to find something else. So, it changes things a little bit, though, because, um, you're uncertain on will I stay with my current employer, and how long will I be ... should I, should I be looking for something else? Should I be looking at a different line of work or a different aspect of journalism? So you kind of, I, I, I kind of wonder, you know, am I making the right move by just working every day? Or should I, you know, should I be making a move to leave? Um, my personal position is pretty good. You know, so a lot of things that happen to the overall organization don't necessarily, you know, come down on me, other than it's sad to see the standards slip, or it's sad to see people leave. But right now, you know, I'm in a good spot, but two or three years from now will that still be the same? It's hard, you don't, it's hard to know." (Scott, 41)
- "I was fortunate enough that I had a good severance package when I left the newspaper and so had time with freelance income to find something more permanent. And that really was my goal when I left the newspaper, was to, I was pretty uncertain about freelancing and so I was looking for something I could use my journalism experience and I think I found it." (John, 64)

- “I still consider myself a journalist, but not by journalists’ standards. So, my measure of success for journalism had changed to that extent because it wasn’t the same measurements. It was more, OK, how can my background in journalism help me become this PR person that I know needs to happen. And it was interesting, too, because at that point, when all these papers were doing layoffs, and everybody was leaving, most people went into PR field because that’s what they were equipped for. So it wasn’t unheard of to be doing a new job and run across somebody you knew from a paper who was now doing PR at another firm.” (Jessica, 35)
- “And the kicker is that we still have journalism classes. And we still have people who are, like, I’m going to be a journalist. And you look at them and go, I appreciate the enthusiasm, but, sweetie, pick something else. And you don’t want to be that negative person to them, but realistically, you’re not going to survive. And if you’re, I don’t want to say an optimist, but if you’re an optimist, you’re really not going to survive in that field. You need to, journalists are a whole different breed of people because they are very intelligent people. They’re quick-witted. They don’t have a problem with arguing when they know you are wrong, but they also are open to ideas. It’s the weirdest mix of person you’ll ever come across. ... I hope that that breed doesn’t die. I hope that it transitions into something better and greater. But right now, I don’t think there’s enough being done to make that happen.” (Jessica, 35)

**APPENDIX F**  
**INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS**

JOHN

Age: 64

Sex: Male

Marital status: Married

Children: Yes, two grown children.

Highest educational degree achieved: Bachelor's

Income bracket: \$90,000+

Receive the survey directly from researcher or from an associate: I believe directly from you. ...

Researcher: At what age did you first identify yourself as journalist?

Interviewee: Um, probably when I was in high school. Probably 17. I knew that's what I wanted to do.

R: What was your first job in journalism?

I: My first professional job? I worked in college; do you want to count that?

R: Absolutely. Whatever you consider your first job.

I: Well, I guess my first job in journalism was at the Indiana Daily newspaper, when I was a student.

R: And what was the position?

I: I was a reporter, and moved up the line, all the way to managing editor over the course of about three years.



R: As best as you can recall, what did you think about the value of newspapers at that time?

I: I thought they were tremendously valuable. I still do.

R: What did the future of newspapers look like to you?

I: Not good. Um, I, at least newspapers as we now know them, as we have known them, I think there's always going to be a future for newsgathering. Whether it's in the newspaper form, I'm very uncertain about them.

R: What did it look like then?

I: Oh, it looked like newspapers could change the world. This was, ah, at the height of the Vietnam experience, it was the time of Watergate, it was a very heady time for someone going into journalism, especially newspaper journalism.

R: How did you feel about your career at that time and was it clear what you needed to do to succeed?

I: I felt like I had good career prospect, and I felt like I had a pretty good idea of what I needed to do. I needed to try and start at small to mid-sized newspaper and work from there. And, yeah, I felt like I had a good career path.

R: At that time in your career, do you remember what the future of newspapers looked like to you?

I: It looked pretty good to me. There were always, from the time I started or before, people saying that newspapers were in trouble. At that time, the big threat was thought to be broadcast. Um, of course the Internet was, you know, not even in anybody's imagination at that point, but I thought the future was good for newspapers. I was never one of those who was terribly concerned about the so-called broadcast thing.

R: What changes do you remember taking place at the first company you worked for during your employment?

I: Well, certainly the transition working with electric typewriters to computer terminals. That probably was the biggest thing I remember from that job.

R: Did it change your role there at all?

I: No, I can't say that it did. It was a different way of producing copy. You know, much simpler, you know, you used to have to type out on sheets of paper, and I'm not a very good typist, so I would have to do a lot of correcting. Either ripping out the paper and start over or using the blue pencil, ah, which was a hassle, so when we were able to go to computer terminals, after the first month or two weeks of just making that transition and learning how to use the new technology, I always found it much easier.

R: Tell me about your first promotion or job change or first major assignment.

I: Well, I started off as a courthouse reporter or legal affairs reporter. I guess about two years into my career, I was shifted over and started covering state politics, so that was a pretty major shift for me to start covering politics and the state legislature.

R: Were you still considered a reporter?

I: Oh, yes, very much.

R: And how did you feel about your career path then?

I: Again, I felt I was on a good path. I had some notion at that point that I might want to eventually become an editor, but I thought there were opportunities that would be available.

R: Did you know how to succeed on that path?

I: Well, I thought I did. In retrospect, maybe not so much, but I certainly thought I did at the time. I thought that I was on a good track. And I had a sense of where I was going.

R: And how did you feel about the future of the newspapers and what did that future look like?

I: At that time?

R: Um,hmm,

I: Again, I thought the future of newspaper was pretty good. I recognized there were challenges. Again, the big threat was thought to be broadcast at that time, and I was not terribly concerned about it.

R: Any changes you remember taking place at that company?

I: No, I'll have to say not, and that's probably part of the reason that I decided I wanted to get away from that company. I thought it was a pretty stagnant place.

R: So, asking if it changed your role:

I: Well, I did do some part-time editing, filling in for editors who were away or on the weekends, so I got a taste of editor's roll, and I left that company for a position as an editor elsewhere. That was about, after 13 or 14 years.

R: So, tell me about a time that you remember a change that involved the Internet at a job. For example either networking or online publishing, something along those lines that was significant regarding the internet

I: I just remember, again, I was working as an editor, I remember being in meetings where people discussing that the Internet was coming, that various news organizations were getting ON the Internet, that we were getting on the Internet. It was going to be a big thing. I do remember people saying "how are we going to make money on the Internet?" I remember nobody had much of an answer for that, as to how we were going to make money on the internet. I remember being troubled by that. This would have been, I guess, in the early 90s.

R: And what was your position or job title?

I: At that time I was state editor at the paper where I worked.

R: So, the coming of the Internet, did it change your roll or performance in any way?

I: It changed some demands on me in terms of producing copy or making sure that the reporters I was working with produced copy more quickly. There was a lot of pressure, both related to the Internet and truly before the Internet, to write shorter stories. There was a sense that, already, that the Internet making the limited attention span of our readers even more limited. And that we

needed to be quicker, more concise. But in terms of the way I did my job, I didn't see much change there. It was the pressures and what kind of product we were producing that changed.

R: And how did you feel about your career path at that time?

I: I think, again, I felt my career path was pretty good. You know, I didn't, yeah, I felt like my career path was pretty good. I was personally uncertain about whether I wanted to move on or move up as an editor or I wanted to go back to reporting, which is what I eventually did do.

R: And, at that time how did you know how to succeed as a journalist?

I: I thought I did. Um, there were, clearly there were a lot of pressures in the industry, a lot of things going on in the industry that I wasn't particularly comfortable with. As you probably already could have guessed, including the movement toward shorter, more concise, short-form journalism. I wasn't a big fan of that. I thought it sold readers short and I still do.

R: How did you feel about the future of the newspapers and what did that future look like?

I: I was becoming more concerned about it. Again, I thought there were things going on in the industry that were not good for the industry, in terms of paying more attention to what we thought readers wanted than what we thought they needed, ah, to be concise about it. That's over-simplifying, but that was the general feeling.

R: And have there been any recent changes in your career or position or job?

I: Well, there certainly were changes in that period. I transitioned back to being an editor, and moved to Washington as a correspondent for the newspaper I was working for, so there certainly were changes in that time, in the early to mid 90s.

R: And what about more recently. What's the most recent change to your career or job?

I: Well, I left the newspaper 6 years ago, six and a half now. My position was downsized, and I took buyout, and did freelance work for about a year, and then went to my present job.

R: And what is that?

I: My present job is senior writer and editor at [REDACTED] in [REDACTED].

R: And how do you feel now about your career path?

I: My career path where I am now? It's not a journalistic career but I'm fine with it. As a friend of mine says, I'm playing the back nine now, so I'm a few years from retirement. But I think I'm on a path that will take me to that, and I'm comfortable with it.

R: So you don't feel like it's journalistic anymore?

I: I do a lot of journalistic kind of work, but I would not call myself a journalist. I'm an advocate. I use the same skills in many ways, and I think part of why I was hired is because I have a journalistic background. They wanted someone who had that experience.

R: And so, how do you feel about the future of newspapers and what did that future look like now?

I: I'm pretty pessimistic about it. Again, I feel like there's a future of news, of newsgathering and reporting, but I'm not at all optimistic about newspapers as a medium. I think they're in trouble. I don't know, and frankly, I don't know anybody who's still in newspapers having fun. It was fun when I was doing it. I hope you're not pointed in that direction.

R: Um, I got out of the industry. ...

I: One of the conclusions I came to toward the end is that the Internet really turned everyone into a wire service reporter, that there was a sense that you had to go somewhere, see something, and immediately stop and file. And that's not what I signed up for. I didn't mind doing it every now and again, election night I got a good rush from, and that's essentially what you're doing on election night, but I didn't want to do that every day.

R: No. You're exhausted.

I: That's what I mean about not fun anymore.

R: Is that what contributed to making that change for you to get out of, instead of continuing freelancing? Some people will do that and be able to make it into a career?

I: Freelanceing I did not see as a good alternative. I'm living and working in Washington, and I was surrounded by people who were in same circumstances as me. Laid off, people who took buyouts, and the freelance market was overloaded, and I think still is in the [REDACTED] area. I did not see it, realistically, as a permanent source of reliable income. And I had kids, college kids, to pay, and I needed something that I could rely on.

R: I felt largely the same way. I work in insurance now. It's something that isn't a dream job but it's steady, it's secure, it has its own challenges.

... transmission issues, repeating thoughts, questions ...

I: I was fortunate enough that I had a good severance package when I left the newspaper and so had time with freelance income to find something more permanent. And that really was my goal when I left the newspaper, was to, I was pretty uncertain about freelancing and so I was looking for something I could use my journalism experience and I think I found it.

R: And so is it clear now what you need to do to be successful for your future?

I: I think so. I work for a non-profit organization now. There's always, and I'm not involved in it really, but there's always a fund-raising challenge, and there's always uncertainty that the money will keep coming in to do the work that we try to do. I'm pretty confident in what I'm doing in that organization, and as long as the money keeps coming in, I'll be alright.

R: That's always the case, for any business.

I: Sure. That's right.

R: So we talked a little bit about how you feel about the future of the industry, but what do you think about the value of newspapers today?

I: I'll have to say that I think they're less valuable than they used to be. I think they're less substantive than they used to be. I'm not sure I can name a newspaper today that, in my opinion, is as good as it was 20 years ago. I don't know that I could name one. There's still some good newspapers around, but I don't know that any of them are as good as they were 20 years ago.

R: Those are all of my questions. Is there anything that we didn't go over that you would like to add regarding the themes that we've discussed.



I: Um, not really, except I thought that you were going to ask about it, and you didn't, and maybe it's not part of your study, but what do people think went wrong. I'm clearly one of those that think things went wrong. I think a lot of folks that ran newspapers got fat on 18 and 20 percent profit margins, and when could only make 5 or 6 percent, they decided it was time to run. I think, as I alluded earlier, people jumped into the new media without figuring out a real business plan for doing so. And we go people, got readers, hooked on the idea that information is free. Information isn't free. And when we started giving our product away and got people hooked on getting it for free, it's going to be very difficult to get them to pay for it again. And I think that's what people trying paywalls, and trying subscription plans are running into. Perhaps a few at the top, the New York Times-es of the world, the Washington Posts of world will be able to pull that off, but I worry about [MID-MARKET and SMALL MARKET – NAMES REDACTED] of the world, those good, solid, mid-size newspapers, how are they going to make it over the long-term. And again, I think that much of what went wrong is the industry's own fault for not thinking through before they made these changes. But it is what it is.

R: ... so much of what is being written is from the outside ... there are a couple schools of thought, and one of them is the economical/financial, that model, the business model fundamentally has to change, and whether it's going to a non-profit structure or a community-funded structure, but that fundamentally the business model has to change in order for there to be a future.

I: Yeah. I'm very impressed with the Pro Publica model. The question I would have is whether you can make that in a small setting. Obviously you can get foundation funding and do big projects, national kind of reporting if you can get national support. But can you do that at a

community level and provide the kind of watchdog function that I think is so important, you know, what helped make me want to get into journalism in the first place. I'm not sure the money is out there to support it. ... and can they sustain it over time.

DAVID

Age: 57

Sex: Male

Marital status: Married

Do you have children: yes, three grown

Highest educational degree achieved: Bachelor's

Income bracket: \$40,000-\$60,000

Receive the survey directly from researcher or from an associate: Researcher

Researcher: At what age did you first identify yourself as journalist?

Interviewee: Almost too young to remember. I was an athlete. I started keeping essentially statistics on football games when I was old enough to write in a notebook, so maybe 5 or 6 years old at the time. I was 12 or 13 at the time, I was old enough to know that if I wasn't good enough to play, I wanted to cover sports and write about it. I read the Washington Post every Sunday, maybe from age 8 on. Read the Washington Post sports section, read the [LOCAL PAPER NAME REDACTED] sports section every single day, probably from third grade on.

Researcher: When did you have your first job in journalism?

Interviewee: Full time or any?

R: Any that you would identify as your first journalism job.

I: I started stringing high school football games when I was a senior in high school. Um, I would play in a football game Friday night and go cover a game for the [LOCAL PAPER REDACTED] on Saturday afternoon. And then a year or two after I graduated, I was still stringing games for

them because I was going to community college and the football coach who I had played for, I wound up interviewing him after games when I had just played for him the year before. So, pretty weird.

R: At that time, what did you think about the value of newspapers?

I: I think, more than anything, I just thought it was fun. At that point in my life, I wanted to cover the Orioles coast to coast, and I lost that desire when I got a little older and I was, I don't know if, I might have still been going to [SCHOOL NAME REDACTED] but I was covering ACC basketball for the [NEWSPAPER NAME AND LOCATION REDACTED] and I was on the road all the time and I just got tired of being on the road, and I could tell that covering a major league baseball team for 162 games was not an ideal way to live. Plus the executive sports editor of [that paper], he saw in me more editing ability than writing ability and he sort of geared me toward the editing end. He didn't like that, I tended to write long. He taught me a lesson one time. I wrote a sidebar for him on a Notre Dame-NC State basketball game on Notre Dame and that was in the days when they pasted the stuff on the sheets and he laid mine out down the left-hand side of the page and just had the guy take a knife and just cut it where it fit, right in the middle of a paragraph. I was like, "OK, I'm not going to write long anymore."

R: What did the future of newspapers look like to you?

I: I didn't really think about it. It was just, um, I could always write. Writing came easy to me. I love sports. I just didn't give it any thought. I knew that's what I wanted to do.

R: How did you feel about your career at that time and was it clear what you needed to do to succeed?

I: Um, by the time, let me think here, by the time I was about 22, I had been pushed more toward the editing end, rather than the writing end. I was still doing both but, ah, organization comes real natural to me, too. So the organizing and planning end and just the sheer anal-ness of being organized sort of geared me more toward the editing end, and I could see where that was going. And it was exciting, but I was pretty good at it, and I was satisfied. I don't know, does that answer the question?

R: Absolutely. Um, what changes do you remember taking place at that first job, at that company during your employment

I: First full-time job?

R: That first job we were just talking about.

I: Stringing, I wasn't there enough to really know. I mean, I saw a lot of changes. When I started covering games, you came back to the office and typed up your story on a select typewriter. So, I went from that to, see, that would have been in 1977, by 1980, working at the [NEWSPAPER NAME REDACTED], I was working on a computer terminal, but it was strictly a news-production terminal. There wasn't any Internet or anything like that. Um, in fact, even at [NEWSPAPER NAME REDACTED], I guess we had, ah, ATEX, that wasn't Internet, so, gosh it wasn't until 1990 that [NEWSPAPER NAME REDACTED], got any Internet-connected computers, I don't think. I don't know. Does that answer the question.

R: It does. Yep.

R: Tell me about a your first promotion/job change or first major assignment. One of those first big moments in your career.

I: First full-time job was a small paper in, ah, near where I grew up. I only stayed there for 6 months because it was, like, 80 hours a week. Ah, so I quit that job and went back to [CITY REDACTED], and I was working 40 hours a week. I guess North Carolina didn't have any labor laws because I was working 40 hours a week, ah, for \$4 or \$4.50 an hour, so \$160, \$180 a week, and when I interviewed up here in [CITY REDACTED], I mean, I remember all the details, um, they offered me a copy editing position on the sports desk for \$313 a week, \$2 a night, night differential, so it was \$323 a week and I thought I was going to be rick.

R: So thinking about that cycle, it was a quick turnaround, it sounds like, you know, in a matter of a few years. How did that impact what you thought about your career path?

I: Um, I mean, newspapers weren't struggling at that time. I mean, newspapers were pretty engrained nationwide. And, ah, [NEWSPAPER NAME REDACTED] was full speed ahead at that time. The sports desk at that time, God, we had, we probably had 12 people just on the night sports desk. And then there was the afternoon paper had 2 or 3 others. So, I mean, the sports department at [NEWSPAPER NAME REDACTED] was probably pushing 30 people, just in the sports department alone. And now they're down to 10 maybe, including the desk people. So, at that time newspapers were pretty much booming. I don't think newspapers really hit the downturn until probably sometime in the late '80s. It started, I mean, I guess there was some indication in the late '80s. And then, it might not even have been until the '90s. I don't think the [NEWSPAPER NAME REDACTED] really started major downsizing until the mid, you know, 2005, 2006 and then 2008 when I left, that was I think the first major wave. A lot of experienced

people left. When I left there were 12 of us, I think, and 208 years of experience leaving. Something like that.

R: So, at that time, when you got that job there, was it clear what you needed to do to be successful?

I: I mean, as a sports copy editor, you knew you were going to work nights, you knew you were going to work weekends. It was a grind-type job so there wasn't any real, you know, it's kind of like playing a sport. You just get better and better every day, and it's like going to work, going to practice every day, you just get better, you get more experience, you learn from the more veteran guys, take in what you think you can use to get better, and ignore the other stuff. So.

R: What did that future look like for newspapers?

I: At that time? Like I said, um, I don't think, that was '81, '82. I don't think there was any indication at that point in the newspaper community that, what was going to come for newspapers. Now, I have no doubt that the people who sit in the ivory towers who were looking ahead, maybe they could see it coming, but the Internet hadn't even been exposed to but maybe 1 percent of the people in the world at that time. I don't think anybody really knew, I mean, newspapers were still a huge source of advertising. If I remember, at that time, the media source that was most in trouble was radio. Um, I think radio was really trying to figure out how do they hang onto their share of the market because TV, let's see, '81, '82 was just about the time cable was starting to boom. ESPN was just in its infancy, so all this hundreds and hundreds of channels, all available to advertisers. With all different advertising rates.

R: I think it was the late '80s that ESPN approached the NFL to carry the draft. The NFL was like, why would you even want that. And now we watch it every year.

I: A big thing that happened with [NEWSPAPER NAME REDACTED] at that time, and this is during my first stint in the sports department, I want to say this was 1985, [OWNER NAME REDACTED] created [NAME OF CABLE TV STATION REDACTED] and everybody said he was crazy.

R: For such a niche publication-type thing.

I: Yeah, and then they sell it to NBC for ... a billion or whatever they said it was (true price was \$3.5 billion).

R: Do you remember any changes taking place at that company during your employment?

I: Um, a big thing [NEWSPAPER NAME REDACTED] was a forerunner in the world at full-page pagination. Um, [NEWSPAPER NAME REDACTED] had a guy that basically wrote the programs to design full-page pagination and have it done on Atex. And after [NEWSPAPER NAME REDACTED] got in on it, that guy sort of went out and contracted all over the place to help other newspapers take their Atex systems and make them full-page pagination compatible. At that time, I was the supervisor on the tab desk. I had left the sports department. My oldest son was born in 1984, my middle son was born in '85 and by 1989 ... they're a year and six days apart ... um, I had left the sports department, the copy desk of the sports department, and went to the tab desk, um, as a copy editor and layout editor, which at that time was producing, gosh, there were 5 [PUBLICATION NAME REDACTED]s, 3 [PUBLICATION NAME REDACTED]s, we were producing massive numbers of tabs, and within about 6 months I was put in charge of the tab desk, and while I was in charge of the tab desk, we were the guinea pig



for introducing full-page pagination. Every step of the way, every time they that they wrote some sort of the program to paginate pages, we were the guinea pig for it because we weren't daily. And so once we got it down, then they would go daily with it. A lot of long days a lot of long nights, but I don't remember it being like hair-pulling out. I mean, I didn't mind at the time cuz I had my weekends off and I had already had my nights off. My kids had reached the age of 5, 6, 7, when they were playing sports and I wanted to be in a position to coach their teams and that sort of thing.

R: Did it change your role having pagination come in?

I: Um, it became more technical, and I think it was probably about that time, from a, from a copy editing standpoint, copy editing became more than just about the words. Um, you sort of had some mental struggles, I think, especially the older guys because I was still pretty young at that time, the older guys had to start questioning, you know, what am I doing, why am I here, because I'm just a, um, you know, I've become a technical processor, a page processor kinda guy rather than someone who's really worried about the configuration of the words and the structure of the sentences and are we using the right words. And I really think that in today's, but, and the Internet has taken it in a whole different direction, the quality of the writing's not that important anymore. It used to be it was all about the writing. Now, with the Internet, it's all about getting it out there the fastest. It really doesn't matter if it's that well written. It doesn't seem to matter. Now, I think there's a lot of newspapers that are trying to hang onto that with bare-bones copy editing staff and I think they're killing them.

R: There's definitely a compromise in the quality of work.

I: Yeah.

R: Um, so talk about a time that you remember a specific change that involved the Internet at a job. Whether it's networking or online publishing or the Internet changing the way you do something specific to the job. Something about the Internet.

I: Well, I think, um, my experience with that is, most newspapers really made a huge mistake with news being available online for people, and newspapers didn't know, well, a couple things they didn't know. They didn't know how to tie advertising to it, so they blew a huge revenue opportunity. And after they started putting their news online, they tried to figure out a way, how do we backtrack and make people pay for it. So, it blew up in their faces. And now, there's so many places out there, I guess there's so many entrepreneurial types who figured out how to, basically rape and pillage people's news and put it on their site, and couple that with advertising, and so newspapers had to start filing lawsuits cuz all this stuff, are you attributing it. When I was a high school sports editor at [NEWSPAPER PUBLICATION REDACTED], we went to battle with the web site called [WEBSITE NAME REDACTED] because they used a message board forum, to where they would just, and they were doing it on their pay service, they would say, um, you know, see such and such a story about such and such, and you would click on the link, but then it would say, in order to see this story you need to pay. Well, it was a free story that we had put up at [NEWSPAPER PUBLICATION REDACTED] online, but they were asking people to pay to go through their site to get to it, where if people knew where it was to begin with, they wouldn't have had to pay. So we got the company attorneys involved and got them to where, you can't link to our stuff anymore. I think a lot of small papers in the state who had started posting stories online, they were happy to get that exposure, but I really fought it because to me it was plagiarism, you know, you're stealing other people's content to try to make money. And, um,

you know, I think some newspapers have figured it out. But they've figured it out at the expense of a lot of people over the last 10 years or so.

R: What do you think they've figured out? What's the formula?

I: Well, I think they've figured out how to get advertising on there. Um, newspapers have had to change their whole mode of advertising. I mean, it used to be sacrilegious to put an ad on your front page and this sort of thing. They've had to, um, throw away all those ideas and pretty much cater to, how we're gonna make money has to come first. I interviewed, um, when I was a high school sports editor in [CITY NAME REDACTED], um, I interviewed to be the sports editor in [CITY NAME REDACTED]. I didn't get the job, but one of the questions they asked in that interview was, they asked me something about, we expect all of our editors to be able to monetize their content. And at that time, I didn't even know what that question meant. I mean, monetize content, what are you talking about? Um, I think that's probably one reason I didn't get the job.

R: At the time you were the high school editor and going through that where you were experiencing the plagiarism-type things, did it change how you felt about your career path in the industry?

I: Um, no. My career path at [NEWSPAPER NAME REDACTED], I mean, I was at [that newspaper] for 27 years. I went from sports copy desk to tab desk to city editor back to the sports department as high school sports editor. And I did that, um, I went back as high school sports editor in 2000, so I would have been 42 years old then, which for someone to be covering high school sports even at age 42, that's pretty old to be covering, but I always loved it. Um, you know, to me it was just fun. It was a lot of hard work, a lot of long hours, um, but to be in a

position to be on a football sideline on Friday nights, I always liked it. And going back to the office on Friday nights and being in there till 2 or 3 in the morning, that never bothered me. And at that point, my kids were pretty much grown. My oldest son graduated high school in 2002, the next one in 2004 and the youngest in 2007. So they were all going through high school while I was covering high school. And a lot of, especially in baseball, the baseball players who came through at that time, a lot of those guys, I had coached them in AAU baseball, so it was just a lot of fun for me. Plus, um, I mean, most of those guys are still there that I supervised, just had a great relationship and had a good time doing it.

R: Yeah. So, it still sort of rung true to what you had started out doing.

I: Yeah.

R: What did the future of newspapers look like at that time?

I: It was fading. You could tell staffs had started to downsize. Space was being cut back. One of the things I preached at [NEWSPAPER NAME REDACTED] constantly was, and I probably started preaching this even before I went back to the sports department, probably in the late 1990s with sports, you need to get away from the information that you can get on ESPN. You need to be all local. Nobody wanted to listen to me. When I became sports editor, or high school sports editor, I kept telling them we need to stop spending money on stuff that we can get off the wires. We need to quit focusing on, ah, the, people who are interested in the NFL can get more and better information by watching ESPN. You know, why are we spending every Sunday taking entire body, putting together this NFL package. You know, I saw it as we're doing it for ourselves. We're not doing it, cuz nobody's reading it. I mean, there are people who reading it but the people who really want that information, they're getting it somewhere else. So why don't

we take all of our resources and gear them toward local. And at that time, I looked like I was just trying to serve myself because I was the high school sports editor. But I truly believe you could see where that was going, and I think the newspapers that are still thriving, and I'll see stuff online, where people will write editorials and whatnot, the papers that are still thriving are those local, community newspaper that that's the only place anybody can get the information. Even, you know, some of the larger papers, the Washington Post, The New York Times, a lot of the papers have gone to having community supplements that totally focus on the communities and little niche areas.

R: So, did you know what it would take to succeed still? If the newspaper was still moving in a direction that you didn't necessarily agree with?

I: Um, I think the one thing, I've never been good with money. Um, the one thing I've never really even tried to grasp is the full, how the advertising thing ties in, you know. I could see how advertising was struggling. I could see how classified advertising was turning into nothing because of Craigslist and all the things that people could put their money into for selling things. Um, I had no clue how to fix any of that. That just wasn't my background. Um, so I could see that, ah, from a financial standpoint things didn't look good. At the same time, one of the things that always made me laugh, was how people, still today, they'll say, well, that paper's only doing that story to sell newspapers. They never understood that the amount that you pay for the newspaper doesn't pay for anything. It's the advertising that's driving everything.

R: Did you feel like you could stay successful there?

I: Um, I could. When I left, I left for pretty personal reasons. Because when I went in and told the editor that I volunteered for the buyout, he called me in and said, “Well, I thought you loved your job.” And I said, “I do.” He said, “Well, why are you leaving?” And I said, “Well, you’re gonna, some of us have volunteered for buyouts, and you’re going to lay off some other people, right?” And he said, “Yeah.” And I said, “Well, is so-and-so one of the people you’re going to lay off?” And he said no. And I said, “Well then, I’m going to leave.” So, cuz, I just, they had someone overtop of sports at that time that just had no clue what she was doing and I was tired of her breathing down my neck. Plus they were offering a full year’s pay at that time. In 2008, if you’d been there for 25 years or more, you got a full year’s pay to leave. And I said I’ll take a full year’s pay. I’ll go get my teaching certificate. When, I got my teaching certificate. I fully intended to get into coaching at the high school level, but I had no earthly idea what teaching involved. And there’s no way that a first- or second-year English teacher could be the head coach of anything with everything that’s demanded of me. And I just never.

R: You never did the coaching?

I: No.

R: How long did you stay in teaching?

I: Six years.

R: How did you feel about the future of the newspapers and what did that future look like?

I: When I left?

R: Um, hmm.

I: Well, the buyout was pretty massive. I think it was the first time [THAT NEWSPAPER] was laying off people. The buyout was substantial for those who had been there 25 years or more. So

you could see where it was going. Plus there were some other people, through the course of years, who were really smart people who had left and gotten out of newspapers. And I started to think, probably 3, 4, 5 years before, that these people are pretty smart and they're getting out. Um, and these were high management people, so. I just felt like I had gone as far as I could go, wanted to try something different. I could see, I didn't want to be someone who was laid off with nothing to turn to. So, but at the same time, once I got my teaching certificate, I had a full-time teaching job at [HIGH SCHOOL NAME REDACTED], eight months after I left the [NEWSPAPER NAME REDACTED]. Um, but it didn't take me very long to realize that I don't really want to do this. And, um, there were newspapers, and I had developed a pretty good reputation for covering high school sports, and I would get calls from time to time, and I would say, "Nope, I'm out, I'm out." But then one of the [LOCATION REDACTED] newspapers called and they said here's what we're going to offer you but we have to interview you first. I told my wife, I said, I'm going to go up here and do this interview. That's too much money to turn down. So I went and I left [HIGH SCHOOL] with about six weeks left in the school year and became high school sports editor for [NEWSPAPER NAME]. Um, but then my wife came up and visited in November and she's like, "I'm not moving up here."

R: Aw, that's the worst time to visit!

I: "I'm not moving up here." So I only stayed 13 months, came back and taught for 5 more years.

R: Taught for 5 more years after that?

I: Yeah. Although at the same time, I was doing part-time copy editing shifts at [NEWSPAPER NAME], covering football games, AND I was stringing for [ANOTHER NEWSPAPER NAME], stringing for [THIRD NEWSPAPER NAME], so.

R: Didn't really get out of it all together?

I: No. The only time I got totally out of it was when the [NEWSPAPER NAME] did this latest round of downsizing and they whacked all those part-time positions. Although I covered three football games this fall when they got really desperate.

...

I: We stopped subscribing to the paper. I don't even get the paper. The only time I ever see it is if I see one laying around. I don't even look at the paper anymore. Seems incredible for someone who grew up as a little kid, boy that was a big part of my day every day and pretty much reading it, um, and.

R: There's just so many other ways to get information now, you know? So have there been any recent changes in your career or position or job?

I: Well, I had become, after 3 years of teaching eighth-grade English, was it two years or three years? After two years of teaching eighth-grade English, they asked me to be department chair at [SCHOOL NAME].

R: Wow.

I: I was department chair there for two years, and then part of this school year. When I went through ODU's career-switcher program, um, that's a real, it's a real intense, I don't know that I've ever done anything like that before, it's a real intense situation, at least the session I was in cuz it only lasts, I think it only lasts six weeks. But it's 8 hours a day, every day for six weeks. And there's 30, 40, 50 people per session. So you get to know those other people really well. Then they divide you up by content areas, and there were 6, 7, 8 of us doing English. So those 6, 7, 8 other people doing English, you get to know them really well. This one woman and I we became real good friends. She took a job at [SCHOOL], taught there for three years, and then she took a job as a technical writer. And we kept in touch, and she said I think you'd be really good



at this. I'm going to get you one of these jobs one day. And I'm, like, OK. So I applied for several jobs through the years, and then she emailed me in September and said there's a job that's opening up, send me your resume. You're going to get this job.

R: What were you doing at the time?

I: I was department chair.

R: You were still doing that?

I: Yeah, I had started the school year and was English department chair. It was September 22 when she emailed me. I sent her the resume September 24. I was interviewed and immediately got the job. Um, I got the official paperwork, cuz the job was through [COMPANY REDACTED], which is an enormous company. Um, I got the official paperwork in the mail, signed the offer letter October 5, turned in my resume October 6, which was a huge ordeal because, with teaching, you have to sign a contract. You're obligated to stay through the school year. They can sue you for the balance of the contract if they want to. You can get, I mean, you can get out if you want, and I wanted to get out. Um, so, I went through the whole process of getting out. Had to provide all kinds of documentation of how much more money I was going to be making at this job over the teaching job. What our family income was from our tax returns for the last however many years and mostly present my case to HR or NPS. And I started working as a technical writer. It's a contractor job working for [COMPANY], but you're essentially working for [MILITARY BRANCH]. I started that job on October 26. Left [SCHOOL] high and dry. The teacher they hired to replace me left after two days. And that's one reason, with the urban schools in [CITY], if they find you can handle a certain situation, they don't want to lose you because I couldn't count on one hand the number of times they hired a teacher and that teacher quit after one week.

R: That's hard work. My sister's a school teacher in [CITY] ...

R: So, this is a very different track, you know, going back to technical writing, how were you feeling about your career path?

I: Um, not really. Um, I've only been there for six, seven weeks. Um, the editing end comes very natural to me. The editing, although it's a different subject matter, it's really not that much different than editing a news story. The big difference is the format, really, because it's essentially a manual-type format and you're using a template, and everything's got to be, it's very structured. But in terms of, one of the things that I found really cool, although I'm not an Obama fan, apparently he signed into law this thing called the Federal Plain Language Guidelines. Have you ever heard of that? In 2012, there was a thing called the Federal Plain Language Guidelines that was signed into law that basically mandated all government publications not be dumbed down but be written in so that anybody can understand. So that where, people who had contracting jobs, you're in a pretty good situation because every government agency, military, whatever, all their manuals, all their policy manuals have to be redone so that all that language can be streamlined, all the garbage taken out, you know, and so it's written so you can understand what the heck it's talking about. And that's always sorta been one of my strengths anyway. Um, cuz I'm, one of the things I always did, and I knew it drove [EDITOR] crazy, whenever I would edit an AP story, I would always count the words in the first sentence. If that thing, if that first sentence had more than about 20 words, I don't care what the content of that sentence was, I'm going to find a way to knock that thing down to where it's something that you can digest. I'm not going to have the first sentence on a news story that's gonna be 40 words.

R: That you have to read through three times to understand.

I: Yeah, I'm not going to have it. So a lot of that, it's not that different, um, in terms of the mindset that you're using. And the other thing is that a lot of the styles and the language guidelines are not that different. You know, the buzzwords that you're looking for, um, ambiguous words and that sort of thing, things that you would edit out of a news story, no different, same thing. There's a lot of people I work with, both in teaching and in journalism that I thought, you know, if we get an opening, they could be good at this job and do very well. They could be very happy.

R: Do you think it's something you'll stay with?

I: Oh, yeah. I mean, I'm 57, so, I put three kids through college. I don't see not working with the student loans and everything we're paying off. But the lack of stress and the pace, I mean, I could do this job until I'm 70, so.

R: Um, so do you still consider yourself a journalist?

I: Um, I guess so, because, I mean, if I get called to cover a high school football game on a Friday night, unless I've got plans, I'm going to do it. Um, it's still fun. Ah, It comes very natural. Ah, I mean, like I said, I covered three games this fall. I think I covered a game for a couple years. The deadlines are always, I mean, I can cover a high school game. They always try to give me games where I can go back to my house and write and then email it in. I mean, I can get to my house at 10 and have a 10-, 12-, 14-inch story written in 20 minutes. So it just comes natural.

...

R: How do you feel about the future of the newspaper industry now that you're largely out of it?

I: Um, I worry that, um, the guys I work with in the sports department more than anything. The one guy who took over my job who was my right-hand man, he's got two kids, I guess the oldest one is maybe middle-school age right now. The youngest one is, you know, elementary age. I worry about people who are sorta trapped, um, but at the same time, I could see when I got out it was a good opportunity for those younger people because the technology was changing. You know, the Twitter, I don't do any of that. You know, the Twitter stuff and all that stuff, they know how to do that, and I was like, let them have it because I'm not interested in all that. I'm not interested in doing my news that way, so, and they're thriving with it, although they're having to deal with very difficult circumstances in terms of the workload. They're having to make constant, I was in the position a few years before I got out where we would have to decide what content we weren't going to put in the newspaper anymore because, either, one, we didn't have the space or, two, we didn't have the manpower to keep doing it that way. Now they're having to continue to make those kinds of decisions, and it's tough cuz you're having to deal with the public. You know they're wanting to know, I can, you used to put this much in the paper, and now you're only putting this much. You're not putting Johnny's name in the paper anymore. Well, we don't have the manpower to take all those phone calls anymore. You gotta make those decisions, and you know, I feel bad that they still have to make those decisions. I really, what is this 2015, I'd say by 2030, printed newspapers won't exist anymore. I just can't imagine they will. Although, maybe they will in those smaller communities where you've got people who were born in a town of 1,500 people and they never leave and that's what they're used to. So, but, I mean, and then, I mean, you've got the people who run those kind of newspapers who are used to, um, just existing on 30,000 (dollars) a year, and that's what they're

going to exist on. The other thing, well there's a couple things that really bother me. When I was in [CITY], the number of small colleges, and all of those colleges in the [CITY] area, there's a zillion of them, and almost all those schools have a journalism program, and all these parents are sending their kids to college to take journalism. And I'm thinking they're ... they ought to give these parents, do you realize that your kid is going to come out of college and unless they've got all these multimedia skills, they're going to have to take a job in 2015 making about 25 or 30,000 a year because that's just, the pay scale of newspapers has just gone back so far. I mean, when I left [NEWSPAPER], I was making 75,000 a year, you know. There's nobody at [THAT NEWSPAPER] making that kind of money now because they've gotten rid of everybody.

...

I: I interviewed several times when they (that same newspaper) had openings when I got back from [CITY], and I never could understand why they wouldn't hire me. And then [NEWS EDITOR] finally told me, look, every time you've interviewed, they find somebody who can do about half the job and they're going to pay them about half of what they have to pay you.

R: Yeah, that's it. The experience, that's less important now as a warm body who's going to do just fine.

I: With no institutional knowledge really. I mean, anybody who, I mean, I would classify [NEWSPAPER] as not a major metropolitan newspaper. It's more of a mid-size,

R: Mid-market

I: and those are the newspapers that are really in trouble because you're not really serving the small communities, um, and you've gotten rid of all your institutional knowledge and you're bringing all of these people fresh out of college from hither and yon and they don't really care

about this area. They still care about where they came from. So, you see it in TV stations, just the way people pronounce things and stuff. I mean, to me it's funny.

R: All the local places. So, what do you think about the value of newspapers today? We've talked about it briefly as far as the community value.

I: Um, that's a good question. I think it depends on location. You know, for, for cities and towns up to 20 or 30,000, 40,000 people, I think maybe those, newspapers can still be valuable there. But once you get bigger than that, ah, unless a newspaper is going to try to figure out a way to serve specific communities, I just don't know valuable it is. And I think for an area like this (mid-market), it's especially troublesome because it's such a transient area, ah, I mean there are people who are born and raised and stay here, but I would say now those are maybe 20 percent of the population.

R: So you don't have the basic people who are interested in the community goings-on.

I: And the whole key to it is, the people who really read newspapers every single day are the people who are, like, the age of my parents, they're in their 80s. You know, might go back in, I mean, I'm in my 50s and I don't read newspapers every day anymore. I mean, you have, well, when I was teaching school, you bring in a bunch of resources for kids to do some sort of project. You had magazines, you had a computer sitting over there, you had newspapers sitting over here, those kids never picked up a newspaper. They're going to look at the magazines or pull stuff off the internet. They're not going to fiend the pieces for their project in a newspaper.

R: They just, they have no idea what it's like to do that anymore. The computer is just such a tool that they've grown up with now. That that's such an easier resource for them than opening a newspaper.

I: They have no concept of the structure of a newspaper in terms of the difference between what's on the front page versus the editorial page.

R: Yeah, where we're used to finding things in certain locations.

I: People who've grown up with newspapers like you and I have, you can pick up any newspaper in the country and now this is the editorial page.

R: You generally know where to find the crossword puzzle. Yeah. Those are my questions. Is there anything I haven't asked specifically that you'd like to add or discuss, you know, related to the same topics and themes?

I: I don't think so ...

CARLA

Age: 52

Sex: Female

Marital status: married

Do you have children: 2

Highest educational degree achieved: Bachelor's

Income bracket: \$90,000+

Receive the survey directly from researcher or from an associate: Researcher

Researcher: At what age did you first identify yourself as journalist?

Interviewee: Probably 16

R: When did you have your first job in journalism?

I: Ah, well, I guess first summer out of college, I was 18.

R: And what was the position or title?

I: I was a reporting intern.

R: Do you remember, at that time, what did you think about the value of newspapers?

I: I was a great believer. I mean, this would have been, so, summer of '82. You know, not too far from Watergate, and the value of newspapers was, you know, um, I'd like to believe that I was in a very important industry. I was making a huge difference in the world. There was a huge public



service component to being a journalist. I still believe that. Back in the day of course, it felt like was more, ah, more cache, I guess, with the role.

R: And what did the future of newspapers look like to you at that time?

I: I can't say, honestly, that I thought much about it at that time. It felt like there were opportunities. There was, you know, I fully expected to get out of college and be able to find a job and have a career and that it would last for years and years. It wasn't, everything that came later wasn't even a blip on the horizon, so, I didn't have any reason to question the future. The future seemed very bright. Newspapers were making lots of money.

R: How did you feel about your career at that time and was it clear what you needed to do to succeed?

I: Um, I guess relatively so. I guess like any young person in college, everybody was preaching about internships and getting as much experience as you could, getting alot clips as you could. It was sort of a traditional route, you know, making your way to a small newspaper and using that to get to a bigger paper and so on. And at some point if you wanted to be an editor, you take that, you know, step and move it along, so I felt like I wasn't really thinking down the road so much. My aspiration was to be a reporter. I was very excited about being a reporter. That was where I thought would be fun, and I would be there for years and life would be grand. You know, and that was its own reward in a way. You know, I fully expected that I would land a job, and that I'd be able to do that. I didn't have any, you know, I'm sure like kids today, journalism goal, there wasn't a worry. I mean, I assumed if you wanted it, you could do it. Nothing would really stand in your way.

R: And do you remember any changes taking place at that specific first job/company at that time?

I: You know, I graduated from college in '85, which sort of places me in time, so you can sort of see, you know, that was years before the Internet even. I was coming up at a time when the industry was a monopoly and really owners were making lots of money, and newspaper companies were doing very, very well. So, you know, the Internet was when things started to, of course, change. And even then, I don't know how much you're going to get into that, obviously, the industry totally bungled the advent of the internet and what it would mean and the whole idea. What the hell kind of business model is it to give away your content. Who does that?! But, um, before all that, it wasn't even, nobody contemplated the future. It was really about, you know, how to make even more money, and how to, you know, grow the business in that regard.

R: So, tell me about your first promotion/job change or first major assignment. Whatever is most applicable for your field. And what that was, the assignment, the job.

I: I reported for about 7 years, and became an editor at that point, not because so much I wanted to but because the city editor where I was, ah, I was very disappointed in the editing, the level of editing people that were getting, and, you know, like a lot of young reporters, I think I mouthed off one too many times, and the city editor sort of said, well, if you think you can do it better, here it is, and sort of arm-twisted me into the job. So, you know, I think after time, obviously I enjoyed it or I wouldn't still be doing it, and I came to feel like editing was a better calling for me than reporting. But that would have been the first major, you know, I changed beats here and there, but I, you know, I was doing a certain kind of work and then moved into the editing realm.

R: So, that's a bit of a career change, did it change, or how did you feel about path that was coming for you now that you changed toward editorial?

I: You know, it just gave me a broader, I think, a broader reach about what I could accomplish and how many people I could affect. You know, when you're a reporter, and you're, I mean, the lovely thing about being a reporter, of course, is that you control what you're doing for the most part, and you're very focused on what you can do to make your stories better and how you can improve. When you become an editor, as you well know, you're responsible for a lot more people. You take a personal interest in them, and you have all these folks sort of relying on you to help them along. So, I don't know, it became, um, I've always enjoyed working with reporters, enjoyed watching them get better, helping them get better. I think because I felt like I didn't get that kind of editing when I was a young reporter, I felt like I kind of knew, because I wasn't getting what I thought I could bring to the job, helping people along. That's been, I think when I look back on my career, the thing that I've enjoyed the most is helping people along, that everyone who worked for me got better. Some of them got a lot better, some of them got a little better, but I feel like everybody got better.

...

R: At that time of the new editorial position, did you know how to succeed as a journalist?

I: I wouldn't say that. I mean, like I said, my examples hadn't been good ones, so I think I knew what not to do in a lot of ways. Um, I, and you know this, newspapers are terrible places for, you know, battlefield promotions, you know, not, you know, one day you're a reporter, on a Friday you're a reporter, on Monday you walk in you're an editor and good luck with that, you

know. And so, the management part, I felt totally on-the-job training, you know, and the editing, the actual hands-on editing and the learning about craft and how to help people with their stories, all of that, hands-on training, so, no, I didn't feel prepared. I didn't feel like I did the job very well for a long time. But things started to kick in over time, just from, you know, doing and learning, and not being very, you know, realizing as you went along what you could do better, getting advice. I've always had a lot of luck finding other editors, and even reporters I thought, taught me a lot about what they needed and how I could help, so that's one part of the industry that I fear has gotten even worse is the, ah, the lack of training.

R: Especially with the downsizing that's going on. It's very normal for people to adopt secondary and tertiary roles outside of their primary.

I: Yeah.

R: So, how did you feel about the future of the newspapers and what the future looked like at that time?

I: I felt pretty optimistic, I think, also, because I was playing a role where I was, you know, once you get into management, particularly as you move up and you have more and more folks under you and you feel this, you know, you feel like you can really affect a lot of change, and you can set the right kind of tone, and you can make it the culture you want it to be. You feel like everybody can succeed. When I was a young editor, it was still very, an industry that was not feeling the, you know, whatever all the clichés are, the winds of change, or whatever, it was still a very, an industry, for instance, like in the '90s, still into the mid-'90s, there was a lot of focus on diversity, a lot of focus on growth and the upside of what the Internet could do for us, and the

reach we could have, so I felt pretty optimistic about it, I think, at that point. I will tell you, even up until I became a managing editor ... in 2005. In 2005, in that newsroom, there were 275 people, which is, like, what is it, it's a hundred now. So, there was, not, there was always belt tightening here and there. There was always the atmosphere of, you had to work within your budget, you know, newsrooms were never places where people just went crazy spending, but it really wasn't until we got into the winds of 2008 when everything started to just completely implode. That's when the layoffs started, and everything just started to fall apart, but I really, I don't think that people prepared well or saw the writing on the wall that we should have, you know.

R: And so, going back again to that initial editorial experience, do you remember any changes taking place while, ah, during your employment there?

I: Well, that was actually an afternoon paper, so it was, by the time I left in '98, they were turning into a morning paper. They were adjusting, of course. Afternoons had gone by the wayside.

R: Isn't that crazy that that recently there were afternoon papers. My first job was, not a p.m., but it didn't come out until 1 or something. It was still an afternoon paper. It's crazy to think those were still around as recently as this.

I: Yeah. But they were already making some adjustments trying to appeal to the marketplace the right way. You know, that was the biggest thing there, that transition there. At that point the Internet really hadn't taken off. You know, some of these newspaper websites weren't really that popular. You know, they got started, but they were bare bones, um, they weren't replicas of the

paper. They weren't even using a lot of the material from the newsrooms. They were just kinda getting into that world but weren't really doing a lot with it.

R: So, tell me a time that you remember a change that involved the Internet at a job, something that changed the, maybe, the role that you played and the function of your position.

I: Once it became obvious that a large share of our readership was going online and that we weren't getting a large share of money from that. You know, we had that constant push-pull. At [REDACTED], I think, there was a period there, where there was, um, I'm trying to place it in time, but, you know, that shift of, we're not going to, we have to put stuff online. We have to think online first. That is our future, and we have to build an audience there, and the money will come later. You know, that became the sort of, you know, we're still waiting for that last part. But, so, I think that was the biggest change for me, trying to change the culture of the place so that it would not be print-centric. So that the room would start to, you know, see themselves, really more of an AP news wire, more of the TV, you know, we're going to bust in at any moment, and we're going to break news and we're not going to be these, like, somebody walks in works toward 5 o'clock deadline and that's the thing they do all day. So, I mean, that to me is no particular moment, but just that whole era where we shifted to being online first, focused.

R: Do you think it was successful in changing, like you said, the culture and the mindset to think that way first and print second?

I: I think it was successful. I think that we through a lot of spaghetti at the wall though with different things. And I think we still do that as an industry somewhat. We sort of overdo it with throwing things out there for people. Unless you use social media to get people to track stuff

down, you could overwhelm a site and they'll never find the three graphs that you put out there about something. You know, we went crazy with video at first. We tried to out-YouTube YouTube, and that didn't work. Um, a lot of time and effort on things that weren't getting a lot of time and effort from an audience. So, I don't know. I don't think we've totally mastered it yet. I don't think we've figured out what's the right way to use our resources. I think it's still a lot of spaghetti on the wall in some cases, trying to figure out. You know, you don't really want to replicate the paper necessarily, but you do have, you know, how do you plan for the day where there is no printed product, and that audience is still looking for those kind of in depth stories, or, you know, what's the model we can create on a website that makes sense and is inviting. So, I don't know. I think we're still finding out way. At least it feels like we are here.

R: And so, the change you were just speaking of, really involving the Internet, was that your position as a managing editor?

I: I think I was probably a DME when things started, you know, that transformation started. I certainly had then, sort of, follow through as ME and make sure that we, and that took years. It took years, I think, to get to that point. I remember being still shocked once in a while when somebody would say, "Don't we want to hold that back?" No. "Cuz TV will get it." Well, guess what, if we put it out there first then we have it first, so, you know.

R: How did you feel about your career path at that time?

I: Um, you know, I've been a reluctant, ah, I guess I've reluctantly taking steps up the path. I was never one of these people who saw myself wanting to run to be editor. I thought there probably wasn't a worse job in the room than that. And having lived next to [REDACTED] for a lot of

years, I can assure you there's no worse job than that. You know, so being administrative and department head and being very far removed from that hands-on and all that. I guess I've always had a struggle with that because the farther you move up the chain the farther removed you are from the things that you loved in the first place, which were all about telling stories and all about how to do that effectively. I mean, what I enjoyed about being ME and getting that position was, like I said, setting, trying to set the tone for the whole place, trying to affect a whole group of people. Um, what I enjoyed the most was when I had the chance to work on stories. I mean, you can't help but get sucked into the other stuff, the personnel, the administrative things, so that, I never really enjoyed that part very much. I just felt, like, it was kind of a necessary evil. And I felt like, despite myself, I did it pretty well. And I worked for many people who didn't do it very well. So, you know, I feel like it was a good thing to do for that reason. But, um, like I said, I never needed the title for my ego, and I never felt like it was, I just wanted to walk away feeling like we were doing good work, you know, like we were doing meaningful work.

R: At that time how did you know how to succeed as a journalist?

I: Well, I like to think that I got better and better at it as years went by. And, you know, also being open to, I mean, I feel like there are people like me who enjoy the practice of still learning, who always feel like there's something cool about, you know, working with somebody different, and getting, pulling something away from working with them. Or tackling a story and trying something that you haven't tried before, so to me, I still enjoy that process but I certainly feel more confident as an editor now that I would 5, 10 or 15 years ago. I think you do pick up a lot along the way, in how to deal with people, and how to deal with stories. You know, you're not a surprised at what comes at you along the way.



R: Or at least you learn to fake it better.

I: Yeah, that's true.

R: And so, that time we were talking about, that change in the Internet, how did you feel about the future of the newspapers and what did that future look like?

I: I was worried then, as I'm worried now, about companies, about media companies that aren't really about public service, quite honestly. They're wrapped up in the bottom line, and, you know, this is an industry that made 24, and 25, and 26 percent profit at one point, an obscene amount of money. I mean, when you look at other industries, this industry, I mean, was just living the high life for a long time. And owners, God love them, they made the, they enjoyed the fruits of their labors, and they had a great time there for a while. And there was an era when I was coming up when a lot of the owners were newspaper men. They were newspaper men that became business men. And so, there was still sort of the passion for the work. Then, of course, if you know, we moved into an era where a lot of those family owned places had gone by wayside, and you're owned by corporations that I feel like, in some ways, have taken advantage of this downfall, and have, you know, made us all very bare bones. I mean, I'm in a newsroom in [REDACTED LARGE-MARKET URBAN LOCATION] with 220 journalists. Two hundred and twenty! Now, like I told you, back in the, 10 years ago, when I was an ME at [REDACTED MID-MARKET LOCATION], there were 275. [REDACTED LARGE-MARKET URBAN LOCATION] is a much bigger area, much bigger area than [REDACTED MID-MARKET LOCATION] is. Um, there's no way that you should get by with this amount of staffing. I mean, to really do justice to your coverage, to do the meaningful work; I'm not saying that people aren't trying, and I'm not saying that people aren't succeeding here and there, but I think this

company, like all the other ones out there, just got to rightsizing, as they called it, or downsizing. And now they've sort of, they're happily living with that expense reductions. And, um, you know, it's frustrating. It's frustrating to see what's happened and that, you know, people are not reinvesting. You know, the bottom fell out. I realize everyone had to adjust. I'm not naïve. It's a business. I realize, you know, just because it's owned by billionaire people, they're not going to just out of the goodness of their heart, or because they believe in the cause, I realize that. But at the same time, I think you have to get back at some point and reinvest. And that's what worries me. I don't see that happening. I see young journalists here, and I fear for whether five, 10 years from now, they're still going to be in this business because, are we giving them a reason to be in this business? I was able to have a career. I could see, even without promotions, I could see cost-of-living raises. I could see, you know, 401(k) plans. I had pensions at two of the papers that I worked at, you know. I, you know, I could support my family. These guys, especially the most talented people, they have options. They can go off to other industries. And I just don't see the corporations here buying into the idea that they really need to do their best to hold on to these people. So that's, I'm very scared for the future of journalism now because of that. Passion will only take you so far. You know, you've got to pay a mortgage. You've got to put your kids through school. And I hate to think of people having to make that choice.

...

R: Have there been recent changes in your career or position or job?

I: Yeah, a year ago, I came here. You know, part of that, because I could see the writing on the wall. I knew what was going to happen in [REDACTED]. And ... it was just discouraging and

disheartening. I've been through five layoffs, five rounds of layoffs. So, you know, I had tremendous survivor's guilt. I was ready to take the bullet myself because I had, I mean, I was an empty nester last summer; my youngest went to college, so I had been putting away money. I felt like, you know what, take me. I'm happy to go at this point because that's not why I went to journalism school was to figure out how to lay people off, you know. And, um, I just didn't see the commitment to keeping the product, the newsroom strong. And then when this opportunity came my way, I thought, well, I mean, honestly, I had been contemplating getting out of the business. And thinking, well, trade for some job that would carry me to retirement, maybe a 9 to 5, and live a very happy comfortable life. I got talked into staying in the business awhile. I don't regret that. It's great to be in the business. But, you know, it's nice here where there haven't been layoffs in a while. Company's making money. At least, it's not growing the newsroom, but there's no, you know, there's no cloud over it either. That was, that was just heartbreaking. I mean, I just, heartbreaking. I cannot, I mean, these last years, the last, I guess it would have been the last seven years of my career were more heartbreaking than just, I could never have imagined how hard that would be. And it's just terrible. It's terrible because people are not just losing their jobs, they're losing their careers. You know, having to let people go when they're in their 50s, or 60s even, um, it's miserable, just miserable. And, you know what, it does make me angry, and I wouldn't be surprised if some of the people, I mean, I still, I feel like I have a little PTSD. I get flashbacks. I'm just completely pissed off that smart people were running these newsrooms, and I say publishers and owners, who, you know, you could see the tsunami coming. It's like, come on, how stupid are we really? You never, I mean, the [REDACTED], the last paper I worked at went for 8 years without raising the cost of the paper. And you knew that the model had to change. You knew that the subscribers had to pay more in freight. It had to come. It had to be. It

was just, like, come on. They did not prepare. They didn't adapt well. And then the people who paid the price were the people on the front lines. And that's, it just shouldn't happen, you know. We should've been smarter than that. We should be more of a, more invested now, because it should matter more.

R: People should matter more.

I: Yep.

R: And so how do you feel about your career path now, since this change? I mean, it seems more stable. Do you think you'll be able to, you know, ride it out through retirement?

I: Um, I hope so. I feel like, um, you know, for me personally family and friends are still back east. So, while this was a good opportunity and this is a stable place, it does feel far away from everybody and everything. So, I know at some point have to make that choice between, you know, how long-term do I stay out here and what does that mean. I mean, I feel like I could ride out my career at this point probably and get to a point where, you know, even if I had to do a few years of something else, you know, I'd still feel like I had a nice. I mean, I'm one of the luckier ones, without a doubt. There's no question in my mind. The fact that I'm still a journalist; I have so many friends who are not journalists anymore. Um, your heart you'll always be a journalist, but they're, you know, working in other fields. But I really don't know. Honestly. I'm not being coy. I could, depending on where my kids end up and where they are, I mean, I definitely see myself heading back east at some point. It's just a matter of when.

R: You mentioned, you know, even if still in your heart you consider yourself a journalist. That's been one of the more interesting questions ... there are people who still work in the industry who don't consider themselves journalists and vice-versa. ... At this time do you feel like you know how to succeed as a journalist?

I: God, I hope so. Yeah, I would think so. Like I said, I still see myself, I still try to learn all the time. I think that's fun. And I try to seek out smart people to learn from, you know. I'll see a good story somewhere, and I'll, if it's somebody I know, I'll ask them questions about what they did. You know, but, yeah, I certainly feel like I'm, I should feel like I'm much more capable than I was before. After all these years.

R: How did you feel about the future of the newspapers?

I: You know, I tell, I get that question from young journalists a lot. I have to believe, I want to believe and I do believe that there will always be a need for the kind of work that we do. And I think the Internet has proved that point. You have all of this noise out there, all of these talking heads. And people do come to newspaper sites, newspaper websites, you know because, even though they rag on us, they also trust that professional journalists trying to vet things, are trying to, you know, they're not just passing along fodder. They're actually going out there and doing reporting. So, I mean, that has value. I think there are plenty of people willing to pay for that. I don't think we've figured out how to leverage that completely. And, um, you know, I think the question is going to be how much a reporting force there is, how big are these newsrooms going to be as time goes on, you know. There will be newsrooms, it's just a matter of how muscular they're going to be, and I don't know. You know, I'd like to believe, because I believe it, that good journalism is good business. That I think you can make a really profitable place out of it. I

think we're all still trying to figure it out. And like I said, I wish that some of these companies would have more of a public service motive to them. I mean, I could see, I could see newsrooms becoming non-profits, or partnering w universities, you know, have it not be so bottom-line driven. Um, I hope that there are some things like that in our future. So, you know, I believe there's a future, but, you know, it's certainly not as flush as it was in the past, and I think it's still to be defined. And I'd love to see, you know my current company, which is owned by Hearst, you know, they could be an industry leader. They make, they're, ah, unlike a lot of media companies, they're doing relatively well. But, you know, will they lead the way and try to pour resources back in? Will they do some of things that, I think, can prove a point that journalism is good business? You know, I don't know. I think they feel like they have to some degree, but. And I can't totally argue that point. I mean, I'm here, I got hired for a position that didn't exist, you know. They've made some, they brought in some people, they've brought in some high-dollar people, so I can't say that they're not trying. But, I just hate to see, I mean, there are just so many companies out there that leave me cold in the way they approach their business model and the way that they just gutted themselves. You know, it's a terrible catch-22: You're relying on readers to have to pay the fee, and then you cut the newsroom and your product obviously gets worse and people drop your subscription, so, it's a terrible catch-22.

R: Yeah. So you touched on it a little in the future of newspapers, but what do you think about the value of newspapers today as they stand?

I: You know, I judge, almost every year I judge a national contest or two. I'm involved in some of that. And I am always pleasantly surprised at the kind of work that I see, the kind of work that's being done. So, you think, wow, everybody's been gutted, and everybody's been, you

know, struggling to get by. And they are, but, there are always those people in every newsroom who are putting in the hours, who are going the extra mile because it's what they love doing, and, you know, they didn't do it for a paycheck anyway. So, I mean, there's still that kind of work being done. I mean, and I still see it here. I still think that people see that. I mean, the people who are really good readers, the people who still value that kind of thing, I mean, I think the worth is there. I just think we could do more. I think obviously with better resources we could do more, and there's more to do. I'm sure there's a lot of things that are not getting done now that would have gotten done 10 years ago or 20 years ago just because we had more manpower. You know, now you have got to prioritize. You're not doing as much. You know, you're not making as many headlines; you're not digging as deep. But we're still telling people things they wouldn't be getting from anywhere else.

... I definitely believe we make a difference. There's a metro columnist here who won the Pulitzer, before I worked with her, but, she did a bunch of columns on this prisoner on death row who was clearly innocent, and had been kind of targeted early. They badgered his alibi witness. There was a police officer in charge of the grand jury. It was just this one nightmare after another, and ultimately he was freed. I mean, you know, we make a difference, we obviously make a difference.

R: Yeah. Those are my questions. Is there anything that I haven't asked regarding the themes and topics we've discussed that you want to mention or that I've overlooked that you feel like is significant and should be

I: Um, you know one thing in talking about where we are now and where we're headed, one thing we haven't talked about that worries me a great deal is the lack of diversity in newsrooms. There was, back in the '90s, a very big push by a lot of newspaper companies to really try to recruit minority journalists, to try to, you know, the heyday, money was flush everybody went to minority conferences, they brought their booths, handed out a lot of swag. I was 18 when I first met a Knight Ridder recruiter, you know, who was trying to encourage me in the business. You know that kind of stuff just doesn't happen anymore. You know, our newsrooms, when I walked into this one, it felt like the '80s again for me. You know, this is the whitest newsroom I've been in since the '80s. And it's alarming because [LOCATION REDACTED] is a very diverse area. But we've lost a lot of minority journalists through layoffs, things like that. We have minority journalist who, you know, move to other industries just like Caucasian journalists and so the pool keeps shrinking and, ah, I think that too is a recipe for disaster in a more diverse America. You know, not that you can't be aware and smart about your coverage. But let's face, especially with language barriers, if you don't have bilingual journalists who can get out there and make connections and go, people need to see themselves in your coverage. If they don't see themselves in your coverage, it becomes very easy to let go of that subscription, and I really really really worry about that because I can see in 5 or 10 years, if this trend continues, it just getting worse. ASNE every year does a census. I don't know why the hell they do it. They've been saying for years they're trying to meet some mark they've never hit. You know, it's still 13 percent or backsliding now so they don't put any money or effort behind it. They just take a count. And again all these newspaper companies have stopped recruiting. They've stopped trying to really, you know, make. We used to bring in several candidates for each job. Now we don't do that. We zero in on somebody and say you're good to go. And so we don't have the pools we used to



have. We don't even go looking as hard as we used to. And I really do think, in modern America, that's terrible. That is a business issue. That's a really, you know, bad journalism, and bad business if you don't have newsrooms that reflect your community. You know that's always been a struggle, but 20 years ago there was a real effort to do something about it. And it felt like we were making progress, and now it feels like we're going downhill. I don't know if others have brought I up but that's an area that worries me a great deal.

AMANDA

Age: 43

Sex: F

Marital status: Married

Do you have children: 2 sons

Highest educational degree achieved: Master's

Income bracket: \$40,000-\$60,000

Receive the survey directly from researcher or from an associate: Researcher

Researcher: At what age did you first identify yourself as journalist?

Interviewee: Hmm, 1990, at what age was that, um, I don't know how old I was. I'm not good at math.

R: No problem, I'll figure it out. (18)

R: And when did you have your first job in journalism?

I: Um, '90

R: And what was the position or title?

I: Do internships count?

R: Um hmm.

I: I was a sports intern at [REDACTED].

R: And at that time what did you think about the value of newspapers?

I: I thought they were incredibly valuable. I don't know if you want me to elaborate or not?

R: Sure, yeah.

I: They were my main source of news. I grew up in Washington DC, so I thought everybody had a paper as good as the Washington Post. We were just never, like, a TV family for news. Of course, we didn't have computers. Everybody read the newspaper and it wasn't really something ... although, when you go to [REDACTED UNIVERSITY], you learn a little about bias and credibility. And you do start to think a little bit more, but, you know, I thought they were great.

R: And what did the future of newspapers look like to you then?

I: Um, I thought there was potential. I didn't think newspapers were in trouble, but I did think that, um, it wasn't a field that there were tremendous amounts of jobs. I mean, getting a job was pretty competitive. But I didn't think that the future of newspapers was in jeopardy?

R: How did you feel about your career at that time and was it clear what you needed to do to succeed?

I: I felt very good, very hopeful about my career. I was a woman in sports. I knew how to write. Um, and it was a good time for women in sports, I thought. I had gotten a lot of positive feedback, um, I initially had a lot of people that wanted to hire me after that internship and during my first job, which was in another market. So, I felt great about it.

R: And, at this time in your career, do you remember what the future of newspapers looked like?

I: I don't really remember anybody ever talking about it. I don't know that there was, and I hate to say it, I don't know that there was a lot of forward thinking. People just did what they had always done, which is one of my pet peeves with newspapers. "Let's do it like we did last year."

R: Same ideas get cycled through. What changes do you remember taking place at that company or that paper during your employment?

I: Referring to the internship?

R: Yes.

I: It was short, so nothing significant.

R: So, your first promotion/job change or first major assignment, anything that resonates as the first big thing for your career, what was the position or job title?

I: I was a high school sports reporter – slash – colleges, backup colleges.

R: And how did you feel about your career path then?

I: Path, what do you mean by path?

R: Where it was headed, what your plans were for your career.

I: Again, I felt pretty good about it because I had picked a market that was small, based on, it was a place that I wanted to live in the West. I had a fiancé in the field, so I wasn't necessarily looking to start at this big paper and climb. I wanted somewhere where we could both work. And again, I was getting calls left and right from people. And I wasn't applying for jobs. I mean, The National called me, I don't know if you know that publication, and they wanted me to cover horse racing. Um, the Star-Tribune in Minneapolis, The Washington Post called me. I mean, it was kind of overwhelming.

R: Yeah, that's really cool.

I: So, I felt really wanted at that time.

R: And so my next question is did you know how to succeed as a journalist? It sounds like you were doing it right.

I: I mean, yeah, I, how to succeed, ah, I wanted to get a lot out of my first job as and make that a learning experience. I've never been someone that wants to hop around position to position because I don't like moving very much. And even when I did end up leaving there, it was because I was homesick. I missed my mom and dad. It had nothing to do with the job itself. I loved the job.

R: And how did you feel about the future of the newspapers and what the future looked like?

I: Again, I thought it was very competitive, but I had no, it never entered my mind that there would be a problem. You know, that newspapers would have an uncertain future.

R: How long were you there?

I: About a year and a half.

R: Any changes that you remember taking place at that company during your time there?

I: Um, maybe just some changes as far as layout and design, pagination emerging.

R: Did it change your role at all?

I: No, it was always an all-hands-on-deck kind of place. It was a small staff of five, that included the editor itself. You were always expected to work the desk in addition to being a full-time reporter.

R: My first job was like that, too.

I: I remember once a week you had a day that was called "write," you know, that you could use how you wanted it. But everything else was 4 to 1.

R: And so did it change your roll that you had to switch into pagination and such?

I: No, I didn't do, I did a lot of copy editing, and I mean, even the layout I didn't understand very well. I didn't do layout; we had two layout people. You know, you had to go back, I know it sounds crazy, to go back and chop things off, literally, I mean, words, there were knives and light tables and all that stuff. ...

R: Tell me about a time that you remember a change that involved the Internet at a job. Either networking, online publishing, some variation of Internet.

I: Well, I guess that would be, come at my next job, I stayed at the publication for 19 years in various roles. Do I need a time period for this, like what year it was?

R: Well, any context for the change, um, what I'm trying to identify that point in time, even if we don't have a specific date or year but point in time and how that impacted your career. It could be a year that things were transitioning.

I: I guess it would be 1993-94, in that time period. I was working, I started out because I came to the area I was in because my husband got a job at a newspaper, and I followed him. And I started working part-time pretty quickly, first stringing and then part-time. But I was in copy editing. And I remember, again, when pagination came in, and I didn't know the old way, I didn't know how to do things drawing, um, so I learned the new way, and that became part of my job. I mean, I didn't know anything about layout, but that became part of my job, and I started laying out the food section, the home section, whatever the daily features section. I mean, initially I was just working with words and all of sudden, then I started working with design.

So that wasn't Internet; that was pagination. I do have an Internet one that I can talk about also.

R: Sure, yeah. Both of those are valid because it sounds like it impacted your role.

I: I know that in 1997, that's easy to remember because my son was born. I went to Portugal and France with a photographer. It was her first time using digital film.

R: Wow.

I: Um, and it was the first time we were going to use the Internet to send stories. I remember these ridiculously long training sessions and steps, and all you were doing was sending an email. But it was like, "What do you mean?" I mean, it was a very difficult process. And you still had to find, we're overseas, and I mean, we spent, you know, we went a couple different places overseas in Paris and Portugal, and the first thing we would do is go into the hotel room and see if the phone thing came out of the back. It's like, do they have anything. It was a cumbersome process. That's what we worried about. You know, instead of worrying about the content of the story. The first thing was how am I going to be able to transport it.

Um, it was around that time we had the first Internet capabilities inside the office. And there was one computer that could do it, but nobody really knew how to do it. It was like, this is over here. And sports writers especially, they're not easy to, change is difficult for them, so nobody explained. I mean, we used to use something called FaxBack, do you know what that is?

R: No.

I: Well, it's amazing. I don't know how we did anything. I mean, you covered a team, and you wanted their statistics and there was no, you didn't look it up on the Internet. No one thought of that. You called this number, and you would shout out, "Nobody use, nobody send any faxes," nobody's using the fax machine, and you would dial in these codes and you would get this, you

know, cumbersome print-out. Half of the time you were doing it, it would be last week's stats or day old stats. Or week old stats, and, I mean, you had to do that to get everything.

R: That's crazy. But that's the way it is. You couldn't look it up.

I: You couldn't look up anything.

...

I: I remember if you wanted something in depth, you went to the library, and said "I'm looking for some background on X, Y or Z." I don't think it occurred to anybody back then. ... you went to a library, and what was it called, Computer Assisted Reporting, and they looked it up for you.

R: I took a class in college called Computer Assisted Reporting

I: They provided everything. But you didn't have to do it. It just seemed like something out there.

R: So at that point in '97, when you were traveling overseas, had you converted back into a reporting role from doing the designing?

I: I should say that I was hired as a reporter full time in '95.

R: So, it sounds like you did quite a bit of transition.

I: I did. I went from part-time copy, well, I went from regular, I mean, I was a huge contributor as a writer, but then I became a part-time copy editor and then I became a full-time copy editor, and then, but I never wanted to copy edit, and then came the sports job came open

R: So, it sounds like that was the first time you were doing quite as many changes in your career over that five-year block of time. Did it change, or how did you feel about your career path?



I: Well, I was a big paper, um, the biggest paper in the state ... I felt like I had made some sacrifices, I guess. Even though I was at a bigger paper, I didn't initially feel like I was in a more satisfying role. I wasn't crazy about the geographic location I was in. And I wasn't really in love with the newspaper itself. It wasn't really where I wanted to be, but that was more personal than. I still thought I was in a good position to, at that point I still valued climbing the ladder, shall we say.

R: And so, you still felt like you were in a good position. Do you know what you needed to do to get yourself into a position of success and succeed to the next step where you wanted to be?

I: Not really. I mean, I was kind of living day to day. You know, you're worried about the next story. You're not really thinking about – especially when you're balancing a relationship. I mean, suddenly there were two of us with newspaper jobs, and I mean, that just kind of changed the dynamic and changed my career path and how I thought about it. It wasn't necessarily what was best for me, so.

R: So, how did you feel about the future of the newspapers and what the future looked like now that you were working with the digital and in transition?

I: Again, I never thought newspapers were in jeopardy, which might have been unrealistic. But, I was in a work environment that was extremely negative about everything. I mean, before I got to the larger paper, when I first called about any type of work, I was told if it was midnight, it couldn't be darker. And this is where I'm moving, and there's two papers, and one of them has a nepotism policy. I mean, we weren't married, but still. Um, you know, I think I made myself marketable enough to get in there, but I saw that that was not a place that, I mean, people stayed

a really long time in their careers, ah, all sports departments are negative and sarcastic. It's the nature of them, but I felt that this one was very much an old boys' network. They had never had a female before. So, I guess, you know, I didn't really think about growing within it. I didn't think that was a good place to grow.

R: But you stayed there. Why?

I: Well, life gets in the way. Again, cuz every time you think about money, you're thinking how hard it was. It took several years until we were both full time employed. I mean, five years. So every time, and I continued to get some offers, but then you're thinking about both of you again. Do we want to go back to one income and looking for another job. So that's how I ended up staying there for 19 years.

R: Have there been any recent changes in your career or position or job?

I: In this job?

R: I mean, we talked briefly before, and now you're working multiple jobs and only one of them is in a news-gathering function.

I: Traditional news gathering. I mean, one is a PR function, so I probably wouldn't count that one, I guess.

R: So, when was that change?

I: My first work was about four years ago ... I did one story, a year later it was another story.

R: Were you out of news for any period of time.

I: No, I've always written, so no.

R: But you got out of full-time?

I: I got out of newspapers in 2012.

R: But you've always still continued to freelance and such?

I: Yeah, I've always freelanced for lots of people.

R: And so with regards to journalism, do you consider yourself a freelancer or do you consider yourself a writer because you're routinely contributing? I mean, it seems a minor thing, because

I: No, not really, I know I still think of myself as a freelancer because nothing is guaranteed, and every time I ask, I just asked two days ago about a piece. I probably wouldn't remain in this teaching position if I had this much work, and I was kind of told "Well, if it were up to me, I would say yes, we're using you in the exact same role." But they're moving my editor possibly, and that's not to say they wouldn't use me, but it's like "We can't promise you." So, yeah, I don't think of myself, I mean, I'd like to go to – I have a coworker who says you'd love it if they could hire you full time there, and I said "No I wouldn't." I don't want to work there. I don't want that. I'd be worried that I'd be laid off. This is perfect for me, believe it or not. Because I feel like this is the future. They don't have to pay me benefits, you know. But it's not, what's the word, there's no security in it. But there's no security in full-time employment either.

R: Not in this industry.

I: Not in this industry, no.

R: ... what's the approximate hours you're splitting between the three positions you're currently working, I mean, on average, roughly?

I: You mean how many per week?

R: Yeah, or even a percentage of the whole pie ...

I: PR, 30 hours, teaching 5 hours per week, freelance, 10-15. I'm a fast writer, so

...

R: So, how did you feel about your career path now, at this time, or since the changes to your career?

I: I guess, um, I'm not satisfied with it. I mean, I'm not, I can't find a sense of comfort in it, or a sense of security, I guess, because I see that things are constantly evolving, and I don't feel that I know enough. I want to be learning more than I did. I didn't learn very much when I was in newspapers, and I realize that was a big mistake. You should be always learning, and I didn't do that. I just got a job and had kids and what is there to learn, you know. I see people, I see my children with technology I don't know how to use, and that's the future. So, I'm pretty good with social media. I thought I was better until I worked with our social media person, you know. So I feel like I'm behind the curve. And my age is a factor as well. So I'm not really sure where it's going, and I'm not making any long-term plans.

R: Do you feel equipped to succeed or find the opportunities or education to do so?

I: Equipped? Because I don't make the money I used to, I think it's hard to be equipped. I have two kids now. Things keep going up. It's more like a day-by-day thing now. I don't look much into the future. Again, there's a lot of uncertainty about the future. Maybe there always was, and I didn't see it as so. I thought I'd have a retirement plan. I thought a lot of things. There's no nest egg.

R: I think we all thought that. Growing up, my dad worked for the railroad. He has a pension. He retired at 62.

I: I don't have that. Neither does my husband.

R: It's just a different world ... this cycle of a generation of baby boomers that grew up in a different time vs a new generation that's different in so many ways.

How do you feel about the future of the newspapers now?

I: I feel there is almost no future for newspapers. I feel that newspapers have not evolved with the times. I feel like they're still trying to fit an old model and trying to make it work. I'm very frustrated with newspapers. I think they've made very little progress. They've put up paywalls, which I don't think is the answer. They cut, cut, cut to the core. I don't think they have any sense of what to do. I'm a big fan of The Washington Post. I'm a big fan of many of the things they do. I think that they're the best ... at adjusting to the future because they try some things that I think most papers aren't.

R: What specific things do you think that they do?

I: Um, one thing they do is a lot of first-person stories that are, you know, by their own writers. First-person essays. I mean, they have something called Date Lab where they match two people to go on a date. They would have never done that [before]. They would have thought that was beneath them. So, I see them doing that sort of thing, just trying to be a little more innovative.

R: To bring some of what the Internet has to a print product.

I: Right. What I think most newspapers are trying to do what they did, with fewer people, and that's frustrating. You don't have to do what you did. I think most sports departments are trying to cover all these beats instead of talking about what are the stories we need to cover. I mean, you can't cover beats anymore. You don't have enough people. So, you have to come at it a different way. I think that you have kind of an aging, white, male workforce that continues to run how things are done and that thinking cannot uphold. Nobody under 40 is looking at newspapers.

There are so many alternatives to them that are frankly better. As a sports person, why do I want to read your story the next day. Your boring game story, I've already read and seen the press conference. I've read 10 stories that are better than yours ... you need to bring something else to it. Not the same story I read yesterday. I'm sorry, that's something I'm passionate about.

R: No, you're fine. Do you consider yourself a journalist today?

I: Yes.

R: Tell me why.

I: It's what I've always been, I guess. I mean, I don't think I've mentioned it. This is a tangent; I have a blog that I coproduce with someone that's a very meaty blog that's very well respected as a niche market. It's a women's basketball blog.

R: So that still keeps you in the news or is it different than news gathering?

I: It's not traditional news gathering, but it has some elements of that. I mean, I have relationships with 13 Division I schools. That's something I've learned that I took those with me. That those don't belong to the paper. So I started that, my partner and I started that, long before. It's going on five or six years. Are we making great money on it? No. Has it helped me get jobs? Yes. As a matter of fact, it helped me get [REDACTED]. Because of that, because there are a lot of blogs out there that are, frankly, trash, but this is blog that has two people who worked in the industry for close to 50 years. So we bring a professional approach to it. And because of how it's received both locally, regionally and at some point nationally, I think that helps me think of myself still as a journalist. And whoever heard of a blog in 1995.

R: So, that stuff's part of the technology. That stuff you've got. So, slightly different, we've talked about how you feel about the future, but how do you feel about the value of newspapers today?

I: I don't know what their value is. Um, I think largely the smaller locals have a ton of value because, I mean, they cover local news. You're not going to find that stuff on the Internet. And I think maybe the biggest dailies have, because they still have their resources, although many of them have cut back, have some value. But I think the majority of newspapers don't have the resources to break news. And we aren't using them for things we used to use them for. We don't use TV Guide. We don't look at the newspaper for movie listings. When the kids went to school, you had to get that issue with the school bus, you don't do that anymore. You go online. So, I think a lot of the things we used to use them for, we find ourselves, we don't rely on them anymore.

R: Different outlets. Is there anything that I haven't asked that you would like to add or discuss related to the topics and themes we've gone over?

I: I guess I would just say ... it's disappointing to me that newspapers haven't come up with a plan other than cutting staff to really, to kind of, what's the word I'm looking for, to make the transition to a new time. I mean, I don't see how they're getting younger people interested. And your readers are going to die out. That seems obvious. But I don't really see anybody, you see video or you see blogs that are quick-hits. But I don't really see anybody who's being successful with what they're trying. I mean, you're getting beat by Twitter. You can't keep up with Twitter, so I guess I'm not sure why you're trying to. I just think you have to come at it, and I'm not saying I have the answer, but you have to come at it with a different approach.

SCOTT

Age: 41

Sex: Male

Marital status: Single, no children

Highest educational degree achieved: Bachelor's

Income bracket: \$40,000-\$60,000

Receive the survey directly from researcher or from an associate: Researcher

R: At what age did you first identify yourself as journalist?

I: Um, let me think here. I would say age 23.

R: When did you have your first job in journalism?

I: Around that age.

R: And what was the position or title?

I: Newspaper reporter

R: And what did you think about the value of newspapers at that time?

I: I thought they were extremely valuable for, you know, informing the public and kind of like my chosen profession, so, um, highly valuable.

R: And what did the future of newspapers look like to you?

I: At that time?



R: Mhmm.

I: Uh, it looked great. It looked great.

R: How did you feel about your career at that time and was it clear what you needed to do to succeed as a journalist?

I: I think I saw my career as being, um, you know having a college degree and student newspaper experience and a good deal of training. And then getting a job at a daily newspaper, a smaller daily newspaper, and thinking this is, you know, currently going to be a lot of fun. But I can also learn a lot, and I want to advance; I want to move to something bigger eventually and move up. So, um, you know it was... Yeah, I was very excited to have a job. There was a little bit... you know, some of the standards of this, being a small daily, were not quite what I would have wanted. But just having a job in journalism was great. And I didn't think it would be a long-term thing. It would be something that I would do for a little while, until I could get a better job. There was a second part of the question too.

R: Um, just was it clear what you needed to do to succeed?

I: Oh, yeah, to succeed, you know, at the newspaper I was at was, you know, doing good stories. In a, you know, in a bigger set picture, you know, getting enough good stories that somebody at a higher level would want to hire me.

R: At this time in your career, do you remember what the future of newspapers looked like to you?

R: And, uh, do you remember any changes taking place at that company during your employment?

I: There were, let me think just for a minute about changes during that time. Um, I think there was some movement to actually help... Oh, shoot, um, maybe like actually expand the internet at the different operations. There may have been actually some branches that didn't have web access. This is like 1998, this is 1998, so they were trying to do, get more technology. Um, they were really promoting the newspaper quite a bit as a competitor to other media. And, um, I don't think there was any expansion or, nothing was getting bigger or smaller when I was there, but they were adding some technology and promoting it quite a bit in the community. And, actually, maybe trying to expand it a little bit, uh, as far as the geographical region.

R: Did it change your role in any way?

I: No, it didn't I don't think. My role was reporter, and so I'm doing journalism, just like you would do now, you know: getting meetings, interviews, tracking people down, writing stuff.

R: So talk about either a first promotion, job change or first major assignment, something that resonates with you as like a first big thing in your career. And, uh, just describe that for me and what was the position or job title?

I: Ok. Well, I would say, you know, a promotion or job change in the first job was being promoted from, to a better beat. So, I was a city hall or city government reporter. The reporter that had the courts beat at the newspaper left for a larger newspaper, so it opened up, and I really wanted it because it was just a little bit higher profile, um, something that I wanted to do. And, you know, two reporters had kind of put their name in for it, and I got chosen, which, you know,

is just based on, you know, they like me better for it, so I got it. I felt a little bad for the other guy, but you know, that. It was a little competitive, so I was happy to get that. And then, you know, I did that, you know, basically moved up to a new beat, um, that I liked better. It was, you know, a bit more challenging. I was able to learn more. So that was cool. That was kinda a bit deal at the time to get promoted. I don't think I got any more money for it, though. But it's journalism, so I didn't care that much. I cared a little bit, but not a ton.

R: Um, how did you feel about your career path after getting that promotion?

I: I felt, actually, you know, it was kinda mixed. I felt good about my career path, but I also was a little worried about it because, um, I had seen, after a couple of years at this small daily newspaper, I had seen other people I went to college with kind of moving up to bigger steps. I was having trouble finding where to get to there. And kind of felt like the editors I was working with, and the just, the, you know, I was kind of maybe plateaued where I was. Yeah, I wasn't really able to enhance. I would go to seminars in Wilmington, Delaware. There was this thing called The Wilmington Writers' Workshop every year, which I think was done by the Pointer Institute. And it was a very low cost seminar. You could drive there. It was just maybe like two days, stay in a hotel and a lot of writing, copyediting, reporting techniques. You know, just training seminars on various things. It was pretty inspirational. So, I was looking, you know, for more training ways to improve, and at times feeling like I was getting kind of stuck a little bit at the small journalism level. But I didn't, you know, I wasn't in despair, I felt like I could eventually move up, but it was frustrating at times after, you know, it was a mix of like enjoying journalism, but also being frustrated with it.

R: And so did that impact in any way, like, how you felt like how you knew you could succeed as a journalist:

I: I don't think it impacted my thoughts on whether I could succeed. There may be times when you think: Boy, I would love to work at The Wall Street Journal. But I don't know if I'll ever get to that level; I'd really have to, you know, improve and become a better writer. So, um, anyway, yeah, that answers that one, I think.

R: How did you feel about the future of the newspaper industry, and what did that future look like?

I: I hadn't, I didn't think there was any problem or anything to worry about with the newspaper industry or fear that it would be replaced or somehow become irrelevant. Uh, so, I didn't, you know, I was confident that it was good industry to be in with maybe a little bit of caveat that, you know, it's not a highly-paying profession. Um, but it's really cool, and it's a lot of fun. And, you know, that was kind of what I had learned in college working at the student newspaper was: we have a lot of power, we do a lot of journalism. This has an effect on how things work and informing people about things they didn't know was very important. So I didn't have any reason to think that in the future that it would be less important than it was at that time.

R: So, tell me about a time that you remember a change that involved the internet at a job.

Whether it had to do with specifically, you know, online publishing or some of the network that you used in the office or something that was specifically related to an internet change at a job.

I: Ok. Well, this would be, um, timeframe would be maybe around, let me think of the year here, maybe, maybe 2006-2007, maybe 2007 timeframe. There was some, so this was the second job;

I'm in at a larger newspaper than the first one. And as I remember there was, you know, kind of an announcement or message that goes out saying... The way our website worked was only a certain handful of people were able to go into it and update or put stories on it. So basically we were up at every night until 11 or midnight, the producer is going in and making sure all the stories get updated on the website. And then that person goes home and then nothing happens until 11 PM the next day. So the website is rolling, unupdated for the most part, as I remember it, for, you know, twenty-four hours. I remember that some kind of alert that goes out saying... There's a little bit, I don't remember the exact details anymore, but I think that they allowed either some editors to start having access, and maybe even a reporter could then say to the editor, "Hey, it's 3 PM, but I have something; let's put it on our website." This was a shift to try to you know, uh, get news up at the time that it's up, you know, the time it's happening. Once it's ready to be published, not wait until midnight. So, at one point I was, you know, covering, I think I wrote story about traffic crash, and, you know, our website we site started to have more things, you know, like 330 pm this crash has happened, and somebody noticed it, and I was on the phone with him, and he said, "I was just looking at your site today and saw that you wrote a story just now. Yeah, it's up there. That's wild. How interesting. Very smart of you guys to do that." And, of course, it is smart, but, you know, it was, at the time it was something that hadn't always been that way. You know, it took a little while to get to the point of putting news online at various times. So I thought it was cool, you know. I liked doing it. Um, so, you know that's kind of a change that's happening there in that sense.

R: It sounds like it changed your role a little bit in just the thought process of producing stories, as well, rather than on deadline, other than at the time it's happening. Did it change, was it a gradual change? Was it something that you had to push for, or did it not really impact too much?

I: I would, I think it's a, I think it was a gradual change that a lot of people ignored, but weren't interested in. You know, but slowly the newsroom is moving that way. And around, not long after that I actually ended up using camera to make video and getting on our, on the website just to learn something different and try something else, you know, too. Because there was, I think some uncertainty, this was around that same time, 2007. There was like this mindset of, "Oh, it's not enough." You know, I definitely remember training, you know, webinars and email, and school of thought of just writing and reporting isn't enough anymore. We need to make videos. We need to do things on the internet, but video was especially this kind of big idea: that every writer should start making video. Um, and so a lot of them did, and some of the video was really bad, but they did it any way because they thought they were supposed to do that.

R: Yeah, um, how did you feel about your career path at that time?

I: At that time, I still, I think it was as similar thought. You know, I felt good about it, but did have trouble moving, getting to, you know seeing, trying to figure out where is the higher level. And it's good for journalism to be competitive like that because if you applied for a larger, for, for a job at a better established, uh, newspaper that's just better, and they don't want to hire you that means because they had someone else who was better, more aggressive, better writer, someone that they wanted. They didn't want you, so if you want to get to that level, you have got to keep improving and working at it. Um, you don't get things handed to you. So, you know, at that point I was, you know, well, I was confident, but then also feeling like maybe I'm, again,

maybe I'm getting left behind here. You know, I'm having trouble getting to the higher level that I'd like to get to. So part of why I did do, um, learn how to, you know, shoot and edit video was to have another skill. So, as I see these job ads or this demand for reporters who can do more than write, I wanted to be able to say I can do that. I can actually shoot and edit a video or take photos. And at the same time I was trying to do a lot of, you know, as much enterprising reporting as I could, but also having more of a mixed, um, bag of tricks I guess, as a journalist.

R: Um, did you feel like you knew how to succeed as a journalist, having those diverse skills?

I: Well, I think so. Yeah, I felt like I did. You know, I felt like my reporting and writing was, uh, I mean, I think there was a time when I felt like my reporting and writing was really good, and then there were times when I felt like I had maybe slipped off, or there's less enthusiasm. Um, some of that is just maybe getting burned out, from time to time. Working a lot, working too hard, but yeah, especially with doing multimedia work, I felt like this is putting me in good position now because I can write and do other things that a lot of other journalist don't know how to do or don't want to do. The way I did it was we had a, that the newspaper that I was at, the producer who had a multimedia degree from a good school of journalism, well, the University of North Carolina. I don't think that gives away too much. Um, and she is working a lot and has a lot of free time, and I'm working, and so I just asked her, "Could you help me with video stuff?" And she was happy to do it, so it was like getting a multimedia course over several weeks in shooting and editing video with someone who had actually just gone through it. She's younger than me. She's, you know, got a degree in this; she's working with me. So I thought, "why not utilize that to learn something?" So it was very helpful. She was happy to do it. She

kind of liked training someone and then kind of seeing what I would, what I ended up doing with it.

R: How did you feel about the future of the newspapers?

I: At that time, I think I still, you know, felt confident in the future of newspapers, but I remember thinking that the internet was taking over a little and that printed newspapers were seeming, were starting to look outdated and a little bit old. And maybe, you know, I know there was, again around, um, you know, 2006, 2005, 2006, 2007, the editor of the paper I worked at had said that he had noticed that maybe within the last 10 years, there had been a change in attitudes about the newspaper. And that it was no longer a requirement for professional people to subscribe to a daily newspaper. And the example that he gave was in his neighborhood he's got a lawyer on one side, or a doctor on the other, or something like that, right one a little cul-de-sac. And every morning, every, you know, every morning he goes out and gets his newspaper, the driveways on each side of him, professional, educated people, do not get the newspaper. And it, and it, and that wasn't necessarily the internet taking over or anything. That was just, in his mind, uh, that was, that there came a time in America when professional people stopped getting the newspaper. And why that was is that just it. They didn't care, or they, you know, uh, there may be not, may be hard to find a good reason behind it exactly, but I still think about that, and I agree with it. And it goes hand-in-hand with, you know, the fact that people now what to talk about there's too much stuff on the web. Well, how, people say, "Well, how do you do journalism, or how do you put out a newspaper anymore? You guys have really gotten clobbered by the web?" And it's like, no, we are on the web in multi, in many ways. I think what really clobbered the newspaper is Facebook, things like that, but especially Facebook because it really



is like local news. Facebook is the newspaper now. Um, it just happens to be very, very local, and everyone in America is on Facebook; most people are on Facebook all the time. On their computers, on their phones, morning, noon, and night, when they wake up in the middle of the night they look at Facebook. At their office all day, they're on Facebook. On their phone anywhere, the airport, you know, sitting on the toilet they're on Facebook. That's not something, you know, that, uh, a newspaper has ever been able to get that much, you know, um, you know, that type of really, um, attention, I guess. You know, maybe, maybe years ago a newspaper would be like that. If you, if that when the newspaper came, you were really excited to get it. It was your only connection to the world. And if you were at a bar or restaurant, you would want to read a newspaper. You're in the bathroom you've got a newspaper. If you go to somebody's house, there's a paper. You're like, "Oh, can I read that? Can I take that?" Um, so I think, now I'm kind of going off, straying a little bit from the original idea.

R: You're fine.

I: I'll stop there and you can keep going with the questions if you want.

R: Um, I was just, the next part is just what the future of newspapers looked like to you?

I: Well, it's uncertain, and printing news on paper is going to come to an end at some point I would think, but it may be a while. So, if you look at like music, we don't generally put our music on compact discs or cassette tapes anymore. It can be loaded right into the device that we are going to use to listen to it. Journalism is like that right now in a lot of ways, too. But there's still enough people that want to get it on paper that you can't just stop doing that, or you would lose a lot of money. So, the fu-, you know, I don't, the future, I don't know if you're, if you had just just a website, would you call your, I think, could you call yourself an online newspaper?

But I like using the phrase newspaper, or the word newspaper because it means the press, and that's different than all the other shit that's on the internet that's written by somebody who is not the press. And all of the other stuff is, generally, you know, often not trustworthy or wrong. Then you have things like, um, Huffington Post. Like what is that exactly, an online newspaper, or an online news outlet? You know, I don't think that they would call themselves a newspaper necessarily, but they, you know, it's called The Post. You know, um, or BuzzFeed. Again, you know, does that count as the press? Or would a, you know, Yahoo! Politics, they're doing journalism; does that count as the press? You know, they're doing reporting, but it's Yahoo!, they don't have, uh, a newspaper. So, I'm just kind of raising like the issues that I think about because I don't have a good answer, but you know, I... For the short term, I do, I mean if you look at The New York Times, they're doing pretty well I think. Doing great journalism and still, you know, kind of really pushing the need for their newspaper even though a lot of it is online. And The Washington Post is doing, um, pretty well. Then you start to see the downfall of newspapers. And this, and this is the most recent thing would be a good example would be in Chicago where you have Laquan McDonald shot down by a police officer. I think I'm getting his name right, Laquan McDonald. He's shot down by a white police officer. An independent freelance, like journalist, who's driving for Uber, and does journalism, almost, not as a hobby, but, you know, he's not really making money off of it; he's a freelancer. He's working with a lawyer who does pro bono Freedom Of Information work for him. Somehow, you know, files a lawsuit and gets a judge to force the city to release this video of this shooting, and this is not only embarrassing, but it, here's the mayor of the city trying to cover this up and working diligently to keep this from public view. All because, all the while, it appears to be because he's got a re-election campaign, and this type of thing coming out would seriously hinder his ability to be re-

elected to his job, so there's basically a cover-up scandal going on. There's protests in Chicago today calling for the mayor to resign, and this is something that got, that brought about by an independent driving for Uber. This is embarrassing for the Chicago Tribune, a major, large newspaper. And right under their noses is a huge story, and for whatever reason, this is not the fault of the internet, they just didn't get it; they couldn't do it. You know, they either didn't have the mindset right or the reporters have turned over too much, and they don't have good reporters covering crime. I don't know, but there's an example of "how is a newspaper going to be relevant, you know, with, if this is how, you know, journalism is operating?" Um, eventually, nobody will think to go to The Chicago Tribune for, for, for, for news. They will think to go somewhere else, or some, someone else will fill the void maybe.

R: What do you think the root of that is? I mean, you touched on a few things there. Whether it's turnover, or whether it's, um, you know... not having a mindset to go after the, the uh, you know, FOA stuff. Do you think there's a root or a theme to some of these things?

I: I think there is a problem with, uh, newspapers and the press, uh, backing off of watchdog reporting. And newspapers especially have had problems with, you know, because they're staff is lower than it was, and there's turnover and they may be younger, there's, they seem to be losing a little focus on, um, doing good watchdog investigative reporting. Not losing a little focus, but maybe a lot. So, I'm trying to think of, um, yeah, I mean, I've heard this is nothing, I don't know if you want to put... just something for you to look at, maybe in the future because I don't have any concrete information on this, but, you know, I've heard talk or rumors at times of newspapers doing buyouts for reporters who are too aggressive. "We don't want you covering our town this aggressively. We're going to pay you to go." Um, and you know, just, there's a lot

of hostility toward the press from government. There's a lot of attacks on the free press from government at all levels. And right now what you see a lot of is local government, state, and especially federal if you look at the Obama administration, journalists are uh, you know, it's always a fight to get access to the information that we want, the officials we want to talk to, there are a lot of times where journalists are made to feel like they're doing something wrong, or they're just, you know, they're, they're bad people and they're stymied by government officials and public affairs people. And then the other thing that's been happening, you know, it's not new, but maybe happening a little bit more now is, uh, government agencies are cherry picking journalists to come work for them. So, if there's a good reporter at the newspaper covering schools or education or city government, or, or crime, the next thing you know they're working for the State Transportation Department or the city school division, or, uh, a lot of TV reporters wind up, you know, working for the police department or the sheriff's office, and they pay is better; they'll, you know, the government will go to them and kind of lure them with better pay and the idea of better hours and, you know, ultimately if you don't think journalism is going, you know, if there's a long term future there a lot of journalists make the decision to go into public affairs or public relations. So now you've lost journalists and once they do that they, you know, probably a lot of them do a good job at PR, but they're not doing PR. I might have given several different things there. You know, as components of problems for news media, but, you know, because there are, you know, a lot of complicated areas. There's pay, and salary and pay have never been great, but everybody knew that though, but especially now when you see newspapers folding, circulation plummeting, struggling to figure out how to do web, you know, online journalism. It might be even more, to go into public relations, a lack of watchdog investigative journalism. I've seen that myself, where I work, and also where, you know, from what I see with

The Chicago Tribune example. I don't know all of the details of their paper, but there's been a lot of attention on the fact that a freelance journalist filed the lawsuit that got a video released, a video that basically shows a murder, of a white officer gunning down a 17-year-old black teenager who is not threatening or attacking in any way, which the police lied about. And lie is not too harsh of a word. You know, multiple officers gave statements, and that this teenager was attacking, threatening, waving his arms. The police union was putting out that information, and the reality is that that's not true. And the city has got this video. I don't have to go into it again, but you know it's just such a compelling, big national news story, and for it to not be brought by The Chicago Tribune, but, you know, for an Uber driver, it's fascinating. You know, and, and the press should be looking at, you know, how does... why don't we get back to doing that kind of journalism? That should be our focus. Editors should be really pushing for that and being aggressive about it.

R: Have there been any recent changes in your career, or your position, or even the job function that you're doing?

I: Well, I don't know if you want to, you know, I've had, let's see, a couple of different beats over the course of a number of years. And, the current beat, it's been about a year. So, um, I can answer one thing is I've had, you know, um, my, my boss left journalism to go into a different line of work. It was something that she and her family wanted to do, and she worked at getting a new career and did it, and left. And I liked her. And, uh, so, and I went for a couple of months without a boss, and now I have a new one. That one's not nearly as good as the last one. You might want to kind of edit me down a little bit there, if that would somehow give something away. I don't think it would. It depends on how many people you interview or how much you

write up, but turnover in management I have experienced, which is kind of disheartening. And this isn't directly me, but the shop that I work for now, like many other places, is having turnover like, it's like a bleeding wound. You know, it's just like boom, boom, boom, like every week or two now, there's almost there's, there's a stream of announcements, and, um, for all kinds of reasons journalists at different levels decide that they're leaving journalism, or they're moving to different outlets, um, in some cases. And then, of course, we have a ton of layoffs that you hear about, which was one of several big rounds of layoffs that have happened since 2008.

R: Um, is it impacting you in any way and how you do your job or how you feel about your own career path?

I: Well, yes, because if you have, um, a good news bureau with five people in it, that's a lot stronger than a bureau with one or two people in it. The one or two... if you've got one with one or two, they've just got all that less fewer resources to work with, you know, fewer colleagues to consult with and work on projects with. You know, more, more, maybe necessity to write more, do more work than and not have enough time to look into things. Um, and it's demoralizing when you see, you know, other journalists leaving, and you know, you know, they're not really wanting to go, if their pay was a little bit better, and, or maybe if there was such a good career path on the horizon. You know, you're going to get a two-percent raise every year or a three-percent raise, but we look good for, we have a long-term plan for what we're going to do as journalists, they might stay; they might not go. Um, some of them would go anyway, but a lot, you know, I feel like right now we're losing a lot more than we would in the past because it's, it's, it's not stable for the future. And there are probably some people that kind of, that just are thinking, "You know, I don't know how long I'll last or what I'm going to do, but there's

nothing else that I can do other than journalism, or that I would want to do.” So they just kind of ride it out. And sometimes those are people that get laid off that, you know, they’re, they’re at kind of like late to the middle part of their career, they might have another 10 years to go, 10 or 12 years, and they have a high salary, and those are people that have gotten laid off in journalism. You know they’re out looking for work. That’s just, you know, demoralizing, and, uh, has an effect on other people. Um, especially if the company’s in question then go out and say things like, “We’re stream... we’re, we’re reorganizing our newsroom.” And a lot of newspapers have said this, things like this: “We’re reorganizing our newsroom to serve you better, to bring you the news you need in a new, efficient way in the new era.” That’s bullshit. What they’ve done is lay off a bunch of journalists, and then essentially are misleading the public they serve into thinking it’s not that bad. Um, you know, no big deal here. We’re still going to do all of the local news you want, and that’s not true, and it’s not how it works. But the management, you know, the high end, the top end of the company will often then try to spin it, which is ironic because we’re in a profession that’s supposed to call out spin, and sift through it, and tell the public the reality. But then here we are, you’ll see publishers of newspapers writing columns when they’ve had a round of layoffs, and we’re going to reorganize things to serve you better. And all of the great local news that you’ve come to expect for so many years, you’ll still going to be getting all of it, and we just need to do it a little differently now. And it’s spin, you know, and I guess in their mind they don’t want to acknowledge, they don’t advertisers to think, “Uh, uh-oh, let’s not advertise in the paper anymore because it’s not reaching many people.”

R: Um, do you think that it’s changed your outlook on your career, and, and what you’ll do, being of a certain age, who still has a while to go before retirement?

I: Well, my attitude is: I like doing journalism. I like learning new things and improving. And, so, as long as I'm doing that, I can find a place to do journalism, even if I have to move jobs or if something happened. If I ever got laid off in journalism, you know, downsizing or something. You know, I feel confident that I would be able to find something else. So, it changes things a little bit, though, because, um, you're uncertain on will I stay with my current employer, and how long will I be, should I, should I be looking for something else? Should I be looking at a different line of work or a different aspect of journalism? So you kind of, I, I, I kind of wonder, you know, am I making the right move by just working every day? Or should I, you know, should I be making a move to leave? Um, my personal position is pretty good. You know, so a lot of things that happen to the overall organization don't necessarily, you know, come down on me, other than it's sad to see the standards slip, or it's sad to see people leave. But right now, you know, I'm in a good spot, but two or three years from now will that still be the same? It's hard, you don't, it's hard to know.

R: Do you think you know how to succeed as a journalist now?

I: Yeah, I do. Success being, you know, having a good job and having a good beat and doing good journalism, I always want to do more and better and learn more. So, I'm not feeling like I've reached the level of full success, it's great to be here. But, I do feel comfortable with where I'm at and trying to improve and, you know. I, you know, one of my biggest things that probably bothers me is when the news is slow, or when people don't call me back or when I can't get reports. I know there's got to be stuff out there; I can't get it, I want to get it. You know, I'm trying, you know, if you're covering government or public affairs, they're trying to always keep



everything secret, so you're trying to find out about it. And, it's like a never-ending struggle, but it's fun. It's, you know, it's rewarding when you succeed.

R: Alright, um, so I think I know the answer to this question, but do you consider yourself to be a journalist today?

I: Yes.

R: What do you think about that value of newspapers today?

I: Well, I think that value is still very good and very strong, but it's been dented significantly from what it was before, when there was only the newspaper, and then, even, there was no 24-hour cable except maybe Walter Cronkite on your evening news and then there, and then that's it. So, the value, I mean, is still I think, you know, newspapers are very valuable to the public. But I still do, I actually encounter people today who said that they read, you know, my newspaper and like it. And, um, you know I don't want things to continue to get worse still. You know, it's like if we could, you want to hold it where it's at as far as the journalism, and, and so that they still do remain valuable. And I think maybe journalists, you know, need to promote what we do a little bit more than we have in the past. Um, there's just, you know, the press is also under attack by politicians, elected officials probably more maybe than it has in the past. Um, so if you look at history, you know, Nixon's Vice President, Spiro Agnew, was known for unleashing an attack on the press. And I think Nixon, you know, was known as like occasionally, um, going after the press. But now it's like a standard where, you know, if you're, um, I mean the last, I mean, let me go back here to, um, John McCain's presidential run. His vice presidential candidate becomes a pundit on Fox News. Part of her whole existence is, part of her whole schpeel is

attacking what she calls the “lamestream” media. And this is a phrase that’s now common among a lot of the, you know, a lot of voters, you know, people, politicians. You’ve got, you know, a lot of the candidates for president on both sides, but on the republican side, like, going after the media is a regular thing that they do. You know, and especially newspapers, and even Bernie Sanders, you know, on the democratic side told, you know, (muddled) of the debate he was tired of hearing about Hilary’s emails. And that’s, you know, and indirect little, um, you know, obviously the republicans are bringing that up, but The New York Times is one of the leaders on looking at Hilary’s email, her secret email server, and um, I don’t, I guess what Bernie was saying there wasn’t really coming after the news media per say, but, um, you know it seems to be more of an established thing now among, um, Fox News, which dominates cable news. And a lot of politicians to ridicule, criticize the press, which is okay, but it’s just at a point right now I think in history where there’s a lot of, um, you know, that’s very common. Maybe in the future it will be less common, but probably not. So, you know, the press has to, newspapers and the press, in general, have to, constantly kind of, um, not just defend their credibility, but also to explain it, try not to make mistakes and acknowledge them when they do. There’s another issues that’s off topic a little bit, but on that: Brian Williams from NBC. I was, I’m surprised that he’s still on the air as a special correspondent. There’s a big news event, there he is. This guy made stuff up. You know, and this is, this is, this hurts the credibility of all journalism. And, um, I guess we’re in an era where for wha, well, I don’t know. But Brian Williams is not newspaper, that’s TV, but at that level, you know, when you say “the press” you think that, um, NBC, you know that qualifies obviously. So, you know, that’s hard to, uh, yeah, you, the press, newspapers want to be able to maintain trust and do things that, uh, inspire trust from people. It’s difficult when elected leaders

and candidates that a lot of these people really admire are trashing the press, so then you can't believe it. That's, that's an issue.

R: So, those are all of my questions. Is there anything that I haven't asked you regarding the topics and themes that I've raised that you feel like I missed, or that you would like to add or mention that might have been overlooked?

I: I don't think so. Nothing is coming to mind, Steph. Um, I'm kind of running through ... I mean, don't, this may be would be, I think we've covered it, but, you know, there are probably some journalists that would think it's a very dark time for journalism right now. There are probably some that are positive, and they're probably the younger ones. But it is, you know, it is a, it is a career that has, you know, as far as the newspaper industry goes, become a little bit more unsettling with time, and it's kind of sad that there was once, you know, um, you know, it was once a grand situation is now not so much. And, I don't know, actually, I have a, well; I've got a farewell email from a staffer who left us right here at my desk. And I'm trying, you may not want to quote from this, you know, because this is something that was put in writing to a number of people. You know, but he was saying he was lucky. You know, his career, it coincided (with) the golden age of journalism in America when there were a lot of resources, there were large staffs, you could do a lot of investigative watch dog journalism, and, you know, "feisty, fearless reporting" is the phrase he used. Um, so, you know, I'm thinking I was lucky because I got to go on that whole ride, realizing now that things kind of suck, at least compared to that. So, I have a lot of faith that that can be turned around, but I think that newspaper companies need to acknowledge it and kind of address it head-on, and promote themselves and what they do and not go into these, like, "we're going to redesign our paper to serve you better." Now we know that

there's no more feature section and the metro page is gone and the editorials are now down from four pages to, to, to, every other day. Ok, but we're still going to serve you better now, you know? It's, this is just, you know, a new way of doing things. They, they've got to acknowledge and, I mean, maybe communities would be more supportive if they knew there were problems. And you could ask, you know, but when you kind of spin it that way you basically saying, like, "Oh, it's fine, but nobody should be alarmed." So that would be another avenue: do newspapers want to try and engage their communities in helping them a little bit, maybe doing a little bit of a, almost like The New York Times, um, maybe has done with it's your civic duty to give us some money unless you want us to go away. And we hope that you don't, here's why. You know, creating that idea that, you know, you don't have to pay money to get on our website, but if you wouldn't mind it would help us do this and we have that you like it, you know, and being very promotional like that. So, anyway, that's, um, more of a beg.

ERIC

Age: 36

Sex: Male

Marital status: married

Do you have children: 2

Highest educational degree achieved: Master's degree

Income bracket: \$90,000+

Receive the survey directly from researcher or from an associate: An associate via Facebook

Researcher: At what age did you first identify yourself as journalist?

Interviewee: Um, what was I, um, 2005, age 26

R: When did you have your first job in journalism?

I: 2005

R: And what was that position?

I: Reporter

R: And at that time in 2005, what did you think about the value of newspapers?

I: Oh, I thought they were incredibly valuable. Ah, you know, particularly the print product was, ah, was still king in this country at that point.

R: And what did the future of newspapers look like to you?

I: At that point it was, I mean, the future was hard to see at that point, to be honest. But, ah, it was starting its decline. It was not as dour as it is today. I still foresaw, I think I foresaw a better future at that point than I do today.

R: And how did you feel about your career at that time?

I: Um, I think there was a little bit of uncertainty, but there was also a lot of excitement, and, ah, you know, I had just invested a year of my life in graduate school, so, um, I was bullish on my own career, less bullish on the entire industry, and a little uncertain.

R: Um, why do you say foolish?

I: Why did I say bullish? Well, because, like I said, I had just invested a year in graduate school, and I had switched careers. I had switched from something fairly lucrative, so I was going to put everything into, you know, realizing my goal to making it to a major, ah, metro newspaper, and I was confident in my ability to get there.

R: That sort of leads into my next question, your confidence in your ability. Was it clear what you needed to do to succeed as a journalist?

I: At that time, I think it was. I think, you know, today it's less clear. Um, you know, if I were starting in the same spot today, it would be far less clear. But, yes, at that point it seemed clear to me what I needed to do, you know, to succeed.

R: Do you remember if there were any changes that took place at that company during your employment at that first job?

I: You know, there were no, let me see here, You know, other than a redesign to our print product, um, there were no other major changes. I was there for 2 years at that first job in that small market. So no, there were no major changes at that point.

R: Talk to me about either first promotion, a job change or first major assignment, something that you would recognize sort of as a first big career break or move for you.

I: Um, I guess I don't know how to, I'll give you a couple of things. The first thing that really sort of set my path, I think, I got stuck on one of those odd stories that you get stuck on when you're a, when you're a young reporter. You get pulled onto a beat you aren't used to. I was covering a New Year's story. And it was a murder/arson, which was a huge deal in this community. And I won a couple awards for it, so that was big. I knew that that would help catapult me to the next level. Um, so that provided me some grift to move forward to look at other, um, opportunities. And then my next opportunity came along that was, you know, moving up a major market, ah, to a mid-major market. That was sort of the big break.

R: Referring to that mid-major market as a first big break, was that still as a reporter or was it a different position?

I: It was as a reporter.

R: Um, did it impact how you felt about your career path?

I: Well, it gave me some confidence, that's for sure. Um, it made me sort of believe that, you know, I can do this. I can handle it at a better, bigger level, handle a, uh, more substantial, responsibilities, I guess, and a more substantial following and so forth.

R: Was it still clear what you, ah, needed to do to succeed as a journalist?

I: I think so, yes, at that point it was 2007, June of 2007. So, yeah, I think so. I think I just felt like I needed to continue on the same path to, um, you know, that it was going to take a little time, but, ah, yeah, when first joined there I guessed it was the first step of many on my journey.

R: And how did you feel about the future of the newspapers; what did that future look like to you at that time?

I: In 2007, June of 2007, it still seemed pretty good. Um, you know, it was right after that, of course, where everything started to fall apart. But, you know, when I first got there, yes, everything seemed great. And then, um, if you recall, the economy, ah, went to hell, and that's when we started shedding jobs. When I joined that paper, there were 5 business reporters, and, um, by the time I left there was one. I was the last, last of them. And at that time, that newspaper was covering, you know, all sorts of national news. We had a Washington, DC reporter. We had, ah, two reporters in the state capital. Um, we had, you know, several sports reporters who were covering all of the major college athletics. Um, and we were covering all of the major industries on business, too. You know, um, when I first go there, things were great, but shortly thereafter is when things sort of hit the skid. And it wasn't just at my paper, of course. It was all over the place. Um, and also, I noticed that the attrition rate of my peers with whom I went to graduate school, um, more and more of them were out of business by that time.

...



R: Talk to me about the changes that took place at that company during your employment. You mentioned a couple of things, you know, the business reporters, you know, you being the last one, things like that, so talk to me about the changes at that company.

I: Sure, sure. This company, I mean, it's a tough call, you'll have to omit this, but just for your background it was a [MEDIA COMPANY OWNER] newspaper, and that was the time that [NEW OWNER] came in and took over, um, which was just absolutely crazy. So, I'll just, the nuts and bolts of what happened at the ground level. There were media buyouts, um, I think it was 11 or 13 people lost their job, or were laid off. And then we had a number of other number people leave and their jobs weren't replaced. Ah, and that's when I think everyone around me, including me, and even at other newspapers started to realize that this was not a short term, ah, blip. This was the start of something, ah, that was very serious, very saddening, and very, I guess, depressing. And, um, you know, I think we all came to the realization that nothing was going to be the same after that.

R: How did it change your role there?

I: Um, that's, yeah, that's when things started to change with my role. I started to, um, they started to require us to post our own stories online, which was unheard of prior to that. It was just, um, you know, you go through a couple layers of editing and then it would go up online. But then, um, you know, you got to the point where you were required to put your story in there, or online, and then it would get read afterwards. So, it was a slippery slope, and none of us really liked it. But I think all of realized this was going to be something of the future. And, of course, you know, once you lose people and their jobs don't get replaced, you start having to pick up

more work. You don't go in depth. You don't get as much time on the subject that you were hired to cover.

R: So, talk to me about a time that you remember a change that involved the Internet at a job. Whether it was networking, or, like, online publishing, for example. Something along those lines.

I: I kind of just described that. Um, we started posting our own stuff. We were not only required to be the content people. We were required to be the, ah, mechanics behind the system. So we were required to start posting our own stories. Um, which is, I think anyone would recognize that as somewhat dangerous though. You know, everyone needs an editor. Everyone needs an editor, and there's a lot of consternation around that. You know, we didn't have a choice. And that's, I think that was a seminal moment there in my career. And then at the same time social media on the rise. So, that's when we all started to, you know, many of us started to realize the value of Facebook and Twitter, and how much traffic they brought to the website. And how, you know, I think maybe a year after, this is probably 2009 or so, um, that the victim from the newspaper was we are no longer a print-first product. We are an online-first product. And we'll follow up in print with something more substantive. So, that was a huge shift.

R: Um, you called it a seminal moment in your career. Tell me what that means as far as the path that you were on, and what impact it had to you.

I: Sure. So, you know, when I took that job, you know, prior to taking that job, I was at a very small newspaper, where it was, you were publishing six stories a week. You were publishing five, you know, a story each day plus one for the weekend. When I moved to the next newspaper,

I was, I would have to do maybe 2 to 3 stories per week. I would be able to do very smart stories, in depth. And then, you know, once we started publishing our own stories online, and people really focused on chasing the clips, as it were, staying on top of it, competing with, you know, the rest of world. It wasn't the same job. You know, you're not spending 2 or 3 days on a story anymore. You're pumping out stuff all the time. And then, you know, it just changes the way you think about your job, I think.

R: How did you start thinking about your job?

I: Well, it wasn't as, it was not "All the President's Men," you know. I think a lot of journalists watch this movie and think that this is what we want to do. We want to, we want to, you know, I don't want to say that we want to change the world, but, I mean, we want to write the first draft in history, and we want it to be a damn good first draft in history. And now, it's more like, here's a couple of lines. And it's, you know, it's somewhat depressing, but I think you realize that if you want to stay in the game, then you have to adapt. You have to change with the times. And so you have to, ah, you know, I still very much a journalist, so I think that, you know, it was do or die. And a lot of people died.

R: And so, like you said, adapting with the times. What new skills or, um, talk to me about succeeding as a journalist and what that looked like for you.

I: Then or now?

R: At that time, as you were transitioning.

I: OK. Um, I think it meant, um, longer hours, first off. At that time, in order to get to bigger newspaper, which was always the goal, you still had to set aside time to do big-impact pieces.

So, you're still working on all that stuff, and then you're carving out other, you have to carve out part of your day to do the, the, the hour-to-hour, day-by-day fill-in-the-news-hole, and fill in the website, because I think at that point you had to prove that you could, you could, um, you know be relevant on the Internet, online. But you also had to have one foot, you know, one foot in the tub, as it were. You had to have one foot in the water and that, you know, you're still going after the bigger picture, bigger pieces investigative slash, ah, enterprising stories in order to move up. So, you know, my job, my plan of staying there three years turned into four because of that, because I wasn't able to focus as much time and attention on the bigger pieces that get you noticed. And that get you moved along.

R: So what did that future of newspapers start to look like? How did you feel about the future, at that time?

I: Um, so for the first 3 years, it felt, it felt increasingly tenuous. You know, I didn't know how long I was going to be able to keep the dream alive, as it were. And then in that fourth year, in that fourth year, I actually started to, our plan was to move back to the Midwest, where our families are from. And, ah, cuz we were out on the East Coast at that point, you know we were 1,000 miles away from home, so we wanted to move back closer to home. And, ah, during that fourth year, you know I start looking for a job outside the industry. You know, I just thought, I can't do this anymore. The pay's not right. Salaries had been frozen. And, ah, I had a kid on the way. And, um, I started thinking, how is this going to work? I can't sit around and wait much longer. And by a stroke of luck, of course the next job came along. But, yeah, at that point, I was not bullish on future of newspapers. In the first three years I was still intent on pursuing this

career path. The fourth year, I almost thought that it was insurmountable pressure, that I was just not going to make it and I had to cut chase. But fortunately that didn't happen.

R: Have there been any recent changes in your career or position or job?

I: Yeah, so, we're in 2011 now, and in 2011, as I said, I was almost ready to walk away from the career. And, you know, an opportunity came along to go to major metro newspaper, one of the largest in the country, by some sort of magic stroke of luck. And also, you know, because I still was [unintelligible] at the time by my editor, even though there was still the pressure of the day to day to fill in the, you know, fill in all the buckets, that, ah, you know, I was able to break away and do a couple of nice enterprise pieces that got me noticed. Like I said, by a stroke of luck I was able to move on. So I went to a major metro newspaper, um, also owned by the same company. And I got a huge job there. Ah, it was great! I did that 3 years and I have since moved on again. So, I've been at this most recent job, which is, it's not a trade publication, it's a business publication, been here for 14 months.

R: Where you're working now, at the business publication, is it still in print?

I: Yes, yes. Once again, this is, this is an online-first organization. Print is where we do our analysis. Online is where we do our day-to-day reporting.

R: So, you said that you felt like it was almost this magic stroke of luck. Did it re-energize your career and the career path you were on and how you felt about it?

I: Oh, for sure. For sure. Because, um, now I look back at that first newspaper and there are just two of us in the business, which is unbelievable. I mean, out of the core newsroom, there are just

two of us still in the business left. And, ah, and then, you know, when I look at that next newspaper that was 120 people, when I left, it was 63. So, you know, it was cut in half. And when I got the next job, of course, I thought I've made it. So, of course, it did re-energize my career, and I thought this is going to be the time that I can actually settle and in do my best work. And, ah, I was able to do so for almost three years. And, ah, never thought I'd leave that job. But things continued to deteriorate at that major-metro newspaper. And, ah, the future was bleak at best. And once again, fortunately, by a magic stroke of luck, something else better came a long, and here I am.

R: So at the time that you were, um, that, I guess in 2011, when you got the job at the major, owned by the same company, you said the future was bleak at best, um, was it similarly because of the cuts that were being made in the newsroom or was it something else that changed your perspective? Was it that company or was it newspapers?

I: I think it was both. And in particular the company. The company was more bleak than the, than the whole, than the entire state of newspapers, I think. I mean, that's my perspective on it, but I felt, at the time, that I had a, you know, so I'm a reporter, right? I'm, ah, boots on ground, and I'm covering a major beat. So, for my personal job safety, I felt no pressure, very little pressure. Ah, you know, I felt like it was possible that the people would start to fall around me, but I still thought I'm still relatively cheap. I'm at a major metro, which I thought, at the time, I thought the major metros would be the ones that would survive this. I thought they would be the ones that would be somewhat insulated, just because of the size of the population that the publication served. I thought that, you know, this is going to be a much better place for me to settle and spend a career. Right? But then after that, as the years, as those two, two and a half, as

those three years went on, things got increasingly bleak. There was buyout after buyout. There were layoffs. There were jobs that weren't replaced. Um, there was, in my view, a lack of direction for the company. How are we going to deal with this insurmountable change presented by the Internet? Things just did not get better. They just got increasingly worse and worse. And in fact, after I left, just recently the major metro newspaper went through another round of buyouts and lost, gosh, dozens of fantastic long-tenured reporters. So, it was the right decision to move on. But, yeah, my tenure there just got increasingly bleak. Once again, I don't feel like my job was ever in jeopardy because I was a front-line reporter covering a major issue and they were going to get rid of a lot of other people before they got rid of me. And that's not because of the quality of work I was doing, which I think was good, but it's because of the nature of the job. You know, you're not a newspaper unless you have front-line reporters out there, and I hadn't been there for 20 years, so I wasn't making, you know, in the top third of salaries.

R: Did it change how you felt about the future of the newspapers?

I: Oh, for sure. I mean, yeah! You know, those three years, they took a lot out of my, ah, you know, my outlook for the future. Um, I don't know, I don't know what the future is any more, frankly. I don't know what the future of print is. I mean, there's always going to be a need for, ah, you know, reported content. I hate the word content, but for quality journalism, there's always going to be a need for it. But, um, yeah.

R: It sounds quite roller-coaster like for you. You know, the couple of years where you're feeling, I don't know if it's ever defeated but low, and then re-energized, and then sort of low. And then, you know, being able to get a job again.

I: Yeah, you know, um, I think a lot of people in my situation, when I was at the major metro, would be grateful for their job, which I was. I still thought that I have, I have climbed the mountain in a way. I have somehow escaped these insurmountable odds that have befallen many of the people around me. So, I, it's clear, I felt very fortunate the entire time I was there. I just became increasingly disenchanted with, the, with what was going on around me at that place. And, ah, you know, granted I would still be there right now if this other opportunity didn't come along. And I, ah, I don't feel like I was defeated. I felt like I could have done that for a long time. You just, ah, you know, and once again, I didn't get a raise for three years, so you start questioning, I guess. I didn't at that point, but I was starting to get to the point where I questioned the long-term viability of ... newspapers, you know, metro daily newspapers.

R: You mentioned your current position, you've been there for 14 months. Um, but it's a more targeted publication. You said it's business oriented?

I: Yes, it's business.

R: Does it still build upon what you've done in the past?

I: In what way, I'm sorry?

R: You had mentioned that you were a business reporter at one point. ... Did you target a business publication or was it just something that happened to come up?

I: No, you know, I, ah, I came from a business background. So, I think I always targeted business as an area I wanted to cover. And I thought that it was, um, I thought it a smart career move because, if you build expertise in something like business, you are in a better position than a generalist. I enjoyed it. I knew it. And, ah, yeah, so I always just wanted to be business reporter. And I happened to, so, you know this opportunity, you know, it came to me. I wasn't looking,



and, ah, it was really, yeah, I was just moving from business reporter at one publication to business reporter at another publication across town.

R: And do you consider yourself a journalist today versus, like you said, sort of a content producer?

I: Yeah, totally. Journalist.

R: And how do you feel about your career path now?

I: Feel pretty good. I feel pretty good. I'm in a privately owned company that treats its employees well. It values its employees. Um, I, ah, I'm treated like an adult. I'm expected to do good work. And, ah, yeah, I feel good about it.

R: Is it clear what you need to do to be successful in the future?

I: Um, I think so. I mean, I think so. Obviously the definition of such has changed incredibly since 2005. But, yeah, I think I have a good idea of what I need to do.

R: Can you elaborate on that, the change of the definition?

I: Sure, sure. So, like you said, in days gone by the key was to build up resume and good clips of in-depth reporting, right? And that's what you were focused on, solely on doing good journalism. Here, I think, the key to, ah, staying power in the industry, there are a number of additional, ah, strengths or, um, core competencies that you need to possess. It's not just doing great journalism anymore. You've got to be able to build a brand online. You've got to be able to build a following. You have to know how to reach readers. You have to know how to balance the, ah,

daily churn for the web. You have to be quick, but you also have to add something to the conversation that is unique, and backed by strong reporting. And that's journalism. Yeah.

R: And how do you feel about the future of the newspaper industry today?

I: I, you know, if we're looking at daily newspapers, I think it's still pretty bleak. I don't think it's good. I, ah, don't think anyone has solved the riddle of how you replace the ad dollars you lost on the Internet. With lower cost online, yeah, I think it's going to move to a more subscription model. I'm surprised no one has come up with that magic bullet yet. It seems like the Wall Street Journal has perhaps done the best job of this because they got into the game early. The publication at which I'm at, it's all metered paywall. And, ah, I think that's the key. I've gotten lost here, what was I talking about?

R: Ah, just the future of the newspaper industry today. Just the future being bleak.

I: Oh, yeah, sorry. I think it's pretty bleak, honestly.

R: What do you think about the value of newspapers today?

I: Well, um, I think that in theory the value is higher than it's ever been, because there's so much clutter out there, and, ah, accessible to everybody. You have novices, a lot of people with no journalism background who are producing content. I will call that content. And they're drawing a lot of eyeballs. And no one is doing the type of in-depth journalism, reporting, and day-to-day watchdogging that newspapers are. So I think the value is more important than it's ever been. In practice, the value is questionable because all of the newsrooms have been so gutted. And, ah, people, you know, it's rare that you have somebody who's able to spend a lot of time on a project today. And those projects are the things that have impact, not only for the publication

itself, but for public, and, you know for the government, for, ah, you know, society. I think that, ah, you know, newspapers have lost so many quality people the last few years that, you could, today it's a quarter the size of one 15 years ago, 10 years ago.

R: Is there anything that I haven't asked you, regarding the topics, themes of the research that you would like to add or discuss or you feel like maybe I've overlooked?

I: Um, no, I don't think so. I think perhaps, I think the biggest failing here was the collective wisdom of the industry and the, ah, the underestimation of the Internet. And it's really a, sort of, a sad overture on the state of the industry, and it's really, you know, in a way it's depressing that no one could figure out a better way. And so, we're sort of left with what we've got now, and it's, ah, it's not even half what it was. And it's no, I think, you know, I think the autopsy here is, sort of, why couldn't anyone figure out a better way to retain readers as they migrated from print daily newspaper to their iPhones.

JESSICA

Age: 35

Sex: Female

Marital status: Single

Do you have children: no

Highest educational degree achieved: Bachelor's

Income bracket: \$40,000-\$60,000

Receive the survey directly from researcher or from an associate: Researcher

Researcher: At what age did you first identify yourself as journalist?

Interviewee: Probably right after college, so that would have put me around, what, 22, 23.

R: When did you have your first job in journalism?

I: It actually started in college. I had an internship as public affairs-slash-journalism person.

R: What did you think about the value of newspapers at that time?

I: I thought they were extremely valuable at that point in time, go places & still see out 7 about You could still see them, you could still go places and see them out and about. If you were at the college campus, they were everywhere. If you were, you know, at a restaurant, you would still see them in the news racks. They were extremely valuable. This was before there was a really huge, there might have been an online component, but if there was, it was still so rudimentary that newspapers were still your point of contact. And they were everywhere. So, like, for me, at that point, since working for government, mine were geared more toward the government, too,

which you would see. They would have, um, what were they called? This is bad because they're not there anymore. There was, like, one for aviators; there was one for, um, there were a bunch of them. I just remember there were so many niche newspapers at that point in time, too.

R: What did the future of newspapers look like to you at that time?

I: I thought it looked like successful and long-run career. They had definitely changed from what we used to see in the movies, where everyone was sitting at their typewriter, the secretaries and everyone was smoking and drinking. They weren't quite that point, but they still seemed such a valuable, like, had I known, had I known in college what I learned just several years later when I was actually in the industry, I probably wouldn't have picked a journalism degree, because you kind of went in and you're like, oh, this is great, and you've got this awesome career. And then you get into it, and you see, it's going downhill fast. And then you're at this critical turning point where this is, wow, no longer a very valid career. So, if that helps.

R: At that time, how did you feel about your career, and was it clear what you needed to do to succeed?

I: At this point, it's still the ...

R: The first ...

I: The first point that I became a journalist. So, how did I feel about it? What did I feel about it?

R: How did you feel about your career, and was it clear what you needed to do to succeed?

I: I was that typical budding journalist. But I wasn't the typical journalist in that I wasn't out beating the pavement, looking for stories. I started my journalism, if you really want to consider the journalism career, starting in college, you could stay that, where I did, you know, cover

stories and stuff, but that was more for classes, which is why I don't consider myself a journalist at that point. But when I started my first job, I went into a copy editing-slash-design position. But it was an interesting role because occasionally you might be on a night desk, where you would have to cover something. You know, something came across the line, you would have to pick it up and help wherever you needed to. Um, and at that point, it was all so exciting because it was so new that there was still such a point where I was learning so much. Because what I learn in school, when you convey over into real life, it was just a drop in the hat for what actually came across. And you would have discussions, and you were also in an environment where it was more of a newspaper for beginners and for people where were in that medium stage of their career. So you were surrounded by so many beginners that you found there was a lot of learning from everybody involved. So I think at that point I was super excited about it. The only thing I wasn't as excited about was the actual location in which the newspaper was because it was a smaller one. But it was one of those things where you came to love it, and it just kinda fell into place. But one thing that job, and this is the best thing I could take away from that job, it was a three zoned daily edition. So every single night, we would completely scrap the paper and have 45 minutes to completely redo it, targeted for specific zones. So, there were two that were in [ONE SOUTHEASTERN STATE] and there was one that was in [ANOTHER SOUTHEASTERN STATE]. The best thing I took away from that job was how to copy edit extremely quickly, extremely concisely, but also how to scrap a newspaper and totally rebuild it in a short amount of time, and then to say to your coworker you have, like, literally 5 minutes to look at this entire paper and get it back to me. Like. It was the coolest experience because I've never gone anywhere else and had somebody say, oh yeah, we did multiple-zone editions each night. That was such a unique experience for me that I think that that was one of the things that I

thrived on and learned. I learned deadlines very quickly and accuracy very very quickly. And, since it was a smaller paper, it had older equipment, so the press room was, literally, like, right behind where we were working. So, you would hear the presses turn up every single night. And it was so funny because the press guys would, like, they kinda remind you of the old train conductors, you know, they're dirty, they're inky and they're just crude and crass and you love them. Man, because, the printer would break and they'd be screaming and shouting. And you'd go back and go, hey, what's going on? We're waiting for the first edition. We want to check this thing, like. They're sitting there, they're swearing, cussing up a storm. Then you see a little guy, walk by with a sledgehammer, and he picks that thing up and just slams it into the press. And it's like, ping, just a little pin drop noise, and that sucker works again. Like, that to me, all of those components put together made it such an interesting time to be in there because not only did I learn a lot of things about being quick on my feet but it also showed me the back end of how a paper works, too. So, I could see it go from on my computer to, you know, the film, and on the press itself, and see the presses run. And it was interesting because just before I left, that paper actually allowed people to go to press school for two weeks. They would pay for anybody who wanted, and they would send them to school and teach them how to run the press. And that was one of the things, where, if I'm not going to quit, I'm going to learn how to run this press because it's such an interesting thing, I thought, nobody will ever understand how to do this. But, it was a neat and kind of a, as far as the place itself, it was very low budget, very low run, like most of them are, but you got very quick and you learned skills, like, nobody would ever believe. Just from that, like, that one job. That's the one thing I always loved about it.

R: You have to be multi-talented.

I: Oh, yeah.

R: At this time in your career, still talking about the internship, do you remember what the future of newspapers looked like to you?

I: I think at that point, they still looked very solid too. The interesting thing is that, ah, the point at which I was interning, it was for a government agency, it was right outside a naval base, and that was right when 9/11 hit, too. So, I saw how newspapers, it was an interesting time because you saw how valuable newspapers were with reaching a wide set of people with very timely topics. But you also saw how limited the news that was put out at midnight could've been completely different than what somebody picked up at 6 or 7 in the morning when they read their paper. So you could see, it was like you were standing on a threshold, and it was kind of like, which way was it going to go. You could see the potential for it, and you could also see the downside of it.

R: Ah, do you remember any changes taking place at that company during your employment?

I: My job was interesting there because the command itself didn't have, it didn't have a public relations or journalism category to it, so my job when they initially brought me in was to start up that division. So it was not only to do the internal communication but also the external communication. Um, so there was definitely nothing like that, but it was interesting too to see with that comment they tested all the equipment that the military would use at their other branches. So, while you could hear about all these awesome things going on and see them, sometimes you were limited because of the government for what you could actually get out there PR wise. So it also was an interesting challenge to figure out what needed to stay internally and how you would boost morale, and really everybody knowing everybody, they really wanted it to



really be more of a family, but also what could you get out to public and who's your best audience for it. Does that kind of answer everything?

R: Yeah. Um, did it change your role at all?

I: My role as far as what I did as a career?

R: Or as your job performance ...

I: One thing I actually found was, they hired me, it was a fluke that I even came on board because I was actually, I was applying for an internship somewhere else. In [LOCATION REDACTED], believe it or not. And my dad had said hey, I need to go early to go let the dogs out to his boss, and his boss just kind of gave him a hard time, and "well, why?" And he goes, "Well, my wife and daughter are in Williamsburg. My daughter is applying for this internship." He told him what it was about, and he was like, "no, no, no, no, no. I've been trying to make that happen here. Send her to me." And my was like, hey here's the deal, call this guy. So I call him and explain everything to him, and he's like, no I want you to work for us. The [ORIGINAL OPPORTUNITY] had a 45 minute commute, well, actually, it was probably an hour, and it was unpaid. This one had a 30 minute commute and it was paid on a governmental salary. Ah, duh. No brainer there. I'm taking the governmental one. And it was interesting because based on how well I actually did, they ended up bringing on, there were two of us that started at the same time, and then there was a third one, but he ended up putting me in charge of all of them and pretty much said, here's what I want for the overall goal, make it happen. So it was really cool because based on whatever worked, and it was pretty much at my control, is how that job worked. And I ended up having job for 3 years before I graduated. And it was funny because by the time I left, there was so much morale in that place, and everybody knew everybody, and people would come

to me to tell me what was going on, that I could see that clear difference in it. And everybody could see that clear difference in it.

R: Tell me about your first promotion/job change or first major assignment, anything that's applicable in that first big things in your career.

I: I think the first big job change is the one that stands out the most. Because the first newspaper I worked at, which was my first real journalism job, you know, after I graduated, that was such a small mom-and-pop shop that I remember, I will never forget the conversation, I went to my editor one night and I had said, "Hey, Tony," his name was Tony, and, uh, as a side-note, he was the coolest guy ever. He was your typical news guy. He had a flask in his top desk drawer, he was laid back, and he always wore a blazer with a crest the days he thought he was getting fired. So on the days he came in in the blazer, you were always like, Tony, what did you do. Just in case I get fired. Like, he was that guy. So he was a great boss to learn from because he was a mix of old school and the new school. But I pulled him aside and I told him, here's the deal. I've kind of maxed out as far as where I'm at here. You know, can you give me more? Because I've always been the kind of person that as soon as I stop being challenged, I'll go to my boss and say, you've got to challenge me more or say I'm going to look for something else because I get bored. So, I had that conversation, and he was funny because he looked me in the eye and said, "I love you, you're awesome, but there is no room for you to grow here anymore." And he said if you feel it's in your best interest to leave then, he said, I get it. And I kind of went home that night and thought about it and said, "OK, it's my time." So, I had actually quit, and moved home for, like, 6 months. And in that 6 months time period I took a job that was a no-stress job. I worked in retail every month, or every day, and 6 months in retail told me I needed to get back in

the professional world. So, I came home and searched, after 6 months, went on journalism jobs, which, all the rage that site was, went on there and found jobs, applied, and I remember one of the guys emailed me back and said, you pretty much need to come in just for technicalities, but we want you to take this job. And that ended up being my second job I took. But I remember that being such a distinctive moment as far as where I was because I went I'm not sure that I want to stay here, and it pretty much was 6 months of retail that went "no, no, this is not for you." You need to go back to what you were doing.

R: So, how did you feel about your career path at that time?

I: At the point ...

R: That new job.

I: With the new job, I was pretty excited because I went from role where I was just a copy editor and designer on a night desk to being, I ended up being a night news editor. So my role changed, essentially from being part of a team to more of a leadership role because the way that news office worked, there was a local, there was an editor, and when he went home at night, you took over the newsroom, which is where I was. So, for someone as young as I was to then take over control of the newsroom that had about 12 people in it, give or take, it felt pretty awesome. Like, it felt like a lot of responsibility, but it felt like I was ready for it. But it was also one of those things that as I was there, it was just interesting to see what kind of things got thrown in your lap. But that was just a, it wasn't unusual for me to go photograph something or to pick up a story. I worked on a redesign at that paper. You know, the online component was picking up, so we were working on uploading stories at night, too. It was a Media General paper, too, so you were uploading them to their news bank. There was another kid who came on board, and I had to teach

him how to design. So it was a very big change, but an exciting change. And it was linked with a lot of [REGION REDACTED] papers, so the potential to move was there. And it was very desirable at that time. But I liked that it was such a small paper too that it was very community oriented. It was one of those points, it was the point that the community paper started to rise. That niche product started to come back where people wanted to know what was going on in their back yard. And it was interesting because of all Media General's newspaper, ours was the one that was the fastest growing of all of them, which was interesting. Oh, you're looking at [CITY], you're looking at these huge places compared to where we technically were, and we were the fastest growing one because people wanted to know what was going on in their back yard.

R: At that time how did you know how to succeed as a journalist?

I: I think I did. I think it was one of those things, where, I remembered, this kind of went back to that first job I had, somebody once telling me that if you're a journalistic person, your very nomadic. So, our timeframe, I think journalism falls into the same category as an armed service person. You work somewhere for about a year or two and then you move. But you're also in the same category as doctors. You work night shifts, holidays. The only thing, we get crappy pay and they don't. That was how I always described myself as the differences between the two. Um, but I felt like I knew at that time what I needed. And I was starting to, that company was really good about sending me to different training opportunities, so, you know, I was being put, I was crossing paths with people who were at a higher level of journalism where I knew I wanted to go. So, it was a great opportunity to say, "OK, so, what do I do with this." And it was interesting because that's where I met [NAME REDACTED] with [NEWSPAPER NAME REDACTED] and

she and [NAME REDACTED] from [NEWSPAPER REDACTED] at a women in leadership journalism conference. And I kind of told them “oh, the [NEWSPAPER THEY WORKED AT] is the paper, it’s my destination paper.” If I make it to [THAT NEWSPAPER], I’m good. And I remember when we left that conference, they were both like, “no, you can do it, you’re at that point.” And I said, “no, I’m not. I’m too young to be at that point.” And they encouraged me, and they were like, you know, reach out if you ever have questions. And that’s when I found the job with [NEWSPAPER STARTUP], and it popped up and I was like, “Hey, I know this girl.” And I sent her a note and was like, “hey, is this the so-and-so from this conference?” And she was like, yeah. And I was like “is this for real?” and she was like, “yeah, are you interested?” And I was like, “Yeah,” and she said, “You need to apply.” And that’s how I went to my third journalism job.

R: So still referring to the second experience, or the transition to the third, how did you feel about the future of the newspapers and what did that future look like?

I: It still looked awesome at that point. It was at the, it was at the point though where readership was picking up for local newspapers. It didn’t matter if the local newspaper was [NAME OF A MID-MARKET SIZE REGIONAL PAPER] or a massive one, or a smaller one that was, you know, a quarter of it. It was picking up. The future still looked really bright, but it looked more along the lines that people wanted to reconnect with their community and their city and their town. So the emphasis was shifting to not covering as much, like, national news and worldwide news. It was more what was happening at the city council meeting and here’s what the planning commission was looking at. It was more along that line, and at first I kind of thought I don’t

understand it. But the more I got into it, the more I realized, OK, this is important and I get the understanding of it. Um, but it was still very bright. We were just seeing that shift at that point.

R: What changes do you remember taking place at that company during your employment and did it change your role?

I: That company had some upheaval at that time. Because, that's when, this is going to sound weird, but do you remember when gas shot up to, like 4 bucks a gallon? That's when that time period was. So at that time period, there was a lot of shift within that paper because they started selling off some of them that weren't making money. And they started repositioning certain people. So, if this paper wasn't doing well, the publisher went away and somebody new came on board. Our paper was never really touched. Our publisher went to a different paper within that group. But, like, ours was, because we were still making money and because we were gaining in readership, we were pretty much untouched. But we were seeing the fallout amongst all the other papers within our paper group. And, you know, just nationally you were starting to see papers start to fold. So, it was that point where if you were a smaller paper, you're still good. You're still golden, and there's still a career. You just have to shift with it.

R: Did it change your role there at all?

I: My role, believe it or not, didn't change there. I did have a couple, like, as far as, like, my job title, no, it didn't change. But my role, it was pretty much the same. Like, I was still the night news editor. I was still in charge of all the design. That's when I picked up the redesign of the newspaper, and I also picked up the ... special sections. So, then there were a couple things that came up every now and then and that was done. But for the most part everything stayed the same. The only, well actually, now that I think about it, the only thing that happened, our paper

bought, within our community we actually had two competing papers within a small territory, and we absorbed the other one, which was a weekly, featurey kind of section. So we absorbed that, and the only change that came out of that was a couple of their people went away, but their publisher-slash-editor got absorbed into our company, so they kind of made this fake position for him. But what also came about, it was very clear from the get-go that he wasn't up to par, that he didn't know what he was doing. And he was just outpaced in role he was in. And he ultimately, I can't remember if he retired or was asked to leave. But he didn't survive. It took them a couple, like it took them a couple years to let him go because he was there after I left. But I'll never forget because he was one of those guys, who, you know you're on the outskirts of [REGION REDACTED], and there are people who are kind of sophisticated and people who are not, which is how I'll explain it. I remember I was always amazed that he was in a leadership position and he didn't know possessives. This is what always blew my mind with this guy. Instead of saying the Civil War, he would always say the war between the states. And because he didn't know possessives, he would always write around them ... the journalistic people were always, like, oh my god, put the possession in and save us the space. Like, you're killing me. But we knew if we held out long enough, ultimately, he would either realize that he was outpaced or the company would say, you know what, we don't need to double up on this. So those were the only changes that came about when I was there.

R: Tell me about a time that you remember a change that involved the Internet at a job. For example either networking, or online publishing, or something that was specifically related to the Internet.

I: Well, there were a couple points. That job that I just spoke about, the one where I was in the [REGION REDACTED], they actually had a network, so all the Media General newspaper had what they called Newsbank, so every night you would filter your local content in there, and so anyone else in Media General could pick it up and use it. So, for us, there were small, community newspapers. We were [COMMUNITY REDACTED]. So then there was [CITY], they were right next to us, then there was [CITY AND ANOTHER CITY], so for all of us to grab the content was useful because we were still within a range of each other but still far enough that we didn't have to use it. But when Newsbank came on board, that kind of changed how you felt your coverage needed to be. You didn't have to say, you need to go to [ANOTHER CITY] and cover this cuz you could just call [THAT CITY] and say, are you covering this, yeah, when's it going to be on Newsbank, thanks. So then you could just grab it. That was a definitive shift in how we would determine our coverage. And then I think the second shift that I saw was at the job that followed that, when we were at [NEWSPAPER NAME]. And that shift came with, I don't remember [NEWSPAPER NAME] having a really strong, I feel like right at the point we were starting to really gain traction and right when they shut us down is right when the Internet component and social media component really came up. But then it was a moot point at that point.

R: Did it change impact your position at the company, these changes?

I: Surprisingly no. But it was interesting because both of those are one of those things were, it was that point at which, if you were a journalist, and I don't want to say a younger one because there were older ones who could see the change, but you could see the change within our society. And you knew the papers were on the edge. You knew that within the next couple years, if



they're not already there or on their way there, they're going to die. Like, you could see that distinctive shift, and it was a matter of how are they going to adjust to it.

R: How did you feel about your career path at that time?

I: I still felt good. Ironically, I felt this is still great industry to be in. I still felt good, um, I think part of that was because I was at a paper that was doing well because there was that shift.

Because there was that shift of the community paper, and people were still wanting to know what was going on. That there wasn't that question of how they were doing. They were still doing great.

R: At this time how did you know how to succeed as a journalist?

I: Still thought I did. Still thought I had all the right tools.

R: How did you feel about the future of the newspapers and that future looked like?

I: I still thought it was strong. But again, it was still at that point where you were seeing newspapers. Like you could drive down people's roads and still see people's mailboxes and you could still see the dots that tell you which paper they were getting and when. Like, it was still at that point. Like, you could drive down a neighborhood and go, oh, green dot, green dot, green dot, green dot, look, that's four subscriptions. And, you could still physically see that. That's how they were still done, you know. So it still felt good.

R: Have there been any recent changes in your career/position/job?

I: No, for that time I was there I pretty much kept that role. I didn't have another change until I pretty much maxed out of that role, too. That's when I went looking for that other one. That's when that opportunity came up.

R: What about recent changes in your career?

I: How recent are we talking about? Very recent? My biggest career shift was when I got out of newspaper journalism and got into PR journalism side. I still consider public relations and that, I still consider that to be journalism. It's just a different type of journalism. I think it's a journalism because you're still trying to get a message out. It's just a more targeted message based on certain needs, you know.

R: And is that your current position?

I: Yep. So, currently I'm the director of communications. But it's at a private school. But my role still, my role straddles the marketing and communication line. So, the other reason I still consider myself a journalist is because the school has two goals. Like, my job is compartmentalized but they all go across each other. So, my goal is to keep the word of mouth going about the school as much as possible. When we have something going on, reaching out to the media and letting the media know what's going on. So, that part is still in the journalism because I'm still collecting facts, I'm still reaching out to let a greater public know what's going on. But then I have a more, kind of like community journalism because the school is really big on communicating with their parents and their students. So, there's an internal communication that goes on, you know, it used to be a weekly newsletter, but then we kicked it back to an every other week newsletter. And that is, you're literally going out and finding out what's going on by talking to teachers and students and parents. And so it's a different type of journalism, and the interesting thing is those stories

don't go to a printed product. They go straight to the website, and it's filtered out. So, your reach, yes, while it's still a very small reach. But every now and then, you're like, oh, check that out, so and so from this state found it because they Googled this and we came up in their search engine. So, you still have that journalism aspect of it. So, it's interesting how they all kind of cross over. It's just a different degree of journalism with that online component, I guess, if you want to call it that.

R: How did you feel about your career path at this time?

I: I feel like it's a successful one versus had I stayed in print journalism. I feel like, if I would have stayed, and it's a double-edged sword, because when I left, I left because of layoffs.

Because it was, OK, our company's getting ready to sell, we're downsizing, we're struggle, it was because of layoffs. But the interesting thing is, when I was, before I was laid off, I had kinda gone back and forth for several months, is this still the industry for me? Because you could see it. My love of the industry died at one specific point. When they said, when they killed [PRIOR PUBLICATION SHE WAS EMPLOYED WITH], my love for the industry died. That's when I went, I saw something that was the future of the industry, the lifeblood of the industry, and something that was taking it where it needed to go with one product, with one specific group of people who would have made it work, and the company killed it. And at that point, I went, they're done. Even though I wasn't at that specific piece of the company anymore, because I was at a different one, that to me was, like, the knife in the coffin, at which I said, when the layoffs happened, it was the best thing that could've happened because it forced me out of something I could see coming. And it forced me to be in a different role. But kinda like we were talking about earlier, I had the skillsets to just roll right over into another industry and be completely

fine. It's that adaptability, that deadline adaptability you have that makes us, what I feel like, is a special group of people who just roll right into the industry that I walk into. And the funny thing is, that next industry, the role that I was picked up as was as an editor-slash-writer. And that's how it morphed into a PR role. Because I went into a role where I was editing and writing for a trade publication, and then the lady who was there needed help w the PR, realized I had a graphic design background from some of the journalism stuff that I had done. And they all collided into the perfect PR-type of job.

R: So, at that time, I guess we're referring ...

I: So, that was kind of a job or two, yeah.

R: At this more recent time, um, do you know how to succeed as a journalist?

I: I think at that point, I debated whether or not I was still a technical journalist, even though I knew I was. I didn't look at myself in the journalism, like, aspect, like, if you were to say to someone, "I'm a journalist," they're going to be like, "oh, what newspaper do you work for or what magazine?" because I didn't work for, and then I went into non-profits and I've been there ever since. So I still consider myself a journalist, but not by journalists' standards. So, my measure of success for journalism had changed to that extent because it wasn't the same measurements. It was more, OK, how can my background in journalism help me become this PR person that I know needs to happen. And it was interesting, too, because at that point, when all these papers were doing layoffs, and everybody was leaving, most people went into PR field because that's what they were equipped for. So it wasn't unheard of to be doing a new job and run across somebody you knew from a paper who was now doing PR at another firm. And it was, "Oh, hey I know you." And we knew that that mutual respect was there because we understood

how it worked. So, um, yeah, I guess it'd be hard to say I knew how to succeed because the terms had kinda changed. I still felt confident but the definition of success had changed.

R: And how did you feel about the future of the newspapers and what did that future looked like at that time?

I: It's like, if you had a horse/buggy and you saw the car come in. You saw the horse and buggy die. It was that same thing, where you felt like, it's almost like sitting on a porch and watching the world go by. You could see the future, you knew exactly what happened, but you knew there was going to be a delay between what you knew actually what was happening and what you knew was coming. So, I don't, I just knew the future was there. I knew it wasn't the bright, respectable paper that we had worked for. That papers were different at that point. And at that point too, you were starting to see more and more journalists on TV, who have been caught lying or making stuff up. So, that whole profession, not only were they dealing with a decline in sales and readership, but then they had all this, just controversy that made people just go, I'm done. And then, the Internet was still, it was booming at that point. And then you had all these other things, you could see the shift in the culture. People start to go, oh, if it's on Wikipedia it must be true. You could almost see the ignorance of world start to be born. Not that it wasn't already there, but you could see that shift. So, at that point, I just felt like I could see newspapers dying. But the interesting thing is my jobs are still so reliant upon them that you have to figure out, you could see that conflict come up too, where you knew you had to adapt, but you could see that there was still something there that you needed to use. But you also knew that down the road, you had to get a lot more savvy in how you reached out to it. So, like a case in point, now in my current role, I can't just call the local education reporter at [NEWSPAPER] because if I'm not

the [CITY] school board and I've got a lot of strife, but I've got good news about this amazing program that's only offered at our school in [STATE], they're not going to pick it up. So, I know though, that I can go to another niche publication and they're going to be, like, that's awesome. So, it takes a lot more work now to get the news disseminated. And I think a lot of it is because of those things, because newspapers shrunk, the trust in the journalism professionals shrunk. The birth of the Internet and all that it can be, good and bad, took over. It was just a compilation, and it was like watching the perfect storm. And yet nobody understood it. And so it's an interesting place we're sitting at.

R: Ah, that pretty much tackles the changes taking place in that company ,whether it's company or industry wide, it sounds like it contributed to your change in your role, too?

I: Yeah. It's so weird, some of the stuff you think about but you don't talk about it. And it's interesting you kinda know what your grandparents feel when they start talking about this stuff. You feel like you haven't lived through that much, but then you're like, oh my god, look at all the stuff I've already lived through, and the change is unreal.

R: So, do you consider yourself a journalist today?

I: Yes. I still do, but not in traditional journalist sense. And so the question also becomes, maybe it's not really a question I guess, but more of an observation, but I don't think your traditional journalists are still alive and well, per se. I think they've morphed so much. Because even your old, crusty journalist guy is like, ugh, they're doing something that they're writing. They're, you're, imagine, like, your crusty guy who couldn't wait to break that story about the corrupt city council. Now, while he's getting the information, he's also tweeting about it, sending something

to somebody to get up on Facebook so that they can get the hit first. You're getting so much more bits and pieces because now they have to be not just a reporter and gatherer of facts and disseminator of information, but they have to be the disseminator of information from the time they think there might be an issue all the way out. And then not only are they sitting there with their pen and their paper like they used to be, but now they have to have a camera and have their smart phone to record the clips so that hopefully if it goes viral, ok great. They have so many more hats that I don't think your traditional journalist exists anymore.

R: How do you feel about your career path now?

I: I think it's still a good career path. I think it's new obstacles now. I still feel like it's the PR-slash-journalism industry is very alive and very well, especially with all the craziness in our world. All the controversy, everything, I think it's a very needed industry. But it's interesting that it's always one of the first industries to go when the economy gets tough. But then it's the first one they need when disaster. So it's an interesting place to be in, but it's also cool because it's at cusp again where, it's like the journalists of days past, it's not just a paper-and-pen job anymore. It's still what same approach to what journalists do but it's on a different scale. So, you know, while I'm sitting there, trying to figure out how to send something out to a newspaper, I'm also thinking, well, hey, if I make a video of this, I can send it out to so-and-so, and if I can get it to viral. So it's still many hats, it's just to a different audience.

R: Is it clear what you need to do to be successful in the future?

I: It is. But what's interesting is those definitions change so constantly. So, I think the biggest thing, and it's not even the birth of the Internet because it's been around, but it's just the power

of the Internet. And the power of smart phones and how they've made our society so different, so instant and so connected. It's almost like everything is constantly changing. And if you're not staying in front of it, if you're just in the current, you're behind already. If you're not in front of it, you're screwed. You know, and it's like at that exact point where we sat there and watching [NEWSPAPER], where we knew, when we first started with that project, we knew this paper is the future of newspapers. And then we saw a traditional newspaper that was attached with it struggle because they were behind the times with the Internet being their focus when they should have already been focused on that. And you could sit there and see it die. You could sit there and go, they didn't shift fast enough to get ahead of the curve, and now their struggling to swim in a pool. It's that same exact feeling now, where you could be on your game, but if you're not ahead of the curve, you're fast going to be behind it. And you're fast going to be outpaced. And I think that's our new society.

R: How do you feel about the future of the newspaper industry?

I: I'm kinda torn because, the original believer in me still wants it to still be there. But I think the realistic person sees it dead. And it's so, as somebody who now works on the opposite side, where I'm pitching the stories to the media and also buying the ads to support my piece. You know I sit there and I go, and here's a good case-in-point that, I don't know, if this explains my point, but so in my role, I'm also in charge of marketing for the school. So, I can sit down with a [NEWSPAPER AD] rep. And here's a great example, my marketing budget for the school is \$80,000 per year, which sounds like a lot of money, but it's pittance. It's like nothing. And I can sit down and she'll pitch all these components where she's like, "so here's what we can do, what we think will work for your admissions season," which is literally November to February. Her



pitch will be \$45,000 of an \$80,000 budget. So I look at her and I go, OK, half of that, not even half, like three-fourths of it, is still in print. Print media, which I have said to her, because I know her. I have worked with her at [NEWSPAPER]. We know each other. We know where you're at. Let's be realistic. One shot in a print newspaper, to hope somebody reads it, when you're readership is down, your product is down, that's crazy for me the way I look at it. But you're going to sell me a digital ad at, like, half the cost because you still don't see the value in that component. It's that same spot, where you just go, you're dead. You're dead. And you still haven't caught up. And it's been five years since that, actually, it's been more than that since then. It's been eight years. It's been eight years since that pivotal moment when I was laid off and switched industries, and that same newspaper still has not figured it out. So, do I see a death of it? Yeah, I do. It's just when are they finally going to realize it's dead? But the death of it is still in the paper product. I think a newspaper will always be there but I think that the investigative story is gone. I think the hard-hitting news, gone. I think it's more of a, the future of it is an Internet-based, a "hey, so-and-so has a smart phone and they watched a kid get beat at school," now that's all the rage on TV. It's a different future, and it's not the pride future that it used to be because of how our society has changed in the way it consumes information. The information that's available to them, and newspapers are too late to jump on board. And I think it's tragic actually.

R: What did you think about the value of newspapers today?

I: I think today's newspapers? I don't think the value is there. And I think it's pretty evident when you look at it. Because I don't think the readers find the value there either. Because I think no matter what had happened, if the readers felt that they were still getting a valuable product,

they would be behind it. But when you look at a newspaper shrink from, like, six sections a day to like, three, and it's like a pittance compared with what it used to be, it shows you the value is gone. But you can also see the value is gone because when they did their layoffs, they laid off their most valuable people, the people who had the experience, the people who knew how to chase down the stories, who could shape and mold the next generation. They did it to themselves. They shot themselves in the foot at that point. You know, they picked, in my opinion, they picked a paycheck over experience, and that's the worst thing they could have done. And I think when they did that is when the value just disappeared.

R: Who do you mean when you say they?

I: I say they as in the corporate people who ran the papers who made the bad decisions. I think it's the people who sat in an office who were not as in touch with the product or the people who made that product and put their heart and soul into it. They are the people who sat, like, at a table and made decisions without the proper information. Or they looked at it as a basic dollar sign. So they could have been the person who owned the paper. It could have been the higher ups. I mean, I knew exactly what happened. They were looking to turn over a newspaper that they no longer wanted. And they were trying to cut corners as much as possible to make it look like it was still a profitable thing when it no longer was. I get it. But the interesting thing is that, years later, that paper still hasn't sold. And what used to be an amazing, phenomenal product that as award-winning every year, is no longer that product. And I'm still friends with a lot of people who still work there. And you ask them what it's like, and they're like, it's the worst place to walk into. It's sad. It's depressing. Everyone's afraid every time they call a meeting it's going to be, "guess what. Five of your coworkers were just laid off." Nobody's certain, and that's an awful place to be. And it's a shame because it used to be a place where you used to say, "I worked at

[NEWSPAPER], or I worked at [SUBSIDIARY NEWSPAPER], and people were like, wow. And you felt like you had accomplished something. And now, you know, there's no clue to it. It's a sad day.

R: Those are all of my questions. Is there anything I haven't asked you regarding the topics and themes we've discussed that you would like to add or bring up or discuss or comment on?

I: I don't know. You feel bad because you look at it and go, it's almost like the death of any dream. I was so happy and young, and it's not that I'm not, but to see something that's such a major piece of history die the way it is. And it's sad because kids these days don't even pick up a paper and read it. You know, they genuinely believe that what they read on Wikipedia is true. Having an argument with somebody now, it's scary because you kind of see the dumbing down of nation because of something like this. And it sounds like such a small thing, but really that's what it was. That turning point, if you look at our history, that's what it was. Our world has dumbled down. And I want to say it's because of the birth of the Internet and the lack of papers. Which is amazing because I feel like the Internet should give you the power of information, but it's uncontrolled information. There's no, you have to prove that it's true. Any idiot can put something out there. So, it's scary that there's nobody behind fact checking the way they should be. That what was once such a honored tradition of keeping people accountable and essentially telling the truth and reporting stuff that people would never know about. Sharing news, it's not the same anymore. It's kind of, I don't know, it's not like I'm a Debbie Downer, even though I'm aware that's how I sound, but it is. It's like watching, you know, you could imagine what the World War II veterans feel like watching their comrades die, and nobody is capturing their stories. It's that same feeling. Here's a piece of history that's literally dying, and our children

will never know about it. They won't understand it, and they won't experience it. And it's something I never thought I'd see in my lifetime. Not as a child did I ever think that I'd see that in my lifetime. And the kicker is that we still have journalism classes. And we still have people who are, like, I'm going to be a journalist. And you look at them and go, I appreciate the enthusiasm, but, sweetie, pick something else. And you don't want to be that negative person to them, but realistically, you're not going to survive. And if you're, I don't want to say an optimist, but if you're an optimist, you're really not going to survive in that field. You need to, journalists are a whole different breed of people because they are very intelligent people. They're quick-witted. They don't have a problem with arguing when they know you are wrong, but they also are open to ideas. It's the weirdest mix of person you'll ever come across. ... I hope that that breed doesn't die. I hope that it transitions into something better and greater. But right now, I don't think there's enough being done to make that happen.

ELIZABETH

Age: 24

Sex: Female

Marital status: Single

Do you have children: No

Highest educational degree achieved Bachelor's

Income bracket: \$20,000-\$40,000

Receive the survey directly from researcher or from an associate: Researcher

Researcher: At what age did you first identify yourself as journalist?

Interviewee: Um, let's see, 19.

Researcher: When did you have your first job in journalism?

Interviewee: Full-time job?

R: Doesn't matter. Whatever you would identify as your first job.

I: Ah, my first job, I guess, 20, no, 22.

R: And what was the position or title?

I: Copy editor.

R: At that time of the first position, what did you think about the value of newspapers?

I: I felt that they were super valuable. I mean, I mean, the industry was struggling, but I thought, you know, it's still important for people to get their local news, and to be informed about what's going on in the world around them. And, sort of, I was, I was the voice of reason in a digital age where everyone is shouting and giving an opinion. Newspapers are the ones who get it right.

R: And what did the future of newspapers look like to you?

I: Um, a little tenuous, but I thought the place I was employed at had pretty good prospects. Um, all the people I interviewed with seemed to think the newspaper was rosy and bright. They hadn't really been affected too much by, um, job cuts and things that other newspapers had. And the fact that they had a full-functioning copy desk, just really impressed me because a lot of other places, their copy desks were bare-bones and they were combining copy editors and designers and that wasn't the case at this place.

R: Ah, how did you feel about your career at that time and was it clear what you needed to do to succeed?

I: Well, it was just beginning, so I had internships under my belt at that point. But I felt like it was going in a pretty positive direction that I landed this job right out of school, and, so I felt pretty good about it. But I knew that to succeed, obviously I needed more experience, and I wanted to get more skills, whether that be just improving my copy editing or, you know, learning web stuff, or, you know, writing better headlines. Any way to learn, especially from the people I was working with, which I got to, and I still get to.

...

R: What changes do you remember taking place at that company during your employment?

I: Oh, uh, well, three months after I got there, a couple of the people who were involved in my hiring process were let go. The news editor at that time who had spoken up very highly for me

and who was, you know, instrumental in helping me get hired there, he was let go. So, um, he had been there a really, really long time, so that was pretty shocking. So, that was three months in. And then about a year later, about half our copy desk was let go, along with other positions around the newsroom. I think it was a 25 percent decrease overall, across the board. Um, just because our finances were bad. Um, after that, a lot of people left voluntarily. Our editor in chief left. Um, our managing editor left. And, you know, even now people continue to trickle out, leave for other jobs in journalism or other jobs. They're kind of dropping like flies.

R: Has it changed your role at all?

I: Yeah, it has made me do more. It's really made everybody on the copy desk do more. Um, so we started doing, well, I guess at the start of this year we had already been doing web production, but it kind of sped up the timetable for me doing web production, wire editing, so it felt like a battleground promotion. There's no one else here to wire edit, so you're going to learn how to do it, like, right now. So, you know, there used to be a dedicated person who would slot the copy and anymore it's just whoever is free, you know, to slot it. Spending less time on stories, maybe. Like, trying to still be thorough, but having less time to spend on them. Um, so it's been, sometimes you might feel a little rushed.

R: So, I know it hasn't been really long, but talk about a first promotion or job change or first major assignment, or something that you recognize as a first big moment or step and what that looked like as far as your position? And it might even include, like, some of these things that you sort of lumped together that have changed your role. I think some of those might also be along the lines of identifying some of those same things that you identified as, like you said, a battlefield promotion.

I: Yeah, I guess wire editing would probably be the biggest one anyway, just because you're actually shaping the content of the paper. You're choosing which wire stories go into the newspaper. So there's kind of a pressure there. What if I don't get something in? What if I miss something big? Or what if, um, I put a story in that, you know, somebody doesn't like or whatever. So that was a lot of pressure there. That's actually one of the things that I enjoy most now, just because it is fun looking through all the stories and pick them and kind of plan all the pages. But, you know, I think that's when I really felt like, holy crap, I'm doing this. I'm helping shape the paper. I'm not copy editing what other people are doing. I can pump some pages out, like, take that, take that, from me.

R: It's a sense of empowerment, right?

I: Yeah.

R: Did it change at all how you feel about your career path?

I: I mean, I still, I feel pretty good about it. I'm not sure I want to stay in copy editing forever. Um, but I would like to stay in journalism, I think, in writing somehow. I can't really see myself doing PR. But, yeah, it is, there is there is definitely something with wire editing specifically, there is definitely something to being able to point to that you've tangibly done and to hold in your hands. I know I probably won't be able to do that at my next job. It'll probably all be digital or something, but, yeah.

R: Do you, with that regard, with that career path, do you think you know how to succeed as a journalist?



I: I'd like to think I do. I'm not actually sure because I have been looking. I'm, yeah, it seems like a lot of jobs now, you need, like, social media skills, which I have some but I don't have a ton, and I'm not really interested in learning a whole lot, honestly. So, I'd like to think I have what it takes to succeed as a journalist, but maybe not what journalism is defined as now. If that made any sense whatsoever?

R: It does, yeah. What do you think journalism is defined as now?

I: Writing quickly, getting it on social media to share, and still getting it accurate at fair but at the same time doing it in a way that is bite sized and understandable in 30 seconds for people. I sound like such a cynic. Oh my god. I'm sorry.

R: You don't have to apologize in any way. Um, do you feel like, I guess, is it a different definition now from when you started?

I: I think so. Like, I think, you know, when I first started, there were lots of projects, lots of long-form journalism projects, spread out over weeks, I'm sorry, not weeks but days, over the course of a week. And we don't do very many of those anymore. We still have people writing some stories, some longer than others, and they're all, I think, you fair and they get it straight and right and everything. But I've also noticed that we're trying to shift a lot of that to readers on social media, and sometimes stories that are very click-baity, just to try to get those clicks from people, so.

R: That term that you used, is it click-baity?

I: Yeah, click-baity.

R: Click-baity. Um, so how did you feel, with that regard, about the future of the newspapers?

I: Um, not as optimistic as I was. Um, I think that the big ones like the New York Times, the Post, the big ones like that are going to be fine because I think there is a demand still for people

who recognize that they are the balance, the voice of, they are the voice of reason there. But I think maybe that same value is not seen for the middle-sized papers, the smaller papers. They might have the news that people need to know, like local politics and stuff like that, but I don't think people necessarily place the value on that the way they should. Or, if they do, um, they're the people who, frankly, they're not going to be around one day. And I'm not sure if people my age are that interested in the news they should be interested in. So, I'm not very sure, I'm not super optimistic I would say.

R: Do you feel like the role that you play does anything to change that, people your age being interested in the news?

I: Um, My role specifically as a copy editor?

R: Or even your role as a part of the organization.

I: I mean, I would say, personally I try to share stuff, like, on Facebook and Twitter, a little bit. I try to promote stuff on there. Um, I write for the business section a little bit, so I try to write in, like, a fun sort of voice that kind of, I don't know, maybe some might find it fun. But otherwise, I don't know that I'm doing very much for the cause, so.

R: So, talk about a time where, you mentioned it before, like the expediting of the web production, but a change that involved the Internet specifically.

I: Yeah, um, well, when we, we were short-handed, so I started learning web production, um, maybe more quickly than planned. Um, so I would post stuff, or prepare stories, local and wire, for the Internet, and that would be adding photos, adding links, promoting some of those stories on social media. And at the same time, on Friday nights, I would also be the breaking news

reporter, so I would be checking in with the dispatchers and writing up any accident, fire stories, crime stories that came in on those shifts, and get them ready quick. Push them up to our web site. That's, ah, um, that's apparently what people like to read, crime stories.

R: It sounds like it changed your role a little bit. You went from being hired as a copy editor to being a producer and reporter.

I: There were some, at one point, there were some weeks I was doing more web production than copy editing, like I would have 3 web production shifts a week and two copy editing ones. Yeah, that wasn't so great. It's not like I disliked it; it's just, you know, it's not what I was hired to do. ... that has changed. Now we don't do, the copy editors don't do any web production anymore. We just switched to a new content- management system. Now it's back to all copy editing. Like, all copy editing, all the time.

R: So it clearly changed some of your performance, but at that time, if you can remember in those moments, do you think it changed your career path or it impacted the way you were thinking about it in any way?

I: Um, it taught me that probably don't want to do web production for a living. Um, that I could do it if I needed to, but that it wasn't that I was ever going to get a social media job, content manager or anything like that. But it was good, I feel like it was valuable experience though to know those skills, like, just in case I ever need to use them ... it was good training in that.

R: Do you feel like you knew how to succeed as a journalist?

I: Once I knew how to do that, I thought I was doing OK, yeah. I thought, OK, I can copy edit, I can write stuff, and I can put it on the Internet. Like, I'm doing OK. I think at that point, like, yeah, I'm doing all right.

R: You're doing it all.

I: Essentially yes.

R: That's crazy.

I: Kinda crazy, yes.

R: How did you feel about the future of the newspapers and what that future looked like at that time?

I: Um, that's about the time I started to really question it. Just because those were, those were, ah, around the time we were starting to hear about the possibility of layoffs. We knew the ax was going to fall; we just didn't really know where. So that's when I started getting, ah, a little less optimistic about it, I'd say.

R: Um, do you consider yourself a journalist today?

I: I do.

R: So, you mention that the definition might have changed a little bit, but tell me why you feel like you're a journalist.

I: Because, I help work on, and occasionally report, stories that people are interested in and stories that people, like, information that's important to people. And I make sure that it is factually accurate. That it's fair. That we're not libeling anybody. Um, and putting it out there so

that people can be more fully informed, and yeah, you know, what's going on out there so that they can act as they want.

R: How do you feel about your career path now?

I: Um, well, I don't know if I want to stay at [CURRENT NEWSPAPER EMPLOYER]. Um, I plan on leaving in the spring. And, um, but I do, like I said, I want to stay in journalism and probably won't work in a newsroom ever again, like, not in a paper-print newsroom. Um.

R: Do you have plans?

I: Well, sort of. The plan is to go to [CITY]. Up there, I don't know what I'll do.

R: Nothing specific, you're just hoping for a job that still keeps you in journalism?

I: Nothing specific. Yeah.

R: Just not in a traditional sense?

I: Yeah, I'm starting to apply to, um, outlets up there. And a lot of them are digital only. Like [NAMES OF PUBLICATIONS]. There's some that are print and digital. Um, [NAME OF LARGE-MARKET NEWSPAPER] would be the only way I'd work in a traditional newsroom again.

R: Are you open to that?

I: Yeah, I think so. [THAT PAPER] seems to be doing pretty well, so, unless, you know, I'm jinxed and destruction follows me wherever I go. Yeah, I think [THAT PAPER] would be OK.

R: So you're still open to ...

I: Still open to it. Would like to stay in it, but realistic of the possibility that it may not happen. So, yeah.

R: Would you be OK with that?

I: I think so. If I found, yeah, if I found a place, I think what really matters most for me is that I feel I'm doing something that helps other people and is important in that regard. Whether that's in print or in digital, like, online only, yeah, it'd be OK. It would just be a little less satisfying because I can't quite hold my computer in the same way, in my hands the same way I can hold a newspaper. So.

R: Is it clear what you need to be successful in the future?

I: Sorta? Sorta. I mean, a lot of these, yeah, like, a lot of these job apps, they say they want the same things. You know, they want X number of years of experience. And they want someone to write on deadline, work well others, who's really good in social media. I don't really get that, I do, but, um, but, you know, who's good with AP Style. So I guess those are the essentials. You know those haven't really changed, I guess, except for the social media part.

R: Um, how did you feel about the future of the newspaper industry?

I: Um, well, yeah, I'm not super optimistic. I think the big ones will be OK. But I think the mid-sized ones are gonna really struggle because people might need to read about a council meeting story, but they're not always the most captivating story out, and so I think they kind of get lost in the shuffle of whatever, when you see everything else on Facebook, you know, cats vs. city council. I can't blame people who would rather see the cat video, so I'm not sure that, I don't know, that, you know, that the value, again is necessarily, that people necessarily see the value there.

R: That's my next question. What do you think about the value of newspapers today?

I: I still think they're super-valuable. I mean, especially for the local news, the national, I mean, even the national and international news, you know, you still get stories in the paper that aren't, you know, super publicized on Facebook. Cuz, like, all the news in the world is out there on the Internet. It's just a matter of, are you seeing it? Cuz you can only, you know, how is your news getting to you? If that at all made sense, but, um, anyway, sorry, the newspaper sort of presents that news to you, you know, hey, here's what's important, and you may not be able to find that other places.

R: Versus, wading through everything online.

I: Exactly.

R: Is there anything that I haven't asked that you regarding the topics and themes we've discussed that you would like to add or think is important and was overlooked?

I: I have zero regrets about being in journalism, and for the most part it's been fun. And I hope it stays fun. Mostly.

R: Do you think newspapers will be around in, 20 years?

I: Physically, physically, probably the big ones will. The other ones, mid-sized and under, I think they'll be around but just in digital form. I don't think print newspapers will be there anymore. I don't know. We'll still probably be able to buy The New York Times on the newsstand. The other ones, I'm not so sure.

## VITA

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### EDUCATION

Bachelor of Arts, Journalism, 2001, Indiana University of Pennsylvania

MA, Lifespan and Digital Communication Pursuing, August 2016, Old Dominion University

### CONTINUING EDUCATION

Building the Millennial Market, 2006, American Press Institute, Arlington, VA

### RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Copy editor, 2012-current, The Virginian-Pilot, Norfolk, VA

Student media consultant, 2005-2010, J&S Solutions, Pittsburgh, PA

Managing editor, copy editor, designer, 2006-09, Link, Norfolk, VA

Editorial advisor, 2002-06, The Penn, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Indiana, PA

Local Editor, Reporter, Designer, 2002-06, The Indiana Gazette, Indiana, PA

### TEACHING

Editing & Design, scheduled, Fall 2016, Virginia Wesleyan College, Norfolk, VA

Text-messaging as a tool to improve customer communication, 2010, GEICO Insurance,  
 Virginia Beach, VA

“Make Yourself More Marketable” workshop, January 2010, Robert Morris University,  
 Robert Morris, PA

“Taking Your Student Publication Online” workshop, March 2009, In coordination with  
 Pennsylvania Newspaper Association, Harrisburg, PA

### PUBLICATION

Socha, T. J., Bernat, S., Harris, S., Hill, B., & Hurd, V. (2016, April). *Peak Interpersonal Communication over the Lifespan: Conceptualization and Pilot Study*. A paper presented at the annual meeting of the Southern States Communication Association, Austin, Texas.