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17 Journalism and Geography

Abstract: This chapter examines place-making within journalism. We argue that ideological roles of mythical and archetypal elements of journalism as cultural storytelling allow journalists to characterize geographies and its people(s) within dominant interpretations and assignments of worth. We present notions of geography as holding particular types of meanings specific to journalists and audiences, which are increasingly problematized by global journalistic endeavors, the ability of the press to push content based upon geographic location, and the agency of audiences to pull information specific to their locations or interests. Overall, we highlight how geography in journalism – in practice and as discourse – should be seen as a combination of ideological and social acts influenced by proximity, technology, and news values and norms.

Keywords: geography, ideology, myth, news place-making, proximity, social control

1 Introduction: journalism, geography and locating power

Miami's predominantly black Liberty City neighborhood had become, in the words of the *Miami Herald*, "a killing place" (Grimm 2014). It was true that Liberty Square – one of the nation's largest housing projects also referred to locally as Pork 'n' Beans¹ – is said by local press to experience more than its share of death and killing. Specific and solid data about the neighborhood's crime and racial composition, however, have always been hard to come by, with journalists relying instead on public imaginations of what the black neighborhood *might be*, and why. In June 2014 when the *Herald* summed-up dominant interpretations of Liberty Square in simple language of hatred and dismissiveness, seven people had just suffered gunshot wounds and two teenagers were dead; the shots had been fired, police believed, from AK-47 and AR-15 military style assault rifles. Liberty City was once again a warzone in an urban jungle. To the *Herald* – and arguable to its audiences – this was, indeed, "a killing place".²

1 There are multiple histories of this place-name. Campbell (2015) states "white people" assigned the name "because they claimed that was the only food poor black people could afford." Other explanations include that the name emerged from residents to reflect how the buildings' colors represented pork and beans (Daddy & Bailey 2010).

2 While the column's author, Fred Grimm, was a news columnist, who frequently writes his opinion, we argue that even opinion news travels through a process of gatekeeping (Vos & Heinderyckx 2015) in ways that legitimize the opinions as acceptable and valid among audiences.

To make the space come alive for readers, the *Herald* described a specific scene to depict what life is like there, especially in times of normalized disaster:

At the base of the stairs, at the mother's feet, someone had thrown a rug over the dirt where Kevin Richardson and Nakeri Jackson bled out in the early morning hours Tuesday, where seven others were wounded. The rug wasn't enough to discourage the flies, still swarming in their blood frenzy, 16 hours after shots were fired.

For the *Herald*, this scene of despair was easily replicated throughout the housing project: “Directly across 12th Avenue, there's another collection of stuffed animals, dirty and mildewed and sun-faded after two years in the South Florida weather.” Serving as “journalistic evidence” (Gutsche 2017: 248), *Herald* storytelling legitimized journalists' interpolations of the geography throughout an article arguing that these scenes were “all too ordinary” enough to explain-away external social and cultural pressures that create and inform stereotypes – and realities – of racialized and economic segregation.

Armed with a cast of characters that represent dangerous and nefarious citizens – the newspaper even named people of this place as “gangbangers” and uncovered droves of “Welfare Queens” and ghettoized, urban (read, black) mothers (Meyers 2013). “Welfare Queens” – those said to have multiple children in order to access a multitude of social welfare awards (Omi & Winant 1994) – were reported as gathering in a crowd “mostly made up of women – mothers, many with small children hanging from their arms” with each “[knowing] that it could have been their kids reduced to collateral damage in a drive-by ambush”. In another case, a “stricken mother” is shown to have “collapsed into a heap of wailing grief on an apartment building stairway decorated with an impromptu memorial”. As a result, news explanations of the neighborhood's perceived disorder and decline connected audiences to local dominant narratives of local place bred by tales of larger, urban topographies (Holloway 2003; Rosenblatt & Wallace 2005). In turn, meanings of the place and of the place's people became shared; in other words, *people functioned as place*.

1.1 Identifying journalistic stories of place

This chapter discusses how journalistic storytelling of geography is rooted in spatial characterization and scene-setting designed to represent basic applications of journalistic literary devices commonly considered by US journalists and scholars to engage audiences with narratives of information (Jacobson, Marino & Gutsche 2016; Gutsche & Salkin 2016). In other words, journalism is seen as “story” that encompasses social and cultural explanations of events and shared memories (Berkowitz 1997; 2011; Schudson 2005). And in turn, these explanations work in times of cultural confusion and social crisis to maintain control and order among populations within particular geographies (Gutsche & Estrada, 2017). By presenting

Liberty Square as an uncontrolled urban space, the *Herald* and its audiences are released from addressing their own influences in the creation of what they consider the problems of racialized savagery (Ewen & Ewen 2008). Such blanket mediatizations of this “other world” (Lule 2001) that disconnects audiences from their roles in constructing social conditions allow outsiders to imagine a place they may have never “seen” and will likely choose to avoid while forming and enforcing rules of order (Soja 2010).

In this chapter, we relate issues of journalism and geography to the *Herald's* coverage of Liberty Square and to other processes of place-making in the news that explain the form and function of dominant power meanings, which appear in coverage of everyday events (Gutsche 2014b). We argue that the hegemonic act of place-making extends mythical and archetypal elements of journalism as cultural storytelling (Lule 2001; McGee 1980) to naturalize a geography and its people within dominant audience interpretations and assignments of worth. This chapter, then, examines intersections of journalism and geography in practice and ideology through an interdisciplinary narrative to present two main arguments: First, journalism provides cultural explanations rooted in dominant ideology through mythical characterizations and discussions of geography. Second, geography holds particular types of meanings specific to journalists and to audiences, which are increasingly problematized by global journalistic endeavors, the ability of the press to push content based upon geographic location, and the agency of audiences to pull information specific to their locations or interests.

As a whole, we argue that geography in journalism – in practice and as discourse – should be seen as a combination of ideological and social acts influenced by proximity, technology, and news values and norms (Castells 2011; Couldry & McCarthy 2004; Kalyango & Cruikshank 2013). Furthermore, we argue that in these discussions, myth does not refer to a “falsehood” but rather represents a method of delivering tales that resonate with a collective’s shared “common sense” that operate as cross-spatial communication (Chadha & Koliska 2016; Tong 2013) within a racialized, geographically-rich hegemon. Furthermore, amid changing media economies, new forms of user-engaged journalism, and the influence of subjective lived experiences of media creators, news that characterizes geography must be considered as a complex form with a rich history of practice and scholarship.

2 Mapping the ideological power of geography

That geography is both tangible and is a product of the imagination contributes to difficulties in bridging normative and cultural explanations of how journalists and audiences interact with location. Political borders, for instance, are intentional lines represented in cartography, formed by treaties and agreements, monitored by check-points and physical barriers, indicated by signposts. We know, of course, that these boundaries are no more than an imagined divide, though from police

jurisdiction and city limits to travel maps and demilitarized zones, boundaries are treated as authoritative and, in some cases, even natural (Cronon 1991). Indeed, there is no denying the intentionality of borders because of the physicality of topography and built environments; however, it is the authority and legitimacy of geographic elements such as place-names and economic structures that require imagination.

2.1 Dissecting “geography”

To examine the intersections of geography and ideology that create social conditions and landscapes, critical geographers note the influence and importance of “natural environment” and “built environment” to distinguish between the degree to which physical locations represent pre-human intervention and what is “man-made”. Two other approaches are even more instructive when discussing geography.

First, the term “space” represents the physicality of geography, in which locations can be identified and marked, touched and used, divided and owned (Harvey 2009). In this way, geography represents a commodity upon and with which everyday life operates, where people are influenced in their “wayfinding” (de Certeau 1984) in part due to their pathways, access and exit points to space, and a location’s social use. A public park, for example, can be welcoming or restricting. One’s perception of the park depends upon her experiences, “knowledge”, and intentions related to that or to another similar space. Much scholarship (and journalism) marks the intensity around contested spatial meanings and activities, such as news about memorialization via monumentation and scholarship about public space that is surveilled by private entities (Beckett & Herbert 2009; Neiger, Meyers & Zandberg 2011).

Unpacking the potential and contested meanings of space complicates otherwise simple and easily accessible shared meanings that are ripe for political and economic influences that shape meanings to benefit the few. Such complications of space can lead to a deeper interpretation of geography through the notion of “place”. Whereas “space” may be highly – but not fully – sociological in its meanings, place is highly cultural. In this view, a park or a monument can be interpreted as holding meanings of collective memory and histories of communities’ resistance or oppression. Established and managed by authorities within approved social structures, these spaces and place items exist to serve a larger ideological purpose of shaping cultural meanings of what occurs within a specific location and time.

2.2 Journalists in geography

Journalists deal in both space and place. For instance, news of a space’s social institutions, such as city governments and schools, construct dominant meanings

of and for communities, while coverage of parades, new businesses, and “crime” function to cast place meanings where social norms and values are reinforced. Journalists’ interactions with and coverage of space and place is complicated largely due to journalists’ own social and cultural power. Newswriters have for the longest time enjoyed wide and close access to the elite. While not necessarily sharing in the economic wealth of the rich and powerful, journalists widely cover these populations and, in turn, receive economic and ideological rewards for their work. Even in struggling economic conditions throughout history, media have maintained elevated levels of formal education and job security as compared to employment opportunities in other sectors of the economy that allow journalists to balance enhanced forms of social capital while arguing that journalism – to varying degrees globally – represents and fights for the less fortunate.

In the US, journalists’ economic success has maintained the ability of reporters to live outside of the geographies that they are “expected” to cover, frequently ignoring the perspectives and places between their suburban homes and centers of control located in cities (Avraham & Ketter 2008; *Washington Times* 2000). Even in rural areas, local journalists are drawn to sources and “news” in locations where power is concentrated; and, as a result find themselves conducting a form of arm-chair reporting of issues outside of that space. Journalists work in ideological and geographic “interpretive communities” in which social norms and ideological paradigms are shared and maintained, where news agendas are issued in a top-down manner, influenced to a large degree upon where news is “happening” (Berkowitz & TerKeurst 1999; Shumow & Gutsche 2016).

As news is formed and expressed, journalists must consider their own geographic awareness and the spatial span of audiences in order to shape information and to provide explanations that meet the needs of recognized collectives through discussions of connections to location (Chen et al. 2015). Yanich (2001), for instance, argues that metropolitan news outlets in the US shape news from the inner-city in ways that highlight the drama of crime and disorder to reify dominant approaches to punishment and control of city dwellers by outside observers. In other words, news outlets “know their audiences” and are able to cross geographies by assigning meanings to specific locations that blend information with mechanisms for instituting oppression upon “undesirable people” in “undesirable spaces” (Beckett & Herbert 2009).

Journalists found their established spatial dimensions disrupted in the beginning of the 21st century amid global economic booms and busts as news outlets began shedding their news spaces following massive layoffs in the 1990s. Emptying newsrooms then quickly moved from the downtowns of US cities and off of small town main streets as conglomerates merged with even competing sister outlets into massive communication campuses outside of city power cores (Usher 2015). For instance, *The Washington Post*, one of the most-prized US newsrooms of Watergate fame that was depicted in *All The President’s Men* (1976), in 2015 its digs and moved

to Washington, DC's K Street, known as the city's bastion of political lobbying and advocacy. The *Post's* connection to power circles in Washington, DC, have remained strong after the move, in part because of the city's socio-geographic identity – the “DC factor”, as Kim and McCluskey (2014) call it – a setting that provides journalists with ready access to world leaders, decision-makers, and insiders in ways that form (and inform) news agendas of the locally-based press that then spread across wide geographies.

That much of the news produced by Washington, DC journalists is rarely distributed locally but is immediately processed and shared outside of the region's borders to journalists and audiences only to be returned for reactions and response through media and socio-political influences to be covered and distributed outside of the space once again, reveals the power process of news-making (Tuchman 1973) – and of the importance and potential, of geographic influences upon journalism. Even after such complexities are unmasked, journalists' articulations of reality, including geographic realities, come with a naturalized sense of cultural legitimacy and authority.

In part because journalists' messages are steeped in official sources, “informative” visuals, approved and replicable maps, and dominant discourse of place, news characterizations of geography enforce “a quiet tyranny of orientation that erases the possibility of disoriented discovery”, a sense of surprise, distraction, and challenge that leads to new ideas and experience (Kurgan 2013: 17). In turn, geographic messages in journalism limit “all the other things that we ought to see” (p. 17) by orienting audiences to single power vantage points that make room for easily placed images that we imagine through ideology rather through interaction, confusion, and discourse.

3 “Communication geography” in a world of transnational media

Just as the telephone and transoceanic cables “unbundled” global news from geographic territoriality by transmitting news from “far-away lands” to “civilization” within packs of communication about foreign economies, war, and personalities (Brooker-Gross 1985), news today operates in a world of emerging geographic-awareness software and content (Akoh & Ahiabenu 2012). Mobile phones, smart watches, drones, and advanced satellite and telecommunication systems move digital communication to even the most distant locations in ways that continue to blur notions of time, proximity, and geography as users watch what is “afar” from “home” (der Derian 2009; Goggin, Martin & Dwyer 2015; Gutsche 2014a). This is not to suggest that today's processes of geographic mediatization occur alternatively to when places are formed among audiences as they were presented from the pulpit

or in the town square (Carey 2009). Just as then, through verisimilitude do producers and audiences today embed and decode cultural meanings about social conditions and characteristics in a quest to uncover personal relationships to both here and there (Bhabha 1990; Said 1979; Williams 1976).

3.1 Critiquing “communication geography” through a critical lens

Place-making must no longer be seen as a single act that operates only as a single effort to be explained through geographic studies. Nor can communication be viewed absent of its intersections of place power and social power of spaces from which and to which messages are formed and within which audiences interact. Rather, place is transmitted among “scraps of interwoven communication threads” (Adams & Jansson 2012: 308) within communication systems that are tied to geography and the imagination of place that enforces behaviors and norms of a given location. These communication threads are woven together in messages between people and place, *stitched by people and places themselves*, with locations serving as mediums of their own, sending and receiving information within particular times and institutional settings amid symbolic meaning (Falkheimer & Jansson 2006; Jansson & Lindell 2015).

“Communication geography” (Adams & Jansson 2012) has come to represent layered sets of complex influences of domestic-to-international-to-domestic communication that can be exemplified in a 2013 warning to international travelers by the French Consulate in Chicago, Illinois, that the French people should “avoid” visiting the West and South sides of the city because of an increase in reported crime (Skiba 2013).³ That the consulate issued such a warning to French travelers already in the US and French citizens who may be traveling elsewhere internationally – while still heading-off those remaining in France from leaving to specific areas – all from the very place diplomats suggested should be avoided highlights the interpretive, imaginary forces and power of place-meaning.

In fact, the Consulate’s message was not restricted solely to those of French descent or citizenry but functioned as yet another stitch into a communication flow of space and place that banks on dominant and culturally shared stereotypes of people and possible danger; in this case, stories of “black-on-black” street crime and murder in 2013 and 2014 in Chicago that contributed to the place-name (and 2016 Spike Lee film) “Chiraq” (Daly 2014). As Barthes (1972) indicates, verisimilitude related to cultural symbols (including names) relies upon manipulation of time. In this case, Chicago’s place-time was stood still to capture only the ap-

³ Diplomats also warned French tourists against visiting parts of Richmond, Virginia, Baltimore, Maryland, New York City, and Los Angeles for similar reasons.

proachable meanings of dark skin and its danger, feeding upon and placing into stories and language of global white supremacy that requires frozen moments in which evidence of deadly black Americans appears and the “inherent savagery” of the dark-skinned is highlighted as an enduring factor of black culture and geographies (Zuberi & Bonilla-Silva 2008).

Despite a seeming lack in critical analysis of place and power, dominant articulations of “communication geography” promote innovative inquiry by applying an interdisciplinary lens and mixed methods, including ethnography and qualitative, participatory approaches, to understand the degree to which moments of media production, consumption, interpretation, and distribution *in and across space* are products of more than just mere operations associated directly with what are considered traditional forms of communication (Hemment 2005; Jansson & Lindell 2015). Through a lens of “communication geography” journalistic reporting of the consulate’s message – and as an extension and alteration of the message(s) – functioned amid social and political positioning of diplomatic relations that grew beyond communication between audiences in two nations and spread into larger public and socio-political spheres stored in global collective memories and “common knowledges” of the world’s places and peoples.

Messages as seen through “communication geography” should also be interpreted for the ideological acts of place-making that allow for geographic meanings to operate amid collectives (also known as interpretive communities, as discussed above) that appear virtually, in locations great distances away, or in imagination. Though these collectives, however, hold in some cases no physical connection to geographies of yesterday and today, they carry temporal understandings that empower media systems to merge spatial power structures maintained at the core through ideas of a sovereign nation place (Bhabha 1990).

3.2 Articulating (today’s) transnational media

Globalized journalistic discourse of political and economic relationships between nations during times of friendship and dispute overshadow underlying power systems created through international journalistic collaboration and joint ownership. In what is considered a “transnational media” system of international hegemony within which journalists cover global – and global-local – news events, media and audiences relate through language and cultural values birthed from long-standing, well-known ties of collective power. Still, news is shaped by journalists’ perceptions of their own and their audiences’ “national origins” of meaning and the geographically aligned media system’s interpretation of audience interests and needs when presented with information that bridges global-local issues (Curran et al. 2015: 1).

Today’s transnational media system provides opportunities for power to operate through evident social structures that restrict some journalists from access to

particular sources and interpretations of information while providing free rein to journalists from nationstates grounded in their positions of elite message construction. Great financial expense of globalized news, which can include travel, lodging, technological and security support, and talent with vast language and cultural skills also contributes to the hegemonic profile of transnational media systems, leading to reductive coverage of issues from various geographies that are interpretations of those spaces and places and related issues that reflect the ideologies of international sources of power and specific voices of power at local levels of interpretation (Archetti 2014; Gasher 2007; Grimm 2015). What remains missing in these elements of transnational media messaging is the complication of interpretations from the middle-level power structures and the low-end power positions in both global and local collectives.

In this discussion of today's transnational media power, we emphasize *today* as a critique of prevailing nostalgic articulations of a less inclusive media system of before and of a more technologically advanced and inclusive mediated sphere of communication of modern day. Globalization, as it has been crafted since World War II, has consisted of building notions of media conglomeration, technological infrastructure, and the intersections of "nation" amid information power flows based in Western spheres of space and thought (Brüggemann & Wessler 2014). As a result, critical and cultural approaches to Media Studies dissects the "truths" of a widening and more inclusive media system, often through analyses of local-global ideological tensions. Zala Volčič (2005), for example, writes about the function of public broadcasting in Slovenia where broadcasters balance the influence of national elites operating on an international platform who work to shape messages of local imagined communities in ways that benefit power structures that build and maintain international spatial and ideological political boundaries, regional identities, and spatialized arguments of "ours" and "others" (see also, Volčič & Zajc 2013). In our next section, we provide a platform for approaching discussions of transnational media.

3.3 Approaching transnational media

Today's technological determinism that focuses on perceptions about an enhanced, inclusive international media is increasingly veiled by celebratory conversations related to social power of social media. Veiled in these conversations are three major ways scholars should consider examining meanings of geography as connected to transnational media systems and, therefore, to cross-spatial dynamics also at regional and local levels to that reveal of local-global dynamics of place. First, scholars should acknowledge and investigate influences of media ownership and governmental financial investment and regulation to interrogate how journalistic place characterizations reflect geographic power interests. In India, for instance, Chadha and Koliska (2016) argue that institutionalized journalistic practic-

es and norms are based upon regional cultural influences *as well as corporate ownership* in that corporate networks are frequently tied to regional market interests and interpretations. This line of inquiry should be included and expanded in media sphere research.

Second, scholars have much to consider related to what is called “cross-regional” reporting. In China, for example, Tong (2013) writes that investigative journalists there regularly move in and out of geographies that operate under shared, overarching national private and state bureaucracies, social norms, and cultural values. However, Tong argues, the degrees to which these larger pressures are applied at the local level vary. Journalists must then be aware of such differences and be open to adapting journalistic practices and interpretations to meet the requirements and needs of locally established social spaces. “Investigative journalism persists where it is appropriate and is abandoned as part of a compromise when inappropriate”, Tong writes. “This is a form of adjusting behaviour [*sic*] by news organizations and journalists that leads to the co-existence of both compromise and resistance” (p. 9). Mixed method approaches – and certainly participatory methods, such as mental mapping (Gutsche 2014a) can be meaningful means of exploring spheres of influence within journalistic place-making.

From a practical position, power is at the core of geographic alterations to journalistic work, where reporters’ information-gathering, shaping, and presentation of explanation of and for local events and events across the globe and are open to – and are part of – greater influences from outside the journalistic community. Journalism scholars, therefore, should consider a third vein for research by recognizing “transnational journalistic culture” (Curran et al. 2015). An “interplay of power in which the privileged access of governments to the media, the hegemony of market liberal thought, the dominance of a small number of news agencies and the legacy of the Cold War” (p. 14) is creating a participatory function in a global world vis-à-vis the Internet. Scholars can no longer dismiss, then, meanings of geography in socio-political relations; neither can they ignore the ideological power of storytelling of place and the intersections of a nation’s dominant marketing strategies, representations by one nation of another, and how these meanings are delivered to audiences (Rafikova 2013, 2015).

4 Future conceptualizations: journalism and geography of and for audience(s)

To look forward in conceptual ties between journalism and geography, it helps to examine previous movements of geo-centric journalism. Early efforts in journalism of the modern day integrated ideas and the physicality of geography into news products in ways that reveal our innate need to make meaning of space and place.

“Backpack journalism” of the early 2000s in which journalists would don knapsacks of digital cameras, phones, and video and audio recorders to cover news outside of the usual spaces led to the momentary rise of mobile journalists, or “mojos”, who worked from laptops, cell phones, and the front seat of their vehicles in geographies across the globe (Dunn 2008). In the US, specifically, mojo and backpack journalism complemented a movement for outlets to produce “hyper-local” news – reporting that focused on issues and communities within a particular geography as a means to encourage original and civically engaged journalism (Metzgar, Kurpius & Rowley 2011).

Hyperlocalism placed a focus on particular spaces, people, and issues and that were otherwise said to be absent in mainstream news; movements to localize news attempted to engage with the people and issues of those localities and harkened to the development of “citizen journalism” (Singer et al. 2011). However, whereas the mojo movement required journalists to *be in the spaces* in which they covered, the citizen journalist model allows the institution of professional journalism to span even greater senses of space and time by encouraging citizens to serve as “pseudo-journalists” to produce the news (Plantin 2015). Here, citizens report news from their own neighborhoods while professional journalists serve as aggregates of reported information. Such efforts are said to reveal potential not just for promoting journalism’s social roles in local geographies, but to also promote localism in terms of advertising.

Indeed, as a darling of the industry because of its supposed “empowerment” of publics through easy access to publishing, public-professional partnerships in reporting and editing, and the distribution of news to those marginalized by spatial segregation, citizen journalism is built on covering space and interpreting place. Ironically, recent journalistic movements to engage with audiences have journalists revealing the power of the industry to oppress, however. Industry calls to include underrepresented voices in the news by expanding coverage ideologically and spatially inadvertently revealed how geographically centralized power systems create a world within which journalists intentionally operate. In turn, we argue, efforts that overtly uncover journalism’s role in social-spatial problems are enacted to support the power positions of audiences outside of those directly being engaged and furthers the ability of the press to serve their targeted public (Chadha & Koliska 2016; Yanich 2001).

4.1 Place-making via audience interactivity

From a sociological position, audiences turn to the news for information that speaks as civic engagement to become educated about what is happening in spaces throughout their community. Whereas datelines, headlines, and political maps allow audiences to interact with geography in the news (Howe 2009; Monmonier 1989), today’s news users are inundated with interactive maps, geotagged news

items, and social media that place the person – and their location at the time – as part of the geographies to which they are exposed (Akoh & Ahiabenu 2012; Picard 2011). As worldwide economies struggled to support current media business models in the late 2000s and mobile technologies advanced in accessibility, news outlets were able to “push” both their journalism and advertising to users through alerts and text messages. Media users, no longer tied to a television set, radio signal, or Ethernet cable to get their news also push their own data (ie product and services reviews, answers to electronic polling, and purchasing information) and information (ie interpretations of a “news event” and eyewitness reports) in efforts that include users’ location, interests, and real-time activities that are tracked via geotechnology.

What Westlund (2013) refers to as media “omnipresence” – the everywhere/ everydayness of media interactions supplied by access to mobile media – has become naturalized among some audiences as a primary, legitimate source for exploring the world. In this way, user interactions with mobile technologies inform “common knowledge” of place meanings that are collected and distributed to masses. Mobile phones and location guidance systems connect audiences with physical location by way of the communicators’ own spatial orientation and perception at the time of communication. In other words, communicating with a family member while “away” from “home” can be a moment in which the traveler’s imagination and emotions of and toward that person and place are influenced by the geographic separation itself.

In this dynamic, geography itself is communication, and new technologies are increasingly creating mobile manifestations of geographic characterizations that influence wayfinding and ideas of place (Gordon & de Souza e Silva 2011). In 2012, for instance, Microsoft announced an app for users to be warned of “high-crime” neighborhoods as they made their way through city spaces. The app, which was not released following criticism that designers were creating what news stations and websites named “avoid ghetto” (Matyszczyk 2012), mapped crime statistics and tracked mobile users to recommend “ghetto-free” routes as users approached spaces where crime had been reported. In 2013, another app, initially called “Ghetto Tracker” used similar features to guide users to what the app called a “Good Part of Town” (O’Connor 2013). The degree to which the news business can adapt to mobile audiences – like others sectors that innovate by connecting audiences’ fears and concerns of urban people and places with consumer products such as “Ghetto Tracker” – remains a critical roadblock for media sustainability.

4.2 Complications of geographic narratives: concluding thoughts

Economies of the mobile marketplace aside, locative media beyond that which is device-specific, such as interactive web-based maps, intensifies and animates long-

standing social and cultural processes and practices of place-making discussed throughout this chapter, the study of which reveals patterns of press power and social control in spatial storytelling. When street riots erupted throughout the London (UK) area in 2011, for instance, *The Guardian* launched what turned out to be some of the most innovative and interactive coverage of social disruption in terms of explaining social conductions through journalism, technology, and scholarship. The newspaper provided an outlet for user comments and reporting that was mapped on the newspaper's website, as well as for visual communication of users' explanations for the violence. Additionally, *The Guardian* not only covered the news but later worked with the London School of Economics to research the causes and effects of social unrest (*Reading the Riots* 2011).

Findings from research and news reporting indicated that the violence that occurred following a police-involved shooting of a reportedly unarmed black man was heavily influenced by pathological racism and economic injustice throughout London, findings that mirror those that emerged after similar street violence in the city in the 1980s that was describe in racist and classist news coverage at the time as being merely a symptom of "The Inner City" (Burgess 1985). In that case, city cores were presented in the press as "alien" and of a racialized pathology of personal responsibility, laziness, and intentional contained violence. Journalistic and scholarly work following the violence of 2011 painted pictures of social and cultural oppression and repression, racialized policing tactics, and economic warfare against the poor and marginalized.

Most troubling, however, is the degree to which spatial segregation and dominant ideologies of race and place were represented in police action, violence, and public discourse and actions through policy. This chapter's final thoughts, then, focus on concerns of the power of news characterizations of geography to obfuscate power processes of the press and publics to control (Gutsche 2015a; Hess & Gutsche 2018). Moving forward, place-making in the press should be examined from perspectives of power to measure and critique three main ideological efforts to control: 1. the influence of dominant public mediated characterizations of geographies, communities, and nations upon explanations of individual and collective action and speech; 2. the construction of an elite "public sphere" by narrowing communication to specific geographic audiences, moving away from notions of a wider and inclusive collectives into a sphere constructed of a segmented public that is spread over wide virtual and physical spaces, 3. the function of surveillance and social control via the collection of geoinformation and observations of daily lives as journalism adopts new data-gathering processes such as drones and sensors to allow the press to tell stories spanning space and time from positions of omnipresence (Holton, Lawson & Love 2015).

Commitments to examining and resisting dominant ideologies of place and people through participatory and radical assessments of journalistic storytelling can heighten understandings of the meanings of local levels of interactions

between press and place to guide media users and creators into an unmarked future where they are even a bit more prepared to unpack power.

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Further reading

Those interested in intersections of geography, place-making, and the news would do well to visit a mix of theoretical discussions and applications, including Henri Lefebvre's (1991) *The Production of Space, The Country and the City* (1976) by Raymond Williams, J. Nicholas Entrikin's (1991) *The Characterization of Place*, and Katherine Fry's (2003) *Constructing the Heartland: Television News and Natural Disaster*. The 2017 article, 'Geographies of media and communication I: Metaphysics of encounter' in *Progress in Human Geography* by Paul C. Adams helps direct readers to an overview of how geography appears in and can be applied to media studies, while Sue Robinson's (2017), *Networked News, Racial Divides: How Power and Privilege Shape Public Discourse in Progressive Communities* and Stephen Reese's (2016) article, 'The new geography of journalism research', in *Digital Journalism* build upon the field via digital work. Still, much is left unanswered in complicating issues of place and the news – versus broad notions of “the media” – that move beyond discussions of “community” and “boundaries”, such as the edited volumes *Mediated Geographies and Geographies of Media* (2015) and *Communications/Media/Geographies* (2016) to examines place as a method of journalistic power, which is examined further in works such as *Media Control: News as an Institution of Power and Social Control* (2017) and in the forthcoming book, *Geographies of Journalism: The Imaginative Power of Place in Making Digital News*.

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