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Original Article

[GQ1]Cultures of Digital [AQ1]Architectures: Power and [AQ2]Positionalities in the [AQ3] Backend of Online Journalism Production [AQ4][AQ5][AQ6]

Recto running head : *Gutsche*

Verso running head : *Journal of Communication Inquiry XX(XX)*

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ABSTRACT

[GQ2]This essay complicates interpretations of digital architectures in online journalism production [GQ4]in terms of journalistic interlopers and intralopers during an age of increased [GQ5]influence of technologists on online news development. While ~~M~~ much normative scholarship revolves around social media, metrics, algorithms, artificial intelligence, VR, and other forms of digital innovation applied to journalism, ~~In the future, scholars must interrogate the embedding of elite ideologies into the news as journalists collaborate with technologists (or as journalists become technologists), interact~~

(and re-interact) with elite ideologies at accelerating rates in networked societies, and move into new digital realms we have not yet imagined. the essay argues that normative scholarship must not focus merely on the actions of today's tech-savvy journalism but should interrogate social and cultural relationships at the center of journalistic production so not to as become distracted away from the embedded practices of ideological incorporation that shapes media messages and reproduces inequalities through what and how journalism covers. In the future, as we approach a notion of the Metaverse, scholars must interrogate the long-standing embedding of elite ideologies into the news as journalists collaborate with technologists (or as journalists become technologists), interact (and re-interact) with elite ideologies at accelerating rates in networked societies, and move into new digital realms we have not yet imagined.

KEYWORDS

- communication architecture
- critical theory
- digital journalism
- interlopers
- Metaverse
- power
- production
- technology

Introduction

Recent discussions about the future of journalism in an online age in terms of the threats to established media's authority, authenticity, and legitimacy in a crowded digital sphere have focused on the role of technologists to make journalism relevant and doable in dire economic times (Kim & Shin, 2021; Schapals, Maares, & Hanusch, 2019). This is not the same debate as the now decades-long one that asks, "Who is a journalist?" Instead, it is grounded in concerns about the mass-marketization and news outlet adoption of artificial intelligence software and technology for digital storytelling through things such as virtual reality, data-driven journalism, and emotional immersion. SAdditionally, scholars and practicioners alike remain focused on the role of social media platforms that can provide citizens with the ability to counter dominant news explanations while and journalists canto build wider source lists and gauge what to cover based on metrics of what seems important to audiences (García-Perdomo, 2021). AsG global political communication infrastructures and elite journalistic narratives that shape communication architectures of "truth" and journalistic power in an age of mis- and dis-information are said to bealso under mass disruption– by deepfakes and advanced forms of mis- and dis-information online. In turn, technologies and technologists have been said to come to the rescue to fact-check, automate news coverage, and scrape social media and the web to surveil politically aligned groups and individuals as a form of new media journalistic reporting (Gonzalez, Davis, & Kim, 2021). Journalism(s) have adopted tech-centered discourse – and technologists' skillsets – to fight the challenges to their authority by using these tools and approaches to counter claims and lies that seep into political scenes.

Tech-savvy journalism also, however, amplifies messages and evidence rooted in the interests of media corporations and personalities said to be working in the public interest and often alongside online publics in what and how news is reported. ESuch evidence and artifacts emerges from police /military, political /governmental, and citizen video, public data, and social media streams, all are often granted validity without scrutiny, deemed valid through their social, cultural, and ideological positions of their social roles of "doing good ,"u such as in the case of a citizen account of a street disturbance or a military account of war. In other words, sources (both directly sourced by individuals or captured onand platforms) that are deemed within journalistic paradigms as holding social and cultural authority are shared and spread, their messages reproducedcaptured to represent dominant explanations for everyday life. Alternative perspectives that either operate outside accepted (and acceptable) journalistic norms (think radical groups, racial minority positions, and public scholars and activists who operate against systems) are shamed, ignored, or otherwise diminished. Journalism operates within these paradigms of human selection of sources to maintain its power boundaries that are aligned with fellow institutions (Perloff, 2019). At the same time, "robot journalism" technologies have been adopted by news outlets to replace humans as news economic models decline (Túñez-López, Toural-Bran, & Frazao-Nogueira, 2020) and to "do more with less." Simultaniously, technologies emerge amid the vast expanse of news deserts across the globe (e.g. Magasic & Hess, 2021), while journalists are said to re-focus on depth reporting. Certainly, however, these "robot" algorithms and technologies are programmed by humans, ascribing to scripts issues of racialized, gendered, and geographic power (Noble, 2018) while other humans also make decisions about where and for (and with) whom journalism operates.

Of concern to this essay is the degree to which dData-collection and analysis run by computers and computer scientists,

editorial and business decisions that occurs in journalism, and normative scholarship about technological development operate without simultaneous and meaningful developments in finding alternative and, ~~sustainable and~~ diverse ~~financial and~~ ideological means~~developments~~ to scrutinize normative assumptions of journalism's role in democratic societies in a digital age. In other words, social media, metrics, algorithms, artificial intelligence, virtual reality, and other forms of digital innovation (and scholarly explanations about them) are being applied to journalism as a panacea for its ills that are as much social, economic, and innovative as they are ~~and~~ cultural ~~as they are economic~~. In turn, scholarship on ~~the~~ digital architectures (Bossetta, 2018) of online journalism – used as a framework for this discussion – heavily relies on insular and conventional understandings of sociological interactionsn in news productio. So, too, do popular interpretations of those in digital journalism elevate normative influences of technology (and technologists) on digital journalism (and journalists)~~,~~ while the addressing of ideological and power forces of institutionalized external/internal actors in journalism production is peripheral (Schmidt & Lawrence, 2020; Westlund, Krumsvik, & Lewis, 2021). And in a post-COVID-19 world, where indivisuals' living rooms replace brick-and-mortar news spaces~~,~~ blurring how and where journalists work, ~~the~~ focus on the entering of technological expertise from "outside" journalistic fields widens a an "insider/outsider" binary of the journalistic community ~~. In this way, it is~~ as though journalistic "insiders" and "outsiders" are somehow, today, more influential or important (despite their uniqueness) than other systems of architecture (for more, see Royal & Kiesow, 2021; Ryfe, 2021[12]), including the ideological.

This essay intends to complicate recent, popular discussions about digital journalism, technologists, and "strangers" through a critical lens to highlight how dominant and reproduced scholarly and professional discourse surrounding innovations in digital journalism architectures~~o~~ seems to ignore issues of power beyond that which is recognized through job title and journalistic function or role. Its aim is to ~~to~~ challenge these and other popular understandings of the involvement of technologists in the creation of journalism, which frequently fail to consider and critique power relations in the current state of online news production (for an example of otherwise, see Dowling, 2021). At the core of the argument is a concern that discourses about and explanations for the craft of constructing reality via digital journalism is overshadowed by technological determinism and intervention in journalistic processes that elevates the role of the high-tech over the human. Specifically, by using the "journalistic strangers" matrix as a guide, this essay hones-in on how by separating it for its technological-only element, the notion of "strangers" has been and remains within a veiled system of interrogation of newswork that sidelines discussion on: 1) collaborative police-media control, surveillance, and shaming via digital (and non-digital) journalism(s) of observation and interpretation fueled by racialized technology infrastructures of smart cities and "public data," 2) journalistic placemaking and boosterism via digital mapping and social media that creates notions of a single "community identity" to benefit business and gerrymandering politicians, 3) journalistic remembrance as collective forgetting where journalism aligns with civic, religious, and business officials to commemorate moments that through emotionally-charged multimedia urge audiences to conform to institutions of control, and 4) oppression via hyper-professionalization of public journalism where language and interpretations of marginalized voices are transformed to support dominant publics and media narratives. While not all research must align with aspects of critical or cultural approaches, through discussion on the limitations of "journalistic strangers" research, this essay cautions scholars about "new" and mainstreamed scholarship -- beyond that of "strangers" -- that talks alongside but past established scholarship on just what "makes" the news "from the inside out" or "outside in."

Positioning & Repositioning Architectures of "Journalistic Strangers"

Holton and Belair-Gagnon (2018) present the notion of "journalistic strangers" (p. 75) in the digital age to reintroduce longstanding notions of journalists' artificial position as naturalized purveyors of objectivity that normalize "outsider" interference with journalistic autonomy. The related ideas inform a maintenance of notions that journalists operate within their own "interpretive community." In defining "journalistic strangers," the two refer to Eldridge's (2018) definition to present two main media and mediaworker "strangers" to digital journalism. First, *interloper* media strangers are those who "[position] their work as journalism, alongside sharp critiques of traditional journalists and dominant narratives of what journalism 'is'" (p. 4). Within this there are two subcategories. First, implicit interlopers are said to contribute to technological innovation alongside journalists in order to "improve" the news. Second, explicit interlopers produce journalistic content to hold journalists accountable to outright challenge traditional journalistic authority or to force journalists to alter interactions with and approaches to audiences.

Holton & Belair-Gagnon (2018) present the second main category, *intralopers*, as being those who work "from the inside out, bringing non-traditional journalistic expertise and perspectives to news organizations and disrupting news production" (p. 75), such as "collaborating" in production based on their data and technological expertise. There then seems to be a third major category to which these individuals are strangers – "journalists," themselves – a group which remains ina

constant battle over its definition and is not really taken on by the most recent work on "journalistic strangerhood," their roles taken for granted and said to be influenced alone by these "outsiders." Definitions for those that operate outside of conventional notions of what a journalist "is" may make for normative theoretical development in understanding journalistic organizations and socio-technological influences on newswork. However, the concept's attraction to normativity is striking, as its positionality follows so well to other, previous hot-topic research ideas from the past decade, from "collective memory," and "reciprocal journalism" to "post-truth" and "fake news," the latter seeming to have diminished since the exit of Donald Trump from the White House, though. Such "trending," normative scholarship operates outside of critical/cultural dimensions of how news works, particularly when it comes to issues of power and ideology. While notions of "power" may appear where the term equates to social and cultural authority, rights and responsibilities, consequences and activities sustained through laws, discourse, and ritual, a critical intepretation would also present power as agency, inherent and not commoditized, but also formed, shaped, and applied through meaning of language. Specifically, this essay is concerned not just with the working relationships of "journalistic strangers" as post-ideological but the normative (and still ideological) power intersections that emerge in collaboration between journalists and technologists. In this way, this argument adopts Thompson's (1990) definition of ideology as "meaning in the service of power," in which news explanations, decisions, and narratives serve to benefit dominant classes and social structures, communities, and individuals, including journalists themselves.

Ideology, in this way, is more than merely a "belief system," but is a way of knowing the world, an epistemological process of maintaining systems of explanations that justify and rationalize inequalities that operate in tandem with technological advancement, as this essay describes in more detail below. Certainly, this essay argues that journalism(s) operate in cooperation and collusion with notions of the "power elite" in ways that complicate local and international contemporary interpretations of the "journalistic interpretive community" (Carpenter & Sosale, 2019). It is this notion of the "journalistic interpretive community" that is at hand for exploration through the intervention of technological practices, hardwares, language, parameters of innovation and interactivity, programming, and processing that scholars continue to unpack (Boyles, 2020). This is not to argue from the position of a luddite in an essay on technology that innovation itself is a form of inequality but that innovation (and explanations around it) is a force by which inequalities are reproduced, whether that be through representations, access, or institutionalization and normalization of hegemonic forms of governance and community. This perspective questions the degree to which discussions within the digital journalistic field – one that has outsourced its technological innovation and in so doing undermined aspects of its authority, perhaps to its own detriment in maintaining a sense of relevancy and legitimacy to societies (Hess & Gutsche, 2018) – maintains a discursiveness that attempts to (re)position itself as a technological center in its most-recent fight against digital disinformation (e.g. Thomson, et al., 2020 [13]).

In times of paradigm maintenance, such as during introductions and adoptions of new technologies, the simultaneous construction of a solid sense of what journalism is during such change, has journalists and scholars risking extending an already strong articulation of normative assessments that reinforce journalistic authority rather than articulating issues of cultural and ideological power. Yet, the field must remind itself and educate its collaborators and citizens alike that journalism is a cultural institution that is never neutral, truths are never dis- interested, and journalists' truth claims and editorial practices are influenced by the power dynamics embedded in the sociopolitical and historical contexts in which they work (Canella, 2021, p. 2). Without articulations of foundational power forces that infiltrate and influence approved practices that make journalism less of an autonomous force than one for the powerful, current scholarship on "journalistic strangers" operates as though journalism functions one way in technological discussions (in a normative sense) and another when philosophy or ideological influences are discussed (in a critical/cultural one). Such a binary may not be intentional, but it does exist within work on digital media and journalism writ large. The next section introduces critical theory as a means by which to establish such a binary in a deeper discussion on journalistic "insiders" and "outsiders" from positions of power.

First, however, it is important to note that there is a history of this type of critical approach that must be adopted when presenting simplified and narrow versions of technological adoption and transition that ignore critical and cultural approaches. Take the very notion of journalism as a Fourth Estate, that which is said, in a U.S. context, to be an additional pillar in the governance of society, alongside the nation's court, legislative, and executive systems. Of course, the Fourth Estate also refers to its origins, with the press representing a social function alongside the clergy, nobility, and commoners. Regardless, this very notion of a pre-digital press as playing a fundamental part in society and governance (and freedom) has been rightfully challenged (Hallin, 1989) and dissected as well in his discussions on journalistic spheres of deviance, controversy, and consensus. Such is also the case when examining popular discourse surrounding advancements of technologies from the telegragh to television (think, "shipping news" to Vietnam) and innovation in journalistic practices in

investigative journalism (think, Watergate and Panama Papers) to news the use of big and public data sets to reporting on TikTok. While changes to journalistic practice through technology have also been rooted in potentials or problems of "democracy" itself (Entman & Usher, 2018), debate about the roles of sources, the agenda-setting function of the media, and gatekeeping has followed suit in ways to articulate the complexities of journalism itself (Zelizer 2019).

Unfortunately for the critical scholar – largely outside of the realm of the political economist – much of these popular scholarly, trade, and public debates has failed to positioned the sometimes considered collusive relationships between journalists and elites (AUTHOR, YYYYa [2]). In this vein Here, Mills' (1956) work on the "power elite" argues that celebrities, corporate chief executives and the rich, and military and political leaders operate in an ideological and practical togetherness to determine social and political courses of action and to relay that information in collaboration with the press. Yet, save for a few exceptions that have been widely adopted (there are many more exceptions that are equally ignored by scholars, as they directly attack the power structures that support both press industries and places of education and training), most-recent scholarship on technology and journalism fail to predict a future of press shortcomings. Rather, research tends to meet normative standards of equal representation, oversight, and, perhaps, advocacy that emerge not in the technological developments but in the details of from where journalism emerged. Today, the digitalization of journalism – and digitalness of journalists – should instead demand a reconceptualization of journalistic practice, one that is based in identifying the propagation of press exceptionalism based on anecdotes of where journalism meets its normative aims and where it undoubtedly (and, perhaps intentionally) will fall short.

Holton & Belair-Gagnon's (2018) discussion in which they identify three main categories – and variations – of "journalistic strangers" is based on actors in times of digital and technological innovation in journalism. In its critique, this essay, however, is interested in co-opting the conversation to reveal similar patterns of "insider" and "outsider" influences at the very heart of journalism that continues to be allayed so that scholars might reevaluate power relations inherent in news – high-tech or not. Such critical interpretation leads to what this essay refers to as "known journalistic strangers," those who have long influenced journalism through natural and normalized processes of feeding and deciphering source material for journalists, providing corrective or disruptive commentary to news coverage, or providing (or resisting) journalists' access to information. This idea borrows from Holton and & Belair-Gagnon's categories of what they consider "non-traditional journalistic actors" and focus solely on the idea of a "journalistic actor."

Discussions below are based on generations of media power scholarship (e.g. Hall, 1974) applied in the digital age to study "society in a dialectical way by analyzing political economy, domination, exploitation, and ideologies" (Fuchs, 2015, p. 10). The text also relies on Hardt's (1992) argument that the basis of critical theory in Mmedia and Ccommunications Sstudies historically – particularly in the United States and the United Kingdom, which hegemonically influences and propogates discussions of much global journalism in terms of a benchmark against which other forms should be measured – positions ideology and power at the forefront of interpreting epistemological meanings embedded within media. Hardt writes that the field of Media Studies was (and likely would argue still is) in need of scholarship that interrogates systems of power that form media institutions, messaging, influence, and interactions. Today, critical perspectives on digital media have identified anti-social elements of social media, revealed through the use of its digital means to ability to capture and catapult personal data across corporate and police surveillance societies personal data, and the use of the online (and news) platforms to spread fake news, dangerous images, and anti-social behavior (e.g. Vaidhyanathan, 2018). Yet, these findings still revolve around discussions that social media and digital outlets operates absent of journalistic interventions of an ideological (power-based) nature beyond normative interpretations that malign Marxist, (non-white) femininist, and other critical vantage points (for alternatives, see AUTHOR, YYYYa [3]; Canella, 2021; Davis, 2003; Goss, 2013).

Identifying "Known Strangers:" Expanding to a Critical Interpretation of Digital Journalism Production

Here, this essay defines – and redefines – "known strangers" to unpack the digital architectures of digital journalism that are based as much in the offline cultural dimensions of journalistic practice as the online to encourage a redirection of how scholars talk about influences of the internet and digital innovation in journalism.

Known Explicit Interlopers

To Holton and Belair-Gagnon (2018), explicit interlopers produce media or journalistic content to hold journalists accountable, to outright challenge traditional journalistic authority, or to force journalists to alter interactions with and approaches to audiences. Explicit interlopers, the authors write, "may not necessarily be welcomed or defined as journalists and work on the periphery of the profession while directly contributing content" (Holton & Belair-Gagnon, 2018, p. 73), such

as socio-political bloggers and hackers (Bodrunova, Livinenko, & Nigmatullina, 2020[10]). It is as though in this and other conversations on the intersection of journalism and technology in the production of today's digital journalism as if~~though~~ these "strangers~~," but the very definition of the word,~~ are "unknown," which the term "strangers" seems to suggest. Here, however, this essay argues that this is not the case, that there have always been such "strangers" but~~in the sense~~ that they were known as merely being part of the news production process. In this case, then, known explicit interlopers have always worked with journalists from outside the ranks of the conventional journalistic field by providing information, or access to information, and are often overtly identified as sources, though not always; indeed, the ideological process of making something "make sense" through journalistic evidence and explication in itself is an intrusion of ideology into what we once called "objective" journalism. This essay uses the term "conventional journalistic field" to separate its argument~~myself~~ from the idea that journalistic boundaries have hard lines. As argued elsewhere (AUTHOR, YYYYb[4]), journalistic interpretive communities may not be as closed as scholars suggest, or at the very least may include the very institutions discussed in this essay within recognized, acknowledged, and defined boundaries, as these known relationships are vital to making journalism not just resonate but become salient. Scholars may argue that the notion of "strangers" is relevant, because of its attribution to technologies and not to news sources, sourced experts, and others who influence news outlined below. In other words, the idea of "strangers" may indicate these influencers are from outside the newsroom and are, in a way, "strangers" to the process of newswork from the viewpoint of the journalist "inside" the news process or find themselves distanced from or new to the processes they enter into. Yet, this essay argues the reverse – that the reservation of the notion of "strangers" as it is used in such scholarship today from traditional and longlasting power dynamics of news reporting does not holistically represent how news operates in its forms and functions of social order and control.

If aligning with Holton and Belair-Gagnon's parameters of explicit interlopers, our "known strangers" contribute original, ready-made content packaged for journalistic production through speeches and interviews, press releases, press conferences and other pseudo-news events, social media posts, citizen and surveillance footage (Gynnild, 2014a), as well as ~~that provide ready-made, and~~ serve as ~~background~~ experts against whom journalists measure ~~the~~ news explanations of social conditions. While Holton and Belair-Gagnon express that their versions of these interlopers are also designed in an age of digital dis- and mis-information where platforms and programmers are hacking their way into news operations, influencing the messages that are spread against institutions of journalism to undermine their authority, these *known* strangers have been doing such since the conception of journalism in ways that provide source material to journalists that benefit power forces (Dimmick & Coit, 1982). Journalism responds to these influences by working alongside the influences (and influencers) so as to not disrupt their power positions within a collective's social networks.

Scholarship pertaining to news sources supports the representation that sources, both individuals and institutions, are overtly presented as separate from the journalistic institution by journalists and strangers alike; still, actions of sources bring in information and interpretations from their ideological positions and, therefore, shape the news. All told, news sources who send encrypted tips, confirm information, interact with journalists online and on the street influence the news in ways that contribute to police-media control, surveillance, shaming via digital journalism(s) of observation, and interpretation fueled by quantifiable "journalistic evidence" (AUTHOR, YYYYd[5]) supplied through racialized technology infrastructures of smart cities and "public data." In the U.K., for instance, Jones (2015) writes about ideological and social connections between journalists and known explicit strangers – named and unnamed government officials – that turn journalists into "outrid(ers) for serving politicians" (p. 112). Listing name after name of journalists who work within politics itself and who shape the news – and public policy – through their networks, Jones refers to these journalist-politicians and political journalists as part of "the establishment," working alongside and in collabortion with each other.

Additionally, U.K. scholars identify influences of corporate media ownership that this decade influenced journalists to hack into private individuals' phones, though investigations into this practice were not limited to the *News of the World* where investigations focused and extended into larger discussions about journalistic ties, ideologically, physically, and organizationally to socio-political influences from government sources, who are known to the public and the press alike~~, on journalistic production and content~~ (Mills, 2016). Perhaps the most overt business influence by known explicit strangers is the paid inclusion of advertisements in journalism. The increasingly common inclusion of native advertisements meant to blend in with editorial content positions cooperating businesses as source influencers of journalistic narrative, and the overall perception of journalist organizations authenticity and credibility (Hardy, 2022).

As with the conventional role of the explicit interloper, journalists and interlopers (or strangers) present a public-facing separation through performances of distance, so as to use conflict as one group's questioning of the other's legitimacy and authority. Sources and opposition groups to the press that also produce content and messaging for the press (in the U.S. context~~, Consider,~~ for example, consider political parties during hotly contested election cycles and cries of "fake news" from press coverage they do not like) argue that they are victims of a media system by challenging journalists' use of

information, the accuracy of their reporting, or what some interlopers may consider to be a delegitimate news system. In these ways – named or unnamed sources and those who guide journalists to news and interpretations – represent a front stage of journalistic theatre and performance related to showing they are not welcome in the conventional journalistic field. These performances, in short, making covert ideological partnerships overtly separate to veil embedded, institutionalized relationships.

Major influences of known explicit interlopers in digital journalism, as described here, are rooted in interpretations and presentations of source information by journalists at an ideological level (how audiences should understand items of news) and in the evidence provided and interpreted by journalists. Increasing use of surveillance video and images from drones, CCTV, and social media, provided to journalists from citizens, police and military officials, private business, and captured by journalists themselves are accompanied by sources' initial interpretations of the images and the subjects involved. Beyond sourcing the material to its original capturer, surveillance matter is presented to audiences as "objective" evidence though it is wrapped in context desirable to the provider (Gynnild, 2014b) and, therefore, represents a foundation upon which to assign ideological interpretations that are products of "outside" influences. (As a note, the use of the term "objective" here should not be confused with the concept of objectivity in journalism, which is a contested concept. Here, objective evidence is that which is presented without clear influence noted; it is very difficult to challenge common interpretations of a bank robbery caught on camera, for instance, but the video serves for ideological interpretation that is absent in the video footage itself.)

This essay does not deny, nor does it attempt to replace, current explanations of explicit interlopers in technological advancements of journalism. However, as this section suggests, the role of interlopers in journalism extends far beyond the actions and actors of those within "new" moments of technological development. Indeed, the technological element of known explicit interlopers, with their technologies and their use of new technological avenues, increases concern about the ideological involvement of "outsiders" in news, if their involvement and messages remain veiled by the "newness" of technology and the embeddedness of technology in how journalist work.

Known Implicit Interlopers

As a second category of interlopers, Holton & Belair-Gagnon (2018) refer to implicit interlopers as contributing to technological innovation alongside journalists in order to "improve" the news. These individuals generally do not challenge traditional journalistic authority but may provide services and perspectives or collect and share public data and technological advancements with journalists to inform journalism and influence content. These individuals may warm to the title of journalist and, at the very least, may be more welcome by journalists, though their identification with journalism as being interlopers is less explicit as the category before. Similarly to the explicit interloper, this essay argues, known implicit interlopers also work "outside" of conventional definitions of the journalistic field, though they are less likley to challenge traditional journalists' authority. They contribute to journalism through the involvement of additional partners, such as third-party companies, universities, philanthropists, and contractors who supply technologies, language, ideologies, and practices (Scott, Nunce, & Wright, 2017). These contributions shape how journalists adopt and adapt to new technologies – and ideas about these technologies – that strip from innovation power conditions of surveillance and sousveillance, privacy, and racial bias in coding and technological development. Journalists collaborate with these interlopers to reinforce their authority in a fragmented digital news space and as an omnipresent and technologically advanced authority. There is a sense of journalistic placemaking boosterism via digital mapping and social media that creates notions of a single "community identity" to benefit business and gerrymandering politicians, for instance. And, in an increasingly digital age, known implicit interlopers provide data and perspective to journalists looking to use interactive digital mapping in news that reinforces "official" boundaries (Slovaara, 2016**[AQ7]**) and "boosteristic" notions of geographic territory (Baeten & Listerborn, 2020).

In a stark contrast to Holton & Belair-Gagnon's conventional definition that states implicit interlopers rarely, but may, adopt a journalist identity, the notion of *known* implicit interlopers allow for the creation or elevation of other social roles and titles. Consider the role of "public information office," "consultant," "partner," "board member," or "spokesperson," which provides the "strangers" with a shared credibility and authority on-par with the journalist herself. Online non-profit news outlets such as ProPublica, for instance, depend on known implicit interlopers to round out governing boards who are vital to successful grant proposals from philanthropists (de-Lima-Santos & Mesquita, 2021). Furthermore, collaborations between journalists, police organizations, and courts, produce content live-stream or live-to-tape video evidence (think court hearings, police arrests, databases) used in journalism on one hand, may improve the service of journalists as the Fourth Estate, with minor attribution, including "sources say," or "according to reports" to "name" the stranger. On the other, however, such evidence also authorizes and normalizes public shaming and surveillance, facial recognition systems, and

even via personal cell phone data as public fodder provided to masses via the news (Hess & Waller, 2014). But known implicit interlopers walk a line between and among the categories discussed in this essay that align with those introduced by Holton and Belair-Gagnon.

As this essay establishes, concerns of "outsider" influence in journalism today through technological innovation (and innovators) does not operate separately from the foundation of cultural and ideological dynamics inherent in journalism as a power force. Weekly Sunday morning news programs in the U.S., known not for conducting original reporting but by making news through its guests' commentary that is frequently covered by other media, highlight complex but also visible interactions between and entanglements of known implicit and explicit interlopers, journalists, and larger structures of elite society. Following 2013 terrorist bombings in Boston, Massachusetts, in the U.S U.S.A., " known" and named sources for one Sunday morning *Meet the Press* on NBC news sources included 1) the Massachusetts governor who also had held multiple corporate positions, 2) an NBC justice correspondent who had once served as a Defense Department spokesperson, 3) a member of Congress who had once worked as an FBI agent, 4) a former Department of Homeland Security Secretary who was operating a private security consultancy, 5) an NBC security analyst who had founded a government intelligence agency, 6) a lifelong professional politician, 7) a journalist and author who had helped write a previous president's memoir, 8) a columnist who had worked as a presidential writer and assistant, and 9) a journalist who wrote for elite publications, such as *The Atlantic* and *The New Yorker* [AUTHOR, YYYYb 6].

These "diverse " range of sources represent the ideas discussed above of "the establishment" as presented by Jones and that of "the power elite" by Mills. Technologists do not directly factor into these examples as being the visible interloper; however, this example highlights how elite source connections to private industry, government, and journalistic institutions shape journalistic content that extend ideological influences from "outside" the conventional journalistic field. This example also highlights the role of interlopers from the explicit perspective as well as the implicit in that while the guests' current titles were mentioned to news audiences, their connections to politics, business, and journalism were left to the critical viewer to find, a practice not absent in conventional journalistic practice. Here, this discussion aligns critical perspectives with the role of implicit interlopers by identifying within foundational arenas of journalism that known implicit interlopers perform similar functions to definitions outlined by in conventional conversations of stranger influences upon journalism. Specifically, known strangers operate to "improve" or "contribute" to journalism through their expertise and involvement as either a source or by providing to journalists third-party perspectives and technologies, information, and interpretation. While technological innovation is not a precursor to being a known implicit interloper, certainly it is the interpretive power of the source to influence rhetorical claims of objective evidence from pervasive means of information-gathering and even, in the case of *Meet the Press*, the use of a roundtable of "multiple perspectives" that aligned the case of terrorism with elite explanations of its causes.

Known Intralopers

Intralopers are a third group identified by Holton & Belair-Gagnon (2018) to represent those who work "from the inside out, bringing non-traditional journalistic expertise and perspectives to news organizations and disrupting news production" (p. 75), such as "collaborating" in production based on their data and technological expertise. *Known* intralopers, therefore, are "journalistic strangers" that have been incorporated into the journalistic community over time. They may include members of fellow social institutions of business and government that, like "*known* implicit strangers," carry their own training on how professional systems work through their exposure and experiences in related fields. The category of "known intralopers" does not as clearly identify the organizations or individuals as do the previous two categories, in that the title known intralopers is focused more on the ideological messaging and interpretation embedded in journalistic information from outside the field rather than the specific individual. Indeed, ideological influences of known intralopers result in knowledge that disrupts journalistic processes of news decision-making in times of change – technological and social. These intralopers by providing explanations and avenues to social conditions that are rooted in expertise from "outside" the newsroom, similar to how conventional, "unknown" intralopers insert and leave their expertise within new procedures and products of journalists based on their involvement (Rodríguez-Breijo, Simelio, & Molina-Rodríguez-Navas, 2021). More specifically, known intraloper expertise shapes journalistic practice. They do so in terms of applying legal standards to news production, helping journalists release new products to the marketplace, shifting news to altered political opinion, and to justify to audiences public policies from elite ideologies of gender, race, nation, economy, and force (Cook, 2006; Parameswaran, 2006; Shahin, 2022).

For the purposes of highlighting the range of known intraloper activity that extends from technology (Lawson, 2021) to technique, such known intraloper influence includes journalistic remembrance as collective forgetting. Here, journalism aligns with civic, religious, and business officials to commemorate moments – and mark meanings for new moments – that

through emotionally-charged multimedia urge audiences to conform to institutions of control for implementation of current or future public reponses or policies. Consider drumbeating by television and cable news channels, particularly during the onset to U.S.-led invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq following the 9/11 attacks. Lule (2004), for example, examines game- and sport-based metaphors for the "countdown to Iraq" used by journalists that were also common language of U.S. military officials when presenting what they considered to be imminent military action in 2003. Such an example also represents critical scholarship that suggests in times of conflict between nations and communities, journalists struggle with Hallin's spheres of influences, mentioned above, as news functions as an interplay of power forces, often explained through normative interpretations of practice (Robertson, 2018). Ideological approaches in the news appear today in ways similar to the use of rhetoric and elite vantage point that emerged in and around the days of 9/11 and the War on Terror, particularly in political elements of and racialized fearmongering in U.S. press (Cockburn & St. Clair, 2007). They also appear in the use of leaks (and possibly now encrypted tips) in journalism across the globe, where an interconnected media-political system, involving the "engaged" citizenry, serving as "political weapons" (Sampedro, López-Ferrández, & Carretero, 2018, p. 257) propogated by the press.

Known intraloper influence also emerges in a hyper-professionalization of participatory, digital journalism in which explanations of social conditions and public policy continue to emerge from journalistic adoption and maintenance of turning to the "information elite," largely on social media, to influence the news (Robinson & Wang, 2018. p. 92; see also, Casero-Ripollés, Micó-Sanz, & Díez-Bosch, 2020). As such, journalistic language and ideological meanings of marginalized populations affected by public policies are transformed through journalistic spheres to support the authority of mainstream press, dominant publics, and media narratives. Here, digital (and "public") spheres of communication are shaped to conform with the interests and interpretations of dominant publics. Media narratives dictated by an institutionalization of interpretive communities and the cultural functions and forces placed upon – and alive within – interpretive communities raise questions about the authenticity of participatory and citizen journalism in terms of its contribution to diversification of media voices that have for a long time been influenced by official sources (Sampedro, López-Ferrández, & Carretero, 2018). Robinson (2017) refers to a similar notion as a journalistic norm of relying on "credentials [that] come from institutional hierarchy" that has extended into participatory journalism (p. 190).

In fact, heighten use of digital and social networks by journalists are thought to be altering their abilities to connect with diverse audiences and communities. In turn, journalists are said to reduce control of power elites on media messaging. Yet, digital technologies have expanded the embeddedness of intralopers and ideologies that are being used by journalists to maintain power of news audiences that include "desirable" spectators of subscribers, followers, and institutional partners. In 2019, for instance, *The New York Times* called upon digital audiences to inform newswork via an online post titled, "Help Us Cover The News," and asked audiences to complete an online form indicating "their contact info, online presence, occupation, race, political leanings, interests, and more" (Schmidt, 2019). But who might these audience intralopers be? What ideas do they bring to the newsroom through their comments? How will journalists use audience demographics to judge their involvement? And, will the news user know? Certainly, journalists are not known for sharing such answers in their reporting despite the seemingly endless ways technology would allow them to do so (for more see, Forde, et al. 2022). **7**

Conclusion

This essay's extension of current meanings of media intralopers by reaching into the core of journalism itself so as to demystify the idea that "strangers" are actually new to news production and digital journalism architectures articulates ideological influences that shape news to justify and bolster perspectives of social conditions by both public and private political and economic actors. Indeed, *known* intralopers operate so closely to journalistic interpretive communities, if not actually within the communities, that journalists and inter- and intra-lopers share common language, temporal awareness, and storytelling ability, though their presence is seen less in the level of the individual than in the institutionalized operation of news explanations. There certainly are journalistic strangers who may never have thought of being involved in journalism but want to see the field improve with their help, those who take a position against mainstream journalism through hacking or blogging, or those who have newfound interests in using their technological expertise to work within a news organization. Yet, this essay applies a critical perspective to newswork generally and to longstanding "known strangers" who influence journalistic practice and content through normalized and naturalized journalistic practices besides those influenced by new technologies. From this discussion, scholars must further explore these cultural and ideological influences in order to ask questions not only about new actors influencing journalism, but about the underlying ideological influences involved in their journalistic contributions and activities.

Adopting *critical perspectives* in the discussion of "new scholarship" such as "journalistic strangers" -- and what has come or

will come next -- should remind us of inherent and existing power relations that make journalism less separate from "outside" ideological-power actors than conventional interpretations suggest. Research on the internet of the future in terms of its journalistic geographies, this essay argues, should reveal influences of known and new journalistic strangers not only in terms of socio-political perspectives, but also as hegemonic cultural ones. Such commentary reveals constant work of journalists to catch moving boundaries and neglecting – perhaps how some scholars might also do – counter-narratives of journalism. Indeed, technological advancements in journalism, such as virtual reality storytelling, may present new and interesting influences by "journalistic strangers." To accomplish a holistic understanding of journalism, culture, and power, however, scholars must also acknowledge deeper connections between journalists and software companies that increase ideological and economic influences on media messaging, and the philosophical (perhaps, postmodern) meanings of virtuality (Toursel & Useille, 2019), as examples of the practice-based aspects of how "strangers" might be recognized. And, as audiences "demand" or "engage with" more "high-quality" or "high-tech" digital and immersive journalism in the pending Metaverse – as journalism has in the past (Brennen & Dela Cerna, 2010) – scholars must interrogate the embedding of elite ideologies into the news as journalists collaborate with technologists (or as journalists become technologists), interact (and re-interact) with elite ideologies at accelerating rates in networked societies, and move into new digital realms we have not yet imagined. These scholars might find, then, they we have, indeed, been there before.

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