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Pofessional Knowledge, Professional Education and Journalism

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Professional Education, Professional Knowledge and Journalism

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Introduction

This paper discusses general concepts and issues underlying the education of journalists. Categorising journalism education as professional education, it seeks to explore the notion of professional education, and in particular, professional knowledge, referring to the work of Schön and Eraut to define the type of knowledge required in professional practice. The curricular models associated with professional education are discussed and compared with the forms of curriculum commonly found in journalism education.

The paper is written from the Irish context, from within the EU and with strong influences from the UK reflecting shared historic traditions with regard to journalism, journalism education and the professions in general.

Journalism education is frequently categorised as professional education as distinct from either academic on the one hand or technical/vocational education on the other. However, its professional status is problematical. 'Profession' in anglo-saxon terms, has in a formal sense a very narrow definition as a regulated occupation, with its own autonomous regulatory body such as doctors and lawyers enjoy, these privileges being guaranteed by law and royal charter originally. Other categories of work such as teaching, social work are in this definition regarded as semi or quasi professions, as journalism is too. With journalism there is the added complication that many of its practitioners do not see themselves as professional and have rejected the notion of aiming to attain professional status. The argument for this is that journalism should not be turned into a closed occupational field, but should be open to all and thus more easily representative of all categories of society. Unlike other professions, its practitioners have not pursued the 'professionalisation' process (Larson, 1977), have not sought to gain professional status with accompanying privileges. (See Delano and Henningham,1995; Stephenson and Mory, 1990; Singer, 2003).

And yet, it is a professional occupation in requiring journalists to work in the public interest, to accepted standards and codes of practice which in turn enables them to demand special rights such as the guarantee of press freedom and the protection of their sources. Therefore education for journalists should incorporate these attributes which calls for a form of professional education, going beyond training in skills alone.

Unlike many other professions and occupations, the acquisition of a particular educational qualification is not a prerequisite for entry to journalism. Entry is open to those with little education, with any form or level of education, yet journalism programmes abound. The reason for their proliferation stem from the industry's concern with the standards starting in the US in late nineteenth century and no doubt in this century, the general increase in third level education with the result that preparation for most forms of occupation is now included within its remit.

Definition of professional education and in particular professional knowledge.
Professional education was traditionally justified by the argument that the professions are knowledge-based, requiring a command of specific scientific knowledge that can only be acquired through an intensive period of study. Knowledge has long been regarded as the 'sine qua non' of the professions. According to MacDonald:

The origins of any profession lie in the existence of an area of knowledge which those who possess it are able to isolate from social knowledge generally and establish a special claim to. (1995: xiii).

Professional knowledge is traditionally seen as knowledge that has undergone a formal rationalisation, knowledge that is systematic, codified and generalised, hence abstract. It thus accords with the norms of academic education, supporting the argument for professional education to be situated within the universities. The universities thus provide the essential knowledge base for the professions, the acquisition of this knowledge being accredited by a university qualification such as a degree.

The concept of professional knowledge has been expanded to include high level specialist skills (see, for example, Freidson, 1994) as in many cases, the educational needs of professions are founded more on required specialist skills rather than particular fields of knowledge. In

journalism indeed, the skills of news gathering and news reporting are unproblematicly seen as essential to the practice of journalism whereas defining specific specialist knowledge, the disciplines that might be required to become a journalist is difficult if not impossible, beyond the general need for a journalist to have a well-stocked mind and well trained mind that can apply itself with ease and speed to any and every form of knowledge.

In addition, for all professions, it has long been acknowledged that the possession of abstract, library-based knowledge or complex, high level skills is not sufficient. The professional needs to be able to practice his or her given occupation. So a third element is frequently included in professional education, that of training in practice. This can take place in various forms of practicum within the university or associated on-the-job training such as clinical practice in hospital in medicine. In both cases, the learner is tutored by master professionals to gain competence in the practice of the job. However, the importance given in some professions and occupations to becoming competent in practice led to the setting up of apprenticeships either with or without associated formal educational programmes, for example, where the barrister, solicitor or accountant is articled to a registered professional for a given period, similar to the craft areas where an apprenticeship is served to master the craft. Entry to journalism was through a form of apprenticeship for a long time in Ireland as in Britain.

It is in the US that the link between the professions and the universities has been strongest and that higher education has been most synonymous with the professions. The obligation on the universities to educate skilled workers for the good of society has been established for a long time there (Rothblatt, 1997) whereas in Europe it has been a more recent phenomenon as previously, there were many other systems in place for educating and training professionals, through non-university educational bodies or various forms of on the job training. The EU, since establishing the Lisbon strategy in 2000 (European Council, 2000), has been to the fore in more recent times in pushing for universities to play a major role in economic and social development and thus to develop professional and vocational education. This can explain how journalism education was established on the whole at an earlier date in the US than in European countries, around the beginning of the twentieth century, whereas in Europe, it has only occurred well into the second half of the twentieth nineteenth century.

It is also significant that Schön's work originates in the US given this close relationship between the professions and the universities. Schön's (1983, 1987) work on professional

education starts from his perception of the failure of the universities to produce professionals who can address or confront the real problems in society in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, citing the Vietnam war, near bankruptcy of New York, and health system failures. The problems in journalism in more recent times could also be added to the list, in relation to coverage of the Iraq war and corporate scandals, as well as the malpractice of a few journalists in prestigious press outlets.

Schön argued that the technical rationality model of professional education was not working, that is, that education based on specialist knowledge and specialist skills was not sufficient because the work of the professional was not concerned with clear, well defined problems that could be addressed by the straight-forward application of set knowledge and skills. Situations of practice are characterised by instability, uniqueness, and value conflicts, in Schön's words they are 'swampy lowlands' which are mismatched with the clean, bounded, standardised professional knowledge acquired in higher education. Thus universities are not adequately preparing those who wish to enter the professions.

Through studying those professionals who cope well in addressing the problems that arise in practice, he concluded that they call on tacit knowledge to do so, using an intuitive, more artistic approach in how they find solutions. When normal problem-solving did not work, these professionals redefined the question, by intuitively naming and framing it in its wider context. This naming and framing approach is constructivist in nature with the professional recasting the problem in a different way in order to find a solution. It differs thus from the positivist framework of the traditional technical rationality approach. Schön's probing of the type of professional required for proficiency in practice led him to characterise him/her as a 'reflective practitioner', that is a professional whose type of knowledge he coined 'knowing-in-action', a knowledge informed by reflection. This reflection is of two kinds, 'reflection-in-action', thinking in mid-practice, on the spot, and 'reflection-on-action', reconsidering the situation afterwards in terms of what was done, what might have been done better. For Schön the key for the professional approach to problem-solving is one of design, with reflection to allow for framing or designing the solution.

He concluded that professional education ought therefore to aim to educate such reflective practitioners by reversing what had been the norm of professional education and putting practice at its centre whereas it had been at the margins or outside of formal education up to

then. Professional education should be centred around the practicum, as in music and art education, and his main example, architecture. Professional education needs to develop an epistemology of practice placing technical problem-solving within a broader context of reflective enquiry in order to bring rigour to the art of practice, corresponding to the rigour of scientific research.

The notion of reflective practice struck a chord and has been incorporated into much professional education, including that of journalism and media (for example, Niblock, 2007). The recent appearance of the journals, firstly *Media Practice* and at the beginning of this year, 2007, *Journalism Practice*, are a welcome indicator that work is on-going on the notion of professional practice in our domain, likewise the work on developing practice-based research.

However, this development has been characterised as being superficial, the term reflective practitioner merely a slogan or cliché. The practicum might have been brought more to the fore in professional education but with little clear focus on what the practicum might be, on how the learner might be led to mastery of their future profession through critical reflection on its practice. Practical knowledge is very relevant for the professional but it is normally acquired through experience and socialisation into a community of practitioners. In the formal education setting, its tacit, implicit and uncodified nature means it does not match academic knowledge in being rigorous and thus open to criticism, and indeed capable of being explicitly learnt.

Eraut (1994), like Schön, recognises the crisis in professional education everywhere and the need to find a solution to this crisis. Rather than referring to problems and the intuitive or artistic approach in professional practice as Schön did, he considers practice as being concerned with judgements, making decisions in unpredictable situations. He sought to find a way of determining what sort of knowledge is needed in order to make these judgements.

He acknowledges the need for a public theory of practice, and distinguishes professional knowledge as 'knowledge how' or practical knowledge as opposed to 'knowledge that', the technical knowledge at the heart of higher education. He includes propositional knowledge and process knowledge in his definition of practical knowledge. The former is theoretical knowledge which will provide a critical perspective from which to judge the principles, routines and actions of a profession. This type of knowledge should not predominate but

without it, the professional is not able to theorise about practice and so cannot easily move on from replicating established practice. Process knowledge is knowledge of what professions do, often contained in manuals, broken down into five main activities by Eraut, that is, acquiring information, skilled behaviour, deliberative process (planning, evaluating, problem-solving), giving information and metaprocesses (the thinking needed to direct one's own behaviour, including self-knowledge and self-management).

In his definition of professional knowledge, Eraut emphasised learning how to use knowledge and argued that the professional neither replicates nor applies knowledge, but interprets knowledge to match the particular circumstances of the practice and can use association to move from one context to another. This is what distinguishes the professional from the craftsman or technician in his eyes. In this approach, professional education is not simply confined to the attainment of competence in practice as that is seen as only one level on the way to mastery of a particular practice. Competence can be seen as the ability to practice within accepted standards whereas the aim should be for the reflective, self-critical practitioner to move beyond accepted practice to improve it.

Eraut's advocacy of the need for some theoretical knowledge ties in with what others have said about practice, that decisions and judgements made in practice depend on personal beliefs, underlying assumptions and values (Dewey, 1933, 1938; Larrivee, 2000; Argyris, 1990). These beliefs and values need to be brought to the surface and made explicit in order to have a clearer concept of the profession, to better understand it, and thus be able to examine and reflect on decisions taken in order to improve practice.

Schön's approach reflects the position of professions in the US more than elsewhere where as has been said, professions are predominantly defined as being knowledge-based with the subsequent link with the universities. Other features of the professions, such as their autonomy and in particular their public service remit seem to attract less notice. Yet knowledge alone, even technical knowledge with high level skills and accompanied by an element of practice, is not enough for a professional. Indeed, some of the most traditional professions such as the clergy and the military, are not primarily defined by the knowledge they require but by other attributes such as a spiritual and moral outlook and bravery and organisation respectively. Even in medicine and law, qualities such as care for patients, concern for justice are required. These other general characteristics of the professions come into play in professional practice

and are as necessary as competence in various skills or particular specialist knowledge. Journalism fits more easily into such a view of a profession, in that it is defined more easily by its role as a public service, requiring adherence to certain ethics and standards of behaviour rather than knowledge of specific areas of formal knowledge. All disciplines can be of use to a journalist as they can be required to communicate about any field. It has been said that what is needed is for them to acquire the ability to think to stretch their minds more than anything else.

I would argue that the problems that Schön has perceived in professional practice are related to an emphasis in professional education on specialist knowledge and competence and a lack of attention to the public service aspect of professional work, the commitment to the common good which will encompass ethical codes and moral as well as technical standards of practice. Public service in its widest context will ensure a regard for society as a whole and not simply to a narrow group or community. A commitment to this in conjunction with specialist knowledge and skills is what is required. The professional will not operate in a way that will address the general problems in society if s/he does not see their role as one of concern for the public good. Although learning about the necessity to work for the common good is no guarantee that this will be applied in practice - and indeed there has been long-standing cynicism about the public service role of the professions in general - awareness of the issues will mean there is a better chance that this will be so. The propositional knowledge proposed by Eraut, focussed on a theory of practice, is where the student can gain an understanding of the role of the profession.

Finally, Eraut's theoretical knowledge ties in with academic norms in being systematic and codified. It can lead to research as normally understood within academia and can provide a base for practice-based research. Thus it provides a way of allying the concerns of academics in ensuring rigour in the study of the practice of professionals and at the same time, professionals can be assured that a theory based on practice is relevant to their professional fields and of benefit to them in increasing their understanding of their work.

The curriculum of professional education

There are commonly acknowledged to be three models for the packaging of knowledge into the curriculum of professional education. These are referred to as the apprenticeship model, the

scientific or knowledge-based model and the practice-based model. Relationships can be drawn between these models, the different perceptions of the knowledge requirements of professional occupations, and indeed the power struggles of the various actors involved. They will be discussed in general in this section of the paper, and related to models of journalism education in the next, final section.

The apprenticeship model concentrates on 'the mastery of practical routines' and is characterised by a tight and instrumental focus on professional requirements and competences which are regarded as unproblematic (Bines, 1992). It is found mainly in on-the-job training, on short courses with the professionals in charge where experienced professionals inculcate students into the accepted knowledge and routines of the particular occupation. The early form of professional education in Britain and Ireland, including journalism, followed this model.

The second scientific or knowledge-based model, is where scientific, rational knowledge is at the centre. The core is based on established academic disciplines such as the natural and social sciences; such knowledge is then applied to the practice of the particular profession; and thirdly, there is an element of practice through work experience. This model ties in best with university norms and academic values and is accepted by many professions. However, it has been criticised for the lack of integration of scientific knowledge and professional practice and for an over-emphasis on scientific knowledge rather than practical knowledge (Bines, 1992; Hoyle and John, 1995). Eraut (1994), Freidson (1970) and Schön (1983; 1987) each judged this issue to be due to a lack of understanding of professional practice within academia. Hoyle and John also criticised the partial nature of scientific knowledge. In regard to medicine for example, it leaves out values concerning prevention, access to provision, access to resources and appropriateness of treatment, all of which are vital to professional practice.

The third practice-based model for professional education is obviously focussed on the practicum. The practicum is the core around which other disciplines are 'integrated, contextualised and utilised' (Bines, 1992). Professional knowledge and action are given precedence and the professional educator rather than academic is given the central role. Schön's notion of critical, reflective practice fits into this model by linking professional and academic knowledge. Yet, as Bines indicates, this integration is always difficult and time-consuming, and, more fundamentally, the core, the practicum has been the least developed element of most courses. Astley (1992) likewise warned of the dangers of replacing one

orthodoxy with another in this model and of seeing practice as unproblematic. He highlighted the epistemological difficulty in 'reflective practice'. Professions tend to require their members to practice within a certain range of practice styles, yet critical reflection advocates the questioning and challenging of these.

The difficulties in these models of professional education reflect the difficulty surrounding the concept of professional knowledge as discussed earlier. The fuller development of the concept, whether along the lines mapped out by Eraut or any other, would seem necessary to the future development of professional education. In the meanwhile, the current emphasis on practice can lead to reverting to a training model rather than an improved model of professional education.

Changes made by the British government in the 1990s to the education of teachers and the education of social workers have been seen in this light. Taking account of the criticisms of the scientific, academic model, practice was put at the centre of training, and reference made to the established pattern in medicine and law where part of the training occurs in hospitals and law firms. However, the changes have been seen as an attack on these occupations, a deprofessionalisation rather than an improvement in professional education (Hoyle and John, 1995; Becher, 1994). The Irish government has recently intervened in professional education too, announcing in summer 2003 major changes to medical courses. Postgraduate programmes in medicine are being established, partly because of concern at the over-emphasis on the academic, scientific knowledge for medicine and the neglect of aptitude for the humanistic, caring concern for patients. In other words, the scientific-based model has also been found inadequate and the development of a more practice-based model is desired, but with a rising rather than a lowering in the level of education in this case.

For further insights it is worth considering a general model for undergraduate curriculum as developed by Barnett, Parry and Coate (Barnett et al., 2001). They propose a model that not only suits all types of courses but also encompasses the dynamic nature of a curriculum. The dynamism or possibility for change is seen as reflecting a balance between the 'shifting epistemologies' of different interest groups. This is very relevant to journalism education given the different and competing perceptions of what it should encompass and how it should be orgainsed. Barnett et al. understand curricula as embracing three domains, knowledge, action (or practice) and self (self-identity, reflection), the domains may be integrated or

separate. The weighting of the three varies across different curricula. Typically, science and technological curricula are dominated by knowledge; in the humanities and arts, knowledge is also important but is integrated with self; in professional fields, the action domain is often more weighted than the other two, and there tends to be a high degree of integration.

Bernstein (1975) described such integrated curricula found in professional fields as having weak classification and weak framing. In other words the boundaries between subjects are weak and lecturers (and students) have control over the content and structure of the knowledge transmitted. Bernstein emphasised the need for the ideology or overall aim behind such curricula to be explicit and accepted by all involved if they are not to become problematic, a statement that is very apt with regard to journalism. Eraut's propositional knowledge would incorporate this ideology, based on a theory of practice.

Models of journalism education

Finally, it remains to consider how models of journalism education compare with the three models of professional education and with the more general undergraduate model of Barnett et al. The three professional models, it will be recalled were the apprenticeship model, the scientific- or knowledge-based model and the practice-based model.

The apprenticeship model accounts unproblematically for the various in-house and on-the-job training models such as in Germany, Portugal and Britain where it was the old model prior to the setting up of formal full-time courses (Stephenson and Mory, 1990). The British NCTJ/NVQ (National Council for the Training of Journalism/National Vocational Qualifications) use a 'modern apprenticeship' model (Esser, 2003; Miller, 2002). The commonly found shorter formal journalism courses at sub-degree level and even at postgraduate level are also primarily skills based. Because of time limitations, and perhaps the lack of an accepted body of theory, the theoretical or academic elements are also necessarily limited in the postgraduate courses.

It is essentially the undergraduate degrees and their equivalents at journalism schools that allow the time:

> *to think richly about education as well as training – about the formation of journalists as a whole rather than their apprenticeship into specific, albeit fundamental skills.* (Adam, 2001: 318)

The most common models of undergraduate journalism education, the so-called professional model and the integrated model (Medsger, 1996; Adams, 2001; Reese, 1999; Reese and Cohen, 2000) should then be compared with the more general models of professional undergraduate courses. Confusingly, within journalism, the professional model is where journalism is taught as a separate subject and the rest of the degree is made up of unrelated subjects from the humanities or social sciences. The integrated model is where journalism is combined with elements of communications theory into what is frequently called a communications degree.

To take the professional model first. It has been more characteristic of US programmes where journalism makes up 25% of the course credits under their modular system, as is the standard required for accreditation by the ACEJMC (Weaver, 2003). But it is also found in some UK universities where journalism is part of a double honours degree. In most cases, the universities also offer an integrated course, with a few exceptions such as City University, Sheffield Hallam and the University of Ulster. In the double honours degree, students are usually allowed to choose from a wide range of humanities or social sciences subjects, and journalism practice is taught with no integration or relation between the elements of the course. The two possible rationales for this model are that as journalism is a craft, it should be taught separately from the intellectual elements of the course, or, more convincingly, that journalism does not require any specific intellectual knowledge, but does require the ability to think (Medsger, 1996). Therefore, from the traditional point of view, any academic education will be sufficient to cultivate and train the mind.

This model of undergraduate journalism degree is close to the postgraduate model where the journalist is seen to need general education together with professional skills. In postgraduate courses, the general education is acquired prior to the acquisition of professional skills. The short postgraduate course has been favoured by many as the best type of professional education for journalists (Stephenson and Mory, 1990). The long established and influential course set up by Pulitzer in Columbia University in 1912 was of this type, a one-year course in professional journalism. The postgraduate diplomas and masters degrees that came into vogue in Europe from the 1970s were based on it. In Britain, for example, the first postgraduate course was established in Cardiff in 1970, the second in City University in 1976 (Esser, 2003). Canadian journalism education in general draws on the Columbia model (Johansen and

Dornan, 2003). Journalism programmes in France, at the CFJ (Centre de Formation de Journalistes) and IPJ (Institut Pratique de Journalisme) in Paris and ESJ (Ecole Supérieure de Journalisme) in Lille were based on a similar principle, that the students should obtain their general education first, and then their professional education.

Such programmes at undergraduate or postgraduate level are difficult to equate with either the knowledge-based or practice-based model of professional education, as they do not attempt to find a systematic body of knowledge to apply and/or integrate with practice. Undergraduate courses of this type in the US were criticised by Splichal and Sparks (1994) as providing 'relatively low level and untheoretical journalism courses'. The better courses do attempt to teach journalism as considered, reflective practice rather than as a set of technical skills, but the overall design of these courses does not fit into the norm of professional education. To some extent they fit in more easily with traditional academic structures with sharp definition between disciplines (Bernstein, 1975). The danger has been, especially in the US, that such journalism courses do not integrate into academic life. Journalism departments are not always research focussed and do not have a developed theoretical base with the result that some have been closed down (Johansen et al, 2001). In Columbia itself, there was a delay in appointing a dean of journalism in summer 2002 because the university required the school of journalism to rethink its entire mission (Cunningham, 2002). The Carnegie and Knight Foundations became involved in initiatives to revitalise journalism education in the US as it was seen as not matching the needs of what is now 'a complex and intellectually challenging industry' (McKinsey and Co., 2005).

This professional model of journalism education is often favoured by journalists because the journalism element is in the hands of professionals, without the interference of theoreticians (Medsger, 1996). The word 'professional' in this context does not refer to the model of education. It would seem to refer instead to the teaching of journalism practice in these courses and to the relative autonomy of journalist practitioners in developing and delivering the courses. The 'professional model' therefore fits in with the view of journalism as an autonomous profession.

What is termed the 'integrated model' within journalism education takes many forms. It ranges from communications degrees with little or no elements of journalism practice to journalism degrees that are centred on professional practice with integrated modules in, for example,

media history, media theory and media analysis (Stephenson and Mory, 1990). The former are found throughout the US and Canada but Stephenson and Mory (1990) referred to this model on the whole as the European model. It is found in universities rather than the journalism schools in Europe, especially in Scandinavia, Spain and Portugal (see Fröhlich and Holz-Bacha, 2003) and may reflect the traditional academic role of European universities compared with the more openly social and vocational role of universities in the US. Within these courses, some are dismissed by journalists as not being journalism courses in any true meaning of the word as they are primarily theoretical programmes that pay no more than lip service to practice. Such courses do not compare with any model of professional education; they are simply academic degrees.

At the other end of the scale are journalism degrees in journalism schools such as Aarhus and at some universities such as Dortmund, Sheffield and Bournemouth, where undergraduate journalism programmes are autonomous and do include theory, including communications or media theory, and related disciplines in an integrated programme (Meerbach, 2003; Cole, 2002). They would seem to be aiming towards one or other of the normal models of professional education, some matching the knowledge-based, others, the practice-based model.

Some communications degrees are quite similar to these in that they incorporate the teaching of practical journalism within theory-based courses. The theory-based elements may be taught under the umbrella of communications rather than journalism theory. The combination of theoretical and practical courses can be equated with the knowledge-based model, but not the practice-based model as practice is given a prominent but not the central role. Practitioners do not normally control such courses; they work in partnership with their academic colleagues or can feel the latter have the upper hand.

In the journalism degrees on the other hand, professional journalism educators often have a major role. Compared with some of their colleagues who support the 'professional model', these professionals do recognise the need for theoretically based courses, for journalism to become integrated into academia, and would seem to have chosen to follow the norms of professional education. Both these courses and the more communications based courses would seem to be an attempt to deal with the situation where the theory is not yet established and in the meanwhile, more general media theory is being used. Lonnrath (1997), in reporting

on interviews she had carried out with journalism educators, found in the late 1990s, little critical thinking in the teaching of journalism practice on most courses.

Journalists have vociferously opposed the integrated model of journalism education, especially where communications or media theory is dominant (Medsger, 1996). They see them as dominated by communications specialists rather than practitioners and are suspicious of media theory (see Cole, 2002). This attitude is widespread and is not only found in the West. It has, for example, been commented on in countries such as Slovenia (Vercic, 2001) and India (Karan, 2001). The undergraduate journalism programmes may seem to be the way forward if journalism theory is developed. However, any trend in that direction is juxtaposed by another trend that is seeing the expansion of journalism and journalism education into a wider professional area. As Winston said:

> *Journalism education can run from advertising, excluding its more information-less marketing aspects, to text-based or visual imaginative communication, as long as that communication makes some claim to the real.* (1997: 18)

In the US in particular, universities have, under pressure from industry, included public relations and advertising in journalism programmes (Hynes, 2001). Blanchard and Christ (1993) had gone so far as to call for a new professionalism to incorporate all media occupations under the one form of education. Secondly, with much of journalism being more focussed on entertainment rather than public service, which Meerbach (2003) has termed 'journalism for an audience rather than journalism for a purpose', there are calls for journalism to adapt accordingly. Bierhoff and Schmidt (1997) acknowledged this and advocated at least two models of journalism education: one that continues to produce the classical journalist focussed on its public purpose, the other to educate the various information-organisers the media require. Thirdly, communications skills are in increasing demand in the information economy/society which are similar to the basic journalistic skills of information gathering, information processing and presentation. There is a call for journalism to be incorporated into a broader occupational classification of communications specialists (Becker, 2003). Singer's (2003) analysis of the work of on-line journalists equates it with that of communication workers rather than traditional professional journalists. Such trends may be anathema to journalists and confirm their worst fears about communications and its adherents. However, it is the weak professional status and the lack of an agreed theoretical base for journalism that

allow these matters to arise. Journalists do not control their ‘profession’, nor do they always control the professional education associated with it. They themselves have no clear concept of what journalism is in order to argue against those who make no real distinction between it and other areas of the media.

It can be seen then, that the two main forms of journalism education do not coincide with the two common models of undergraduate professional education. The so-called 'professional' model is dissimilar from the usual model of professional education and the 'integrated' model covers a wide variety of different curriculum types. They can perhaps best be described by Barnett et al.'s framework for analysing the undergraduate curriculum. The flexibility of this model was developed to account for change within the curriculum but it is also suited to undergraduate courses for an occupation such as journalism which is relatively ill-defined and where educational courses have many different forms. Its three domains of knowledge, action and self allow for different emphasis in the content of different programmes, depending on whether the focus is on knowledge, practice or reflection. The domains may be integrated or not so that linkage between subject areas is likewise flexible. In Bernstein's (1975) terms, journalism courses are sometimes weakly and sometimes strongly classified; that is, their subject boundaries are clearly defined in some courses and integrated in others. The use of this model can help to illustrate the differences between courses rather than producing any one fixed template common to all.

Journalism education has been said to be in crisis; for example, in the US as previously mentioned, in the UK (Cole, 2002; Esser, 2003), in France (Charon, 2003), and in Spain (Barrera and Vaz, 2003). There is a confused medley of systems for pre-entry training to journalism in many countries, none of which is mandatory. This is understandable given the problems of defining the concepts involved. The general problems of conceptualising ‘profession’, ‘professional knowledge’ and ‘professional education’ add to the difficulties within journalism itself, given the lack of agreement on its status and on its role. It is therefore to be expected that curricula in journalism will evidence strains between competing discourses on these issues unless or until theoretical knowledge of journalism as a professional practice is more firmly established.

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