ABSTRACT

Title of Document: TRANSPARENCY AND TRUST IN JOURNALISM: AN EXAMINATION OF VALUES, PRACTICES AND EFFECTS

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Journalism scholars and practitioners have repeatedly argued that transparency is crucial to generate trust in the news media, which, over the years, has faced continues decline in public trust. As news organizations have been encouraged to implement transparency in their daily work, transparency has increasingly gained the status of a professional norm in journalism. However, very little is actually known about how journalists think and apply transparency in their everyday practices or how news organizations in the United States implement transparency. Similarly, normative assumptions about the trust-generating effects of transparency have not been consistently shown to exist.

This dissertation examined to what extent journalists at 12 national news outlets embraced transparency on a day-to-day basis and how these news organizations implement transparency online at the news item level. Moreover, this

dissertation tested whether existing features of transparency (hyperlinks, editorial explanations, corrections, staff biographies etc.) impact audiences' trust perception of a news story.

The results of the mixed method approach showed that transparency in journalism is far from being a professional norm, which guides journalists' news production processes. An analysis of 27 in-depth interviews found that journalists rarely consider transparency in their work. Journalists agreed that the notion of transparency has value. They repeatedly suggested that the news outlets they work for utilize transparency as a promotional tool to engage audiences and to appear transparent, rather than significantly disclosing information about the inner workings of their news organization. The results of the content analysis supported this claim as the findings show that the transparency features news organizations currently use provide little information for audiences to learn about how journalism is done. Meanwhile, the results of two experiments indicate that participants may not recognize the intended meanings of the varied transparency features, as participants' trust perception did not vary across different transparency conditions.

The findings of this dissertation suggest that transparency in journalism is still a goal rather than reality. News organizations have not opened up to the extent that they may be understood as transparent organizations; instead their efforts to pull back the curtain so that audiences may see the inner workings of newsrooms can be considered translucent at best.

TRANSPARENCY AND TRUST IN JOURNALISM: AN EXAMINATION OF VALUES, PRACTICES AND EFFECTS

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Dedication

For Lijuan(瞎丽娟), who continues to open my eyes.

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Chapter 1: Believing in the Power of Transparency

1.1. A rising culture of transparency

The belief that transparency has inherent advantages is widely held. This basic notion of transparency as opening up an institution by providing information about the inner workings to outsiders has and is increasingly gaining importance in a variety of social arenas. Politicians, activist groups, and business leaders all advocate transparency, as do journalists. This call for more transparency (Craft & Heim, 2009) has often been linked to the creation of a culture of transparency (Florini, 2007) that is supported among the highest levels of society. On the U.S. White House website, President Barack Obama (n.d.) promises an “unprecedented level of openness in government . . . to ensure public trust and establish a system of transparency. . . .” Ensuring that the U.S. government is living up to its promise, the nonpartisan activist group Sunlight Foundation continuously pushes for more transparency. The foundation’s mission is to request and analyze federal data to “make government more accountable to all” (Sunlight Foundation, 2015). Implying that it upholds the transparency principle, Exxon Mobil (2012), one of the biggest companies in the world, claims “one vital component of building community trust is transparency” (p. 26). Unilever CEO Paul Polman (2012) has asserted this more explicitly, declaring, “[W]e are embracing transparency by opening up our business model to scrutiny. . . . In a world where trust in our institutions is in decline, greater transparency should be part of our response.” The *New York Times* public editor Margaret Sullivan (2013) defined transparency as a mechanism to induce trust:

> Journalists can let readers get to know their backgrounds, their personalities and how they do their jobs. The *Times* has embraced that move toward transparency, through social media, Web-based chats with journalists, and even its employment of a public editor who explains the paper to readers.

Across disciplines, scholars agree that transparency can positively influence perceptions of institutions and companies. Opening up and providing more information to outsiders will make businesses, public institutions, and governments more accountable and trustworthy (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007; Tapscott & Ticoll, 2003; Birkinshaw, 2006; Florini, 2007; Plaisance, 2007; Allen, 2008; Holtz & Havens, 2009; Bennis, 2013). Transparency, scholars have argued, may reverse or possibly stop the continuing erosion of trust in institutions (Edelman, 2014). The strength of this growing belief in transparency, particularly in the fields of governance and institutional design, has been described as having "quasi-religious significance" (Hood, 2006, p. 3).

Even though transparency is not a wholly new concept for holding governments and institutions accountable (see Bentham 1790/ 1995), its recent renaissance has been accompanied by changes in communication technologies (Fung, Graham, & Weil, 2007). The internet and the growing number of digital communication devices make storing, accessing, and analyzing information about organizations and individuals increasingly easy (Allen, 2008; Bennis, 2013; Brin, 1998; Karlsson, 2011; Singer, 2007; McBride & Rosenstiel, 2014; Granados & Gupta, 2013). Digital technologies have facilitated the move to more openness in contemporary society. Federal, state, and local governments now often stream meetings online, offering citizens a look into the decision-making processes of politicians (Meijer, 2009).

The introduction of digital communication technologies like social media has also contributed to a wider public sphere capable of triggering political change (Shirky, 2011). U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-California), for example, took to Twitter to criticize CIA Director John Brennan's misleading remarks regarding the Senate "torture report" that examined the CIA's detention and interrogation program, which was started after the terrorist attacks of 9/11[1]. Digital technologies also ensure that information online almost never disappears as users preserve a lot of information through sharing and downloading (Rosen, 2010). In that respect digital technologies have changed the access to and scrutiny of information by anyone with internet access, which Meijer (2009) broadly described as "computer-mediated transparency."

The news media share similar challenges to corporations and government organizations, including the loss of public trust (Edelman, 2014). However, the debates about how and to what degree institutions should be transparent vary across fields. The literature among the varied domains of journalism, governance, and management discusses transparency either as strategy, policy, or an ethical standard. In the field of governance and management, transparency has not only been described as the opposite of secrecy (Florini, 1998), but also as a form of strategy that makes institutions and companies seemingly more open to outsiders by creating a pseudo-transparency, which provides access to information of limited significance (Coombs & Holladay, 2013; Holtz, 2008; Granados & Gupta, 2013). In journalism studies, transparency is often understood as an ethical principal to disclose information regarding "the way news is selected and

[1] Brennan had called the report an "'exaggeration and misrepresentation' and said claims that no intelligence was gained from the use of these techniques 'lacks any foundation at all'" (Breitman, 2014). Feinstein retorted on Twitter that all the evidence Brennan tried to devalue came from "CIA record, cable, etc." and that a bipartisan Senate committee compiled the report.

produced" (Plaisance, 2007; Karlsson, 2010) and who selects and produces the news (Heikkilä, Głowacki, Kuś & Pies, 2014). The immediacy in publishing and interactivity of digital communication platforms has also given rise to the idea of participatory transparency, in which users take part or contribute in the news production or political process through comments or by supplying news content (Karlsson, 2010; Balkin, 1999).

The focus of this dissertation is on transparency in journalism. In contrast to the fields of governance and business, transparency in journalism is still a relatively new phenomenon. Because of this, many questions regarding the practice and place of transparency within news organizations as an ethical norm (Plaisance, 2007) and impact on audiences as a trust- and credibility-generating tool (Karlsson, Clerwall, & Nord, 2014) have not been answered or are only marginally understood. Moreover, transparency within journalism is still somewhat ambiguously defined. Transparency has been described and categorized in varying terms, including disclosure and participatory transparency (Karlsson, 2010), news item and editorial transparency (Meier & Reimer, 2011), or as generally letting audiences see the process of reporting (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007). By investigating the values, practices, and effects of transparency, this dissertation aims to clarify some of these theoretical differences while primarily contributing to a better empirical understanding of transparency in journalism. Particularly, this dissertation seeks to answer how journalists at 12 national news organizations in the United States (*CNN*, *FOX News*, *NBC News*, *ABC News*, *CBS News*, *NPR*, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Los Angeles Times*, *The Wall Street Journal, Chicago Tribune,* and *USA Today*) think about and embrace transparency in their daily work and how these national news organizations implement transparency on a news item level. This dissertation also examines whether transparency will impact audiences' trust perceptions.

Transparency in journalism cannot be seen in isolation. Rather, it must be seen as a phenomenon embedded in larger societal developments such as recent efforts to increase transparency in politics and business. These developments subsequently influenced the rise of transparency in the field of journalism (Craft & Heim, 2009). In other words, transparency is increasingly expected from public and private organizations today; as a result, the institution of journalism has to follow suit. Consequently this dissertation draws from various conceptions of transparency in different fields, including governance and business, to argue for a comprehensive definition of transparency in journalism, which incorporates the idea of a transparent display of decision-making processes that go beyond the notion of access to information and participation. The definition of transparency in journalism, I argue, should include what Florini (2007) proposed for governance. She described transparency as "the degree to which information is available to outsiders that enables them to have an informed voice in decisions and/or to assess the decisions made by insiders" (p. 5). Despite varying definitions of the term transparency, the functional conception of practicing transparency remains similar across different fields. Whether in governance, business, or journalism, transparency is often seen as a key to generate trust among institutional outsiders.

While this dissertation also draws partly on literature about transparency from other countries, this research focuses on journalism practice and the institution of journalism in the United States. This focus is deliberate, as innovations in U.S. journalism have consistently been seen as a major influence for the practice of journalism in other parts of the world (Kleinsteuber, 2001). Moreover, U.S. journalism was among the first hit by economic challenges after the introduction of digital media technologies resulting in revenue losses, smaller newsrooms, and numerous newspaper bankruptcies (Langley, 2012). As such, journalism in the United States was also the first to adopt new practices and adjust its professional culture to a changed digital news environment. These adjustments include the adoption of a new and central professional norm: transparency.

This introductory chapter provides an overview of this dissertation. In the pages that follow, I first briefly highlight the growing role of transparency in journalism in the United States. Then, I provide, in section *1.3.*, a summary of the research on transparency in journalism to set up and explain the central questions of this dissertation. Additionally, I describe the mixed method approach employed in this study (section *1.4.*), and detail some of the contributions of this dissertation to the field of journalism studies (section *1.5.*). Finally, in section *1.6.*, I outline the remaining chapters of this dissertation.

1.2. Transparency in Journalism

Journalism has a special relationship with transparency. One could argue that transparency has been a part of journalistic professional conduct for about 100 years, especially if sourcing and attribution, for example, are conceived as the most basic forms of transparency in journalism. However, sourcing — that is, the correct display and naming of information sources — has traditionally been associated with accuracy in journalism (Reuters, 2008; Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007).

Walter Lippmann (1920) proposed sourcing as a crucial element to give journalism the clout of a respected profession. These concerns regarding the professional role were also associated with a sense of journalistic quality. According to Schudson (1978), Lippmann was very much concerned with keeping journalists honest by equipping them with a professional skill set that would guard them from their own subjectivity. Moreover, to openly or transparently refer to where journalists get their information has been a longtime practice to increase accountability and trust in the news media (McNair, 2013).

The institution of journalism has continuously developed standards, normative practices, and ethics to ensure and uphold quality in journalism. Despite these standards and norms that guide practitioners, journalism has and continues to have its moments of crisis. On an individual level, extended plagiarism and fabrications by Jayson Blair while he was working for *The New York Times* has shaken confidence and trust in the profession and in one of the most respected news outlets in the world. Most egregiously, Blair repeatedly claimed to have covered news events he never witnessed. He also fabricated quotes and comments, manipulated photos, and "lifted material from other newspapers" (Barry, D., Barstow, D., Glater, J. D., Liptak, A. & Steinber, J., 2003). The *New York Times* called the incident "a profound betrayal of trust and a low point in the 152-year history of the newspaper" (Barry et al., 2003).

The more recent controversy surrounding *NBC Nightly News* anchor Brian Williams concerning an embellished story from his time in Iraq won't help the reputation of journalism as a profession, either. Over several years, Williams changed a story regarding an attack on a U.S. helicopter to an attack on a U.S. helicopter in which he was traveling. The *Wall Street Journal* commented that the problem about the “scandal” around Williams, one of the most prominent figures in current U.S. journalism, isn’t the specifics, but that people may “retain the essential word that captures it, and the word here is lies” (Noonan, 2015). A lack of transparency in journalism can contribute to the occurrence of such incidents as too little information may have been disclosed to fully account for what really happened during the reporting process in the first place.

While these individual transgressions of journalistic standards and claims of truth telling undermine the integrity and trust in journalism to some degree, they may seem negligible when compared to the impact of digital communication technologies on the institution of journalism. The introduction of digital communication technologies triggered a sea change that undermined the legitimacy and trust in the profession by giving rise to alternative journalistic forms, such as blogging or the use of social media (Allen, 2008; Singer 2007; Shirky, 2009). The new technologies have also led to severe losses in advertising revenue (particularly from classifieds) that triggered a permanent shutdown of numerous news organizations. These changes in the news media landscape pressed news organizations to find new ways of practicing journalism, including the adoption of transparency to provide news audiences more information about the journalistic process.

News organizations in the United States have embraced transparency to varying degrees. For *The New York Times* public editor Margaret Sullivan (2013), transparency is established several ways: through social media, Web-based chats with journalists, and through her role as the public editor who acts on behalf of the readers of the paper. Both national news outlets and smaller news organizations have started to open up their news organizations by letting the audience see "how the sausage is made." *The Spokesman-Review* in Spokane, Washington, for example, invited their readers to its editorial meetings via online stream (Tompkins, 2011).

Journalism scholars, meanwhile, have focused on two major streams of thinking about transparency: first, as an ethical principle that guides journalistic practice (Plaisance, 2007); second, as a means to a positive perception of journalism (Karlsson, 2010). Allen (2008) described two major functions of transparency:

> It is an important part of the discovery of social truth, but it is also a way to gain access to the truth about the manufacturing of news. For journalists, transparency functions as a system of accountability and as a way of increasing legitimacy with citizens, both key institutional values. (p. 324).

The majority of literature regarding these positive effects of transparency has been normative in nature and numerous questions remain unanswered as to whether transparency will indeed increase legitimacy and trust among news consumers and allow for more accountability in journalism.

1.2.1. Transparency Bolstering Trust in Journalism?

Several scholars and practitioners have pushed the adoption of transparency in journalism as an industry-wide norm (Allen, 2008; Karlsson, 2010, 2011; Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007; Deuze, 2005; Lasorsa, 2012; McBride & Rosenstiel, 2013; SPJ, 2014). Scholars argued that transparency would produce such positive impacts on journalism that transparency should be an ethical imperative (Plaisance, 2007). After about a decade of intensifying discussions around the subject, the Poynter Institute formalized transparency alongside truth seeking and community as one of three new core principles of journalism ethics (McBride & Rosenstiel, 2014). Following suit, the Society of Professional Journalists' (SPJ) revised code of ethics, published in September 2014, recommends journalists to "be accountable and transparent" (SPJ, 2014).

Generally, transparency in journalism has been described as the disclosure of information that explains journalistic processes, including the access to communicate with journalists and/or news outlets (Karlsson, 2010). In this respect, the technological changes have been a major facilitator of transparency. Furthermore, online journalism established a more "open journalistic culture" (Deuze, 2003), influencing how news is presented (Karlsson, 2010).

Researchers attest that transparency has many qualities that will help journalism and journalism practice. Transparency has been termed "the new objectivity" (Weinberger, 2009) that can help to protect professional reporting and journalists' pursuit of truth (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007; Phillips, 2010), increase the legitimacy of journalism (Karlsson, 2010) or even show that professional "journalistic content is superior" (Karlsson, 2011, p. 292) to non-professional journalistic content. Hayes, Singer and Ceppos (2007) proposed that transparency could increase the credibility of journalists. Furthermore, Singer (2010) suggested, transparency can be understood as not only a more open but also a more honest form of journalism that highlights and explains failures, which Silverman (2007, 2013) argued will build more trust with audiences. Moreover, Kovach and Rosenstiel (2007) proposed that transparency can help citizens "to identify which journalism to trust" (p. 91), because "the more honest the journalist is with the audience about what he or she knows and doesn't know, the more trustworthy the journalist is” (p. 100).

Overall, supporters of transparency in journalism have seen it as a solution to major problems facing the entire industry, such as the undermining of journalists’ professional role and authority (Deuze, 2005; Singer, 2007) and the loss of trust and credibility in the news media (Pew, 2012; Kovach & Rosentstiel, 2007). Yet, despite these normative assumptions, whether transparency will actually deliver the desired positive results for journalism remains unclear. Little to no empirical research exists to date that would support the normative assumptions that transparency will build trust (among other things) immediately or in the long run (Karlsson, Clerwall, & Nord, 2014).

1.2.2. Transparency Undermining Trust in Journalism?

While several researchers see the many benefits transparency may bring to journalism, few raise words of caution. Allen (2008) warned that no immediate effects of transparency on trust should be expected. Allen agreed with Onora O’Neill (2002) that trust would not be gained by unveiling secrets but rather by the reduction of deception and lies. Thus, “disclosure transparency” as access to information or even “participatory transparency” (Karlsson, 2010) through interactive means like social media or “commenting” may not be enough to establish trust in the news media. In fact, Ward (2014) argued that “transparency is not sufficient for responsible journalism” (p. 45) that can be trusted, as transparency is a prerequisite for accountability. According to Ward, “important distinctions collapse” when “transparency is used improperly as a synonym for democracy, accountability, responsibility, honesty, frankness, and lack of pretense." (p. 47).

Transparency could, in fact, undermine journalism (Smolkin, 2006). Smolkin (2006) asked in an *American Journalism Review* headline if U.S. news media is already "Too Transparent?" While she acknowledged the positive implications of transparency, she also questioned whether too much of it may actually be unhelpful, especially if readers could witness newsroom decision processes. "[B]y making so much of the editorial decision making available for public consumption, do we risk sanitizing a messy process that should encourage robust debate and bold investigation?"

Another issue raised with increasing transparency is the problem of information overload. Craft and Heim (2009) argued that "transparency can be counterproductive, bombarding people with so much information that it becomes nearly impossible to separate the 'signal' from the 'noise'" (p. 224). They cautioned that transparency in journalism could become a distraction from what is important such as the news, itself. According to Craft and Heim:

> Journalism is conducted in such a way that those specifics and particulars are already — transparently — available, [so] we are left to wonder about the value of increased transparency of less checkable information such as motives or even methods and processes (2009, p. 225).

Broersma (2013) went a step further and suggested that transparency can potentially harm journalism's entire mission. He argued that journalism would lose its authoritative voice if it publicly admits to possible biases or that news reports only "temporarily resemble truth" (p. 33). Broersma concluded that such transparency would subvert journalism by inviting doubt about its own "performative discourse that strives to persuade the public of the truthfulness of its accounts . . . [W]ere journalism to admit its shortcomings, and were doubt to be allowed into its discourse, its paradigm would be broken" (p. 33).

1.3. Where is the Data? Need for Empirical Research

The discourse about transparency in journalism has predominantly been taking place around normative arguments, that is, that transparency will have positive outcomes, even though the ideal amount of transparency may not yet be certain (Smolkin, 2006). Scholars and practitioners, alike, have argued that transparency can increase trust, credibility, and legitimacy of journalism. Yet, the empirical research in the field that can bolster these normative assumptions has been sparse. Karlsson (2010) pointed out that much of the previous research has been essayistic (i.e., lacking rigorous empirical research), anecdotal, or focused at a particular news site showing whether transparency efforts are present in online journalism (Deuze, 2003; Hayes et. al 2007; Plaisance, 2007; Allen 2008). Even Karlsson's (2010) own research study does not go beyond an investigation of the presence of transparency types (disclosure transparency — showing how news is selected and produced, and participatory transparency — users taking part in the news production process). He examined these types at the news item level at the online platforms of three newspapers—*The New York Times* (USA), *The Guardian* (UK) and the *Dagens Nyheter* (Sweden).

To date, little empirical research looks at the institutional, that is, industry-wide, adoption of a transparency norm, let alone the potential effects of transparency in journalism on audiences. Lasorsa (2012) tested the journalistic norm of transparency on Twitter. He showed that female journalists were more transparent than their male counterparts by revealing information about their jobs, personal lives and daily activities. But Lasorsa did not investigate whether this form of transparent behavior has any effects on trust in journalism. Hellmueller, Vos, and Poepsel (2013) also explored the transparency norm among journalists. They surveyed journalists to measure their attitudes toward occupational norms of transparency and objectivity to explore whether transparency has become dominant as "the new objectivity" within journalism (Weinberger, 2009). The researchers found no conclusive evidence of a shifting journalistic cultural capital from objectivity toward transparency. Rather, objectivity remained a strong norm among journalists across different age groups, including professionals who were socialized within an online environment. Yet, like Lasorsa (2012), Hellmueller et al. (2013) found that senior female journalists embraced disclosure transparency more than their male counterparts.

Plaisance and Deppa (2009) interviewed journalists to gauge the importance of transparency as an ethical principal among other values. The researchers operationalized transparency as journalistic practices such as naming/disclosing sources or protecting people's privacy. They found that during the interviews, journalists rarely addressed the notion of transparency and concluded that journalists had an inadequate appreciation of the importance of transparency as a critical professional standard and "end goal in ethical deliberations" (p. 376). Chadha and Koliska (2014) also interviewed journalists at six national news outlets (*The New York Times, The Washington Post, The Wall Street Journal, The Los Angeles Times, CNN, and NPR*) to gauge to what degree reporters and editors implemented transparency into their daily work. Even though interviewees recognized the value of transparency, this research showed, it was not something that guided their daily news production processes.

All of the above-mentioned studies contribute to the overall discussion of transparency as a growing value within journalism. But these studies fall short of finding clear support for the normative literature by indicating that more transparency in journalism will indeed impact perceptions of journalistic credibility, trust, and legitimacy among different audiences and constituents to which journalism is catering. A noticeable exception is Roberts (2007), who undertook a first (known) attempt to measure effects of computer-mediated transparency on journalistic credibility. His online experiment tested the impact of hyperlinks that provided additional information about a story and editorial explanations about the journalistic decision-making process. Roberts' experiment showed no statistically significant impact. The additional information provided (i.e. disclosure transparency) did not affect readers' perceived credibility of the story itself or of the news media outlet. Karlsson, Clerwall, and Nord (2014) also tested the effects of transparency on credibility in Sweden and did not find any significant results.

The brief examination of the literature shows that empirical research has still to cover a wide array of questions to gauge the influence of transparency in today's journalism. Particularly, the implementation and the effects of transparency within the field are still unclear and require further examination. This dissertation seeks to expand the research efforts by examining the arc of communicating transparency to news audiences. This is accomplished in three ways: first, by examining how journalists conceptualize and adopt transparency into their daily routines; second, the implementation of transparency features online by 12 leading national news outlets in the

United States are identified and analyzed; finally, the relationship between transparency and trust in journalism is tested as one of the central questions concerning transparency in journalism. One overarching question of this dissertation is thus:

Does journalistic transparency affect news audiences' trust?

This rather wide-ranging question serves as the central approach to this dissertation, as the relationship between transparency and trust hinges upon providing information and knowledge about another social actor (news media) that will reduce uncertainty (Simmel, 1950; Kohring & Matthes, 2007). In other words, transparency provides more information to audiences about the journalistic process, which in turn reduces social uncertainty leading to an increase of trust. In order to answer this question more analytical steps are necessary. The concepts of trust and transparency in journalism, both very broad terms, are explicated in the chapters to come in order to measure the impact of transparency on trust perceptions among news audiences. This includes a clear outline of the possible, yet mainly unproven, relationship between transparency and trust within the journalistic context in the United States.

The idea of trust in journalism is at least as complicated as the notion of transparency, itself. A major problem is that scholars have often compounded trust with the notion of credibility (Kohring, 2004; Kohring & Matthes, 2007). In order to clarify the notion of trust in journalism this dissertation also asks:

What are the fundamental elements of trust in journalism?

Based on Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt & Camerer's (1998) definition of trust — "a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behavior of another" (p. 395) — I will explicate four elements of general trust (psychological state, acceptance of vulnerability, positive expectations, intensions/ behavior of others). Then, I will further specify what trust means in journalism by contrasting this concept with notions of credibility to enable a more accurate measurement of this rather general term. For this purpose I will draw on Kohring and Matthes' (2007) concept of trust in journalism as a process of selection of topic, facts, descriptions and opinions.

Moreover, as argued above, journalism scholars have not agreed on a comprehensive definition of transparency in journalism. A major hurdle to this endeavor is the lack of a systematic outline of the varied elements of transparency in journalism. This dissertation attempts to fill this gap by addressing the following question:

What are the elements of transparency in journalism?

Explicating the elements of transparency will set the basis for a more nuanced definition of transparency within the journalistic context. For that purpose I will divide the concept of transparency into several different components that fall under two main categories: first, transparency about the news production process and second, transparency about the news producer (i.e. author, journalist, or news organization). I will detail these two categories according to what information will be disclosed and how. This step will be informed by a content analysis of the websites of 12 leading national news outlets, which will help identify the different transparency features that fall under the two main transparency elements.

After answering the questions above this dissertation will focus on empirically exploring the three major aspects of transparency in journalism. First, how do professional journalists conceive and implement transparency? Second, how do news organizations display or communicate transparency to their audiences? Third, how will transparency affect users' evaluation of trust in journalism and a specific news item, in particular?

1.4. A Mixed Method Approach

To maximize the external validity of this dissertation, the empirical data will be gathered in three stages through a mixed method approach. This study employs a mixed method approach not only to simply corroborate or triangulate the veracity of qualitative and quantitative data sets but also for the purpose of methodological development (Greene, Caracelli & Graham, 1989). This approach builds on the results from each step to develop the method and instruments for the next subsequent stage. For the purpose of this study, the sequential exploratory method is used (Creswell, 2009). This approach is important to explicate the concept of transparency more thoroughly within journalism and to move beyond the current focus on transparency as a normative ideal. This study accomplishes this by providing empirical data regarding journalists' perceptions of implementing transparency and audiences' perceptions concerning the effects of transparency.

The first phase of the data collection are semi-structured interviews with reporters, producers and editors of 12 national news outlets, specifically *CNN*, *FOX News*, *NBC News*, *ABC News*, *CBS News*, *NPR*, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Los Angeles Times*, *The Wall Street Journal, Chicago Tribune* and *USA Today*. The interviews are vital to map how professional journalists conceptualize, value, and implement transparency in their daily work. Interviews are considered instruments of meaning making or construction of individualized experience (Gubrium & Hostein, 2002) that go beyond attitude assessment of a survey (Merton, Lowenthal & Kendall, 1990). Interviews as descriptive knowledge creators (Benz & Newman, 2008) can shed more light on daily routines and can also go deeper to record sentiments and cognitive ideas (Merton, Lowenthal & Kendall, 1990) that may help to uncover motivations, intentions, and rationales of interviewees.

The second phase of data gathering consists of a content analysis of the various media outlets' websites whose members were interviewed in the first phase. This step is important to juxtapose the institutional rationales of the journalists and match them with their personal and their news organization's practice of transparency. The content analysis focuses on the transparency efforts or practices of each media organization because these practices are an expression of institutional norms (Kellner & Durham, 2006).

The third phase of data gathering consists of two online experiments that explore the relationship between journalistic transparency and news audiences' trust in journalism. Few published studies have researched the effects of perceived transparency on news audiences. Notable exceptions are the studies by Roberts (2007) and Karlsson, Clerwall and Nord (2014), who used experiments to explore the relationship of credibility and transparency. Yet, while their experiments did not find any significant results, Meier and Reimer (2011) were able to experimentally show that a relationship between transparency and trust in journalism exists.

The first of the two experiments of this dissertation builds on Meier and Reimer's (2011) research and examines the correlational relationship of transparency on the trust perceptions of newsreaders online. First, groups of newsreaders will be randomly assigned to online news content with varied types and degrees of transparency. Second, the levels of trust toward the particular news outlet or author will be measured through a post-test questionnaire. The second experiment explores to what degree participants do, in fact, recognize transparency features in the first place. The second experiment is crucial in order to contextualize the findings of the first experiment.

The experiment data can help advance a more nuanced and empirically based understanding of communicating openness or transparency to news audiences. Simultaneously, experiment results may shed some light on a general mechanism of how transparency may be implemented for audiences to recognize transparency efforts by news organizations.

1.5. Contribution to Research

Current research on transparency in journalism focuses primarily on normative considerations without providing much empirical data to underline the mostly idealized assumptions of positive transparency effects. This dissertation adds to the scientific discussion around the growing role of transparency in journalism and society at large by examining the journalistic perceptions of transparency, the implementation of transparency by news outlets and the effects of transparency on newsreaders' trust perceptions. This research also expands the understanding of how transparency as a concept and value is communicated and to what purpose. But perhaps the most relevant contribution of this investigation is the answer to the question, does transparency beget (more) trust in journalism? If so, how? By testing if transparency affects trust perceptions, this research is also of relevance to practitioners. The results may yield significant implications for journalistic practice, in general, such as how transparency efforts may be better communicated to audiences.

Moreover, the currently prevailing definitions of disclosure and participatory transparency within journalism are re-examined and contested to propose an alternative definition of producer and production transparency. Additionally, this research seeks to examine current transparency practices in order to evaluate whether non-media specialists (i.e. regular news consumers) can recognize online transparency features.

1.6. Dissertation Outline

After providing a general overview of this dissertation in the introduction, chapter 2 explicates the concept of transparency within the journalistic framework. This discussion aims to differentiate transparency from the concept of accountability in journalism as an important part of the accountability process. Moreover, the second chapter expands the current definition of transparency by leaning on propositions by Deuze (2005) and drawing from other fields such as administrative sciences (Florini, 2007; Grimmelikhuijsen, 2012), which include the visibility of decision-making processes. Transparency in journalism is thus far mainly defined by disclosure, audience engagement or participation (Karlsson, 2010) yet it very rarely entails a clear view of decision-making processes or access to the inner workings of a newsroom.

Chapter 3 provides an extended definition of trust. It aims at explicating this rather broad concept for the context of journalism to show what role trust plays within journalism and news media, in general. The basic conceptual definition of trust by Rousseau et al. (1998) is used to identify the different components of trust and how trust may be negotiated. The third chapter also clarifies the connection between transparency and trust by arguing that transparency will reduce uncertainty through more information about another social actor or entity.

Chapter 4 describes the mixed method approach and its rationale for this research. The qualitative and quantitative approaches for the interview, content analysis and experiment are explained including the robustness of this methodological approach.

Chapter 5 focuses on the analysis of the interview data of 27 journalists from 12 national news outlets in the United States. Journalists' responses are categorized along conceptualizations and practices of transparency, which are further classified according to the proposed definition of producer and production transparency in journalism.

Chapter 6 presents the findings of the content analysis and discusses news organizations' current efforts to implement transparency. Again, the transparency features news organizations use are classified according to producer and production transparency.

Chapter 7 discusses the results of the two experiments of this dissertation, the first testing the relationship between transparency and audiences' trust perceptions and the second exploring to what degree audiences are paying attention to transparency features.

Chapter 8, the conclusion, brings together the results of all three empirical research steps to evaluate how transparency is communicated to news audiences. The conclusion also proposes that news organizations implement a limited form of transparency to strategically garner trust. Moreover, the last chapter outlines limitations and implications of this research for journalistic practice and further research.

Chapter 2: Transparency

Transparency, the concept of disclosing the inner workings of a news organization, has come to occupy a more significant place in journalism discourse. In particular, educational and professional organizations such as the Poynter Institute and the Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ) have begun to promote transparency as an ethical and thus, institutional norm. Whereas some disclosure practices, particularly those regarding the naming of sources, are not new to journalism (Lippmann, 1920), the term transparency to describe practices of disclosure that allow audiences to see and retrace the journalistic process has entered journalism only recently.

Journalism handbooks barely mentioned the term transparency until Kovach and Rosenstiel (2001) published their book *Elements of Journalism*, making it one of the first to give importance to the value of transparency. Kovach and Rosenstiel usually used the term transparency as a contrast to lying or hiding information. According to the authors:

> Transparency also helps establish that the journalist has a public interest motive, the key to credibility. The willingness of the journalist to be transparent about what he or she has done is at the heart of establishing that the journalist is concerned with truth (2001, p. 80-81).

Furthermore, transparency does not have a long history in major handbooks on mass communication theory. In the sixth edition of his seminal book, *Mass Communication Theory*, McQuail (2010) only referred to a need for journalists to be more transparent in their reporting. The previous editions of his book, published since 1983, neither referred to transparency in journalism nor discussed disclosure of processes that would allow audiences to see the inner workings of journalism (McQuail, 1983, 1987, 1994, 2000, 2005).

The previous scarcity of the term transparency and the more recent frequent use of the concept indicate a growing importance of particular practices and meanings (Wittgenstein, 1955) within journalism as a professional field. Moreover, transparency as a journalistic norm or practice was not a central consideration for professionals or scholars before the turn of the millennium. Until recently, none of the core journalistic ethics codes previously proposed and embraced by the Poynter Institute (see Steele, 2002), SPJ (1973, 1984, 1987, 1996; for SPJ 1926 see MacDougall, 1941), and the Radio Television Digital News Association (RTDNA, 2000) included an explicit call on journalists "to be transparent."

The Poynter Institute and SPJ both made transparency a principal element of and for current journalism by including it as part of their codes of ethics in 2014 (McBride & Rosenstiel, 2014; SPJ, 2014). RTDNA (2015) just accepted a revised code of ethics, which includes a call to "independence and transparency." Preceding this move by educational and professional organizations was an ongoing but sparse discussion among journalism scholars and practitioners around transparency. Scholarly research is still nascent regarding transparency in journalism and, as this dissertation shows, practitioners are still coming to terms with the concept, as well.

The rising importance of transparency in journalism has been associated with a rising culture of transparency in society, overall. The opening up of government and businesses (Hood, 2006; Florini, 2007) has fueled the debate for more transparency within journalism. Craft and Heim (2009) suggested, "[T]he push for greater transparency in the news media can be seen as part of a global trend toward transparency in such diverse areas as corporate financial reporting, monetary policy, international politics, and food and tobacco labeling" (p. 218).

The aim of this chapter is to discuss and explicate the rising role of transparency in journalism. First, in section *2.1.*, I extensively discuss the literature on accountability and transparency not only to differentiate between these two terms but also to show how these concepts depend upon each other. Moreover, I discuss how transparency has been an important part of news media accountability, particularly connected to the notion of accuracy, which is closely linked to the notion of social responsibility. In section, *2.2.*, I detail how and why transparency is becoming a new professional and institutional norm in journalism. I argue that the introduction of digital media technologies was a crucial factor for transparency to become an integral part of the journalistic accountability process. In section, *2.3.*, I outline and discuss the published research around transparency in journalism, from normative to empirical investigations. The extensive discussions of transparency and the reflections concerning accountability and accuracy in journalism lead to the primary goal of this chapter, which is to propose a detailed definition of transparency in journalism. In section, *2.4.*, I delineate several different factors and elements — such as external actors and availability of information — to clarify the scope of transparency within news organizations and to indicate two major dimensions of transparency in journalism: production and producer transparency. In section, *2.5.*, I build on the proposed transparency definition to provide a rationale for the empirical research approach of this dissertation, which explores how journalists conceptualize transparency, news organizations implement transparency, and audiences' trust may be affected by transparency. Lastly, in section *2.6.*, I summarize the major arguments and propositions of this chapter.

2.1. Transparency and Accountability in Journalism: Two Concepts, one Goal

Transparency may generally be understood as making information available to outsiders about the inner workings of a group, institution or organization (Deuze, 2005: Florini, 2007; Ward, 2014). Normally, journalists demand transparency from the people, groups, organizations, and institutions they report on in order to inform the public. Yet, in the process of reporting, journalists and news organizations have also adopted ways to disclose information about their own work. Over time, news organizations installed ombudspersons, published corrections, and attributed their sources (Meier & Reimer, 2011; Ettema & Glasser, 1987; Barkin & Levy, 1983). Such practices have until recently not been contextualized or explicated as forms of transparency or disclosure about journalistic news production processes. Instead these practices have been described as "professional rituals" that enable news media organizations and professionals to be accurate, fair, objective, and primarily accountable (see Tuchman, 1972; Kampf & Daskal, 2014).

The concepts of accountability and transparency, I argue, while closely intertwined, are not identical, as some scholars have suggested (Singer, 2007; Plaisance, 2007). Transparency in journalism, which I (for now) define as disclosing information about the journalistic process of news production including decisions, biases, and corrections, should be understood as a means for news organizations to be accountable. Or, as Ward (2014) wrote: "Under accountability, transparency finds a place" (p. 53). I draw on the literature on accuracy, accountability, and social responsibility to argue that transparency is and has been vital for news organizations to be accountable.

Forms of transparency have been part of accountable reporting for nearly 100 years, since Walter Lippmann (1920) suggested openly naming and attributing journalistic sources. With the growing role of disclosure in journalism, researchers have frequently equated accountability with the notion of transparency (Singer, 2007; Lasica, 2004, 2005). Yet these two terms cannot be identical because “transparency by itself is not sufficient for responsible journalism. . . . Transparency is only one of the gods in the pantheon of journalism ethics” (Ward, 2014, p. 45) to promote accountability. Ward argued that although transparency and responsibility are related, the two are not equal in meaning, because the “range of actions that are accountable” are larger than the ones that are transparent (p. 48). He contended that while transparency allows a “look into the internal workings of newsrooms,” (p. 51) accountability goes much further, as it “adds to responsibility the idea of answering for one’s actions to someone, and the possibility of sanctions” (p. 48). Moreover, he suggested that every act of transparency is not ethical, per se. Rather, disclosing information can, at times, be irresponsible, especially when private and possibly harmful information is divulged, which clashes with the notion of responsible and accountable journalism.

Clarifying the distinction between the two concepts of accountability and transparency is important to determine the contemporary role, function, and effectiveness of transparency in journalism. In order to do that, it is important to trace the roots of both transparency and accountability in journalism.

2.1.1. Accountability and Social Responsibility in Journalism

Transparency in journalism can be linked to two long-standing and closely tied concerns in the U.S. news media: social responsibility and accountability (Bardoel & D'Haenens, 2004; Kampf & Daskal, 2014). Social responsibility indicates journalism's obligation "to see that all sides are fairly presented and that the public has enough information to decide; and that if the media do not take on themselves such responsibility it may be necessary for some other agency of the public to enforce it" (Siebert, Peterson & Schramm, 1956, p. 5). The news media's obligation to be socially responsible is a requirement to balance the power and monopoly the media holds, which could be used to the advantage of news organizations instead of advancing democracy. As such, responsibility is related to providing trustworthy and relevant information to serve the public first, then the interests of a news corporation.

Accountability can be understood as "the process by which media organizations may be expected or obliged to render an account of their activities to their constituents" (Pritchard, 2000, p. 2). Accountability in journalism can also be defined as the "answerability" of a journalist or news organization (Newton, Hodges & Keith, 2004, p. 166) particularly to "those whose lives and well-being are significantly affected by the professional's conduct" (p. 176). McQuail (2010) described accountability as "all the voluntary or involuntary processes by which the media answer directly or indirectly to the society and those immediately affected for the quality and/ or consequences of publication" (p. 206). Bertrand (2000) listed more than 20 accountability mechanisms or processes from the code of ethics to journalism reviews and academic research. All of these, he argued, help journalists to be accountable to the public. Fengler, Eberwein, and

Leppik-Bork (2011, p. 11) wrote, "communication scholars have emphasized the network character of media accountability" that combines several norms, practices and values. The researchers wrote of accountability institutions (law) and instruments (press councils, media journalism, ombudsmen) to reinforce journalistic norms particularly from outside. Fengler et al. (2011, p. 20) defined "media accountability instruments as any informal institution, both offline and online, performed by both media professionals and media users, which intends to monitor, comment on and criticize journalism and seeks to expose and debate problems of journalism" including plagiarism, corruption, encroachment of public relations content and state repressions against journalism. This described "network character" of accountability, I argue, indicates that the obligation for journalists and news organizations 'to be answerable' cannot be equivalent to transparency. Instead, I suggest, transparency enables accountability, which is rooted in the idea of social responsibility.

The idea of social responsibility — that is, a free news media based on self-regulation and public accountability and without government censorship — entered the U.S. media landscape after the introduction and spread of broadcast technologies that "made it possible for just a few media to serve a vast audience" (Siebert, Peterson, & Schramm, 1956, p. 78). Technologies often trigger paradigm shifts within journalism (Elliott, 2009), such as the shift from the libertarian to the social responsibility model in the United States. Siebert et al. (1956) suggested that as technologies such as radio and television, as well as more efficient printing presses allowed the occurrences of 'press conglomerates,' the media became increasingly targeted for criticism. Media organizations were accused of propagating "their own opinions," resisting social change, and being "subservient to big business." These notions of bias tied to the concentration of power led to a call for a media that was socially responsible and accountable to the public, as the government was not seen as an adequate agent within a democracy to "correct conditions within the press" (Siebert et al., 1956, p. 82).

The Commission on Freedom for the Press (CFP or Hutchins Commission) saw a threat in government intervention because if the press is "controlled by government, we lose our chief safeguard against totalitarianism — and at the same time take a long step toward it" (CFP, 1947, p. 5). The need for regulation of the press appeared evident in the Hutchins Commission report but the commission also pointed out the irony that controlling possible "misuse of press power" requires the press to regulate itself (Nerone et al., 1995, p. 92).

Sixty years later, Fengler, Eberwein, and Leppik-Bork (2011) still supported the idea of a self-regulating media even though several scholars point toward the problems of forms of voluntary accountability. For example, the installation of ombudspersons, as an effort to establish accountability with readers, has been seen as ambiguous because its function is somewhere between public relations and press criticism (Ettema & Glasser, 1987). Bardoel and D'Haenens (2004) agreed and argue that when news organizations are giving account "it is often hard to see the difference between real feedback procedures and ritual PR strategies" (p. 18).

Despite concerns regarding the effectiveness of self-regulation, the trend toward a socially responsible journalism is also a reflection of changes in business culture at the time. After World War II American industries moved away from complete free market ideals to assuming obligations for their communities. Siebert et al. (1956) contended that as businesses developed a "sense of accountability to the public . . . the press developed a sense of mission requiring it to serve the general welfare" (p. 82-83). These developments have been condensed within social responsibility theory and reflect philosophically "the triumph of community over the lone individual" (Nerone et al., 1995, p. 78). As a result, the news media shifted its focus and "in general, major newspapers and magazines became more audience oriented" (p. 82) and more accountable.

2.1.2. Accuracy: First Steps to Accountability

More responsibility toward the public and a climate "of public hostility to the media" led to a reevaluation of the media codes of ethics (including the movie, radio and television industry) between the 1930s and early 1950s (Siebert et al., 1956, p. 86). For the news media this meant specifically the development of accurate and objective reporting. The Hutchins Commission (CFP, 1947) suggested that for a free, democratic society "the first requirement is that the media should be accurate" (p. 21). The commission stressed the fact that media "should not lie" and that it is the media's responsibility to provide the context of facts, without which it may be misleading or untrue (p. 21). According to the Commission: "It is no longer enough to report the fact truthfully. It is now necessary to report the truth about the fact" (p. 22). In that respect, accuracy in reporting arose to be central to the self-regulation efforts of news media organizations in order for them to be publicly accountable.

Nerone et al. (1995) indicated that as news organizations became more oriented toward their audiences, they also increased their efforts to be held accountable by introducing a variety of different features such as letters to the editor, daily corrections of factual errors and appointing ombudspersons to address reader complaints. Nerone et al. (1995) pointed out that William Ernest Hocking, the Hutchins Commission's principal philosopher, stressed the importance of accurate media representations of events because "while errors are inevitable, wrongdoing cancels the rationale for freedom" (p. 86). Therefore, social responsibility and accountability go hand in hand. Bardoel and D'Haenens (2004) summarized the link between the two concepts. They suggested "responsibility . . . has to do with defining proper conduct; accountability with compelling it" (p. 7). In other words, "to be accountable is in fact to be responsible" (Plaisance, 2000, p. 260).

2.1.3. Transparency: Linking Accountability and Social Responsibility

In the context of social responsibility theory, accountability forces journalism to stay true to its mission by providing the public with relevant, reliable, and accurate information. Yet, this connection between social responsibility and accountability, I argue, lacks a crucial link necessary to conceptualize media accountability. Connecting responsibility with accountability requires transparency, in that information has to be disclosed before accountability is possible. Transparency is the initial step that allows learning the "truth about the fact" (CFP, 1947, p. 22) in a process of accountability. Transparency makes information about an organization, individual, or group accessible and is thus a "possible determinant of the probability of accountability" (Naurin, 2006, p. 91). At the same time, being accountable is not the same as being transparent. Transparency allows audiences a look into a news organization and by seeing more of the journalistic production process it compels that organization to answer or give account about its actions. By giving account or being held accountable an individual or organization has also to take responsibility or pay "the price for one's actions. Accountability therefore involves something more than just having one's actions publicly exposed" (Naurin, 2006, p. 91). In cases of transgressions of the norm, possible sanctions and public embarrassment are all part of the accountability process but not necessarily part of being transparent.

Transparency in journalism relates to opening up the production and decision-making processes (including the disclosure of errors and possible biases) or, more generally, the inner workings of newsrooms to outsiders (i.e. news audiences or users and other stakeholders) (Deuze, 2005; Ward, 2014). Transparency, then, is primarily thought of as a way of disclosing information and allowing a greater degree of open access to this information. Thus, transparency is a requirement to give account because a closed system or organization cannot be examined or give an account. As such, transparency may be better understood as a part of or means to accountability in journalism, which I define as a system of efforts from press councils to academic journals to ensure socially responsible journalism by answering for one's (news media's) actions to the public under the possibility of sanctions (Naurin, 2006; Fengler et al., 2011; Fengler, Eberwein, Leppik-Bork, Lönnendonker, Pies, 2014; Newton et al., 2004; Bertrand, 2000). Therefore, without transparency or actively disclosing information about journalistic processes, media accountability is impossible. Moreover, accountability can only be achieved if the information disclosed or made transparent also gains "publicity" meaning it is "spread to and taken in" by outside stakeholders (Naurin, 2006, p. 91).

Having highlighted the overall differences between accountability and transparency in journalism, what remains is a discussion about shifting conceptions regarding media accountability from accuracy to transparency. Plaisance (2000) argued that the definition of accountability can be rather fluid, vague, or blurry as the concept is tied to “the shifts in values we hold as media users” (p. 266). I argue that whereas in the past, concerns of accuracy were central to journalistic accountability, currently the notion of transparency gains increasing importance.

2.1.4. *Drawing distinctions: Accountability, Accuracy and Transparency*

Ward (2014) argued that when transparency is used as a synonym for accountability, “important distinctions collapse” (p. 47). Kampf and Daskal (2014), for instance, wrote of accountability in journalism when dealing with corrections and the use of correction boxes by newspapers, yet they described these as practices of transparency:

> In the printed press, disclosure transparency may be achieved in specific genres, such as correction boxes, which, in addition to abiding by the principles of accuracy and responsibility, can foster transparency by giving the public information about the procedures that went wrong (p. 170).

The researchers stressed that accuracy is “the core value guiding the production of what is historically considered the first product of media accountability — news corrections” because “true stories are based on factual information — accurate details about unfolding events, the actors involved, the sources cited, and so on” (p. 170). This focus on accuracy in journalism, as Kampf and Daskal suggested, is also reflected in the first point of the current SPJ code of ethics (2014), which is to “seek the truth and report it” and also asks journalists to "take responsibility for the accuracy in their work." Moreover, journalists also tend to conceptualize their work as "an accurate account of unambiguous facts" (Ettema & Glasser, 1998, p. 185).

Kampf and Daskal (2014) referred to Reich and Kan (2011), who argued that accuracy receives special attention in journalism as it represents a measurement of professional quality, which will invoke readers' trust in news media products and journalism, in general. Accuracy, then, seems to include correct professional behavior, at least according to Kampf and Daskal's (2014) definition of media accountability, which they described as "the expected obligation of media organizations to provide information to the public about what went wrong following the transgression of a specific professional value" (p. 168). This definition's focus on "transgression of a specific value" suggests that a correction has to take place in order to reclaim accurate professional behavior.

Traditionally, accountability became particularly important in the context of "communicating imperfections" or violations of accuracy in reporting. Researchers have analyzed professional accuracy and accountability in the news media as a significant link between journalistic ethics and practical standards (Bardoel, 2000, 2001) because the "peril of being wrong" appears to be inevitable (Kampf & Daskal, 2014, p. 166). Kovach and Rosenstiel (2007) underlined the importance of accuracy in journalism. They argued that "accuracy is the foundation upon which everything else is built: context, interpretation, debate, and all of public communication. If the foundation is faulty, everything else is flawed" (p. 43). This focus on accuracy in journalism, I contend, has been increasingly expanded by news organizations, leading toward an emphasis on transparency, that is, providing information about journalistic production and decision-making processes (Deuze, 2005).

Throughout the history of journalism in the United States, news organizations have developed and increased efforts to be accurate. Silverman (2007) suggested that accuracy has been a longstanding concern in journalism, tracing the first news corrections back to 1624 in England. He also pointed out that the United States' first multipage newspaper *Publick Occurrences Both Foreign and Domestick* "provided what is perhaps the first formal corrections policy on paper" in 1690 (p. 24). Silverman quoted Benjamin Harris, the editor of *Publick Occurrences*, who promised readers, "when there appears any material mistake in anything that is collected, it shall be corrected" (p. 24). According to Silverman (2007), these correction practices continued to expand as informal practices through reader complaints and "correction-like statements" that "meant to display the publication's devotion to accuracy" (p. 27).

A more systematic effort to deal with corrections and the issue of accuracy started about 100 years later. In 1913, *The New York World* started to recognize the importance of being accountable to their particular enterprise and established the Bureau of Accuracy and Fair Play (Nemeth, 2010). Nemeth described this step as an "early systematic effort by a newspaper to make itself accountable through investigation of reader complaints and the publication of corrections" (p. 36). He argued that even though the newspaper was sold in 1936 because of financial problems, the Bureau of Accuracy and Fair Play was successful in its mission "to stamp out fakes and fakers" (p. 40) as "aggrieved readers expressed appreciation for the corrections and most abandoned threats to file lawsuits" (p. 47). In other words, addressing concerns of accuracy and being held accountable for one's mistakes appeared early on to have direct effects on readers. As such, openly displaying corrections is not only a function to correct a mistake and adequately represent the truth (Silverman, 2007) but also to maintain "credibility and restore the readerships' trust in the process of news production and editing" (Kampf & Daskal, 2014, p. 1972).

Accuracy remains a major concern for news media outlets. Academic studies have repeatedly shown that only about half of all newspaper stories were accurate or free of mistakes (Charnley, 1936; Brown, 1965; Berry, 1967; Maier, 2002; Mensing & Oliver 2005). A frequently used approach in accuracy research, first formalized by Berry (1967), explored how sources or people who were mentioned in a story judge the accuracy of a news item. Participants in these studies had to first read a particular story and then evaluate the number of objective (factual mistakes, misspellings and inaccurate descriptions of events) and subjective errors (wrong interpretations, omissions, misquotations or biased judgments) of the story (Berry, 1967; Maier, 2002). Subjective errors were often found to be most frequent in longer stories, while objective errors occurred more often in breaking news (Berry, 1967; Maier, 2002).

The seeming inevitability of errors prompted efforts to display mistakes to set the record straight and to become accountable. Research has shown that journalists and news organizations from print to broadcast outlets indeed care about displaying corrections (Cremedas, 1992; Nemeth, 1999; Mensing & Oliver, 2005; Nemeth and Sanders, 2001, 2009). However, although many journalists have reported that they value accuracy and believe that they should admit their errors, the number of corrections and the depth of explaining those mistakes have remained limited (Cremedas, 1992; Nemeth & Sanders, 2001; Kampf & Daskal, 2014). Kampf and Daskal (2014) described such practices of news organizations as ‘thin accuracy,’ which suggests, “in most cases the information is not contextualized in a way that allows readers to fully reconstruct the inaccurate initial publication” (p. 180). Thus, more information and context would create “thick accuracy,” which allows readers to make sense of corrections and the problems that led to the errors in the first place.

2.1.5. From Accuracy to a Mechanism of Transparency

Moving towards disclosing mistakes can be understood as an act of transparency. By itself, this act of disclosure or transparency was, until recently, not seen or recognized by scholars and practitioners as particularly important. The ability to disclose more information online marked a shift toward transparency as an increasingly important practice toward accountability by showing more about the journalistic process. In other words, it isn’t enough for news organizations to show that they work accurately, they have to demonstrate how accurately they work. Thus, transparency mechanisms, which provide audiences with information to retrace the journalistic process, include admitting mistakes and setting the record straight. But the list of mechanisms also includes giving more information on the granular level, such as time stamps, hyperlinks, audience comments, information about reporters, production processes, and more.

Transparency is not equal to accountability or equal to “the disclosure of information by media organizations about imperfect procedures leading to faulty publications” (Kampf & Daskal, 2014, p. 168). Instead, transparency is part of a web of values and mechanics that can lead to accountability by continuously disclosing and providing information. In that respect, transparency is a process that “denies any finished or objective character of knowledge and emphasizes uncertainty" because transparency as a process "presupposes that (i) there is always more to know on any matter, (ii) there is always another side to every story and (iii) one account never cancels out a different one but merely supplements it, even through contradiction" (Cotterell, 1999, p. 419).

Again, without first disclosing information or being transparent about processes and decisions accountability is impossible. On a more practical level, transparency should be understood as a controlled means that is used by news organizations to give sufficient information to audiences explaining contexts, causes, and processes, including decisions that led to faulty publications as well as to any other error-free publication, so that audiences can discern, retrace, and evaluate the veracity of journalistic work in general (McBride & Rosenstiel, 2014; Deuze, 2005). Glasser and Ettema (2008) succinctly argued, "the aim of ethics is, in a word, accountability" (p. 512). Therefore, following Glasser and Ettema, I suggest that transparency has gained a more central role in facilitating accountability and ethical journalism. As such, transparency should be embedded within an accountability system to increase audiences' perceived credibility of and trust in the news media (Ettema & Glasser, 1987; Barkin & Levy, 1983; Allen, 2008; Singer, 2007; Karlsson, 2010, 2011). Underlying this idea is the assumption that "people can tell when someone has come closer to getting it right, when the sourcing is authoritative, when the research is exhaustive, when the method is transparent" (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007, p. 45).

Accountability systems may in fact "improve the services of the media to the public; restore the prestige of media in the eyes of the population" (Bertrand, 2000, p. 151). But accountability systems also have to develop to reflect changes in the journalistic paradigm. With their new and revised codes of ethics, both the Poynter Institute (McBride & Rosenstiel, 2014) and SPJ acknowledge that more information about journalistic processes is required to be accountable; journalists can no longer simply disclose corrections and sources. Hence, SPJ now suggests journalists "be accountable and transparent" instead of merely suggesting they "be accountable:" "Ethical journalism means taking responsibility for one's work and explaining one's decisions to the public" (SPJ, 2014).

2.2. Transparency and Journalism: Coming to terms

Transparency in journalism refers to two different aspects. German scholars Meier and Reimer (2011) differentiated between external-transparency and self-transparency (in German: Fremd- & Selbsttransparenz). Whereas the former refers to reporting about others, such as politicians, businesses, etc. and demanding "full disclosure" to inform the public, the latter describes a voluntary form of disclosing information about the reporting process itself, or about oneself (journalist or news outlet) (p. 137). The focus of this chapter is on self-transparency, a practice that, according to Kovach and Rosenstiel (2007), should be exercised more thoroughly by the U.S. news media. **"**Unfortunately, too much journalism fails to say anything about methods, motives, and sources" (p. 96).

In recent years, a few things have changed regarding the practice of transparency in journalism. Self-transparency has become increasingly important among both news media practitioners and scholars. In fact, the practice of transparency in the journalistic profession has been described as a "ritual" (Karlsson, 2010) and as an ethical imperative for journalists (Plaisance, 2007). Self-transparency or, simply, transparency, as I will be using the term, is increasingly considered a core professional norm in journalism (McBride & Rosenstiel, 2014; SPJ, 2014 that has been suggested to supersede the norm of objectivity (Weinberger, 2009).

2.2.1. Transparency and Digital Technologies

The rise of transparency in contemporary journalism has been associated with the introduction of digital media technologies, particularly the internet (McBride & Rosenstiel, 2014; Singer, 2007; Karlsson, 2010, 2011). In fact, not only has technology caused repeated paradigm shifts in journalism (Elliott, 2009), from the introduction of the printing press to the internet, but also some of these new technologies provided slightly more information about journalism and the people behind it.

In particular, electronic and digital media technologies allowed for more transparency on the basis of higher personalization and new journalistic practices such as live interviewing on radio or television (Meyrowitz, 1985). Online, new practices such as hyperlinking and frequent updates with changing content also revealed that kind of processuality of journalism (Broersma, 2013). In contrast, printing technologies did not seem to have such a direct impact although newspapers started early to publish corrections (see above Silverman, 2007; Nemeth, 2010; Nemeth & Sanders, 2001; Kampf & Daskal, 2014) and, much later, to disclose slightly more information about journalists. The introduction of reporter bylines in the 1920s and 1930s, for example, reflected an increasing “subjectivization of facts” and indicated the “specialization” of a reporter (Schudson, 1978, p. 144-145). Moreover, ascribing publicly who wrote a news story was also, on a more organizational level, considered “a deterrent to plagiarism” (Reich, 2010, p. 717).

The introduction of electronic media allowed for more information about journalists, their sources and, partly, their process than was previously available. Radio enabled a shift toward greater personalization of journalists as their voices were finally heard. While bylines in print may have given the name of a person to reflect “subjectivization,” the personalization of electronic media increased this form of subjectivity. According to Meyrowitz (1985), with the greater visibility of journalists through the means of electronic media, journalists’ performance was also increasingly judged by their perceived personalities.

Broadcast technologies also allowed audiences to sometimes get a glimpse of the journalistic process through the introduction of new reporting practices and, at times, technical flaws. In particular, technical difficulties (microphones left on or dropped phone calls on air) during live radio occasionally revealed the producers behind the on-air talent, indicating that the entire show is more of a team effort than an individual behind the microphone. Similarly, in television, a camera that was not turned off during a live event may reveal the normally invisible side of wrapping up a live shot on location. But Meyrowitz (1985) also indicated that in this respect, electronic media leaves very little to chance. “Intentional television exposures of Tom Brokaw or Dan Rather falling down, cursing, or becoming irritable and tense” are very rare (Meyrowitz, 1985, p. 324). Beyond the infrequent mishap that gave a glimpse into the process of journalism, the practice of interviewing on camera allowed for greater visibility of journalists and their sources. Although little substantial information about reporters and their process was made available to audiences, the introduction of electronic media (TV & radio) indicated a shift, particularly from print media, in what became publicly available about journalism and its sources (Meyrowitz, 1985; Balkin, 1999).

This shift toward increasing disclosure about the journalistic process continued through the introduction of digital media technologies. More specifically, the internet influenced journalistic production. “The networked digital environment has meant an end to media forms that are discrete or concrete” (Singer, 2007, p. 79). Space restrictions that constrained newspaper publishing became obsolete as online environments enabled quick access to large amounts of information through hyperlinks and more. As such digital technologies allowed for new practices in reporting (Elliott, 2009), creating a fruitful soil for a new norm in journalism, that is, transparency. In adopting these new technologies, news organizations started to provide more information about journalists and their work (Karlsson, 2010). Karlsson (2011) argued that journalistic processes became increasingly visible because the digitally enhanced media landscapes allow for more immediacy in publishing and interactivity with news outlets (Karlsson, 2011).

Several researchers (Bivens, 2008; Bruns, 2006; Deuze, 2005; Jenkins, 2002; Karlsson, 2011) have linked transparency to interactivity because it “potentially means that the way in which news stories are told can be rearranged and challenged, and a greater variety of voices and different competing descriptions of events can be heard” (Karlsson, 2011, p. 286). This notion of interactivity is connected to the idea that digital media technologies blur previous distinctions between journalists and the “people formerly known as audience” (Rosen, 2006). As the new technologies potentially turn “everybody into a media outlet” (Shirky, 2008), participation and expressions online become part of the news production process (Bruns, 2006; Boczkowski, 2005; Singer, 2007). Interactivity, referring to the participation of news audiences in news stories through comments or social media, therefore, can challenge the journalistic paradigm of truth telling (Bruns & Highfield, 2012).

In the past, truth telling was tied to the notion of a final, authoritative, and often unquestioned journalistic product (Broersma, 2013). Interactivity in journalism virtually puts an end to this finality of news stories. In the digital space the finality of news stories, which had been only printed or broadcasted, is gone because the addition of social commentary adds another openly visible production component to a news story, which reveals or makes the processual character of news transparent (Karlsson, 2011). Audiences are actively invited to interact with journalists or news outlets, a practice that has been widely accepted among news outlets (Karlsson, 2010). News organizations institutionalized several ways to potentially engage audiences through comment sections, links to journalist's social media platforms, or direct email contacts to the newsrooms as well as individual journalists.

Another characteristic tied to the rise of transparency in journalism is immediacy. Karlsson (2011) showed that the move toward immediate online publications of news reports revealed more about the journalistic process than what was previously visible. He pointed out that frequent changes or updates of news stories online, which often occur in the span of only a few hours or less, uncover the processual aspect of journalistic work to audiences that breaks with the previous norm of publishing (seemingly) finished news.

Whereas news organizations deliberately created portals for interactivity and participation to allow audiences greater access, it appears that immediacy in publishing, which reveals the processual nature of journalistic work, was, at least initially, an accidental or circumstantial form of transparency within the news media. Karlsson (2011) contended that transparency due to increased immediacy and interactivity (revealing incompleteness and changing presentations of stories online) undermines former truth and legitimacy claims, which were based on notions of fully independent, neutral, and objective journalism. The consequence regarding these changing journalistic practices, he suggested, was to adjust professional norms "to maintain journalism as an authoritative source of information" (p. 292).

Professional and educational organizations followed the call to strengthen journalistic authority by highlighting the importance of transparency as an official ethical norm in journalism (McBride & Rosenstiel, 2014; SPJ, 2014). The combination of technological changes and opportunities along with increasingly opinionated and fragmented political journalism has fueled the emergence of transparency in the news media (McBride & Rosenstiel, 2014). As transparency is more widely practiced and journalists show more about the news production process, some scholars have argued that people increasingly expect more transparency (Meijer, 2009). Singer (2007) suggested this has been taking place for a number of years, as "expectations of transparency and accountability online seem to be growing" (p. 88). Transparency can thus be understood as a reciprocally induced norm fueled by the introduction of digital technology and influenced by the growing expectations of audiences about what should be known about the journalistic process, including errors and possible biases.

2.2.2. Transparency the Good

The majority of the current literature about transparency in journalism is normative; most scholars have agreed that news media transparency is increasingly important for the news production industry. Weinberger (2009) argued that transparency is the "new objectivity" in journalism. Singer (2010) agreed and suggested transparency may be a better way for journalists to tell the truth. According to many scholars, the meaning of objectivity has been increasingly diffused, so that now it can only be seen as "an aspiration" that is in great need of a revision (Deuze, 2005; Calcutt & Hammond, 2011; Weinberger, 2009). Weinberger concluded:

> What we used to believe because we thought the author was objective we now believe because we can see through the author's writings to the sources and values that brought her to that position. Transparency gives the reader information by which she can undo some of the unintended effects of the ever-present biases. Transparency brings us to reliability the way objectivity used to.

Kovach and Rosenstiel (2007) similarly proposed that journalists should "be as transparent as possible" (p. 89) about their methods and motives. They argued that displaying how a "story came to be and why it was presented the way it was "will foster a "more discerning public" (p. 83). Allen (2008) wrote that transparency should be understood as a normative standard for journalism and not just as a way to increase news organizations' "power and standing in society" (p. 325). Transparency, then, should not be a means to an end but should be "seen as a good itself" which "will aid in the establishment of a democratic discourse" (p. 336). Additionally, Plaisance (2007) suggested that transparency should be understood as a behavioral guideline, an ethical imperative similar to Kant's categorical imperative — a moral act that may be promoted as acceptable behavior generalizable to everyone.

According to McBride and Rosenstiel (2014) the notion that transparency will have positive impacts on audiences, such as increasing trust, is based on the idea that transparency will help audiences distinguish between opinions and facts. In that regard, transparency will also indicate if a news story has a point of view. Moreover, Kovach and Rosenstiel (2007) argued that transparency could help citizens "to identify which journalism to trust" (p. 91). The promotion of transparency in journalism seems essential in an increasingly complex world. Singer (2007) wrote, "truth and transparency both are fundamental to notions of trust in a society" (p. 83).

Beyond increasing trust among news audiences, transparency is also said to safeguard journalists and increase the quality of their work. Transparency can protect professional reporting and journalists' pursuit of truth (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007; Phillips, 2010), increase the legitimacy of journalism (Karlsson, 2010), or even show that "journalistic content is superior" (Karlsson, 2011) to non-professional journalistic content. Showing the quality difference is also reflected in the sincerity with which journalists admit mistakes, which, according to Silverman (2013), will positively reflect on professional journalists. In other words, the practice of transparency will increase trust not only in the news product but also in the news professionals. Although McBride and Rosenstiel (2014) contended that transparency should be primarily about how journalism is done and not about who is behind the production, Hayes, Singer and Ceppos (2007) suggested that transparency would have a direct impact on how professional journalists are perceived in today's digital media environment. They proposed that the digital medium “gives journalists an unprecedented opportunity to build credibility through a form of information transparency that has never before been feasible” (p. 271). The scholars also stressed that the times when audiences could simply trust the institutions of journalism have passed.

Transparency supporters have made many compelling arguments, yet skeptics remain cautious. After all, little empirical research exists to date that can support the claim that transparency will build trust or credibility.

2.2.3. Transparency’s Downsides

The promises of transparency to possibly instill or regain lost credibility and trust in the news media (Pew, 2012) also come with a number of challenges. As news organizations open up and show more about their work, the trust that is attached to a brand or the idea of “institutional authenticity as a basis for credibility” (Hayes et al., 2007, p. 269) may be undermined. Broersma (2013) interpreted this tendency of opening up as a worrisome development because journalism chips away on its authority as undisputed truth-tellers. “Journalism’s claim to truth is at the core of the journalistic paradigm. As a producer of knowledge, journalism derives its authority from its presumed ability to provide a truthful representation of the social world within a limited time frame” (p. 31). If this presumed ability is challenged by the transparent display of possibly fallible journalism, the principal notion of journalism, which “speaks with an authoritative voice that leaves no space for doubt” (p. 33), is jeopardized. Broersma argued that audiences believe and trust in the ceremonial or “performative power of journalism” (p. 35) that was established over a long period through formal conventions of the profession (see Tuchman, 1972;

Ward, 2004). Therefore, Broersma suggested, undermining these traditionally held beliefs will undermine the journalistic paradigm.

Another problem with opening up windows for audiences to see journalism's often "messy," "untidy," and creative process (Smolkin, 2006; Wasserman 2006), is that audiences may see things that go counter to what journalism and its members have claimed about themselves and their institution. As interpretive communities, journalists have celebrated their achievements in the past, glorifying and obfuscating actual events by often neglecting actual reporting processes in the recollection of these events (Zelizer, 1993). This established public discourse of journalism, also widely shared and enforced in popular culture (Ehrlich, 2005; Saltzman, 2005), becomes problematic with greater transparency. This is because a diversion of expected normative behaviors can undermine the legitimacy of an institution among the general public (Meyer & Rowan, 1977).

Silverman (2007) indicated that displaying mistakes, for example, is attached to a widely assumed notion of disgrace. Hence he suggested, "[G]etting journalists to acknowledge that errors, while unacceptable, are a part of journalism, helps to remove some of their stigma" (p. 315). Despite disclosures of errors in newspapers, online, and less frequently, on air, the problem of errors, to some degree, remains a stigma among audiences, as it is goes counter to the infallibility of journalism and journalists' claims to represent the truth. Moreover, many news organizations only acknowledge egregious mistakes, which contributes to the notion that mistakes are not a part of the journalistic trade (Silverman, 2007).

Increasing transparency may also impact journalistic autonomy. With more disclosure of information regarding decisions and intentions, external stakeholders (i.e. audiences) can challenge the credibility of this information more easily and may actually hamper independent reporting in order to conform to public criticism. Previously, such criticism was done primarily within news organizations, the aim being to guard news stories from mistakes and possible biases (Hayes et al., 2007). Moreover, too much transparency could jeopardize sources, endanger the safety of journalists (especially if they cover sensitive beats such as organized crime and terrorism), or give away a competitive advantage to rival news organizations.

Another negative aspect related to transparency is the possibility of information overload or data dumping (Balkin, 1999; Etzioni, 2010) that can complicate the ability to distinguish the “signal from the noise” (Craft & Heim, 2009). According to the authors, disclosure or making things visible can hide relevant information. Therefore, transparency should not be seen as a neutral act, per se. Drawing on Bakhtin, Craft and Heim (2009) argued that opening up to outsiders’ scrutiny could impact or threaten the autonomy of an individual, organization, or institution because this act of disclosure can be associated with social interests. Ward (2014) also cautioned that transparency or disclosing information could do harm or be irresponsible if private information is divulged. Disclosing the messiness of the creative journalistic process that relies on argumentation and collaborative debate could become a problem, as well. Wasserman (2006) contended that transparency crosses the line between the private and the public spheres but practicing good journalism “needs a space and needs a degree of privacy.”

In fact, transparency may hinder the practice of quality journalism. Instead of instilling trust in the institution through the scrutiny of methods and possible critiques that could lead to the improvement of an institution (Strathern, 2000), transparency may stifle journalistic autonomy, jeopardize sources, and could altogether undermine the public's conception of professional journalists. Yet, all these considerations are primarily theoretical and cannot accurately reflect practical implementations or the effectiveness of transparency. What follows is a closer look at how transparency is adopted among journalists and to what effect. Both aspects have not yet been widely analyzed or researched.

2.3. Researching Transparency in Journalism

So far, most discussions about transparency have been largely normative and framed around potential gains and losses for the profession. More empirical research has been emerging in the past five years. Overall the literature on transparency in journalism may be classified into three larger categories: normative, best practices, and empirical. After briefly summarizing the normative literature, the main focus of this section is on the currently available empirical research studies. For this purpose I divide the empirical literature into two categories: implementing transparency and testing effects of transparency.

2.3.1. Transparency: Do the Right Thing!

Plaisance (2007) argued that transparency in journalism is a moral imperative. According to the author, transparency moves beyond clearly indicating the origin of sources and the disclosure of production processes to establishing expectations of openness in a digital environment between news organizations and journalists and audiences. Plaisance (2007) wrote:

> [Transparency] serves a reasonable expectation of forthright exchange when parties have a legitimate stake in the possible outcomes or effects of the communicative act. It is an attitude of proactive moral engagement that manifests an express concern for the persons-as-ends principle when a degree of deception or omission can reasonably be said to risk thwarting the receiver's due dignity or the ability to exercise reason. (p. 188)

As such, transparency may have the ability to foster trust between communicators. Plaisance acknowledged that transparency is not a means to eradicate distrust or deception, in general. Yet, he suggested, digital "technologies have reaffirmed claims that openness is the best way to build public trust and accountability" (p. 192).

Several other researchers concurred with Plaisance and have deemed transparency as perhaps a more appropriate means of truth-telling in the realm of digital media technologies than older norms such as objectivity (Deuze, 2005; Singer, 2007, 2010; Hayes, Singer & Ceppos, 2007; McBride & Rosenstiel, 2014). Hayes et al. (2007) contended that "the credible journalist in a digital age" (p. 262) must display transparency to be recognized as a professional, one who strives for quality and trustworthy journalism. This is, they suggested, because transparency can foster accountability in digital information environments and lead to more trust among audiences, who are then able to check and respond to news media information. As such, scholars suggested that journalists should learn from or adopt certain disclosing practices from bloggers that consider transparency as a "golden rule" (Singer, 2007; Lasica, 2004, 2005).

Kovach and Rosenstiel (2007) were confident that audiences could recognize transparent behavior. As noted above, they argued that “people can tell” (p. 45) if journalists are transparent about their work. By that logic, people should also be able to tell if journalists are not transparent, although neither claim has been empirically supported or researched. Nevertheless, Kovach and Rosenstiel seemed to equate transparency with a form of “honest journalism” that has nothing to hide and, therefore, is the right, ethical thing to do.

Transparency as an ethical norm for journalism indicates a shift in journalism culture away from formerly central notions of objectivity and independence. McBride and Rosenstiel (2014) wrote that transparency is required in a news environment where information is becoming ubiquitous and checkable at the same time:

> We recognize that journalism in the future will take many more forms and will intertwine with the proliferation of opinion in the digital marketplace-the two no longer so easy to distinguish. Journalism with a point of view can be just as powerful as work that starts from a position of neutrality. Both can and do move people to democratic action. Both can seek truth (p. 4).

In other words, as long as journalists clearly disclose and display their work and decision-making processes, including biases and possible political approaches, journalism will still fulfill its democratic mission.

2.3.2. Transparency: Tested in the Field

Studying transparency in the online context, Karlsson (2010) compared the websites of *The New York Times* (US), *The Guardian* (UK), and the *Dagens Nyheter* (SWE).

Karlsson collected a total of 335 online front-page articles from these three leading news outlets in their respective countries. He found several fairly similar transparency features among these publications, including detailed time stamps, updates or limited corrections, and hyperlinking to original documents, as well as channels for interactions and reader contribution. After establishing his transparency taxonomy Karlsson found that all news articles from his sample of *The Guardian* and *The New York Times,* as well as 99 percent of the 189 articles published by the *Dagens Nyheter,* had at least one transparency feature. Karlsson concluded that news organizations employ "rituals of transparency" to allow audiences to see more information about the news productions process (disclosure transparency) and also to interact with news organizations and participate in the news production process (participatory transparency).

All of these transparency features combined do offer significantly more information than what print publications were able to offer in the past about the journalistic process. As such, these transparency features offer a more visible account about journalistic production processes. But the majority of what Karlsson identified as transparency features, although touted as signs of openness, essentially represent a form of disclosure that neither provides much insight into the news production process nor calls on journalists to be transparent in their day-to-day practice. Providing time stamps allows audiences to discern the timeliness and possible updates of a news item and providing hyperlinks to original documents may offer evidence as to where journalists got their data. Nonetheless, these features neither significantly illuminate the journalistic production processes nor can audiences retrace the journalistic process.

Beyond the implementation of transparency features, Hellmueller, Vos and Peopsel (2013) examined to what degree journalists in the United States adopt transparency as an essential part of the journalistic capital (see discussion about cultural capital by Bourdieu, 1998, 2005). They theorized that with the economic and technological changes that the field of journalism has experienced and is experiencing, a shift in the cultural capital, towards transparency and away from objectivity, may be taking place. They surveyed 228 newspaper journalists to measure if this shift in cultural capital of the journalistic field has already taken place. The researchers tested "various truth-telling strategies" by comparing how journalists perceive disclosure, participatory transparency, and objectivity (i.e. factual and neutral representations of information) (Hellmueller et al., 2013, p. 293). Their findings suggested that objectivity, in particular the "strategy of factualness," still trumps transparency. Although journalists valued disclosure transparency (providing hyperlinks to original documents and explanatory information) as the second strongest strategy of truth-telling, it was closely followed by neutrality. At the same time, journalists evaluated participatory transparency (inclusion and contribution of user-generated information) as the least important norm of the four tested strategies for their news production process.

Hellmueller et al. (2013) concluded that this shift to a new cultural capital among journalists isn't quite as clear-cut as the normative literature sometimes seems to suggest. For instance, journalists with a long professional career tended to value neutrality less as a strategy of objectivity. Moreover, women reporters with 12 years or more experience were more likely to favor disclosure transparency than men who were journalists for 12 years. Overall, the researchers concluded that their findings seem to reflect a "preparadigmatic conflict and suggest a relative commensurability of objectivity and transparency norms" (p. 299). In other words, it is too early to measure a clear shift toward transparency in the cultural capital of journalism.

Rupar (2006) made a similar assessment, after exploring how journalists in New Zealand covered the topic of genetic engineering (GE). Rupar wanted to find out if journalists explicitly show audiences the journalistic information gathering process. She compared 674 news articles published between 2001 and 2002 by three major New Zealand newspapers (*The New Zealand Herald*, *The Dominion Post,* and *The Press*). "The transparency of the newsgathering process is important because it clarifies the mediating character of communication in news media; it reminds the reader that there is a journalist between reality and representation of reality" (Rupar, 2006, p. 128). Rupar found that about two-thirds of the articles she analyzed for her study offered little to no explanation of the news gathering process. Many articles lacked any indication or "explicit markers" regarding the "place, time, and means by which the information" for the news stories were collected (p. 127). "[T]he absence of those markers in everyday journalism practice … points towards what might be the quiet disappearance of an explanation of the newsgathering process" (Rupar, 2006, p. 139). The lack of transparency about the news gathering process, Rupar warned, can lead to a blurring of the line between facts and opinions.

The emergence of social media as a publishing platform for journalists (Hermida, 2010) offered the ability for news professionals to voice their opinions transparently. To date, two studies explored journalists' transparency behavior on social media, specifically on Twitter (Lasorsa, 2012; Lasorsa, Lewis & Holton, 2012). Both studies indicated a similar trend. Overall, researchers found, journalists on Twitter use existing norms of objectivity and gatekeeping to "normalize new media" (i.e. behaving and expressing themselves as they would on camera or in a newspaper) (Lasorsa, 2012, p. 414). Analyzing over 20,000 tweets from 500 journalists, Lasorsa (2012) found that the level of transparency was affected by gender. Female journalists were more open and transparent with respect to their personal interests and when "conveying mundane information about one's everyday life" (i.e. lifecasting) (p. 408) than their male counterparts. Otherwise, gender seemed to make very little difference with respect to how journalists tweeted; both women and men predominantly strived to be objective and employed gatekeeping techniques when expressing themselves on Twitter.

The tendency of "normalizing" social media by using established norms and standards in journalism was particularly prominent among elite media outlets (Lasorsa, Lewis & Holton, 2012). Analyzing the tweets of 430 journalists (newspaper and broadcast), Lasorsa et al. (2012) found that journalists used Twitter to express opinions more freely and to be more open, in contrast to traditional mainstream news media platforms. Despite this seemingly more transparent behavior, researchers showed that reporters from non-elite and elite media behaved differently. The former group tended to frequently depart from traditional journalistic norms such as objectivity and their tweets resembled those of "normal" Twitter users. Lasorsa et al. (2012) explained this difference by suggesting that elite journalists "might believe that they have relatively more vested in the existing system. Having been socialized into the nation's leading news organizations, they may be more inclined to keep the status quo than their counterparts at news organizations with possibly less reach and influence" (p. 31).

While the studies above analyzed perceptions of transparency strategies for truth-telling and impressions of the transparent conduct of journalists, they lack a more direct approach to understanding journalists' conceptualization and implementation of transparency in their daily work. Lasorsa (2012) suggested that interviews might be critical to directly understand journalists' notions of media transparency.

Plaisance and Deppa (2009) interviewed 15 journalists from six newspapers to gauge the value systems of journalists that impact their decision-making. In this process, the researchers also examined the importance of transparency as an ethical principle. They found that journalists seldom consider transparency compared to other values such as autonomy. Their research showed that journalists rarely addressed the notion of transparency in their work, leading them to the conclusion that news practitioners had an inadequate appreciation of the importance of transparency as a critical professional standard and "end goal in ethical deliberations" (p. 376). But Plaisance and Deppa (2009) also suggested that journalists have had an "insufficient grasp" of other ethical key concepts such as independence and autonomy — professional values and norms that have been long established within the journalistic profession.

Chadha and Koliska (2014) probed journalists more directly by explicitly exploring the conceptualization, evaluation, and implementation of transparency among journalists working for national news outlets. The researchers conducted semi-structured, in-depth interviews with journalists from *The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post, The Los Angeles Times, NPR, and CNN*. According to the study, the majority of those interviewed indicated that transparency was not a significant consideration in their daily reporting and it did not come up frequently in newsrooms or editorial discussions. We saw an institutional disjuncture — also recognized by the participants in the study — whereby news organizations make claims asserting their transparency but journalists do not appear to consider transparency as a significant value in terms of their everyday work. This disjuncture has resulted in a situation where "only limited areas of news production have been opened up to public view, with the thrust being on the introduction of technologically facilitated online features that enable" news "organizations to engage in a type of low-risk 'managed transparency'" (Chadha and Koliska, 2014, p. 13). In other words, while news outlets use technology to appear transparent, members of the institution do not adopt the norm to a significant degree.

The research regarding the implementation and adoption of transparency in the daily production process and journalistic culture has indicated that transparency has not been fully embraced as a new norm. The traditional norm of objectivity still appears to be strong. At the same time, news organizations have appeared to implement and institutionalize transparency features to provide additional yet limited information about themselves and their work.

2.3.3. Transparency: Testing the Effects

Two transparency studies in journalism tested the effects of transparency features online such as hyperlinks, corrections, editorial explanation, and more, on the credibility assessment of news audiences (Roberts, 2007; Karlsson, Clerwall & Nord, 2014). While the majority of the normative literature has proposed that transparency would increase credibility, neither Roberts (2007) nor Karlsson et al. (2014) supported these normative assumptions.

Roberts (2007) went into great detail and proposed 32 dimensions of transparency based on Berlo's (1960) source-message-channel-receiver model of communication. Every single element for each of the four parts of the model was described by the degree of how transparent, translucent, or opaque it may be within an online context. His findings suggested that a video is more transparent than a text; a two-way channel of communication will be more transparent than a one- way channel; and that the access of an unlimited archive will be more transparent than if a story is only available once. Roberts' 32 dimensions explained the theoretical assumptions of disclosing extra information of many currently used transparency features. Karlsson (2010) described the most common features in his "rituals of transparency" study, including hyperlinks, editorial explanations, and interactivity.

Roberts (2007) dissertation mainly relied on Deuze's (2005) proposition that transparency may be understood as "increasing ways" of how audiences can monitor journalistic products and journalists. In his two experiments, Roberts (2007) focused on two main aspects: message and messenger (or source) credibility. Both these dependent variables were tested through a combination (or lack thereof) of what Karlsson (2010, 2011) would have described as disclosure transparency — providing additional information about the evidence that was cited in the text (through the use of hyperlinks, etc.) and editorial explanations about the news story.

Roberts' (2007) study has been criticized for its theoretical approach measuring credibility[2] (Meier & Reimer, 2011). Roberts' adoption of Petty and Cacioppo's (1986) Elaboration-Likelihood-Model (ELM) for the theoretical framework may also have been

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[2] For a detailed discussion regarding the theoretical issues concerning credibility see section 3.6.3.

problematic. The ELM suggested that people utilize two varying cognitive routes for processing messages in communication. The central route indicates a close and thorough examination of information, while the peripheral route suggests a more heuristic processing of meaningful cues. According to Petty and Cacioppo (1986), ELM focuses on "issue-relevant arguments contained in a message" (p. 128). As such, the ELM may not be the best framework to test transparency, as audiences may not perceive such information as directly "relevant to the issue." Transparency features such as hyperlinks and editorial information can provide context and additional facts but risk "information overload," so these features could be seen as irrelevant to the issue or the storyline.

A second experiment testing the impact of transparency on credibility in Sweden was also, like Roberts, unable to produce results establishing a correlation between transparency and perceived credibility. Karlsson, Clerwall and Nord (2014) experimentally tested 18 different transparency versions of a website — differentiating between disclosure transparency (allowing audiences to see more of the production process) and participatory transparency (allowing audiences to participate in the news production process). Karlsson et al. studied whether different forms of transparency will alter audiences' perceptions of the journalists (source) and of the news content (message). The researchers recruited 1,320 participants for this online experiment that aimed at separating and testing various transparency features in isolation and not in combination. Normally, news organizations include several of these features simultaneously on their webpages, but Karlsson et al. created an artificial context (lowering the external validity) to treat each feature like editorial content, corrections, information about the journalists etc. by itself. Thus, the research design may have contributed to the lack of significance with respect to perceived source and message credibility. Yet, the researchers have shown that transparency had at least some impact on the perception of the source when journalists were portrayed as partisan, resulting in a negative evaluation of the source (i.e. the journalist). Overall, Karlsson et al. concluded that: “Transparency will neither revolutionize nor reform journalism’s credibility in the short or middle-to-long terms” (p. 7-8).

In contrast to Roberts (2007) and Karlsson et al. (2014) an experiment conducted with 786 German participants showed that transparency may positively influence the perception of news content, that is, increase trust. Meier and Reimer (2011) employed Kohring and Matthes’ (2007) concept of trust in journalistic selectivity, which suggests that audiences will trust journalists in the selection of topics, facts, and the accuracy of depictions and journalistic assessment (value-based evaluations) regarding a news story.

Meier and Reimer (2011) distinguished between news item transparency and editorial transparency. News item transparency refers to information that allows audiences “to replicate the reporting” process (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007, p. 96) by displaying hyperlinks to original materials and providing background information. Editorial transparency describes the disclosure of editorial decision-making processes and explanations regarding possible motives of story selections.

Meier and Reimer (2011) employed a 4 x 2 design that was comprised of four different transparency versions (non-transparent, news item transparency, editorial transparency and full transparency — a combination of news item and editorial transparency) both in print and online. The researchers did not find support for all of their hypotheses. But the study showed that participants trusted online news articles more that displayed editorial explanations, compared to the same article without such explanations. Participants' trust evaluations online were also higher for a full transparency article than for an article that only displayed news item transparency. Overall, the correlations were not very strong and the researchers suggested that normative claims regarding transparency have to be more nuanced with respect to certain aspects of news item transparency (e.g. hyperlinks), which did not seem to provide any significance in their study.

The currently available research measuring possible effects of transparency runs counter to what the normative literature has suggested, which is that transparency will increase credibility and trust in the news media. All studies above have also warned that measuring transparency effects may require a longitudinal approach that includes multiple interactions. Trust and credibility may be gained over time and would, therefore, be hard to detect through one-shot experiments. As previous research on credibility and transparency — in contrast to transparency and trust — has not shown any significant results in different national settings, this dissertation will explore if transparency will impact audience trust in the U.S. media context.

2.4. Defining Transparency in Journalism

Transparency in journalism is generally associated with "openness in communication" (Plaisance, 2007, p. 188). This notion is coupled with the incremental increase of disclosing previously invisible journalistic processes that allow audiences to monitor and assess journalism. As such, transparency entails "providing information to a public that sits as an informal tribunal, passing judgment" (Ward, 2014, p. 46) on the quality of the journalistic performance (Meier & Reimer, 2011). Nevertheless, Ward (2014) wrote that the term transparency is often used improperly as synonymous with other concepts such as accountability, honesty, or even democracy (p. 47). This confusion may also contribute to the lack of an institutionally agreed upon definition of transparency in journalism.

Definitions and descriptions of transparency vary yet they maintain the core concept of disclosing more information about journalistic production processes. Transparency in journalism has been described as journalists being honest and open about sources and methods (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007). Singer (2007) defined transparency as being open about motives, biases, and the production process (p. 88). Although her definition is derived from blogging practices, the general assumptions apply to professional journalists because transparency is an "essential element of credibility" (Plaisance, 2007, p. 193). McBride and Rosenstiel (2014) proposed that transparency is about showing how the reporting was done, including the explanation of sources and the articulation of the journalistic approach as either independent or with a particular point of view (see p. 3). Yet, they stressed that transparency refers to "how the journalism is produced — not necessarily who produces it" (p. 4). SPJ (2014) similarly foregrounded the production process, stressing that news professionals should explain decisions, ethical choices, and processes and "encourage a civil dialogue with the public about journalistic practices, coverage and news content."

Others have proposed that the aspect of disclosing information about journalistic work processes should not only include how journalism is done, but also who is doing it. Ward (2014) defined transparency as allowing "citizens to look into the internal workings of newsrooms, viewing their operations, decisions, and conduct" (p. 51). Ward acknowledged that this definition refers to the news content and its production; however, he wrote that, at times, more should be known about journalists' possible conflicts of interest and the funding strategies of the news organization. Karlsson (2010) defined transparency along two disparate but similar lines. He differentiated between disclosure transparency — showing how news is selected and produced — and participatory transparency, which broadly describes the idea that users are taking part in the news production process. Meier and Reimer (2011) differentiated between news item transparency (showing sources through hyperlinks, etc.) and editorial transparency (explaining decisions regarding the story). Karlsson (2010) and Meier and Reimer (2011) thus favored in their definitions a focus on how journalism is done but did not exclude the notion that journalists, themselves, should be transparent about their personal biases.

Heikkilä, Głowacki, Kuś and Pies (2014) differentiated more explicitly between actor and production transparency. Actor transparency refers to "contextual information about the people and organizations involved in the news production" (p. 57) such as reporter profiles. Production transparency describes "additional information about internal processes within the newsrooms" (p. 59). Heikkilä, Głowacki, Kuś and Pies (2014) saw these different levels of transparency connected to stages of the news production or publication process. The actor transparency is related to the time phase before the act of publication, while production transparency is related to "practices taking place during the act of publication" (p. 59). The authors also added a third level, which they describe as the responsiveness that takes place after the publication. Responsiveness refers to communication between journalists or news organizations and their followers or users, mostly via social media.

Two very concise definitions of transparency in journalism come from Allen (2008) and Deuze (2005). Allen (2008) suggested that "[A]t its most basic level, journalistic transparency can be defined as making public the traditionally private factors that influence the creation of news" (p. 323). Deuze (2005) added a little more nuance by describing transparency as "the increasing ways in which people both inside and external to journalism are given a chance to monitor, check, criticize and even intervene in the journalistic process" (p. 455).

In summary, the literature does not provide a consistent definition of transparency; instead definitions vary regarding the aspects of what should be disclosed (how and/or who produces), without giving any indication as to what extent such information should be made available. I argue that a definition of transparency for journalism must include not only information about the journalistic work processes and content but also about who is producing a story. With the increasing visibility of the makers of news, there may also be an increasing evaluation of journalistic performance based on the perceived personalities of the journalists, similarly to what has occurred with electronic media (Meyrowitz, 1985). Moreover, transparency about journalists may provide contextual information that could at times help audiences discern possible points of view within a news story.

A definition of transparency should also encapsulate the idea of publicity (Naurin, 2006) that requires an active processing of the "information made available" (Heald, 2006, p. 26). In other words, it is important to consider who has access to disclosed information about the inner workings of journalism and to what extent.

Based on the various propositions and assumptions above, and in consideration of the various definitions of accountability and transparency recommended by other scholars, I propose the following definition of transparency in journalism:

> Transparency in journalism is the availability of information about news organizations or journalists to allow external stakeholders (i.e. audiences) to evaluate journalistic work and interact with news organizations or journalists.

From this definition, six elements emerge as crucial for transparency in journalism that require a more explicit discussion to describe the function and scope of the concept:

1. Availability
2. Information
3. News organizations/journalists
4. External stakeholders/audiences
5. Evaluation (of journalistic work)
6. Interaction (with news organizations/journalists)

What follows is a further explanation of the different parts of transparency to indicate other layers of meanings that are attached with each element of the proposed definition.

2.4.1. Availability

Transparency in journalism is based on the assumption that journalists and news organizations make information actively available about their work. Practically, this has led to several new or enhanced journalistic practices such as hyperlinking to original documents or related news stories, information about journalists (bios, photos and article history), time stamps, updates, corrections, editorial explanations, and more. Yet, the availability of information doesn't always equate to access and consumption of the available information. News organizations often provide information about corrections online but not necessarily right below or above the news article in question. Such information is often buried in different parts of the news organization's website; some major news organizations do not have a corrections page, as in the case with CNN (2013).

Availability of information must, therefore, be differentiated between an easy access that allows audiences to effortlessly process the information, and forms of disclosure that either only give an impression of transparency (such as internal hyperlinks to other news stories instead to original documents or contextualizing information) or restrict access to information regarding the journalistic production and the people behind the news. Easier access to detailed information about the journalistic process could then be understood to reflect a news organization's commitment to transparency while more difficult access to that transparent information may be seen as a form of managing impressions of openness.

On a more basic level, availability also refers to the extent that news organizations are either transparent or opaque (Tsetsura & Kruckeberg, 2009) about their production and journalistic processes. The availability of information about the inner workings of journalism can vary greatly and may already be a first indicator to what degree an organization cares about transparency as form of accountability.

2.4.2. Information

The type of information available is also crucial for understanding journalistic transparency. In this respect it is useful to differentiate between information about the journalistic work/production and the producer, that is, the journalists and news organizations. Information about journalistic production is currently focused on illuminating a limited set of characteristics such as sourcing and providing links to original documents or other news stories that dealt previously with the subject matter. Moreover, information timeliness is communicated through time stamps and possible updates. Corrections are also used to indicate problems with the news production process, while editorial explanations can inform the decision-making behind the news production. McBride and Rosenstiel (2014) encouraged journalists to disclose their philosophical or political approach to allow audiences to contextualize the news content. Information about the production can be part of the news story, particularly if journalists explain why a source went off the record or refused to be interviewed.

In contrast, information about the producer or journalists includes mostly naming the reporter and providing a brief outline of his journalistic career and education. At times, the journalists' previous news stories are listed with hyperlinks. Information that often is considered private, such as age, martial status, or number of children, normally is not provided through reporter bios.

The types of information available do not reflect the scope of information necessary to allow audiences to contextualize and evaluate journalistic work. As such, two more transparency information dimensions should be considered: level of completeness and usability of information.

Information completeness may be understood as exhaustive information about the process and decisions that guide news production in order to allow audiences to evaluate how the reporting was done and to detect possible biases or points of view that may have influenced or colored a news story. In that respect, information usability is closely tied to information completeness, as the idea of usability reflects the degree audiences can evaluate the quality of journalistic work that they are consuming. Yet, information usability is also linked to accessibility. How information is presented to enable audiences' easy access and quick comprehension of the disclosed material can influence the usability of information. In that respect, it is necessary to differentiate between the types and dimensions of transparency information.

2.4.3. News Organizations and/or Journalists

Transparency information needs to distinguish between who is disclosing information about whom. While journalists are part of a news organization and are supposed to represent their organization at all times, they are not synonymous with the company they work for and vice versa. On an annual basis, journalists are often internally required to disclose possible conflicts of interest that may influence their ability to be independent and balanced in their reporting. Externally, however, such information is rarely provided. While news organizations have made an effort to provide additional information about their employees (i.e. journalists,) audiences are not offered easy access to information about the inner workings of the news organization.

Providing a more detailed picture of the author behind a news story has been met with reservation, as it may undermine the notion that journalists can portray news events in a balanced and independent way. At the same time, the amount and type of information that news organizations currently make available about their journalists is limited and rarely allows audiences to assess either the expertise or biases of a journalist. (Chadha & Koliska, 2014).

Meanwhile, distinguishing whether the journalist or the news organization is disclosing information may be important, as it could indicate to what degree transparency has been adopted within a particular news organization. Many transparency features such as time stamps, correction updates, and audience comments are only loosely connected to the actual news production process and do not necessarily guide the journalistic work. Thus, journalists may not consider disclosing more information about their work as news organizations already use digital means to signal news audiences a commitment to transparency, yet without necessarily providing much information about their work.

2.4.4. External Stakeholders (i.e. Audiences)

External stakeholders of news organizations primarily refer to audiences, that is, people who consume the news. Audiences include not only average citizens but also other journalists, politicians, companies, public, and private organizations. In a digital news media environment those stakeholders can monitor and evaluate the quality of journalistic work directly through comments and social media. Potentially any audience member can become a news outlet and contribute to or intervene in the news cycle (Shirky, 2008; Deuze, 2005). These "active audiences" are vital for news organizations on three levels. As customers of a news organization, their positive assessment of the quality of the journalistic work is crucial to maintain a trust relationship. As users, their preferences and online habits are increasingly tracked, which can influence the news selection and production process (Tandoc, 2014). Moreover, audiences can function as sources and contributors of news content (Lewis, 2012). CNN and other news organizations constantly invite audience contributions and also frequently integrate social media commentary in their news stories. Audiences, then, have increasingly become collaborators in the news production process, while also providing a vital feedback function to journalism.

In such a collaborative environment, transparency allows audiences to become more engaged stakeholders as they learn more about the production and values of an organization. At the same time, transparency enables a more community-based journalism that can foster trust relationships with audiences.

2.4.5. Evaluation of Journalistic Work

Transparency allows for greater access and visibility of the internal workings of journalism regarding decisions, approaches, and more, which in turn enables an evaluation of the quality of journalistic work (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007; McBride & Rosenstiel, 2014). Yet, opening up every aspect of the journalistic process seems neither feasible nor is it currently practiced. Thus, what can be made transparent that would help audiences to evaluate thoroughly journalistic work is still a question that needs to be explored.

The question of what should be made transparent to allow audiences to properly assess and evaluate journalistic work also touches upon the question of whether more information regarding the producer of the news is required. The Poynter Institute (2014) and SPJ (2014) have suggested that the production process should be made transparent and that who produces a news story is of less importance. News organizations and journalists should be open about their decisions, selections of sources and facts, and they should explain their point of view. But this may not be sufficient. Journalists and news organizations should also open up and reveal possible conflicts of interest, and political and financial relationships to their audiences (Ward, 2014; Singer, 2007; Heikkilä, Głowacki, Kuś & Pies, 2014). Much could be learned about the main advertising revenue stream of privately held companies to determine possible interdependencies with advertisers.

2.4.6. Interaction with News Organization/ Journalists

The digital news environment has not only increased the ways audiences can access news but also how they communicate with and provide feedback to journalists and news organizations. Beyond the letters to the editors or calls of listeners, news organizations today have opened other channels to interact with their audiences. Social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr or Reddit are often means to engage audiences, seek their opinions or alert them about news (Revers, 2014). Some news outlets also invite audiences to directly email journalists or participate in reporter chats or

Google Hangouts. The online comments function below news items also allows, at least theoretically, for a more direct engagement with news organizations. All these interaction vehicles enable audiences to critique or inquire about journalistic processes and decisions.

As indicated above, the interaction with news audiences creates what Karlsson (2010) described as participatory transparency where news audiences are becoming actively engaged in the production of news. Social media platforms such as Twitter allow for this kind of participatory transparency, particularly when journalists present themselves on this microblogging platform. "[T]hey enable and implicitly invite others to interact with them and to get involved in the news production process" (Revers, 2014, p. 808).

2.5. Selecting Transparency Variables: Narrowing the Scope

The proposed definition above assists in guiding this research to explore how journalists and news organizations implement transparency in their work and to what degree transparency can lead to more trust among audiences. Several variables in this transparency definition need to be explored but go beyond the scope of this dissertation. Therefore, I look at three characteristics concerning transparency in journalism: First, I explore, how, if, and to some extent why (or why not), journalists and news organizations make information about their work available. This is done through 27 interviews with journalists from 12 major news organizations in the United States (*The Washington Post, The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, The Los Angeles Times, Chicago Tribune, USA Today, ABC News, CBS News, NBC News, NPR, Fox News, CNN*). The interviews can help gauge to what extent journalists feel comfortable sharing insights regarding their work and themselves, as it might influence what may be made available to audiences.

Second, this dissertation examines the available information online that news organizations provide to audiences regarding the journalistic process. Through a content analysis of the 12 news outlets' websites mentioned above, the number and type of transparency features at the news item level are studied. In total, more than 1,000 news articles online are examined. This step is important to gauge the extent of the provided transparency information (i.e. to what extent this information is actually useful or complete) so that audiences can retrace how the reporting was done.

The third step explores the effects of transparency information on audiences' evaluation of trust. Kovach and Rosenstiel (2007) argued that "people can tell" when the journalistic method is transparent. Overall, the literature has suggested that a transparent news story should be perceived as qualitatively better or more trustworthy than a non-transparent news story. For this research, I explore four different levels of transparency — from no transparency to full transparency — reflecting various degrees of transparency.

The proposed transparency definition assumes two spheres of information available to audiences: information necessary to evaluate the journalistic work and contextual information about journalists and news organizations. Thus, in an effort to distinguish if there is a difference between these two spheres, as McBride and Rosenstiel (2014) seemed to suggest, I differentiate between transparency about the production process or the inner workings of journalism and transparency about the producer of a news story.

2.6. Conclusion

This chapter discussed several issues that are associated with the concept and practice of transparency in contemporary journalism. First, I examined the differences between accountability and transparency, as these terms are often referred to as synonymous concepts in the literature. I argue that transparency is a precursor of accountability in journalism. Transparency in journalism is the availability of information about a news organization or journalists to allow external stakeholders (i.e. audiences) to evaluate journalistic work and interact with news organizations and journalists. Accountability is taking responsibility and answering for one's actions to someone, such as audiences and other stakeholders. Transparency allows for the disclosure of information to hold journalism accountable and is, therefore, part of a wider accountability system or network. This observation may also point toward the limitations of transparency. Transparency alone may not be able to increase levels of trust in the news media. Nevertheless, I argue that transparency has claimed an increasingly central role within the accountability mechanism of journalism.

Previously, news organizations put great emphasis on accuracy in reporting by showing their commitment to admitting and correcting mistakes. As such, the notion of accuracy in journalism was limited to the notion of fixing measurable mistakes, a concept that may have outlived its usefulness. In fact, transparency allows audiences to gauge more holistically whether journalists worked accurately. Simple mistakes and errors may never be eradicated in journalism but transparency can allow for a broader understanding of accuracy evaluation as it, in its ideal form, should provide complete and useful information regarding the news production process, including factors that may have influenced the news work. Transparency, then, provides a key to evaluate the quality of journalism according to standards of accuracy and professional conduct. Such an accuracy assessment also reflects that journalists sincerely and ethically approach the production of every news story.

A review of the normative and empirical literature regarding transparency in journalism suggested that beyond the implementation of transparency features (hyperlinks, staff bios, time stamps, corrections, etc.) by news organizations, online journalists, themselves, have not widely embraced the transparency norm. Furthermore, transparency had not been shown to have any effects on the credibility assessments of audiences in the United States and Sweden. The literature review indicated the need to explore a number of questions, which this dissertation attempts to answer. At this point, very little information is available as to why journalists do not or have not fully accepted transparency as a new, guiding norm in the United States. Moreover, there is very little data to determine to what extent news organizations implement transparency features online to signal audiences that they are open to being evaluated. Meanwhile, an exploration of the usefulness of the information that news organizations provide under the umbrella term of transparency has not been conducted and thus, another crucial question remains: can audiences indeed discern how journalism is done online? Finally, despite the claims that transparency will increase trust in the news media, there is only one study in the context of Germany that showed that such effects exist. Whether similar findings can be replicated among audiences in the United States still remains an open question. Thus, this dissertation tests whether transparency can lead to more trust in a U.S. context.

After canvassing the role of transparency, I discuss the notion of trust in journalism. The literature on transparency in journalism suggests that a link exists between opening up an organization toward external stakeholders and their perception of trust in journalism. The aim of the next chapter is to show how trust in journalism can be understood and how trust in the news media can possibly be established through increased transparency.

Chapter 3: Trust

Trust is essential to many forms of collaboration, from buying a car to maintaining a marriage, from business trades to international affairs (Gambetta, 1990). Trust has been frequently described as the "lubricant" for social relations among individuals (Arrow, 1974; Kiyonari, Yamagishi, Cook, & Cheshire, 2006; Yamagishi & Yamagishi, 1994). Researchers across different fields have argued, "trust plays a part in almost every human interaction" (Tsfati & Cappella, 2003: 505). Thus, scholars have contended, trust is what enables societies and economies to function not only on a macro level but also on the micro level (Delhey, Newton & Welzel, 2011; Fukuyama, 1995; Lewis & Weigert, 1985; Luhmann, 1979; Putnam, 1993; Simmel, 1950). Consequently, a lack of trust would make transactions with partners outside one's immediate circle of friends, family, and acquaintances difficult, if not impossible (Luhmann, 1979; Fukuyama, 1995).

Trust is often seen as a prerequisite in modern societies, where dealings and interactions with strangers cannot be avoided because of an increasingly complex society and necessary division of labor (Simmel, 1950; Giddens, 1990; Delhey, Newton, & Welzel, 2011; Kohring, 2004). This division of labor allows the creation of experts, particularly in professional fields, who have a distinct knowledge advantage over people who rely on the experts' services (Parsons, 1970; Giddens, 1990; Putnam, 1993). Journalists can be understood as such experts; they filter and select information to provide orientation for audiences within an increasingly complex world (Bardoel & Deuze, 2001; Kohring, 2004). Trust, then, is essential for journalism, as audiences often need to rely on or put their belief in the "professionalism of journalistic practice" (Liebes, 2000, p. 295).

This chapter examines the role of trust in society and within journalism. In contrast to the concept of credibility, trust has received fairly limited attention from journalism researchers (Tsfati & Cappella, 2003; Kohring & Matthes, 2007). First in section *3.1.*, I provide a brief overview regarding general conceptualizations of trust to indicate the complexity of the trust concept within social science research. Next, in sections *3.2.* to *3.5.*, I explore the notion of trust in greater detail based on Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt and Camerer's (1998) definition of trust. The researchers based their definition on a synthesis of a meta-analysis of trust definitions across varied fields of social theory. This step is done first to categorize widely shared commonalities of the trust concept, including risk taking or the acceptance of vulnerability based on expected behavior of others. Further, this step details specific variables that influence the trust mechanism, such as time or number of interactions, expectations of possible gains or losses, availability of information, and so forth. In this process I reflect on how these basic elements of trust may be relevant in journalism. Then, in section *3.6.*, I outline the concept of trust in journalism based on the notion that news audiences must rely on or put faith in journalists' ability to select relevant topics, facts, assessments and commentary from the flow of information and events (Kohring, 2004; Kohring & Matthes, 2007). This part of the chapter also discusses why trust differs from the more widely used concept of credibility in journalism research, which often includes trust or trustworthiness as an element of a multimodal evaluation of credibility. Finally, in section *3.7.*, I summarize the concept of trust in journalism to show how transparency can both boost and undermine trust in journalism. The research questions posed for this dissertation are listed in the final section of this chapter.

3.1. Conceptualizing Trust

A very basic conception of trust in social sciences described the idea that people will take reality more or less for granted (Holzner, 1973; Luhmann, 1988). In other words, people trust that when they get up in the morning everything and everybody will behave and work as expected. This notion of "business as usual" includes the idea that the perceived social and "moral order" will remain intact (Barber, 1983). Thus, people can rely on and trust in commonly shared social expectations that shops open, businesses operate, people abide to laws, and much more (Luhmann, 1979; Giddens, 1990).

Berg, Dickhaut and McCabe (1995) saw trust as a strategy based on mutual gain, because trust is tied to the expectation of reciprocity as a "basic human element of behavior" (p. 122). This expectation of reciprocity, they argued, has been developed over time as an evolutionary strategy. Delhey, Newton and Welzel (2011) similarly suggested that trust "is the basis of reciprocity, social connectedness, peaceful collective action, inclusiveness, tolerance, gender equality, confidence in institutions, and democracy itself" (p. 787). The sociologists emphasized that general trust in others is required for daily interactions with strangers and serves as the basis of the functioning of society. General trust stands next to particular or specific trust — also called interpersonal trust — when referring to a relationship between two individuals (see Lewis & Weigert, 1985), which indicates trust relationships among familiar others. I will explain both notions of trust in greater detail below (see section *3.2.1.*). While both general and specific trust differ in respect to the type of relationship (familiar vs. unfamiliar), both contain, to varying degrees, an affective or emotional component. As such, Parsons (1970) defined trust as “the attitudinal ground — in affectively motivated loyalty — for acceptance of solidary relationships” (p. 142). Similarly, Yamagishi and Yamagishi (1995) described trust as an “expectation that partners, including potential partners, have goodwill and benign intent in their dealing with us” (p. 135-136).

Many definitions of trust incorporate the ideas of reciprocity, interaction and exchange (Coleman, 1990; Putnam, 1993). In this way, trust involves an element of risk taking because the outcome of the interaction depends on another actor. Coleman (1990) defined trust as an expectation by a trustor toward a trustee. The mechanics of such an interaction are that the trustor first gives the trustee the freedom to make a decision that will then affect both the trustor and the trustee. Coleman viewed risk taking as tied to the idea that the trustee is expected to be reliable and to deliver an interaction outcome that will increase the probability of gains rather than losses. Coleman’s definition, however, overlooked other relevant considerations. While several researchers have argued that trust is a “solution to the problems caused by social uncertainty” when dealing or interacting with other human beings or organizations (Simmel, 1950; Giddens, 1990; Yamagishi & Yamagishi, 1994; Kohring, 2004), this “solution” may come with a price. Cook, Yamagishi, Cheshire, Cooper, Matsuda and Mashima (2005) contended that risk taking in the trust process makes the trustor vulnerable. Yamagishi, Cook and Watabe (1998) described this vulnerability as “the risk of being exploited in social interactions” (p. 170). Social uncertainty, which has been closely linked to the complexity of modern societies, always entails the possibility that a trustee may be motivated to exploit an interaction that will result in harm to the trustor.

As trust underlies many social interactions, trust has often been regarded as central to the notion of social capital, which enables society's effective functioning (Coleman, 1990; Fukuyama, 1995; Delhey, Newton & Welzel, 2011). The concept of social capital relates to the ability to utilize social resources and networks. Bourdieu (1986) defined social capital as "the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition" (p. 248). Putnam (1993) added that social capital also includes "norms and trust that facilitate action and cooperation for mutual benefit" (p. 36). Again, trust as a key ingredient of social capital operates as a "lubricant" for social interactions because "trust is the expectation that arises within a community of regular, honest, and cooperative behavior, based on commonly shared norms, on the part of other members of that community" (Fukuyama, 1995, p. 26). Similarly, Tsfati and Cappella (2003) suggested, "trust leads to an increased likelihood of cooperative engagement" (p. 507).

Delhey, Newton and Welzel (2011) argued that although many researchers have agreed that trust is the key ingredient of social capital, "its origins remain uncertain and its consequences are yet to be clearly established" (p. 800). Consequently, other scholars pointed to the difficulty of examining trust, which is also reflected in the lack of a commonly agreed upon working definition of trust within the social sciences (Grimmelikhuijsen & Meijer, 2012; Lewis & Weigert, 1985; Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt & Camerer, 1998; Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995). Meanwhile, in journalism studies, trust has not been very well defined or sufficiently explored (Kohring, 2004; Kohring & Matthes, 2007; Coleman, Morrison & Anthony, 2012). The lack of trust research in journalism may be considered a significant oversight considering the implication of trust ”for consumption of and response to news media” (Tsfati & Cappella, 2003; p. 506). Moreover, trust may be particularly significant for journalism. As a public service journalism provides information about different sectors of society and, therefore, may influence generating trust in these sectors (Kohring, 2004) and subsequently influencing the functioning of society as a whole (Fukuyama, 1995).

The various discussions around trust above mirror the scope of factors that can contribute to a conceptualization or examination of trust. Trust may be bound to the level of familiarity between trustor and trustee, the frequency of social exchanges or interactions, the social settings, the availability of information, etc.; all of these may influence the degree of social uncertainty (Yamagishi, Cook & Watabe, 1998), which in turn can influence trust assessments. The complexity of the trust concept may explain the difficulties of agreeing on a particular trust definition. Rousseau et al. (1998) explored whether various definitions of trust bear commonalities. The researchers examined 12 trust definitions through a multilevel, multidisciplinary meta-analysis. Their evaluation considered several variables such as development of trust over time, considerations of gains and losses, interactions, and possible interdependencies within micro- and macro-level settings. The authors’ inquiry of psychological, sociological, and economic conceptualizations of trust distilled a number of commonly agreed upon features, which led to the following definition: “Trust is a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behavior of another" (Rousseau et al., 1998, p. 395). This definition serves as a starting point to examine the various facets of trust more closely. This step is useful to better understand the concept of trust in journalism, which includes considerations regarding the knowledge or lack of journalistic decision-making and production processes (Deuze, 2005) and selectivity (Kohring, 2004; Kohring & Matthes, 2007). Following Grimmelikhuijsen (2012), I dissect Rousseau et al.'s (1998) definition into the following elements:

1. Psychological state
2. Acceptance of vulnerability
3. Positive expectations
4. Intentions or behavior of another (i.e. social actor)

As trust may be considered a latent concept (Kohring & Matthes, 2007), influenced by various factors, I closely examine and explain the different elements of trust while also keeping in mind how these factors may be relevant for journalism.

3.2. Trust as a Psychological State

Research often describes trust as a psychological state or strategy (Kollock, 1994; Lewis & Weigert, 1985; Ozar, 2014; Yamagishi & Yamagishi, 1994). From the information processing point of view, trust can be seen as an evolutionary strategy that is employed to facilitate interaction and exchange between different people (Berg, Dickhaut & McCabe, 1995). "Evolutionary models predict the emergence of trust because it maximizes genetic fitness even though myopic self interest suggests cheating. From this perspective, trust can be viewed as a behavioral primitive that guides behavior" (p. 124). As such, trust is not a deliberate or consciously chosen strategy. Instead Yamagishi and Yamagishi (1994) considered trust a cognitive "*bias in the processing of imperfect information about*" interaction partners (p. 136, italics in the original). Such a cognitive bias or psychological strategy can then be understood as a way to reduce cognitive load (Luhmann, 1979). But Yamagishi and Yamagishi (1994) suggested that trust can do much more than simply reducing cognitive loads, "trust provides a solution to the problems caused by social uncertainty" when individuals are interacting or must rely on others (individuals or organizations) (p.131).

This dissertation utilizes the general definition of the psychological state component as a strategy to reduce complexity. Nevertheless, to better understand how this state may be developed, maintained, or weakened, a number of other factors need to be considered. In particular, personal relationships, the possible influence of emotions, and frequency of interactions are relevant. Thus, expanding on the notion of trust as a psychological state requires establishing when trust is considered general or specific, that is, when one trusts people in general or in an established personal relationship. Moreover, what needs to be defined is whether trust is a primarily cognitive or affective phenomenon. Finally, trust must be examined within the framework of time. How do trust relationships differ at an initial or continuous stage after a number of interactions? The following three sections provide an overview of how these factors may influence trust as a psychological state.

3.2.1. General and Specific Trust

Trust as a psychological state needs to be differentiated as something that can take place on an individual level within face-to-face interactions or on a more communal sphere between larger groups or between an individual and these larger entities. Researchers have often described these two plains of trust as general and specific trust (also interpersonal trust).

Several scholars have described general trust as a means to reduce or a solution to social uncertainty (Luhman, 1979; Yamagishi & Yamagishi, 1994; Yamagishi, Cook & Watabe, 1998). The rationale is that people start or need to trust when not enough information is available to confidently assess or calculate the outcome of an interaction. Therefore, trust depends, at least to a degree, on the amount of information or knowledge available and the level of familiarity with another entity with which one is interacting. The complexity of modern societies makes it almost impossible for people to have extended knowledge about all organizations and institutions with which they are dealing; as such, they must trust them to a certain degree. In that respect, general trust describes a more "taken for granted" state or belief that society and its institutions will function as expected (Holzner, 1973; Luhmann, 1988; Barber, 1983). General trust then facilitates interactions not only among groups and between organizations and groups within an organization, but also between an individual and those various groups (Fukuyama, 1995).

The main difference between general trust and specific or interpersonal trust is the level of familiarity, which is also tied to the amount of information or knowledge one possibly has about another interactant. While specific trust is mainly directed toward familiar others and is based on knowledge from previous interactions (Burke & Stets, 1999), general trust describes trust relations with unfamiliar others. Yamagishi and Yamagishi (1994) described specific trust as a knowledge-based trust "*limited to particular objects (people or organizations), general trust is a belief in the benevolence of human nature in general and thus is not limited to particular objects*" (p. 139, italics in the original). Nevertheless, both general trust and specific trust indicate a knowledge base that must be taken into account, whether considering abstract social systems (i.e. manifestations of human nature in institutions) (Giddens, 1990) or specific experiences with individuals (Lewis & Weigert, 1985). Thus, trusting a specific person or organization involves to what extent one relies on one's limited knowledge or the information at hand to estimate interaction outcomes. "A trusting person is the one who overestimates the benignity of the partner's intentions beyond the level warranted by the prudent assessment of the available information" (Yamagishi & Yamagishi, 1994, p. 136). According to McAllister (1995), specific trust is based on information or knowledge is derived from previous encounters with a specific social actor. McAllister described specific or interpersonal trust as the "extent to which a person is confident in, and willing to act on the basis of, the words, actions, and decisions of another" (p. 25).

Delhey, Newton and Welzel (2011) suggested that in today's society, general trust is becoming more important than particular or specific trust as the extent of people interacting with strangers or unfamiliar others is constantly increasing. Within a digital media landscape such connections and interactions with unfamiliar others and unfamiliar sources of information may in fact be outweighing interactions with specific others.

Tsfati (2010) contended that for news media audiences generalized trust is important during an "interaction with and exposure to news media" (p. 23). General trust, then, describes the trust in the institution of journalism rather than in a specific news outlet (Tsfati, 2004). General trust can then be understood as a "collective attribute [that] is applicable to the relations among people rather than to their psychological states taken individually" (Lewis & Weigert, 1985, p. 968). Yet, Lewis and Weigert also acknowledged that trust could be influenced by individual differences and experiences. News media research has shown, for instance, that partisans' personal attitudes can lead to hostile media effects, which describes a deep distrust in news media information (Gunther & Schmitt, 2004; Gunther, Miller & Liebhart, 2009). Researchers have repeatedly found that people with strong beliefs assess neutral news as opposite of their values and points of view. Nevertheless, research may need to differentiate between personal experiences with specific news organizations and a trust in journalism, as a whole.

The issue of trust in journalism is a curious one because, generally, audiences trust journalists to not be trusting of others. As such, general trust in news media or journalism is associated with the idea that for journalists to do their job properly they cannot simply believe the information that they are finding or getting from their sources. Audience expectations of the media are that journalists will do their due diligence to fact check everything, ask the tough questions, and to not take anybody's word for granted. Finding and reporting the truth requires a critical approach to carefully investigate and question all of the information. In the recent past, this trust in reporting, checking, and not trusting all given information may have been undermined for some people by a *Rolling Stone* magazine article. The article centered on a University of Virginia student's account of an alleged rape by several members of a fraternity. The veracity of the story quickly came into question as details that were later uncovered suggested that the "assault could not have taken place the way we [*Rolling Stone*] described it" (Rolling Stone, 2015). The *Columbia Journalism Review* (CJR, 2015) pointed out that the internal editorial checks did not take hold and that *Rolling Stone* realized that they trusted their source "Jackie" too much. "In the face of new information, there now appear to be discrepancies in Jackie's account, and we [*Rolling Stone*] have come to the conclusion that our trust in her was misplaced." This case exemplifies that general trust in the news media also relies on audience expectations that journalists would, by default, not be trusting of their sources and the issues on which they report. If journalists start to trust too much, a consequence may be losing the trust of their audiences. At the same time, the *Rolling Stone* case shows that the specific trust relations between loyal readers and the magazine may have been negatively impacted, as well.

General levels of trust can overlap with more specific levels of trust as first-hand experiences or attitudes regarding previous or ongoing interactions often converge, making a complete distinction between general and specific trust difficult. Thus Grimmelikhuijsen (2012) proposed that trust must be understood as a social reality and individual strategy or decision-making process (to reduce uncertainty) within different social contexts. For the context of journalism, this would suggest that the immediate interaction with news media content is not only informed by readers' previous experiences with a particular news outlet but also by general beliefs regarding the profession of journalism.

The latest Gallup (2012) data on people's assessments of journalists showed that 24% of the participants rated journalists' honesty and ethical standards as high or very high. In 1976, 33% of Gallup participants rated journalists as highly or very highly honest and ethical. In contrast, the most recent Gallup data shows that 90% of survey participants thought that firefighters' honesty and ethical standards were high or very high. Nurses also stood out as ethical and honest, receiving 80% of high or very high ratings. College teachers received 53% in that category. Members of Congress fared lowest, with only 7%.

The German marketing association GFK measured the level of trust in professions in 25 different countries. Having conducted 28.000 interviews to have a representative sample from Europe, North and South America, the Asia/Pacific region and Africa, GFK's (2014) latest study found that, on average, about 64% of all participants trusted journalists. Yet, these numbers vary quite dramatically. While 26% of the participants in the UK agreed with the statement that they completely/generally trusted journalists, in India 84% agreed with the same statement. In contrast, in the United States 64% of the participants trusted journalists and in Germany only 37% expressed the same level of trust. Similar to the Gallup data, the GFK study found that, overall, firefighters (90%) and nurses (89%) were among the highest trusted professions, while politicians were the least trusted (31%).

Trust in the journalistic profession can be seen as an indicator of general trust in journalism, as it is not specific to a particular news outlet or individual journalists but reflects an assessment of the profession, as a whole. As such, general trust can be seen as a "collective attribute" (Lewis & Weigert, 1985) or as a part of "social reality" (Grimmelikhuijsen, 2012) that can impact, on an individual level, decisions about trusting another entity, person, group, or organization based on the available information.

Whether the assessment of trust is primarily a cognitive process (possibly deliberate) or an affect when one faces uncertainty or an "epistemic distance" within a particular situation is clarified in the next section.

3.2.2. Trust: Cognitive Process or Affective Reaction?

Scholars have pointed out that for trust to occur, the amount of information available to a person is crucial. Lewis and Weigert (1985) referred to Simmel (1950) who suggested, "trust involves a degree of cognitive familiarity with the object of trust that is somewhere between total knowledge and total ignorance" (Lewis & Weigert, 1985, p. 970). Kohring and Matthes (2007) described this state as midway between knowing and not knowing. Trust, then, is closely linked to knowledge or access to information. But Kohring (2004) suggested that the access to or availability of information does not lead to a formula automatically ensuring trust or the lack thereof. Even though trust is connected to a level of incomplete information, he argued, trust cannot be rationally calculated; it cannot resolve uncertainty, only help to tolerate it (p. 185).

Lewis and Weigert (1985) suggested that trusting or not trusting someone within different social settings is partially determined by making a deliberate cognitive choice. This decision to trust a person, a group, or an institution is based on "good reasons, constituting evidence of trustworthiness" (p. 970). Yet, the researchers also suggested that the sheer amount of knowledge about someone or something would not cause trust to occur. They argued that the "foundation of trust is also constructed on an emotional base that is complementary to its cognitive base. This affective component of trust consists of an emotional bond among all those who participate" in a particular interaction or relationship (p. 971). After all, if every emotion was removed from cognitive trust assessment what would remain is a “coldblooded prediction or rationally calculated risk” (p. 972). Burke and Stets (1999) also proposed an emotional basis to trust. They suggested, however, that the dominant part of trust is “rational expectation and calculation” (p. 349).

Lewis and Weigert (1985) contended that while emotions are part of all forms of trust, they are particularly strong in interpersonal trust relationships. Supporting this notion, Yamagishi and Yamagishi (1994) argued that emotional attachments could help reduce uncertainty, particularly in committed relationships. Similarly, Granovetter (1973, 1985, 1992) argued that trust depends on the strength of personal ties. He suggested, “trust in leaders is integrally related to the *capacity to predict and affect their behavior*” (1973, p. 1374, italics in the original).

Exploring the role of personal ties in the dissemination of news media content, Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955) showed that people acted more often on news media content when it was also transmitted through personal ties. Researchers have shown repeatedly that interpersonal relationships play a significant role in this process, particularly in shaping political attitudes (Jasperson & Hyun Jung, 2007; McDevitt & Kiousis, 2007; Kushin & Yamamoto, 2010). Interpersonal exchanges, such as word-of-mouth communication, are often viewed as highly credible and trustworthy (Bearden & Etzel, 1982; Bearden, Netemeyer & Teel, 1989).

Lewis and Weigert (1985) argued that trust is a mix of emotions and cognitive processing, although the proportion may vary depending on the type of social relationship or situation in question. The social relationship between audiences and news media (i.e.

with journalism) may be described as a professional-client or journalist-audience relationship. Journalism as professional complex performs specialized functions for others (laymen) (Parsons, 1970). Such professional-client relationships are often asymmetrical because of "a 'competence gap' between professional and lay persons" (p. 127). Parsons (1970) argued that "such a competence gap must be bridged by something like what we call trust" (p. 127). Ozar (2014) described this gap as an epistemic distance. The competence gap between professionals and clients is created around the institutional education and the practice of experts. News media disseminate information to "general publics, most of whom do not claim any special expertise in judging the content of the communication" (Parsons, 1970, p. 120). The introduction of digital communication technologies has possibly narrowed the "competence gap" in journalism, since audiences can easily search and check facts or information online. Nevertheless, as long as professional news organizations exist, the competence gap will not disappear; thus, the professional-client relationship hinges on an epistemic dependence (Hardwig, 1985).

Trust is then primarily based on the amount of knowledge social actors have about another social actor, group, or institution. "The person who knows completely need not trust; while the person who knows nothing can, on no rational grounds, afford even confidence" (Simmel, 1950, p. 318). For trust to occur certain information saturation must be reached. "The manifestation of trust on the cognitive level of experience is reached when social actors no longer need or want any further evidence or rational reasons for their confidence in the objects of trust" (Lewis & Weigert, 1985, p. 970). Lewis and Weigert described the available information as the basis for trust, enabling what they call a "cognitive leap" that goes beyond what one could expect from the information or the experience at hand. They argued that without this "leap," trust would not occur and all prior knowledge and experience will only have opened "the door to trust" (p. 970). Taking the leap then indicates a kind of tipping point (level of knowledge saturation) that may lead to trust but will not, consequently, establish trust. In fact, one could argue that without taking the "leap" a form of distrust may be established, as the lack of trust could lead to the termination of the trustor and a trustee relationship.

Following the conceptualization of Simmel (1950), Luhman (1979), Lewis and Weigert (1985), Putnam (1993), and Kohring (2004), I focus on trust as a process that can lead to a cognitive "saturation" of information, which can result in establishing and possibly increasing trust. The relationship between trust and transparency in journalism, I argue, may follow a similar process. Transparency can generally be described as providing more or extra information, which, in turn, can decrease uncertainty, when a point of information or knowledge saturation is achieved. As a consequence of reaching this point of knowledge saturation, trust may occur. In this respect, cognitively established general trust is assumed to be more important than specific trust because "with population growth and greater structural differentiation, a greater number of social relationships are based on cognitive trust than on emotional trust" (Lewis & Weigert, 1985, p. 973).

Whether cognitive or emotional, almost any trust relationship is influenced by the number of previous interactions that allow a trustor to gather more information about the trustee, which in return can influence the development of trust or distrust. The next section discusses to what degree time may be a factor in trust building.

3.2.3 Trust Over Time: Initial and Ongoing Trust Relationships

Evaluations of trust may differ depending on the times of interactions or the length of time a trust relationship is ongoing (Berg, Dickhaut, & McCabe, 1995). In journalism how often one consumes news content from a particular news organization may influence trust assessments to some degree, as certain personal emotional ties are formed or individual needs are met (Stephenson, 1967; Tsfati, 2010; McQuail, 2010).

Social scientists have often used exchange theory to test the time component of trust. Experimental games — such as the investment game, trust and faith game, or the Prisoners' Dilemma — can be used to evaluate trust relationships since the players can choose either to cooperate or act in their own self-interest. These experimental games show that pure rationality does not always govern exchanges or interactions even when both parties would benefit from cooperation. In other words, trust does not always occur even with several positive exchanges or fade away after several negative exchanges (Tedeschi, Hiester & Gahagan, 1969). At times, trust depends on the level of subjectively perceived difficulty to trust another (Frey, Buskens, & Raub, 2015).

In the majority of the trust and faith games, a trustor sends a trustee a chosen amount of money with the chance of increasing his/her investment through a return from the trustee. Thus, the trustor places his or her trust in the trustee. However, it is mostly the trustee who decides how much he/she will return. The trustee can opt to make a mutually beneficial or trustworthy decision, but has an incentive to make a self-interested decision to gain more money for himself or herself. He or she will gain higher returns if less or no money is returned to the trustor. Kiyonari, Yamagishi, Cook, and Cheshire (2006) used such a scenario to explore if interactions with people considered trusted partners would strengthen trust. Kiyonari et al. found that U.S. participants did not trust their so-called trusted partners and were more self-interested during a single interaction. The researchers concluded that the lack of repeated interactions may have prevented trust building because repeated interactions or social history may be essential to foster trust.

Researchers also used the trust game to explore to what degree information disclosure or levels of transparency can significantly influence trust relations positively or negatively (Rietz, Sheremeta, Shields, & Smith, 2013). Rietz et al. (2013) showed over a number of interactions that investors' trust went up when they could get information about how their money was handled by two subsequent parties. But investors' trust declined when investors themselves had to provide transparency information. In contrast, Lunawat (2013) found that the disclosure of private information served as an additional information source that, beyond dividend information about a transaction, promoted reputation building and improving welfare between two interacting parties. Lunawat also showed that repeated interactions combined with information disclosure increased reputation even further.

Another frequently used experimental game is the Prisoners' Dilemma game. The Prisoners' Dilemma is often based on a more uncertain context, as less information about the interactants is available. In a Prisoners' Dilemma scenario two individuals are given the same option at the same time that will automatically influence the faith of both individuals. They can either defect or cooperate, which means that the interactants will either serve their self-interest or take responsibility for each other. In the original Prisoners' Dilemma game, two criminals interrogated by police can choose either to blame the other as the sole perpetrator and walk free; blame each other, which would result in both receiving a higher prison sentence; or keep silent and both receive a lower prison sentence. In other words, cooperation would mean a better outcome for all parties involved. But the dilemma for both prisoners is that they have no indication how their partner in crime would decide; trusting the partner involves a risk.

Kuwabara, Vogt, Watabe, and Komiya (2014) tested such a Prisoners' Dilemma scenario in the context of office collaboration in the United States and Japan. The researchers showed that frequent interactions with positive outcomes could indeed build trust. But trust was not only affected by the number of interactions but also at what point in time an ongoing trust relationship is undermined. In particular they were able to show that the moment when trust violations occur has various consequences in different cultural settings. Kuwabara et al. (2014) found that Americans relied more on the notion of general trust than Japanese participants. In other words, Americans anticipated immediate cooperation as they trusted their interactant from the outset. Trust violations early on affected their trust in subsequent interactions. In contrast, Japanese participants anticipated no problems after a number of interactions. They faced difficulties when trust violations occurred after repeated interactions, which they assumed had already build a solid trust relationship. Several researchers have described similar cultural differences. These researchers define U.S. culture as a high-trust culture (high on general trust) versus countries like Japan that have been described as low-trust cultures, where interpersonal trust relationships are more pronounced (Kuwabara et al. 2014; Cook et al. 2005; Yamagishi & Yamagishi, 1994; Kiyonari, Yamagishi, Cook, & Cheshire, 2006).

The number of interactions may not always be a predictor of trust, especially when a trustee breaks the trust of a trustor. For example, Tedeschi, Hiester and Gahagan

(1969), who also tested trust relationships through the Prisoners' Dilemma, found that people whose trust was violated or exploited were willing to cooperate again, especially when they had a predisposition for trusting others in general. Thus, personal disposition could overcome negative experiences from interactions.

Kollock (1994), on the other hand, showed that positive repeated interactions with others can lead to trust and eventually to commitment — a binding tie between an individual and another social entity such as individuals, groups, or organizations. Kollock suggested that commitment within partnerships of exchange is a mechanism for dealing with or minimizing uncertainty. Commitment reduces uncertainty that stems from the "lack of information about the motivations of others" (p. 317). Kollock's experiment showed that participants evaluated those exchange partners as most trustworthy they interacted with the most.

In journalism, interactions with news media have been primarily conceptualized as news exposure, as historically, mass communication was primarily understood as one-way communication from sender to receiver (i.e. audiences). Tsfati and Cappella (2003) found that audiences' media skepticism (the opposite of trust) was negatively related to news exposure (broadcast and newspapers). In other words, frequent encounters with the news media were positively correlated with audiences' trust. On the flipside people who were highly skeptical of the news media also tended to have less exposure to news in general (Tsfati & Cappella, 2005). Similarly, frequent exposure to online news resulted in a negative relation to media skepticism (Tsfati, 2010). Audiences' attitudes and preconceptions about news media outlets also informed such trust judgments. "The more people trusted mainstream media, the more they consumed news from online mainstream news outlets" (Tsfati, 2010, p. 37). Meanwhile people who mistrusted mainstream media got their information from other non-mainstream media outlets. These findings suggest that frequent interactions with the news media appear to at least not undermine trust in journalism. Moreover, similar to Kollock's (1994) findings, news audiences may develop forms of commitment to the news media or at least to specific outlets if, as suggested by Tsfati (2010), they keep returning to their preferred news organization.

This notion of commitment may be particularly important during interactions between professionals and clients who form a particular social relationship. Parsons (1970) suggested that trust is established in social relationships steeped in the concept of a "feeling" of solidarity of a collective group. These relationships require mutual investment from both the professional and the client over a period of time. Parsons proposed four factors that can generate trust over time. First, belief in common values by a "sufficient proportion" of professionals and clients. Second, shared values that amount to common goals. Third, the "successful fitting of the expectations engaged on both sides of the relationship into the balance of the plural set of solidary involvements in which all actors, individual and collective, are involved" (p. 128). Fourth, the trust relationship should not be too "incompatible with known facts and conditions of feasibility" (p. 128). All these factors reinforce each other and strengthen the belief in a professional complex such as journalism. Coleman et al. (2012) showed that audiences not only seem to distrust news media less when journalists and audiences share values and expectations such as accuracy and reliability but also when the information is useful.

As indicated above within the context of news media, trust relations may be influenced by the frequency of exposure, attitudes, and perceptions about the news media. While this dissertation examines the effects of transparency on trust perceptions through a one-shot exposure to a news article, it acknowledges that a general conceptualization of the news media itself, at least theoretically, may contribute to a general assessment of trust. In other words, participants in this study have probably had previous interactions with the news media and these experiences may have impacted how people assess trust (Rousseau et al., 1998).

Although trust can be influenced by the frequency of interactions, there must also be a cognitive "leap" that triggers trust (Lewis & Weigert, 1985). But while trust may be based to a degree on the cognitive evaluation of available information, one cannot possibly account or calculate all possible outcomes. Thus, a leap of faith is required such that a trustor opens himself or herself up to risk, making himself or herself vulnerable. This may be especially true for one-shot or single interactions with a particular news story, as done in this dissertation. The next section explores how considerations of vulnerability may affect trust assessments.

3.3. Accepting Vulnerability

Kollock (1994) argued that risk-taking and uncertainty in trade exchanges are closely connected to trust. Uncertainty can promote higher levels of trust as one cannot fully calculate if an expected outcome will occur. In other words, when one starts to trust another party one risks being exploited; as such, one makes oneself vulnerable (Bhattacharya, Devinney, & Pillutla, 1998). This notion leads Mayer, Davis and Schoorman (1995) to define trust as "*the willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular* *action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other party"* (p. 712, italics in the original). Similarly, Barney and Hansen (1995) wrote of trust as "the mutual confidence that no party to an exchange will exploit another's vulnerabilities" (p. 176). The notion of vulnerability suggests that trust may have its limits with respect to how much of a risk people are willing to take. In that respect, vulnerability may be a subjectively "calculated" assessment of possible losses in uncertain situations. Kollock (1994) cautioned that "if uncertainty is too high, the risk is too large," which could undermine trust development and prevent a successful exchange (p. 341).

The perception of trusting as risk taking has also been explored within journalism studies. Kohring (2004) and Kohring and Matthes (2007) argued that a social actor is taking a risk since his own actions depend on the outcome of the actions of another social actor. In the context of journalism, audiences take risks by aligning their own actions to the information provided by news outlets.

Cook et al. (2005) explored whether risk taking or making oneself vulnerable through social exchanges — sending money to strangers and hoping for a return — will build trust. A main outcome of their research indicated that this is indeed possible, as "trust can be built by initial risk taking" (p. 139) or by first making oneself vulnerable. So when news audiences trust news media content they are making themselves vulnerable to a certain degree. This is especially true if audiences rely on the correctness and usability of the news content as a basis for their own decisions — whether it is voting, playing the stock market, or purchasing certain goods.

Taking risks and the willingness to accept a level of vulnerability may be part of any trust relationship, including when audiences put trust in journalism. Trusting weather reports may leave one standing without an umbrella in the rain. But trusting the news media does not reflect to what degree audiences make themselves vulnerable. Many news items can have little or only partial consequence to peoples' lives, which makes it difficult to assess the degree to which audiences are taking risks when consuming and relying on news.

3.4. Positive Expectations

The default position in any trust relationship is that social actors normally expect a positive outcome (Lewicki & Bunker, 1995; Rousseau et al., 1998). Barney and Hansen (1995) described trust as a mutual expectation that no one will be taken advantage of. Mayer et al. (1995) wrote that trust is the "expectation that the other party will perform a particular action important to the trustor" (p. 712). Such positive expectations are connected to the idea of a successful cooperation between a trustor and a trustee. In commerce this can include the notion that an investor will profit from his or her investment. In journalism such positive expectations refer to being informed about important issues in society that may impact news consumers or is simply "useful information." Audiences expect to "find what they needed to know" (Coleman et al., 2012, p. 40) to monitor the environment and stay abreast of developments in society (Lasswell, 1948; McQuail, 2010).

Expectations in journalism normally go beyond the delivery of useful content. According to Kohring (2004), news audiences trust journalism not only to function but also to function correctly. Such an assessment leads to two general expectations associated with the idea of trustworthiness, which can be defined as a "characteristic of the one who is trusted" (Kiyonari et al. 2006, p. 270). First, audiences expect to be informed about the most important current issues in society. Second, the assumption of a correctly functioning journalism does not allow "much" room for error. In other words, audiences will generally expect that information from news outlets should be correct and reliable facts (Lasswell, 1948; CFP, 1947). But to elicit such expectations, journalism or journalistic work has to be interpreted as trustworthy in the first place. As mentioned above, in the professional-client relationship trustworthiness may be gauged based on the values and goals that audiences and journalists share, which creates the prerequisite for a "feeling" or sense of solidarity (i.e. trust between the two) (Parsons, 1970). Moreover, if an organization is considered trustworthy, trust in that organization may increase and as a consequence may influence the behavior toward the organizations and its members (Cook et al., 2005).

Kiyonari et al. (2006) pointed out that "trust is not a simple reflection of trustworthiness" (p. 280), as trusting someone does not necessarily translate into more trustworthy behavior by a trustee. One may trust the news media although not everything journalism produces warrants the label "trustworthy." As such, the relationship between trust and trustworthiness appears not necessarily to be causal but circular and in need of constant verification. Cook et al. (2005) have described the trust and trustworthy relationship as a Catch 22. Before an interactant can prove to someone that he or she is trustworthy, both parties have to "induce her or his partner to be trusting" (p. 122).

Researchers in different fields have attempted to gauge trustworthiness. Grimmelikshuijsen (2012) identified three dimensions — competence, benevolence, and honesty — for administrative sciences. For journalism, competence and honesty seem fitting dimensions. Credibility research in journalism has provided similar dimensions such as accuracy, fairness, telling the whole story, and trust (Gaziano & McGrath, 1986). Hovland, Janis and Kelley (1953) mentioned expertness and trustworthiness when measuring message or news item credibility. Similarly, Flanagin and Metzger (2000) proposed that message credibility could be discerned by asking audiences about the believability, accuracy, trustworthiness, bias, and completeness of a story. This dissertation departs from the commonly used credibility assessment by focusing on trust in journalism. The concept of credibility often subsumes trustworthiness and trust as interchangeable values, which is conceptually problematic. In section *3.6., Trust in Journalism,* I explain these varying concepts in greater detail and provide a rationale for why trust differs from credibility in journalism.

Positive expectations are closely tied to the notion of trustworthiness, which a trustor may draw on when he or she takes a cognitive "leap" to trust a trustee. The notion of trustworthiness then is also tied to gauging the intentions or the possible behavior of a trustee, which is discussed in the following section.

3.5. Intentions or Behavior of Another Actor

Rousseau et al. (1998) broadly defined another actor as the independent entity who will be trusted. Coleman (1990) wrote of the trustee in whom the trustor puts his or her trust. Within a trust relationship, a fundamental expectation is that the other actor will cooperate, meaning the behavior of that actor will result in a mutually beneficial outcome (Lewis & Weigert, 1985; Coleman, 1990; Putnam, 1993). Thus, generally, the trustee's perceived intentions are positive, because if a trustor perceives negative intentions a trust relationship would normally not occur in the first place.

The intentions and possible behavior of another actor within a trust relationship may be influenced by several factors, such as social norms, institutional restrictions, and guidelines of a social context (Fukuyama, 1995; Bhattacharya et al., 1995). Rousseau et al. (1998) suggested, "[S]ocial norms shape both the behaviors parties engage in, as well as their beliefs regarding the intentions of others" (p. 397). These shared norms enable a trustor to anticipate or expect the intentions or behaviors of trustees in a particular situation. But social norms differ across various cultural settings and can lead to unexpected outcomes in trust relationships (Yamagishi & Yamgashi, 1994; Kiyonari et al., 2006). In that respect, trust regarding the behavior or intentions of another actor can be, at least to a degree, calculated as shared social norms. These norms may even be institutionally prescribed, which allows some predictability.

In journalism the other actor can be considered from two different perspectives. As many trust relationships can go both ways, journalists may consider the audience to be the other actor, as they anticipate that the audience will purchase and believe in the offered news content and that audiences will come back repeatedly when they get a "good" product. Professional norms and ethical guidelines serve to ensure quality in journalism. At the same time, they provide audiences a cue about the intentions and behavior of journalists when they act as a trustor and journalism as a trustee (i.e. another actor). The display of professionalism, then, may induce audiences' trust in journalism.

This trust may depend on the perceived level of expertise and professional conduct that may include factors such as the selectivity of topics, facts, opinions, biases, etc. about a particular news topic (Kohring, 2004; Hovland et al., 1953; Gaziano & McGrath, 1986; Flanagin & Metzger, 2000).

In the previous sections, trust has been defined as a psychological state that is either general or specific, is evaluated either cognitively or emotionally, and may change through the number of interactions. Further, trust is closely linked to risk taking that assumes a willingness to make oneself vulnerable (i.e. knowing about the possibility that a positive expectation regarding the outcome of an interaction may not be fulfilled by another actor). All of these elements factor into an understanding of trust in journalism, which is discussed in the following pages.

3.6. Trust in Journalism

Practitioners and scholars have frequently cited trust and credibility as crucial for the existence of the journalistic institution or a particular news organization (Gaziano, 1988; Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007; McBride & Rosenstiel, 2014; Tsfati & Cappella, 2003). Without trust or the reputation of providing credible information, audiences may not turn to the news media. While trust has received fairly little attention, research in journalism studies looked primarily toward the multimodal concept of credibility, which includes trust or trustworthiness as one element among several others. But as shown above, trust itself is a very complex concept that is informed by several factors such as the amount of information available, previous interactions, social norms, and more. What follows is a more thorough discussion concerning the role and conceptualization of trust in journalism.

In this section, I first address the news media's part in maintaining and creating general trust in society. Then, I briefly discuss how journalism may undermine trust. Lastly, I define trust in journalism based on Kohring's (2004) and Kohring and Matthes' (2007) concept of journalistic selectivity. This part also includes a discussion as to why trust differs from credibility.

3.6.1. Journalism and Trust in Society

Trust has been described as a lubricant for societies to function (Arrow, 1972; Fukuyama, 1995). But it may be that trust in journalism, as Kohring (2004) argued, is the cornerstone that enables trust and the functioning of democratic societies in the first place. The premise for this notion, according to Kohring, is that complex societies and organizations operate on the basis of risk and trust because responsibilities must be delegated and cannot be fully controlled by individuals or groups. The division of labor thus facilitates trust to develop as a "lubricant" within increasingly complex socio-political and economic structures. At the same time, the news media can be regarded as the main information source of social, economic, and political life in such societies. The news media's societal function "consists of selecting and conveying information about the complex interdependencies of modern society. By doing so, news media enables their its public to fulfill their need for orientation to their social environment and to adjust their expectations regarding other social actors (e.g. politicians)" (Kohring & Matthes, 2007, p. 238).

Using system theory, Kohring (2004) contended that within the public sphere, journalism is a system of efficacy that offers symbolic tools of control that help to reduce uncertainty concerning the social environment. Journalism, then, can be understood as a form of observation that monitors relevant behavior of social actors in respect to other members of society (Lasswell, 1948). Kohring (2004) also suggested that trust in journalism offers a solution to the psychological and social need to observe the environment by establishing a system of accountability concerning other relevant social actors, systems, or institutions. Based on that argument Kohring and Matthes (2007) wrote that one has to trust the news media first in order to gain information about others and be able to trust other social actors. In other words, trusting the news (as a way of surveying the environment) is critical as the news provide relevant information to learn about existing and changing social norms and enables adaptation to social, political and cultural contexts (Bandura, 2001). However, because this process of observing the environment through journalism — a window to a larger world — is based on selectivity (due to the overall complexity of society), a primary condition for trusting others is trusting the news media first.

Trust in the news media is a necessity within complex societies; without that trust it would be difficult to cooperate with or put trust in others. If one takes this reasoning further, a lack of trust in journalism could ultimately result in a dysfunctional society that is stricken by the absence of trust, the fundamental lubricant for social interactions. Yet, as shown above trusting is never risk-free. After all, the news media "selectively inform the public about issues, personalities, and events. This selectivity of news reporting makes relying on news media itself a risky action" (Kohring & Matthes, 2007, p. 238).

3.6.2. The Problem with Trust in Journalism

While journalism may be essential to creating and maintaining trust within societies, journalism also has been accused of doing just the opposite. Gerbner and Gross (1976) wrote that watching a lot of television is particularly problematic because this can cultivate ideas of the world as mean and violent. The so-called mean world syndrome points toward an erosion of trust in society. Indeed, Gerber, Gross, Morgan and Signorielli (1980) argued that heavy television viewers tend to trust others less. Putnam (1996) also suggested that television watching discourages civic involvement by eroding social connections and decreases community activities by eating up people's leisure time. "The culprit is television," Putnam wrote, because "each hour spent viewing television is associated with less social trust and less group membership" (p. 13 & 14). But Uslaner (1998), who analyzed television content from news to soap operas, wrote that he was virtually unable to find "evidence that any type of content . . . makes people less trusting, less optimistic, or less willing to participate in civic life" (p. 442).

In my view, differentiating between content types is important. Putnam (1996), for instance, did not claim that all news media have detrimental effects on trust. He suggested that each hour reading a newspaper is associated with more civic engagement and more trust. Nevertheless, Coleman et al. (2012) suggested that the mean world syndrome and "bad news" stories can contribute to a general skepticism in all institutions within society. Kohring (2004) considered not only the impact of "bad news" stories on society but also how journalism as a whole may influence trust. He cautioned that journalism's societal role brings challenges because journalism, as the watchdog of democratic societies, asks audiences to essentially trust the news media while journalism is eroding trust in others. In other words, given that journalists uncover stories that show the flaws and possibly untrustworthiness of political, economic, and social institutions, news media may be unable to disassociate themselves from this process of questioning the trustworthiness of important social actors. Journalism, then, appears to be caught in an irrational loop that on the one hand helps to inform the public about society, fostering trust; on the other hand, this process of informing the public is often based on shattering the trust in individuals or institutions. As such, trusting the news media becomes difficult because the news media can create uncertainty by shattering people's expectations concerning individuals and institutions, which in turn can result in undermining general trust in society. Trust in journalism, therefore, may not be directly related to additional information about the journalistic process (as a means to reduce uncertainty), as journalism itself constantly creates and undermines trust in society.

While journalism may contribute to creating and/or undermining trust in institutions and society in general, journalism at times also faces questions regarding trust in its own work. Tsfati and Cappella (2003) suggested that in "audience-media relations, the core of trust is accuracy, credibility, and objectivity" (p. 519). In recent years, U.S. journalism has faced some challenges precisely in that arena. A prominent scandal involving plagiarism and fabrication by Jayson Blair (formerly with *The New York Times*) can cast doubt on and damage the reputation of journalists, as can inaccuracies such as when CNN and Fox News misreported that the Supreme Court decided to kill the individual mandate of the Affordable Care Act in 2012 (Fung & Mirkinson, 2012). But Coleman et al. (2012) argued that although "journalistic inaccuracy or lack of commitment to the establishment of truth undermine trust . . . they do not forswear trust"

(p. 38). Coleman et al. (2012) examined expectations of news audiences through focus groups and interviews with journalists. They concluded that the function of news fails when audience expectations are not met. Such expectations are often linked to an "ontological assurance in an insecure world" through useful information for personal and civic lives, reliable information and amusing information (p. 49). The authors contended that by not meeting these expectations "the production, circulation and reception of public knowledge raise problems of trust" (p. 50).

Public institutions, governments and companies are all facing a decline in trust (Edelman, 2014). Similarly, the top U.S. national media companies' believability ratings fell more than 15 percent in the past decade (Pew, 2012). Trust is an issue that journalism as an institution cannot ignore and this dissertation attempts to add to a better understanding of the concept.

3.6.3. Defining Trust in Journalism

Trust in journalism is a somewhat tricky concept, as it has been frequently associated with the idea of credibility; at times where trust begins and credibility ends is unclear. Gaziano (1988) appeared to have used credibility, believability, and trust almost synonymously when she wrote:

> Credibility is an important issue to study because public inability to believe the news media severely hampers the nation's ability to inform the public, to monitor leaders and to govern. Decreased public trust also can lead to diminished freedom of the press and can threaten the economic health of some media. (p. 267)

Self (2009) described the research around credibility as "plentiful, contradictory, and confused" (p. 435), as the term has been defined and researched in various forms as believability, reliability, expertness, trustworthiness, and trust (Hovland et al., 1953; Burgoon, M., Burgoon, J. K., & Wilkinson, M., 1981; Gaziano & McGrath, 1986; Flanagin & Metzger, 2000).

Traditionally, the majority of research regarding trust in journalism has revolved around the concept of credibility (Kohring, 2004; Kohring & Matthes, 2007). Tsfati and Cappella (2003; 2005) largely assessed trust or mistrust by using parts of the 12-item News Credibility Scale by Gaziano and McGrath (1986) and Cappella and Jamieson (1997). The items of these scales include fairness, bias, accuracy, privacy invasion, considering readers interest, separating fact from opinion, self-interest or public interest, well trained reporters, telling the whole story, and whether the news media can be trusted. They also assessed perceptions of speedy news coverage and solution-based news coverage. Meyer (1988) reduced these 12 items to five items: fair, bias, telling the whole story, accuracy, and trust. Flanagin and Metzger (2000) suggested that credibility should be assessed in terms of believability, accuracy, trustworthiness, bias, and completeness. Interestingly, many of these credibility items are core professional journalistic values tied to the notion of objectivity.

The beginnings of credibility research in modern communication have been strongly influenced by the seminal work of Hovland et al. (1953) on persuasion and opinion change. Hovland et al. distinguished two perceptual components of credibility. On the one hand, expertness refers to how informed or intelligent a source or communicator is being perceived. On the other hand, trustworthiness describes the “degree of confidence in the communicator’s intent to communicate the assertions he considers most valid” (p. 21). The researchers never qualified on what basis or what information audiences may make such judgments. In contrast, trust research has indicated that trust evaluations are often based on the availability or lack of information rather than only impressionistic perceptions of expertness or trustworthiness.

Hovland et al. (1953) described trustworthiness as a prerequisite of credibility. This construed correlation, which served as the basis for much of credibility research, pointed toward a conflation of the concepts of trust and credibility at the historic roots of credibility research. Researchers repeatedly pointed out that Hovland et al.’s approach lacks a theoretical construct, which influenced subsequent credibility assessment models mentioned above (Kiousis, 2001; Kohring, 2004; Kohring & Matthes, 2007; Meier & Reimer, 2011). Kohring (2004) argued that the lack of a theoretical model and the inductive nature of most credibility research within communication and journalism indicate further limitations and the need for a clearer definition of trust within journalism studies. Similarly, a lack of research — necessary for the conceptualization of trust in the field of journalism — has also been pointed out (Coleman et al., 2012; Kohring & Matthes, 2007; Tsfati & Cappella, 2005).

In an increasingly interactive new media environment, the concept of trust in journalism not only needs to account for the interplay between news producers and news users but also should reflect the journalists’ enhanced role in an information-rich world, which is to filter relevant information and produce it for public consumption. Instead of relying on previous concepts that mix trust, trustworthiness, and credibility, this study draws to large extent on social science research, particularly from sociology and a proposed model of trust in journalism by Kohring (2004) and Kohring and Matthes (2007) to account for the conditions of the new media environment.

Kohring (2004) drew upon sociological theories by Simmel, Weber, Giddens, and Parsons. He pointed out that for communication and journalism studies, the element of selectivity has been neglected. Simmel (1950), who located trust somewhere between the dimension of knowing and not knowing, stressed the importance of selectivity when communicating social reality. Whatever we communicate "is a selection from that psychological-real whole whose absolutely exact report (absolutely exact in terms of content and sequence) would drive everybody into the insane asylum — if a paradoxical expression is permissible" (p. 312). Simmel explained this element of selectivity and trust penetrates modern societies:

> Our existence rests on a thousand premises which the single individual cannot trace and verify to their roots at all, but must take on faith. Our modern life is based to a much larger extent than is usually realized upon the faith in the honesty of the other. Examples are our economy, which becomes more and more a credit economy, or our science, in which most scholars must use innumerable results of other scientists, which they cannot examine. We base our gravest decisions on a complex system of conceptions, most of which presuppose the confidence that we will not be betrayed (p. 313).

Simmel (1950) suggested that trust is so essential in a modern world that a violation of trust or a lie "becomes something much more devastating than it was earlier, something which questions the very foundations of our life" (p. 313). Simmel pointed out that through the complexity of social life trust often takes on the form of dependency or reliance on symbolic systems of communication, social norms, technology, and so forth.

According to Weber (1964), money functions as a symbolic system for social relationships of exchange. Yet, Weber also contended that any social relationship includes an anticipated orientation to the expectations of all the social actors in a particular context. While Weber didn't use the word trust, he wrote that social actors "orient their action rationally to these expectations as given facts with, to be sure, varying degrees of subjectively 'loyal' intention of doing their part" (p. 120). In that respect, Weber saw that trust underlies symbolic mechanisms such as money. Parsons (1963) extended this argument, suggesting that symbolic systems such as power and money "depend on the institutionalization of attitudes of trust" (p. 47). Similarly, Giddens (1990) argued that "*the nature of modern institutions is deeply bound up with the mechanisms of trust in abstract systems*, especially trust in expert systems" (p. 83, italics in the original). Such abstract or expert systems replace interpersonal reliabilities that were common in less complex societies. That is, experts claim their competence through a communicative act (Luhman, 1979), which, as Simmel suggested, is in itself a selective process and requires not only trust in the act of communication but also in the presented claims of the expert system to indeed deliver what the experts promise.

Kohring (2004) understands that journalism is such an expert system, whose primary focus in decision-making is to select and filter topics, facts, sources, opinions etc. Journalism as an expert system has to rely on audiences' trust in the journalistic selection process. Kohring and Matthes (2007) defined trust in the following way:

> Social actor A selectively connects his or her own action with a certain action of social actor B under the condition of a perceived risk. The risk refers to the fact that A's action becomes impossible when B does not fulfill the trust expectation toward him or her (p. 238).

Thus, Kohring and Matthes (2007) concluded: "[W]hen people put their trust in news media, they take a certain risk. This is because journalists selectively choose some information over other information. Therefore, when trusting news media, people trust in specific selections" (p. 239). The researchers suggested that trust in the selection process becomes even more crucial when one considers that the new media is a significant information source "about social and political life" (p. 238). Journalism, then, can be regarded as an intermediary between citizens and other social actors. As such, as an intermediary, journalism creates news by selecting events of importance across multiple spheres of society, which in turn serve as an orientation for all social actors (Kohring, 2004).

Kohring and Matthes (2007) proposed a set of trust dimensions for journalism that focus predominantly on selection. Their research indicated that trust is a hierarchical latent factor of second order that consists of four first order factors: 1. trust in topic selectivity; 2. trust in fact selectivity; 3. trust in correctness of descriptions, and trust in journalistic assessment. Each of these first order factors is comprised of four variables (for a detailed list see table 5, chapter 7). Trust in the selectivity of topics refers to the trust in journalism to select topics for public discussion. This factor touches upon the frequency, continuity, and emphasis of a selected topic in contrast to other important events. Trust in the selection of facts provides contextualization of a selected news event and includes variety, comprehensiveness, and emphasis on selected information. Trust in the accuracy of depictions serves to empirically verify the factual information that has been selected for a given news story. Finally, trust in journalistic assessment evaluates journalistic commentary as a value based form of journalism by assessing the comprehensibility, usefulness, and appropriateness of comments. This multifactor concept of trust in journalism as professional selectivity serves as the main matrix for this dissertation to assess the impact of journalistic transparency on audiences' perceptions of trust concerning an online news item.

To summarize, trust in journalism is primarily a form of general trust in the selectivity of journalists (i.e. trust in a particular expert system), which is based on the cognitive evaluation of four factors (selectivity of topics, facts, descriptions and assessment). Nevertheless trust in the news requires a "leap" of faith or risk taking (making oneself vulnerable) in respect to the relevance, usefulness, comprehensiveness and correctness of news.

The following section discusses how transparency and trust as a concept of journalistic selectivity can be connected and why transparency can further illuminate and strengthen the trust factors discussed above. Then I discuss the overarching research questions of this dissertation.

3.7. Conclusion: Connecting Transparency and Trust in Journalism

Trust is closely linked to the availability of information. Simmel (1950) described trust as the stage between knowing and not knowing. Thus, he concluded that if all information about a particular issue is available, trust is not necessary; but if too little information is available, trust may be impossible. Many researchers stressed the importance of a cognitive assessment of available information in any trust relationship (Simmel, 1950; Parson, 1973; Lewis & Weigert, 1985; Luhmann, 1979; Coleman, 1990; Putnam, 1993). More information about another actor in a social relationship can help to come closer to seeing the "full picture." While getting all information may be improbable or unlikely, there is always more to know (Cotterell, 1999), and transparency may allow for this extra information to become available. Transparency, then, could reduce risk (and bolster trust) to a certain degree by providing more information to explain the process of journalism. Coleman et al. (2012) showed that audiences expressed distrust when "they were being told stories that were not adequately explained" (p. 42).

Singer (2007) suggested that transparency is a better way of truth telling. As journalists try to verify for their audiences that they are in fact providing an adequate representation of reality, they now also have to show the process. In the words of Kovach and Rosenstiel (2007): "If journalists are truth seekers, it must follow that they be honest and truthful with their audiences, too — that they be truth presenters" (p. 92). Transparency, then, is the key for modern day journalism to show the process, to be truth presenters, to explain facts, sources, possible biases, mistakes, and so on. When objectivity was considered the core value of journalism, accuracy and balance in reporting were central to gain audiences' trust. As journalism moves away from this positivistic notion of objectivity, it faces challenges to find a new way of verifying the truth. Kovach and Rosenstiel (2007) recommended transparency. "Most of the limitations journalists face in trying to move from accuracy to truth are addressed, if not overcome, by being honest about the nature of their knowledge, why they trust it, and what efforts they make to learn more" (p. 92).

Coleman et al. (2012) pointed out that "much of the existing literature tends to reduce the tricky issue of trust to the appreciably more straightforward issue of accuracy"

(p. 37). The researchers showed that in order for audiences to trust journalism, they expect more explanations and contextualization of issues and processes, rather than a focus on journalistic veracity based on accuracy. Audiences want to know more about the people behind a story, learn about the journalistic process, and also see journalists' track record. "To trust news is not only to believe that journalistic narrators are being honest and accurate about what can be witnessed in the present, but that they possess reputations for past veracity and can be expected to stay with the story wherever it might lead" (Coleman et al., 2012, p. 38).

Transparency, Kovach and Rosenstiel (2007) argued, is how citizens can "identify which journalism to trust" (p. 91). As transparency offers more information about journalism, it then also allows audiences to see more of the selection process that, as argued above, are central to trust in journalism. The idea of selectivity, I argue, also points toward journalistic decision-making processes such as why journalists selected certain topics, sources, and facts in the first place. What is required is that news organizations need "to be clear with audiences — clearer than in the past — about how news organizations operate" (p. 73). But transparency as an additional information source may also lead to a loss in trust when information about a journalist's possibly biased selectivity process becomes available to audiences or if too much information is disclosed leading to information overload (Smolkin, 2006; Wasserman, 2006; Craft & Heim, 2009).

Transparency as a means to more information and explanations about journalism could at least theoretically lead to higher trust evaluations. While very little evidence exists that transparency has effects on perceived credibility (Roberts, 2007; Karlsson et al., 2014) a single experiment in Germany showed that, using Kohring and Matthes' (2007) multifactor model of journalistic selectivity, transparency can lead to an increase of trust in the news media (Meier & Reimer, 2011). Testing such a correlation in the U.S. media context, I recognize that an experiment alone cannot account for the degree to which journalists and news organization have embraced this new culture of transparency in current day American journalism. Transparency needs first to be practiced by news organizations for audiences to recognize a new openness. Transparency also has to be promoted to become socially important and a standard within the journalistic institution.

The literature on transparency suggests that journalists still grapple with embracing the norm or concept of transparency in their daily work (Plaisance & Deppa, 2009; Hellmueller et al., 2013; Lasorsa, 2012; Chadha & Koliska, 2014). Research is still missing a larger scale examination of how journalists in leading national news organizations actually think of, conceptualize, and implement transparency in their daily work. Moreover, although Karlsson (2010) suggested that news organizations use "rituals of transparency" online, he explored only one newspaper each in the U.S., UK and Sweden. At this point Karlsson's study is the only known available study that explored to what degree news organizations use transparency features online.

This dissertation attempts to address these gaps in research to explore if transparency in journalism is indeed becoming important among leading U.S. news organizations and to what effect. I conduct interviews with journalists from 12 national news outlets, employ a content analysis of these news organizations websites, and conduct two experiments of audiences' trust perceptions to answer the following three research questions that have not been answered satisfactorily by the currently available empirical literature:

> RQ1: How do journalists at leading U.S. news media organizations conceptualize and implement transparency in their daily work?
>
> RQ2: Do news organizations in the United States utilize transparency features to explain to audiences to a certain degree how journalism is done? And if so, what kind of features are used and to what extent?
>
> RQ3: Does transparency online impact U.S. audiences' trust evaluations of a news story?

The following chapter explains the methodology to address each research question. Chapter 4 also details the hypotheses and one research question to experimentally explore the correlation of transparency and trust.

Chapter 4: Methodology

The normative literature has suggested that transparency will lead to a qualitatively better journalism (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007; Karlsson, 2010, 2011), while also fostering trust in journalism (Singer, 2007; Deuze, 2005; Allen, 2008; Plaisance, 2007). Moreover, not only scholars but also educational and professional organizations promote transparency as a core journalistic value (SPJ, 2014; McBride & Rosenstiel, 2014; RTDNA, 2015). However, beyond these positive expectations of transparency and recommendations to implement it, we still know very little about how journalists think about and practice transparency in their daily work; neither do we understand how news organizations implement transparency and whether transparency in current day journalism can indeed impact U.S. audiences' trust.

Understanding how transparency, as an institutional value, is communicated to the public is crucial, as transparency is increasingly considered a marker for quality journalism (Karlsson, 2011; Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007). In this respect, signaling transparency to audiences may be seen as a communicative act that includes the intentions and beliefs of a sender (journalists or news organizations), transmitted through a message (transparency information) to the receiver (audiences). While this dissertation considers the idea of communicating transparency as a marker of quality journalism to foster legitimacy in the journalistic profession, my primary focus is to examine how journalists grapple with the concept of transparency, news organizations implement transparency and news audiences may be affected by transparency. The exploration of these three aspects of transparency aligns with the three research questions:

1. How do journalists conceptualize and implement transparency in their daily work?
2. To what extent do news organizations use transparency features?
3. Does transparency online impact U.S. audiences' trust evaluations of a news story?

These three aspects taken together can be understood as the act of communicating transparency. In order to explore these three aspects of transparency, I use a mixed method approach because it seems most suitable for the purpose of discovery of a fairly underexplored subject (Creswell, 2003). Moreover, triangulating the data can overcome some of the limitations of purely qualitative or quantitative studies (Jick, 1979) by putting the findings from each specific method into a larger context.

In this chapter, I detail my methodological approach step by step. In section *4.1.,* I explain the rationale for using a mixed method approach and the chosen sequence of investigation (qualitative followed by quantitative) in greater detail. Then, starting from section *4.2.,* I describe the specific methods used in this study (interviews, content analysis, experiments). I first describe the rationale and the use of semi-structured in-depth interviews. In section *4.3.*, I provide a rationale and description of the explorative content analysis of national news outlets websites to determine transparency practices on the news item level. The content analysis also informed the design of the experiment to test whether transparency affects news audiences' trust perceptions. In section *4.4.,* I outline the experiment design, including the rationale for the proposed hypotheses and the selection of the sample population, the materials, the procedure, and the measurements of the experiment. In section *4.5.,* I briefly summarize the mixed method approach and point to some limitations of this methodology.

4.1. A Mixed Method Approach

In order to maximize the external validity of this dissertation, the empirical data were gathered in three stages through a mixed method approach. This study employs a mixed method approach not to simply corroborate or triangulate the veracity of qualitative and quantitative data sets but for the purpose of development (Greene, Caracelli, & Graham, 1989; Guba & Lincoln, 2005). This approach builds on the results from each step to develop the method and instruments of the subsequent stage. With this goal in mind, I used the sequential exploratory method (Creswell, 2009) to investigate how journalists conceptualize and implement transparency in their daily work, to what extent news organizations use transparency features online, and how these features of transparency may effect audiences' trust evaluations. For this purpose I collected first qualitative and then quantitative data to interpret three different data sets (interviews, content analysis, experiment) sequentially. In a final step I analyzed the data sets as a whole. Creswell argues that this approach is ideal for testing elements of an emerging phenomenon and theory. Thus, the sequential exploratory method appears to be the most sensible approach, as the goal of this study is to test the theoretical and normative assumptions of the emerging phenomenon of transparency in journalism. Moreover, the sequential exploratory method allows for a thorough explication of the concept of transparency that is based on empirical observations rather than normative ideals.

Creswell (2007, 2009) argued that complex problems require a complex methodological approach. Stake (2005) saw practical value in the combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches, especially when investigating case studies. He suggested that the behavior of subgroups or individuals examined through the use of qualitative tools can assist in the interpretation of outliers within a statistical data analysis. Miller and Crabtree (2005) agreed that a single quantitative or qualitative approach may be too limiting. Their work within clinical research highlights the integration of qualitative methods within a field that is largely dominated by quantitative research. The introduction of a hybrid approach, Miller and Crabtree argued, opens up spaces and language that give a better understanding of people's experiences. Transparency unfolds as a complex issue because it is arguably an ethical principle and a means to an end (i.e. increasing trust among audiences by providing additional information about the journalistic work process and thus decreasing uncertainty and risk).

Transparency as an ethical principle in journalism cannot simply be assessed through an examination of the current use of transparency features that provide information about the journalistic process (see section *4.3*). A qualitative approach may be best to evaluate the intentions of the message sender (journalists or news organizations) in order to gauge if transparency is indeed a guiding (ethical) principle or possibly a strategy.

Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) wrote of an iterative sequential design that uses qualitative and quantitative data to explore new phenomena. Using two different methods and three strands of data allows for an adjustment in methodology "when important, but unexpected, events" occur (p. 164). Bryman's (2006) meta-analysis of over 200 mixed method studies suggested that mixed approaches increase the potential of sometimes-unanticipated outcomes. Exploring the complexity of transparency in journalism aims at the discovery of such unknown, unexpected, or not anticipated elements of transparency that the literature has currently overlooked. As such, the mixed method approach is the ideal instrument to examine journalistic transparency.

The flexibility of sequential exploratory research design also allows making adjustments during the process of discovery, which is especially crucial considering that to this date very little available empirical data — qualitative or quantitative — exists (Karlsson, 2010, 2011, 2014; Meier & Reimer, 2011). In other words, predictions or hypotheses about how journalists conceptualize transparency, news organizations implement transparency and to what effect can be speculative at best. In particular, only three known studies have tested transparency finding either no or small effects (Roberts, 2007; Karlsson et al., 2014; Meier & Reimer, 2011). The outcomes of these three studies make it difficult to confidently predict that transparency will indeed influence audiences' trust evaluations as cultural settings could have also influenced the results.

In the following sections I detail each part of this mixed method approach by providing the rationale, description and explanation of the use of each method — first, interviews, second, content analysis and third, experiment.

4.2. Interviews

In the first phase of the data collection, I conducted semi-structured interviews with reporters and editors of 12 national news outlets: *CNN*, *Fox News*, *NBC*, *ABC*, *CBS*, *NPR*, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Chicago Tribune, The Wall Street Journal,* and *USA Today*. These news organizations were selected because they are generally considered major U.S. news organizations and as industry leaders may have a significant impact on the adoption of new institutional standards and practices.

Moreover, The Pew Research Center For The People and The Press indicated that 9 of these 12 organizations suffered a decline in credibility ratings (Pew, 2012). These companies may be more inclined to implement transparency to regain lost credibility and trust.

The interviews with members of the 12 news organizations are important to map how and if professional journalists conceptualize, value, and implement transparency in their daily work. Moreover, interviews can unearth journalists' rationales regarding why transparency may or may not be important to their work. At the same time the interviews may help to uncover the intentions of the various news organizations to implement transparency (i.e. to what specific end).

Interviews are considered instruments of meaning making or a construction of individualized experience (Gubrium & Holstein, 2002) that go beyond attitude assessments of a survey (Merton, Lowenthal & Kendall, 1990). Interviews as descriptive knowledge creators (Benz & Newman, 2008) can shed more light on daily routines and can also go deeper to record sentiments and cognitive ideas (Merton et al., 1990). Moreover, in-depth interviews can serve as an exploratory tool (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005) to report as complete as possible the experience and the definition of particular situations or meanings (Merton et al., 1990).

Transparency is a relatively new value to journalism and, as such, may not be widely accepted or integrated into daily newsroom activities. But according to Strang and Meyer (1993) an indicator that a new value and practice within an institution has been accepted is if institutional members are theoretically thinking about and possibly discussing this new idea. Interviews can tease out if such theoretical thinking in fact takes place, especially if transparency is not necessarily widely practiced within a particular newsroom. Benz and Newman (2008) also argued that in-depth interviews enhance the validity of mixed method research by moving beyond possible preconceptions of a problem that has predominantly been informed through the literature. In the case of transparency in journalism, the bulk of the literature available is normative by nature and as such, interviews may be able to uncover new ground than surveys or experiments alone.

In order to identify journalists at the 12 national news outlets, I employed a non-probabilistic model and a purposive sample, using snowball sampling. Holstein and Gubrium (1995) explained that a purposive sampling of interview participants can be theoretically justified because the interview methodology is based on the selection of specific individuals (who share and have experiences in the particular subject of study) over an abstract and representative sample of the population.

I emailed a brief description of my dissertation project to several journalists working in newsrooms of the 12 news outlets, asking them if they might be willing to be interviewed and if they could possibly suggest names of colleagues not only within their own workplaces but also at other news outlets who might be willing to participate in the project. During the recruitment process I offered every study participant anonymity. I decided to keep any identifying information confidential to provide participants with a safe space that would allow them to speak openly to me about transparency in their newsrooms. Moreover, I believed that superiors would disapprove of journalists talking to outsiders about work and newsroom activities, which could lead to serious repercussions for the journalists. In two cases this belief proved correct: two journalists who initially agreed to be interviewed decided to drop out of the study after consulting with their newsroom managers. In several cases, journalists also said that their news outlets do not easily permit them to talk with researchers on or off the record.

Overall the recruiting of journalists proved rather difficult and time intensive. Scheduled interviews had to be postponed because of journalists' frequently changing work schedules. Again, some journalists were initially interested in the project but either were too busy or felt unequipped to talk about transparency. As a result, I ran into several dead ends and had to restart recruiting journalists.

Eventually 27 journalists were interviewed. Kvale (1996) suggested that 15 ± 10 participants are required for an interview study that explores possible attitudes and specific behaviors within a context. This number of interviews, he argued, would allow research to go beyond anecdotal evidence and instead would lead to a detailed representation of "the relationship between an individual and the situation" (p. 103). Initially, I had anticipated interviewing two journalists from each news outlet but in two cases, *The Los Angeles Times* and *Chicago Tribune*, I was only able to interview one journalist each. In contrast, I interviewed three journalists each from *CNN, NPR, NBC News, CBS News,* and *Fox News* and two journalists from *The New York Times, The Washington Post, The Wall Street Journal, USA Today*, and *ABC News*. Overall the total number of 27 interviews appeared sufficient, as similar themes emerged and no substantially new findings emerged after conducting about 18 interviews.

Two researchers conducted the first 13 interviews of journalists at six news outlets (*The New York Times, The Washington Post, The Wall Street Journal, Los Angeles Times, CNN, and NPR*). This first wave of interviews followed the same procedures and included the same questions for all 27 interviews. The findings of the first interviews were also part of a published study that looked at the strategic implementation of transparency (Chadha & Koliska, 2014).

The group of journalists that participated in my research included veteran journalists with 20 to 55 years of newsroom experience and younger journalists with 7 to 15 years of experience. I interviewed the journalists mostly via phone either at their work place or at home. In three cases I was able to interview journalists face to face. I recorded each interview, which lasted between 26 to 54 minutes.

In the semi-structured interviews I asked participants how they define the concept of transparency and how they conceive and conceptualize transparency in their journalistic work, with news audiences in mind. I also probed journalists about how important the concept may be for their organization and why they think transparency is implemented by their organization. I also explored to what extent journalists view transparency as a new norm by asking them to describe their work and if they implemented different forms of transparency – production or producer transparency – such as hyperlinking, commenting, editorial explanations, audience engagement via social media, staff bios, and more. Moreover, I posed questions concerning the theoretical thinking about transparency within newsrooms and the frequency of discussions among colleagues. Toward the end of the interviews, I asked participants to give me names of other journalists whom I could possibly contact for this study.

Each recorded interview was transcribed and then analyzed using grounded theory and open, axial, and selective coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). I used open coding to analyze each transcript paragraph by paragraph to identify recurring ideas and categories.

In the next stage, I classified the ideas and categories to determine how they were reflected in all transcripts. In a last step, I considered the interviews collectively to uncover thematic patterns, which allowed for the emergence of previously unexpected findings.

4.3. Content Analysis

The second phase of data gathering consisted of an exploratory content analysis of online news items (webpages) of the 12 news media outlets mentioned above. This step is important to juxtapose the answers and institutional rationales of the participating journalists to the transparency practices of their respected news organization.

A content analysis is mainly a quantitative device to describe and categorize communication messages, which is predominantly qualitative information (Holsti, 1969; Bereleson, 1971; Krippendorf, 1980). The use of content analysis makes sense, as it allows for a discovery of "the nature of messages" (Merrigan & Huston, 2009, p. 148) by cataloging transparency types and categorizing the frequency and systematic use of transparency features by news organizations. Recording and categorizing the frequencies of transparency features allows an examination of usage patterns (Babbie, 1999) at particular news organizations, which may allow the extrapolation of the spread of transparency across leading U.S. news companies and within the institution of journalism in the United States. As such, a content analysis can estimate if transparency has become an integral element in news reporting. Moreover, Rogers (1994) suggested the frequency and use of certain communication devices (transparency features) could inform possible effects of the message content (transparency information).

A content analysis primarily serves to develop an understanding of the manifestation of meanings (i.e. the apparent content of a message or communication device) (Stempel, Weaver, & Wilhoit, 2003). Such an understanding is achieved on the basis of the systematic and objective observations and the frequencies of occurrences gathered in the content analysis. While these “manifest” meanings (disclosure of the journalistic process) are cataloged and categorized, textual data also allows an evaluation of latent meanings (Merton, 1968) of a communication device that lie “below the threshold of superficial observation” (p. 116). Content analysis can then be used to gauge intentions (Vergne, 2012), for instance whether a news organization is attempting to open up about how journalism is done.

Scholars have pointed out that studying journalistic online content comes with certain challenges, in particular, the lack of commonly accepted methodologies (Karlsson, 2010; Shoemaker & Vos, 2009). While websites can be considered a text (Fairclough, 2004) as well as a product of human practice (Potter & Hepburn, 2008), the analysis of websites can be particularly difficult given the large body of different messages (Stroud & de Macedo Higgins, 2009). In this study, I will follow Karlsson (2010) and DiStaso and Bortree (2012) and define transparency features as communication messages that give access to or disclose information about the journalistic production process because these practices can be considered an expression of institutional norms.

On the one hand the content analysis is the basis to catalogue current “transparency features” that news organizations use to disclose elements of the journalistic process. This step is vital to distinguish between two different forms of transparency in journalism that I described earlier as production and producer transparency (see chapter 2). On the other hand the transparency taxonomy also becomes a reference point to analyze and explain (Merrigan & Huston, 2009) journalists' perceptions about their news outlet's transparency efforts that have been recorded during the interviews.

The underlying rationale for using a content analysis is that this approach allows the examination of the normative literature's assumption concerning an increased opening up in today's journalism. In other words, if transparency practices have become a norm or a "ritual" (Karlsson, 2010), several transparency features should be consistent, to a degree, across leading U.S. national news outlets.

The starting point for this explorative content analysis has been provided by Karlsson's (2010) study that suggested the existence of a "transparency ritual" in journalism after analyzing online news stories at *The Guardian* (UK), *The New York Times* (US) and the *Dagens Nyheter* (Sweden). Karlsson's classification is supplemented with Meier and Reimer's (2011) theoretical proposition of transparency features within the German news media context. Based on the previous studies, current transparency features include:

1. Time stamps (including various details)
2. Changes or updates
3. Corrections (with and without explanations)
4. Links (external to original documents and internal to other news stories)
5. Contacts (email, social media)
6. Comments (user comments below, social media)
7. Reader participation/ collaboration (published and wanted)
8. Journalistic profiles (photo and bio)

9. Reporter blogs/ chats
10. Polls
11. Editorial comments
12. Publically accessible code of ethics
13. Additional background information (videos, extended interviews, etc.)

The listed non-exclusive features (above) were used as a reference point for identification and exploration of online transparency efforts at the various news outlets.

For the purpose of the content analysis a sample of 12 news stories a day from each of the 12 news outlets were collected. Over the period of a full week (Monday to Sunday) in January 2015, I used screen grabs (manually) to gather six stories from each outlet at 10 a.m. EST, and six more stories at 6 p.m. EST. Finally, 84 stories were collected from each news outlet, resulting in a total of 1,008 news stories from all 12 news organizations. After three weeks, the same news items were revisited and screenshots were taken and downloaded using software. This step was necessary to discover if the collected news stories were updated or had to be corrected at the various webpages.

The webpages were scrutinized for transparency features, which were categorized according to type and their frequency of use by the various news organizations. After a general classification of transparency features, more detailed patterns emerged as anticipated. Transparency features were thus further categorized under two main transparency types: a. production transparency (information about journalistic work process) and b. producer transparency (information about journalists).

The classification into production and producer transparency and the currently available literature on transparency in journalism both informed the next and final step of the exploratory sequential mixed method approach — the experiment.

4.4. Experiments

The online experiment was designed to explore the relationship between transparency and news audiences' trust in journalism by advancing a nuanced and empirically based understanding of the effects and possible role of transparency within journalism as a means to generate trust. For this purpose, two experiments were developed. The first experiment measured the effects of transparency features on trust and the second experiment explored whether audiences do, in fact, recognize disclosure practices as a gesture by journalists and news organizations to open up or lift the curtain into their inner sanctum of news production.

The three currently known studies testing a relationship between transparency and credibility (Roberts, 2007; Karlsson et al., 2014) as well as trust (Meier & Reimer, 2011) showed either no or (in the case of trust) little significance. These studies may indicate that audiences do not recognize transparency features as an honest attempt by journalists and news organizations to open up. Hence, in the second experiment, this dissertation explores to what degree audiences may recognize and value disclosure practices by news organizations.

While Roberts (2007) and Karlsson et al. (2014) based their research on long-established credibility research and credibility dimensions (Hovland et al., 1953; Gaziano & McGrath, 1986; Flanagin & Metzger, 2000), Meier and Reimer's (2011) study utilized a version of Kohring and Matthes (2007) trust multifactor model of journalistic selectivity. This study followed Meier and Reimer's (2011) approach because the researchers were able to find a relationship between transparency and trust among German news media audiences. As this dissertation also draws on the notion of journalistic selectivity, it will not simply replicate Meier and Reimer's (2011) research in the U.S. media context. Instead, this dissertation will draw on two different dimensions of transparency, namely production (information about how journalism is done) and producer (information about the author behind a story) transparency.

Meier and Reimer differentiated between editorial and news item or product transparency. Alternatively, I argue that the increasingly higher visibility and presentation of the producer or journalists in digital news media environments highlights the notion of subjectivization of news production (Schudson, 1978); thus, more information about the producer may be vital to gauge trust. Online news media platforms generally provide journalists a public profile and greater visibility than traditional news media platforms, which could lead to an increased judgment of journalists' performance by audiences based on their perceived personalities (Meyrowitz, 1985).

As the first experiment primarily investigates whether transparency can generate trust, this study also expands the empirical examination of the theoretical conceptualization of trust in journalism selectivity (Kohring, 2004; Kohring & Matthes, 2007).

In the next pages I detail first, in section *4.4.1.*, the hypotheses that guide the first experiment and the research question that informs the second experiment. Then, I briefly describe the experiment design (section *4.4.2.*), followed by a longer discussion of the participant sample in order to explain the use of Amazon's Mechanical Turk as participant recruiting platform of this experiment (section *4.4.3.*). In the next sections, I delineate the stimulus materials (section *4.4.4.*), describe the experiment procedures that participants had to go through (section *4.4.5.*), explain the varied measures (section *4.4.6*) and discuss the limitations for both online experiments.

4.4.1. Hypotheses

The experiment part of this dissertation consists of two experiments that followed the same methodology (with different posttest questionnaires) but measured different outcomes. The first experiment was set up to see whether various levels of transparency on a news item level online would affect audiences' trust evaluations. The second experiment explored whether news audiences would recognize transparency features.. This second experiment was employed to more closely analyze or explain the outcomes of the first experiment.

The main idea behind the concept of trust in journalism is based on the notion that trust reduces uncertainty and thus compensates for the lack of information. In that respect, trust is tied to the knowledge one might have about a certain issue. Simmel (1950) described trust as a state between knowing and not knowing. Without having full information, every interaction with others is, therefore, attached with a certain risk that some expectations will not be fulfilled by another interactant. "[T]rust enables people to compensate for the risk of giving up control to someone else" (Kohring & Matthes, 2007, p. 238).

As trust is linked to the availability of information, transparency can be understood as a means to provide additional information that can reduce some of the perceived risk and strengthen confidence to actually trust another social actor. According to Kollock (1994), if the risk is perceived as too big, trust may be impossible. Thus, providing additional information about the journalistic process may trigger a “cognitive leap,” as Lewis and Weigert (1985) put it, in order for audiences to trust journalism.

Transparency can provide additional information and give context about the journalistic process that could strengthen trust by simultaneously lowering uncertainty about how journalists do their work. Kohring’s and Matthes’s (2007) multifactor model of trust in journalism stresses journalistic processes in the assessment of trust. In particular, one of journalists’ core activities is that the selection of information is central to trust evaluations. As detailed above (see *chapter 3* on Trust), the researchers described trust in journalism (see Kohring & Matthes, 2007, p. 239-241) as:

1. Trust in selectivity of topics: Audiences trust that journalism as a whole and news organizations in particular select and report on relevant topics.
2. Trust in selectivity of facts: Audiences trust that journalism will select and present the relevant facts.
3. Trust in accuracy of depictions: Audiences trust that journalism will describe facts in a verifiable and accurate way. This includes that journalistic accuracy can also be verified.
4. Trust in journalistic assessments: Audiences trust in journalistic forms of assessments, advice, and appeals for actions such as through the use of commentary.

Based on Kohring's and Matthes's (2007) multifactor model of trust, which also served Meier and Reimer (2011) as a matrix to test transparency effects on trust perceptions in Germany, I propose the following hypotheses:

H1: A production transparency news item will be trusted more than a non-transparent article.

H2: A producer transparency news item will be trusted more than a non-transparent article.

H3: A full transparency news item will be trusted more than a non-transparent article.

H4: A full transparency news item will be trusted more than a production transparency article.

H5: A full transparency news item will be trusted more than a producer transparency article.

H6: A full transparency news item will be trusted more than a full transparent article that includes biased information about the producer.

H7: A producer transparency news item with neutral personal information will be trusted more than a producer transparency article with biased information.

H6 and H7 are based on the idea that disclosing information about a journalist who describes his or her past and political convictions as possibly biased toward the news content will negatively affect the trust evaluation of the news item. Hellmueller et al. (2013) showed that traditional journalistic values such as independence and neutrality are still strong in the U.S. news media. Transparency that undermines these values and thus the professional integrity of journalists could consequently trigger negative trust assessments.

As previous experiments could either not find transparency effects (Karlsson et al., 2014; Roberts, 2007) or found weak correlations (Meier & Reimer, 2011) I suggest that audiences may not recognize or pick up on the function of transparency features to disclose information about the journalistic process. In order to gauge if online users can, in fact, distinguish between stories with various degrees of transparency, an additional experiment was conducted to measure if users recognize transparency features in the first place. Thus, the second experiment explores whether news audiences are able to differentiate between the publication of additional information (that discloses information about the journalistic work) and the news content. Currently, no previously known research has tested whether audiences recognize transparency features in the first place; additionally, I am not aware of a specific theoretical concept that provides guidance to measure transparency itself. Thus, I will explore this issue guided by the following research question:

> RQ: How do features like hyperlinks, editorial comments, journalist's bio etc. (information about the journalistic process) affect reader's perceptions of transparency (i.e. will audiences recognize these features)?

4.4.2. Experiment Design

In order to gauge transparency effects on trust and if audiences recognize transparency features, I employed two web-based experiments. Experimental studies online allow for fast and efficient data collection (Flanagin & Metzger, 2007) and have been considered of "high ecological value" (Karlsson et al., 2014). I used a between-subjects design with respondents being randomly assigned by an algorithm to the various treatments. The first experiment, measuring trust perceptions, is comprised of six different conditions including a control group. The second experiment, exploring transparency recognition, consisted of five conditions, including a control group.

4.4.3. Sample

Participants for this study (both experiments) were recruited using Amazon's Mechanical Turk (AMT), which is a crowdsourcing online labor platform that was intended for small and discrete tasks for micro payments starting at $0.01. On AMT requesters post jobs and workers choose which jobs or HITs (Human Intelligence Tasks) they do for a certain fee. AMT is a closed platform, as it only allows registered users to access HITs as workers or post HITs as requesters.

In the recent past, AMT has been increasingly used for research studies across different fields and the platform's validity for research has been demonstrated (Buhrmester, Kwang & Gosling, 2011; Paolacci, Chandler, & Ipeirotis, 2010). Mason and Suri (2012) described AMT as "one of the largest subject pools" for behavior research (p. 1).

Buhrmester et al. (2011) tested the quality of the data of AMT participants and concluded that AMT workers were demographically more diverse than standard internet samples and significantly more diverse than samples drawn from American colleges. At the same time, the researchers found that compensation rate and the length of an HIT can impact participation. However, the data obtained on AMT are at least as reliable as traditional methods. Paolacci et al. (2010) came to similar conclusions after comparing data from AMT with college students and internet board samples. They wrote, "[E]xperimenters should consider Mechanical Turk as a viable alternative for data collection. Workers in Mechanical Turk exhibit the classic heuristics and biases and pay attention to directions at least as much as subjects from traditional sources" (p. 417). Yet, Ross, Zaldivar, Irani and Tomlinson (2010) contended that even though AMT workers are demographically diverse across dimensions such as age, gender, and income, their education level and nationalities do not fully reflect a representative sample of the U.S. population. Overall, the previous research regarding data quality collected through AMT has suggested that recruiting participants through this online crowdsourcing platform is viable, particularly for testing online content.

Participants in both experiments were recruited through a task that indicated that they have to read a news article, carefully examine a website, and then take a brief survey. Each participant was offered $0.75. The average speed of the task would have resulted in an hourly pay of about $5.00. Even though Harris (2011) suggested that crowdsourcing participants on AMT are encouraged through financial incentives to make more accurate judgments, there is no gold standard. In fact, Shaw, Horton, and Chen (2011) pointed out that to obtain better performance on an AMT task, framing may be more important than financial incentives. Mason and Watts (2010) found that while "increased financial incentives increase the quantity," it did not improve the quality of the work (p. 100). The researchers showed that participants in lower pay conditions were at least as accurate as in the higher pay conditions. Moreover, Alsono, Rose, and Stewart (2008) suggested that despite varying individual performances, the high number of participants that can be recruited on AMT can "eliminate the noise" (p. 14). At the same time, AMT allows requesters to evaluate the quality of each workers contribution. Such evaluations influence the performance ratings of individual workers, which can directly impact worker's qualification for future HITs and future earnings. Requester evaluations thus serve as another incentive for AMT workers to perform tasks to a high standard.

To a degree, AMT allows filtering and selecting suitable participants for a specific task. In order to recruit workers who have proven reliable in the past, AMT filter settings were used to only allow workers located in the United States, with an approval rating of 98% over the course of at least 1,000 HITs. In other words, only participants that have proven that their work on AMT was 98% satisfactory over the past 1,000 tasks were able to see and participate in this study. This research study was comprised of one task or one HIT.

A total of 1,092 participants took part in the first experiment; the second experiment included 379 participants. The high number of participants in the first experiment was sought deliberately after the closer examination of previous studies that averaged 63 participants or less per web-based condition and showed no or small effects (Karlsson, et al., 2014; Meier & Reimer, 2011). Indeed, to be able to measure effects and to improve power (i.e. to correctly reject the null hypothesis and to decrease chances of Type II error), this study aimed for about 160 participants per condition. After removing all participants who did not complete the experiment and further cleaning the data from possibly automatically generated responses, 1,021 participants (56% men, 44% women; mean age 37) remained for the first experiment and 304 participants (57% men, 41% women, 1% other; mean age 37) remained for the second experiment. The participants in both experiments were ethnically diverse and in parts similar to U.S. census numbers[3] (2013) with 77% white (76% in second experiment), 7% African American (9%),

[3] U.S. Census Ethnic Demographic as of 2013: White – 77.7, African American -13.2%, American India - 1.2%, Asian 5.3%, Hispanic - 17.1%.

Hispanic or Latino 5% (7%), 7% Asian (9%) and Native American Indian, including other 2% (1%).

Participants were able to take part once in either experiment. That is, if someone took part in the first experiment he or she could not take part in the second experiment. Each participant's worker ID was automatically registered. Using an AMT filter enabled me to block anyone from participating a second time.

4.4.4. Materials

All webpages used in the experiment contained an identical news story that addressed the potentially harmful effects of nanoparticles in everyday life (see Appendix A). Following the suggestion of Meier and Reimer (2011) and Roberts (2007), the story was selected to provide a widely relevant topic for audiences that, at the same time, would be relatively unknown to most participants. This step can avoid possible partisan opinions influencing trust perceptions. The issue of nanotechnology and nanomaterials was chosen because its controversial nature generates a wide range of opinions. Nanomaterials are widely used, including by the food industry, cosmetics, water purification, and mobile technologies. Despite this wide use, news coverage regarding the topic appears limited.

Opinions regarding nanotechnology range from the belief that they are extremely dangerous materials that could cause diseases if they enter our bodies, to the idea that they are absolutely harmless. The article used in this study included this range of opinions, yet presented the various viewpoints in a balanced way. Moreover, the story provided background information to explain the possible dangers of nanotechnologies and the widespread presence of nanomaterials in everyday life. The article showed that despite an ongoing controversy concerning nanomaterials, only one study out of more than 6,000 in the past decade was able to prove possible hazardous effects of nanomaterials.

A journalist for 12 years, I wrote the news story. The main issue raised in the story, concerning evidence of the alleged dangers of nanotechnology, was based on an article that appeared in Slate (Maynard, 2014). The article was written with journalistic values such a balance and neutrality in mind. I included an equal number of sources and experts representing opposite ends of the opinion spectrum. The article was then vetted by 12 professional journalists for its journalistic standards and also to ensure that the topic was not widely known. The journalists examined the article for an accurate and balanced portrayal of the issue. After receiving feedback, the article was slightly altered to facilitate a clearer understanding for common audiences. The news professionals also indicated that the topic of nanotechnology is not frequently covered by news organizations.

The article was placed on a website that was designed and programmed for this study. The website was not fully functional (sub menus pointing to other parts or news categories of the website were disabled) but every hyperlink that was displayed (depending on which of the five or six overall available webpages were displayed) allowed participants to access original documents or learn more about the journalist by accessing his work history or to read an entire editorial article about the decisions and processes that went into the production of this news article.

A webpage layout was chosen that did not allow for an identification of the news outlet to avoid possible trust effects triggered by a particular brand (see Appendix A for the screen shots of different webpages). The article was then embedded into six different webpages (five in the second experiment) that looked identical with respect to the general website and text layout, but differed in the display of various transparency features.

As this dissertation seeks to expand the understanding of transparency in journalism, two webpages (version 4 and 6) also explored how “too much” transparency (i.e. detailing biases and political affiliation of a journalist) may impact trust evaluation. For a detailed list of implemented webpages including the different transparency features used, see *Table 1* below.

Table 1 - Transparency features (production and producer transparency)

Transparency version	**Transparency Features**	**Experiment trust N=1021**	**Experiment transparency N=304**
1. No-transparency	- no transparency features - simple text that included standard sourcing information	N=166	N=58
2. Production transparency	Like version 1 but included: - hyperlinks to original documents - corrections plus explanations - editorial information - comments - time stamps, updates - call for audience participation	N=178	N=62
3. Producer transparency	Like version 1 but included: - byline - email contact of journalist - social media contacts of journalist - photo of journalist - short bio of journalist	N=166	N=64

4. Full transparency	- all elements of production transparency (version 2) - all elements of producer transparency (version 3)	N=168	N=60
5. Full transparency (negative producer image)	Like version 5 but included: - the biased producer information (version 4)	N=170	N=60
6. Producer transparency (negative)	Like version 3 but included: - short bio that was biased toward the article content and included political affiliation	N=173	

4.4.5. Procedure

The participants were invited on AMT to take part in an academic study of quality in journalism. The task description on AMT informed participants that they should first read a news article and then fill out a subsequent survey (for details of those instructions see Appendix A). Once participants accepted the HIT they had access to the URL that directed them to the webpage containing the news article described above. An algorithm randomly assigned each participant to one of the six (or five) versions of the webpage. Each participant could see only one webpage. While webpages were being displayed randomly, they rotated sequentially to direct approximately equal numbers of participants to each condition. Before participants could read the article, another set of instructions were displayed. The directions stressed to participants the importance of carefully reading the article and then evaluating the webpage content in the subsequent survey (for the instructions see Appendix B).

After participants perused the website and read the article about the potential dangers of nanotechnologies, they were instructed to click on a highly visible link at the bottom of each webpage. Upon clicking the link, participants were directed to an online questionnaire. Once participants proceeded to the survey they could not go back to the website. This step was done to guarantee that participants were exposed only once to a specific condition, as the aim of the experiments was to measure not only audiences' perceptions (first experiment) but also whether they paid attention and recognized and recalled transparency features (second experiment). In order to prevent participants from revisiting the site, a cookie was automatically placed in each participant's web browser. Thus, if a participant attempted to go back to the website they were immediately re-directed to the questionnaire.

AMT workers, in general, are concerned about their performance because a requester evaluates their HITs (Paolacci et al., 2010). A negative assessment and evaluation can lead to restrictions of workers' qualification for future HITs and to not receiving payment for their current task. While these circumstances may motivate workers to be thorough, this system of worker evaluation can also lead to workers using "shortcuts." In order to ensure that AMT workers did not fear a negative evaluation for possibly posting "incorrect answers," instructions prior to the survey explicitly emphasized that the correctness of participants answers will not be evaluated to encourage participants to answer honestly and to discourage the use of screen grabs.

4.4.6. Measures

As described above, the goal of the first experiment is to measure trust in journalism. Instead of relying on previously developed and widely used trust scales in the social sciences (Yamagishi, 1986, 1988; Rotter, 1967), which are not specific to trust in journalism, this study employs Kohring and Matthes' (2007) multifactorial trust scale for the assessment of a single news item. As audiences were presented only one topic, I excluded the dimension of trust in the selectivity of topics as proposed by Meier and Reimer (2011). After participants were exposed to the various transparency versions (see *Table 1*) they were to rate — on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) — to what degree they concur with the statements listed in *Table 2* (see below). The statements were randomized for each participant to avoid order effects.

Table 2 - Multidimensional factors for the assessment of trust in journalism (Kohring & Matthes, 2007)

Trust dimensions:	Trust factor items:
Trust in selectivity of facts (F_1)	1. The essential points are included 2. The focus of the article is on important facts 3. All important information regarding the topic is provided. 4. The reporting includes different points of view.
Trust in accuracy of depictions (F_2)	5. The information in the article would be verifiable if examined. 6. The reported information is true. 7. I think the article recounts the facts truthfully. 8. The facts that I received regarding the topic are correct.
Trust in journalistic assessment (F_3)	9. When criticism is expressed, it is done in an adequate and well-founded manner. 10. The journalist's assessments regarding the topic are useful. 11. The journalist's evaluations of the topic are well founded.

Survey participants were also asked how closely they read the article to establish how thoroughly they processed the information at the website. This question contained an explicit note that participants' truthful assessment was important and that answering honestly would not bear any negative repercussions. Participants were also asked to rate to what degree (on a five-range Likert scale) they trusted the author (journalist) of the article and to what degree they thought the news article was transparent, which was defined as providing information about the journalistic process. Moreover, a range of demographic information about each participant was collected including age, education, occupation, gender, etc. In order to gauge the familiarity with the news media, participants' frequency of news consumption was also surveyed.

The second experiment, as stated above, explored the question of whether users or audiences recognize transparency features and if they are also able to distinguish between levels of disclosure. Overall, the second experiment's procedures were similar to the first experiment; the difference was that the second experiment employed a different posttest questionnaire and that only five transparency conditions (see *Table 1*) were tested.

The posttest questionnaire of the second experiment included the same demographic questions as in the first experiment. However, participants were primarily asked to evaluate, on a five-point scale (not transparent to very transparent) how transparent they thought the news story they just read was (see Appendix B for the entire questionnaire). The definition of transparency as information about the journalistic process was provided. The second experiment was also used to explore what audiences thought news media organizations and journalists should be transparent about.

Moreover, the survey tested predominantly if participants were able to recognize and remember whether the website version they saw had various transparency features such as hyperlinks, corrections, time stamps, and so forth. Additionally, this included a test to find out if participants were able to identify the journalist displayed on the website (version 3, 4, 5, 6) through a different photograph. These questions aimed to explore whether audiences pay any attention to such transparency features or whether these features become indistinguishable parts of the text and fade to the background. In other words, research in this area has to establish if news audiences are able to differentiate between the publication of additional information (transparency features) and the news content. At least theoretically, audiences should be able to recognize or distinguish transparency elements from the text. Otherwise, I argue, audiences may not be able to identify these features as a meaningful communicative gesture (Goffman, 1967, 1974) that signals an opening up by journalists and news organizations. Transparency as a communicative device needs to be understood, then, as an act or gesture of disclosure. Without recognizing this intention, a failure in communication may occur, preventing an increase of trust.

4.5. Limitations

This study has limitations. While I attempted to draw a picture of how journalists at major U.S. news organizations think about transparency and show how news organizations implement transparency features, this research cannot claim to fully represent all U.S. journalists and news organizations concerning their conceptualizations and implementation of transparency online. Furthermore, this study did not test the effects of transparency on a fully representative sample of U.S. news audiences.

While I interviewed journalists at 12 major national news outlets, this sample neither reflects journalistic practices in the majority of news organizations (mostly regional or local news organizations) across the United States, nor does it provide information to derive conclusions about practices within emerging news organizations such a VICE Media or Vox Media that operate fully online. Moreover, as transparency is a relatively new value within journalism, the gathered interview data has to be contextualized within the paradigmatic shift that U.S. journalism is still experiencing (Elliot, 2009).

The content analysis does not explore in detail the transparency information provided by news organizations. This limitation becomes even more pronounced as the content analysis is focused on a news item level (a single webpage) and does not examine transparency information available on other parts of the various news organizations' websites. Moreover, the frequency analysis of transparency features lacks a detailed textual exploration regarding an assessment of the usability of transparency information, which may be vital for audiences to understand or retrace the journalistic process. In that respect, a textual analysis appears crucial for future research.

The experimental design also bears a number of limitations. First, the literature suggests that trust development may be impacted through repeated interactions. Yet, this study tested only a single, one-shot interaction. The use of AMT also bears certain risks, as the online experiment cannot provide the same conditions (in contrast to a lab setting) for each participant and thus may affect the internal validity of the experiment.

Despite these limitations, this study provides new empirical data to enhance the understanding of the professional value of transparency in journalism, its practice, and effects on audiences' trust evaluations.

Chapter 5: Journalists Negotiating Transparency - Interviews

The normative literature in journalism studies has argued that transparency about the reporting process is a way to show audiences which journalism to trust (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007) and also to identify professional, quality journalism (Karlsson, 2011). Yet, while much has been suggested theoretically about the possible effects and utility of transparency in journalism, less is known about how journalists themselves adopt, implement, or think about transparency in their day-to-day work. In particular, the operationalizability of transparency within the daily practice of journalism requires further examination to determine to what degree journalists are and can be transparent about themselves and their work. I conducted interviews with 27 journalists from 12 national news organizations to explore how and to what extent transparency plays a role in the journalistic process.

The introduction of digital communication technologies allows audiences to see more of how journalism is done than was previously possible. Journalists have to negotiate this technologically enabled openness in their daily work, from corrections and audience comments to social media and staff biographies. The analysis of the interviews indicated that news organizations show more about who they are, what they do, and how they do it. Nearly all of the 27 journalists that I interviewed mentioned that audiences could now see a little more about their work. At the same time however, many of the journalists did not conceptualize this openness as transparency (i.e. a way to disclose more about production processes including decisions and possible biases of news producers). Instead, several reporters referenced well-established norms like balance, neutrality, and accuracy. An *NBC News* correspondent said:

> Transparency is not a term that I use. It is not a term I hear other reporters use. Being accurate, excellent attribution, accuracy is an extremely important value in our work. . . . Getting that across to viewers, how you did it, is not a top priority. I think we feel that viewers trust us to do it. We do try to make clear a lot of how we got things, but the main point is not to get across the process, the main point is to get across the facts and the opinions that we covered. How we did it takes a back seat.

A journalist with the *Chicago Tribune* similarly stressed that transparency is not a primary consideration at the organization; rather it is accuracy that is the value that stands above all else: "It's an environment in which we want to correct errors and make people aware that we know about mistakes that we honor them, that we respect them, and that we fix them fast" While recognizing that corrections and talking openly about accuracy in reporting is a "key element of transparency," the senior-level editor added that the *Chicago Tribune's* "goal is not to be transparent; our goal is to be credible. We may be splitting hairs but this talk about transparency . . . that word is not ours." In fact, only a couple of the 27 journalists said they used the term transparency on a regular basis, and the majority of news reporters I talked to said the term rarely or never comes up.

A *USA Today* urban affairs reporter primarily talked about sourcing — a long-standing journalistic technique that identifies where information comes from — when she addressed the issue of transparency. In fact, the majority of journalists spoke about sourcing when asked about transparency in their daily work. A junior-level correspondent with *CBS News* stressed that sourcing has become even more critical in today's journalism because of the sheer ubiquity of available information online. "We want to be clear where we are getting our information from. . . . We are bombarded with information that is not necessarily true." The objective for these journalists, then, is to specifically describe sources, not only for the benefit of the audience but also to make sure that reporters work accurately.

Throughout the interviews, journalists repeatedly referred to well-established journalistic values when addressing transparency. This should not be too surprising considering that journalism continues to experience a paradigm shift based on technological advancements in producing and disseminating news (Elliott, 2009). In such a shifting environment, journalists are still coming to terms with this often technology-induced openness in journalism. For example an editor with *USA Today* said:

> I think it [transparency] is about accountability. I think news organizations . . . always have been sort of accountable to ourselves and we've always been fairly good at that — making sure that there is some structure in our organizations such as ombudsmen, standards editors, etc., who make sure that we adhere to standards. . . . I think digital technology has opened up the portals for more community engagement around journalism that has encouraged more transparency outside of newsrooms.

In this chapter, I detail how 27 journalists from *ABC News, CBS News, NBC News, CNN, Fox News, NPR, Los Angeles Times, Chicago Tribune, USA Today, the Washington Post,* the *Wall Street Journal*, and the *New York Times* understand transparency in their reporting. First (in section *5.1.),* I trace the beginnings of an increased transparency in journalism by examining journalists' observations about the impact of technology on their daily news work. Section *5.2.,* explores to what degree journalists discuss transparency as a new value and practice, as such discussions can be seen as a prerequisite for conceptualizing transparency as a relevant practice. In section *5.3.,* I show how journalists at these major U.S. news outlets define and conceptualize transparency in journalism. This section includes journalists' varied understandings about what should be made transparent regarding the news production process and the producers of news. In Section *5.4.,* I discuss journalists' perceived merits of transparency as a trust or credibility instrument. Section *5.5.,* looks at transparency as a strategy used by news organizations and journalists to make themselves impervious to critique from outside stakeholders and examines how transparency is used as a promotional tool. Section *5.6.,* discusses the obstacles that journalists perceive in implementing transparency in their daily work, including time limitations and increasingly smaller newsrooms. In section *5.7.,* I summarize the major findings of the interviews.

5.1. Transparency and Technology

The introduction of digital media technologies has influenced a variety of journalistic production processes from newsgathering to news presenting. The majority of journalists pointed towards new technologies as a trigger for increased transparency in journalism. Journalists said the easy access to information has fostered an environment for increased disclosure in society, overall, which also impacts journalism. A *USA Today* reporter said: "I think transparency has always been very important, but now it should be a part of what we do, because everything is more transparent" A *Washington Post* editor added that the internet has changed people's expectation of openness: "I think there is a certain kind of spirit of access and transparency that encouraged us and other media outlets to be more accessible and transparent, and to use all of the tools that are available, technologically speaking."

A veteran reporter with the *New York Times* also acknowledged that technology is forcing news organization to open up. "I would say there has been a consistent trend toward it [transparency] using all of the new digital tools to bring our readers behind the curtain." Similarly, an *NPR* senior-level editor said transparency is very much driven by the new technologies and the internet:

> In theory, you have now infinitive space and you can tell people a little bit more and you can include more background information. You can point to documents, you can post documents, and you can be very transparent if you make a mistake by alerting readers and explaining why. You can do it much more easily now than you could have 10-15 years ago. . . . And this isn't even an issue necessarily of transparency. It's just . . . adding value that you couldn't have given years ago.

But technology did not merely enable journalists to actively disclose information; it also demands more openness. A *USA Today* editor pointed out that in a digital age, "it becomes harder to be less transparent" as people "share information on social media all the time."

Veteran journalists also saw the adoption of technology that enabled greater transparency as a response to increased competition. A senior-level *NBC News* producer said that the adoption of technologies by legacy news media companies, was less an effort to be transparent and more a reaction to staying competitive: "[NBC] began to do what their competitors do and all of a sudden show YouTube items on their newscasts." Similarly, with Twitter, when *NBC* "saw people responding back to Twitter, all of a sudden everybody on television has to have a Twitter account and tweet."

Digital media technology enabled transparency regarding the work of news companies and journalists. Despite this technology, several journalists suggested that "opening up" was not a deliberate move, but rather a response to the changes in the industry and the larger social world. Transparency in journalism, then, can be understood as a quasi-accidental byproduct following the introduction of digital media technologies. The premise of transparency being a byproduct suggests that the implementation and value of transparency may not be central to journalists in their daily work.

5.2. Discussing Transparency

While the journalists interviewed for this research value the idea of transparency in journalism, they also pointed out that transparency isn't an issue they think about a lot or discuss frequently in newsrooms or among colleagues. A *CNN* reporter said: "I was never a part of such a discussion . . . it never happened in a room that I was in." A national correspondent with the *Wall Street Journal* spoke of a similar experience. "In general, I don't think we do [discuss transparency]. We have weekly meetings and it's generally not a topic." Another experienced reporter with the *New York Times* similarly said discussions about transparency did not come up. "If there was, that would happen at pay-grade levels above mine." A less experienced *Fox News* reporter said: "I don't feel like it is something I think a whole lot about. . . . I never sat in a meeting and had people discuss how do we show the public how we came to this." An *NBC News* correspondent stressed that such discussions may be hampered by the fact that many reporters often work in isolation. "We don't sit down, five reporters and say 'okay, how are we going to cover this story?' We don't have that luxury."

An *NPR* reporter acknowledged the lack of substantial discussions about transparency, but said: "There's a discussion about using different ingredients in the sausage, but not so much about sharing the entire process of how it's made." In contrast, a couple of editors and producers said that discussions about transparency do take place. A longtime editor with the *Washington Post* said that talking about transparency, whether it is about sourcing or the assignment process, is nothing new:

> If a reporter feels he or she has some kind of personal stake or business relationship that prevents them from being fully objective, they tell their editor so that the assignment goes to somebody else, or if it is still workable for them to do the assignment, those facts are disclosed within the context of the article.

These conversations, however, do not necessarily include considerations regarding how to make the journalistic production visible for audiences; rather, these talks focus on strengthening internal accountability processes to ensure accurate and unbiased reporting. As a *Chicago Tribune* editor put it, "our business is based on integrity and trust and credibility."

Generally, journalists across news organizations said they were not aware of transparency being high on any agenda or a part of any newsroom discussion unless anonymous sources were discussed. Yet a *USA Today* editor said that transparency "is kind of an innate part of the job as journalist." In contrast, a *CBS News* reporter said colleagues at the network openly discussed transparency only when a big mistake was made. Then "an email would go out . . . company wide. You get those memos. Sadly, it is usually after something happened."

5.3. Journalists Defining Transparency

Theoretically, an increased adoption of transparency among professionals should be reflected in the theorization or thinking about the concept among institutional members (Green, 2004; Rogers, 1983; Strang & Meyer, 1993). Thus, the lack of extended discussions about transparency within newsrooms may indicate that a limited relevance is the norm. Yet a closer look at how reporters, producers, and editors define transparency in journalism may indicate to what degree transparency is conceptualized and practiced.

The majority of journalists referred to transparency in journalism as showing audiences "how the sausage is made" or "drawing, pulling back the curtain" to take audiences "behind the scenes." The "making of the sausage" analogy evokes a somewhat organic process that is unappealing to watch. A *Wall Street Journal* reporter described the production of news, including journalistic decision-making regarding topics and angles, as a "messy process and everyone in the newsroom has very different opinions on it, even between reporters and editors."

While the above analogies suggested that journalists share similar definitions of journalistic transparency, a closer look reveals that many of the interviewed newsmakers differed in defining the specifics of transparency. Opening up the journalistic processes was at the heart of all transparency definitions; however, the breadth of disclosure varied significantly from letting audiences know "where the information came from, always making sure that we are clear on the sourcing" (*USA Today* reporter) to providing the "reader an honest accounting of how you as an organization operate and provide information to them without obviously giving away proprietary information or sources" (*Wall Street Journal* reporter).

A prevalent theme in defining transparency was stressing the element of sourcing. A *USA Today* editor defined transparency as "making sure that there is clear understanding of how information is gathered and shared." A senior-level editor with *NPR* similarly spoke of "being very clear with people about where I am getting the information" in addition to who or what the sources are and "why they are credible, why we trust the information that they are giving us." A junior *Fox News* reporter echoed the same idea, saying that "adequately sourcing your stories is sort of where I come to think about transparency.

Very few journalists went beyond the notions of sourcing or accuracy during interviews. A *CNN* national reporter said transparency was a way to bring audiences a "little bit more into the (news making) process, and letting them know we're giving you both sides. . . ." Conversely, a *Wall Street Journal* reporter said: "I guess my definition of transparency is being open about information that helps people come to a clear, given understanding of a topic." This notion of contextualizing a story was also brought forward by a *CNN* producer who noted that transparency in journalism should also include decision-making processes and "your motivation for doing a story or where you are coming from." A *NPR* journalist elaborated on the idea and said that transparency is showing the building blocks of a story:

> What's the impetus for the story? Who are all the sources used for the story? Does the story have an agenda? Does it not have an agenda? . . . I mean, is there a purpose to the story. All the sort of building blocks . . . ranging from who assigned it [the story], to who reported it, to the sources.

In that respect, a *Washington Post* editor stressed that transparency in journalism also means to disclose "biases than can be perceived as affecting the reporting and writing."

Thus, transparency in journalism should not only shed light on the news production processes, but also on the news producer. In the following two subsections, I show how journalists define these two categories and how they think about disclosing information about themselves and the journalistic process.

5.3.1. Production Transparency

The lack of discussions about transparency indicates that journalists do not (yet) consider transparency a major factor in their work. As shown above, much of journalists' understanding of transparency was linked to long-standing journalistic values such as accuracy, balance, and objectivity. In this way, the majority of journalists described the transparency practices of their news organizations as ways to provide "added value" that offers audiences a better understanding of the story, rather than letting audiences learn more about how journalism is done.

When journalists were asked to point out what transparency practices their news organization currently employs, many reporters, editors, and producers pointed toward social media and other forms of audience engagement such as chats or reporter Q & As. Journalists would use Twitter, for example, while being out in the field to say what stories they were working on and to disseminate or promote their stories. Several journalists also mentioned that another way of showing people more about their work is to hyperlink. According to a *Washington Post* reporter:

> We post more documents to help people understand and support the things that we are reporting. So, if you are writing about government contracts, you don't

> just write about government contracts, you can post the contracts if they are available. . . . At the very basic level, we try to hyperlink as much as we can.

Beyond the common practice of hyperlinking, the understanding of what can or should be generally revealed regarding the production process varied according to what journalists saw as feasible. It also varied depending on the news selection mechanics of a particular news media. While print and broadcast journalists agreed on similar transparency efforts online (hyperlinking to sources, reporter blogs, etc.), journalists pointed out that production transparency or how much can be seen of the journalistic process depended on the specificities of print and broadcast media or general organizational policies.

The level of organizational openness varied greatly. On the one hand, a *CNN* reporter of more than 10 years said the company offered very little transparency. "We don't even offer tours, so I cannot imagine a situation where they would let the general public in to view [the journalistic process]." On the other hand, a senior *ABC News* producer said, "[I]f people want to come and visit us, we entertain visitors all the time. We don't try to hide. . . ."

NPR also offers tours, but some news organizations go a step further than allowing visitors to see their newsrooms. A *Washington Post* editor said, "[S]ometimes we will have guests who sit in on our morning critiques . . . somebody from the public would give their thoughts about the day's paper." The *Chicago Tribune* does something similar once a week: "We will have four or five people sit in on a page-one meeting."

Opening up the institution or news organization "offline" was not mentioned very often, but journalists generally said that their news organization's online platforms allowed for increased transparency. Yet being transparent in reporting hinged on a number of factors, ranging from the distribution medium to the feasibility of transparency practices. In the following pages, I will focus on various aspects influencing transparency such as broadcast and print media, blogs, chats, emails, Q & As, corrections, and social media.

5.3.1.1. Broadcast Media

An *NBC News* producer with more than two decades of experience pointed out that news organization provides more transparency online than on the air. On television, transparency can take on various but limited forms such as disclosing possible biases of sources. "We have to tell people about someone who goes on TV. 'Full disclosure!' We are bringing this person on to talk but you should know they also work for *NBC Universal*." A *CBS News* producer referred to another fairly common disclosure practice that is used when handling a sensitive news story. "You asked someone for comment and they refused . . . a lot of news organizations will say, 'We asked for comment and they said no.' That shows that you are doing your due diligence as a reporter." Beyond such fairly common reporting practices, an *ABC News* producer explained that new television storytelling showed more about the journalistic process:

> Now, we shoot a lot in first person or how we did this kind of narrative. When one of our people takes a trip to Yemen we make sure to shoot lots about how we got to Yemen and here is what is involved in doing it. . . . [A]nd it does give people a window into . . . how we do what we do and how decisions are made.

CBS has two program segments that show more about the journalists and their work. On the Web, *60 Minutes Overtime* gives viewers background interviews and editorial and technical information about the show. On television, *Postcards From* shows reporters covering difficult stories abroad. A junior *CBS News* producer said, "I think that is something that is useful for people to know, but it is also really interesting." *CNN* also devoted an entire program to this sort of storytelling. The show *Backstory* ran on *CNN International* but was also available online. A CNN producer said the program was all about transparency:

> We would be very transparent about what we were doing, what we were thinking and why we made choices that we did and why are we bringing people to stories that we did. . . . There was also a push in the network to make our reporting more 'backstory-esque,' in general. We also allowed reporters to show their emotions. Normally you don't see a reporter crying when she is covering an earthquake. . . . Let the viewer see a part of the entire process and not just the end product.

While CNN's *Backstory*, which was taken off the air in 2012, may have showed journalistic decision and production processes, most transparency efforts on TV focus on what a *Fox News* reporter called the "production side rather than the editorial side:"

> You see the camera guys on the floor, people in the control room producing, it's more of an aesthetic. . . . I've heard people say that it gives the viewers a sense that they are there and understand what is going on. You see anchors, I know Shepard Smith at *Fox*, will refer to 'Oh, take REM 241!' Joe Schmoe doesn't know what REM241 is! It is total TV speak, but still they do it because the producers think that viewers feel they are getting this inside look….

Generally, journalists said that providing more information about the news production process is not a common practice in broadcast news. Instead, if news stations wanted to show more about their work, they would produce a special or "making of" program rather than make transparency part of daily journalistic routines.

5.3.1.2. Print Media

Similarly to their colleagues on the broadcast side, print media journalists pointed out that their news outlets don't offer many explanations about the process, at least not on a regular basis. Instead, journalists were primarily concerned about the use of anonymous sources. A *USA Today* reporter said: " We don't do anonymous sources except when it is approved by an editor and it has got to be a really big deal." Sourcing is also a big issue at the *New York Times*. A reporter there explained that after the Jayson Blair plagiarism scandal, a lot of things changed with respect to internal transparency measures:

> There are a lot more rules now, which are not always followed. You are supposed to explain to the reader why they [sources] are being allowed to speak anonymously, which has created it's own problems. . . . Now, one editor is supposed to know who your source is. If I don't tell an editor, 90 percent of the time they never ask. And so I would say that is something in general that is not being followed. . . . The thing about Washington, in particular, nobody speaks on the record.

According to a *Wall Street Journal* national correspondent, another issue is that the use of anonymous sources is often not explicitly explained. Many journalists also said that other explanations about the process such as editorials do not occur on a regular basis but are reserved for special investigative projects. A *Chicago Tribune* editor said that transparency is not part of "every story, every day, but . . . we do a lot of investigative reporting where we will have a little explainer and the reporters will say here is what we do." Although several journalists said editorials are nothing new, a *Washington Post* editor mentioned that the *Post* provides such background information less frequently:

> Occasionally I guess we do stories about how things were reported. I'm thinking about a feature that we had a few years ago, which really dug behind the scenes of how stories were reported. But I think we have kind of fallen off that a bit.

5.3.1.3. Blogs, Chats, Emails and Q & As

Other attempts at being more transparent with audiences that have increasingly taken a backseat are live chats online and reporter blogs. Journalists considered both chats and reporter blogs as an interactive way of letting people know more about their work. But a producer with *Fox News* said, "for a while all our reporters were supposed to blog. . . . We don't do it anymore." Blogs were also becoming less visible at the *Los Angeles Times*, but chats were still done frequently, an editor with the paper explained:

> Google Hangouts, so that's a way to have reporters talk about the stories that they're working on, or answer reader questions about a story that's been in that day's paper. . . . That's sort of transparency in a different way . . . making it more an interactive discussion as opposed to a story that comes out….

While Google Hangouts were used at the *Los Angeles Times*, most of the interviewed journalists pointed out that live chats or Google Hangouts (video chats) are on the decline across the different news organizations. A *Washington Post* reporter explained:

> We had like 40 people at some point. Now we are down to 5 or 10 people, at most. I guess it just got too difficult. Somebody had to produce them, they had to promote them and it was, again, a resource question. The most popular chats survived and the ones that weren't drawing traffic were cut loose.

A *Wall Street Journal* reporter also spoke about the lack of chats at the newspaper, but "I get plenty of emails from readers since our email is at the bottom of every story." Even though not every news organization makes reporter emails fully accessible, individual journalists can often be contacted through email forms. Journalists pointed out that emails were also a way of engaging audiences. A *New York Times* reporter said, "[R]eporters are expected to respond to reader emails unless they are abusive, profane, or somebody is completely crazy." The *Times* reporter also acknowledged that chats are on the downswing but the paper produces more videos to reach audiences, as does *USA Today,* according to one editor: "We also do an ask *USA Today* feature, its a video feature, where we look at questions from readers and from those questions we answer them in video format." (Participant T).

While newspapers offer Q & A sessions, such reader interactions do not occur frequently. At the *Wall Street Journal,* Q & As are rare, according to a finance and politics reporter. A *New York Times* business and technology reporter said, "I haven't been asked to do one [Q & A] probably in at least four or five years."

Journalists pointed out that while the bulk of transparency efforts appeared online, many of these practices, apart from hyperlinking to documents, are very infrequent. Yet one transparency practice that came up repeatedly was corrections.

5.3.1.4. Corrections

The handling of corrections across platforms and news organizations differed to some degree, according to the interviewed journalists. A *Los Angeles Times* editor pointed out that publishing corrections was a "first step in transparency." The editor said the news organization corrects much more than in the past and that corrections are easy to find online and offline. The editor also stressed that the paper does not mend any mistakes invisibly i.e. corrects mistakes without posting a correction: "You know, there's an error in the story and you just change it and make it right and it's online, you can just change it. We don't do that."

In contrast, many broadcast companies rarely admit errors on the air, with one frequent exception — *NPR*. A senior *NBC News* producer said corrections as part of transparency is vitally important. "When you got it wrong, you should tell people why you got it wrong." Yet the senior producer also admitted mistakes are mostly corrected online; for corrections to occur on the air, something extraordinary must go wrong:

> There is a high bar to admit fault but if you got it wrong, you have to admit it, you have to tell the people. It is a fact-based profession. If you got your facts wrong, you have to tell people that you got your facts wrong, simple as that. And it is one of the few professions were the standard is you got to get everything right a 100 percent at the time, not 99.

Despite this perceived need for corrections and accuracy, for most broadcast companies corrections on the air are the exception rather than the standard. A *CNN* reporter said that very few corrections make it on the air, "[B]ut there are so many things . . . it'll drive me crazy, but they [*CNN*] won't acknowledge it." An *ABC News* correspondent said corrections are mostly handled internally: "If it's a small enough error it's something we discuss internally . . . and make sure it does not happen again. But it is not something that we would address with the audience."

Generally, most broadcast journalists said that admitting mistakes is rare, but a *Fox News* producer also pointed out that *Fox* doesn't really do public corrections. The *Fox News* producer said the national bureau produces stories for *Fox News* affiliates and when things go wrong not much is and can be done:

> It was a story about Florida, and we said on the chyron [lower third] Senator Bill Nelson, when it should have been a different first name. So a [local] station complained that it was the wrong name. They sent back a note saying the only reason they knew was that a *Fox* affiliate from Kansas called because Nelson was from there and they said that was the wrong Nelson in your script. We looked at each other after we already sent it out and said, "we probably shouldn't do that again," and called it a day.

Mistakes such as the one above often either go unnoticed or are not corrected publicly. A veteran *ABC News* producer said corrections bear an "interesting dynamic:"

> If you make a mistake on the air to what extent are you obligated to correct it if nobody points it out, and if nobody is particularly bothered by it, or nobody is making a big deal about it, and if there is nobody who was hurt by your original statement . . . so do you correct it just for the sake of correcting it? Sometimes I think it is the right thing to do it; sometimes, it sort of passes by.

A *Washington Post* reporter also suggested that visible corrections might not always be required or desired:

> I'm not sure why simply correcting the copy and putting the best version that you can put online is such a terrible thing. I mean, a person encountering a story for the first time, why shouldn't he or she have the best possible version of it? I guess we are expected to admit we are human and show them our mistakes.

An *NBC News* reporter, on the other hand, said he prefers to openly admit factual mistakes. "I love to do it. . . . It adds to credibility . . . because the implication is that you care about truth, that you are not perfect . . . that you want people to trust you." Yet while journalists at the major television networks and the two cable news channels in this study said the bar for corrections is generally very high, *NPR* attempts to be upfront about mistakes. A *NPR* senior editor explained:

> Of cause there are shades of errors . . .if *All Things Considered* makes a mistake tonight and it is serious, they'll try to correct it before the re-broadcast.… Online, if I make a minor mistake . . . I might just fix it and not worry about telling everybody in the world that I once again spelled I-T's and it should have been I-T-S, which I do probably twice a day. But if I spelled a name wrong, I got a fact wrong . . . I will correct it, put a notice at the bottom with a time stamp saying: "People, I corrected this at this time, it has been raised to me by a reader in the comments thread." I will then go in the comments thread and tell people what I have done . . . thank them etc.

NPR and several other news organizations archive serious mistakes, as does *USA Today.* An editor with the paper pointed out that *USA Today* has archived corrections going back for more than an entire year. Another *USA Today* reporter explained that there are strict procedures to follow when filing a correction. The process starts with identifying and verifying that a mistake occurred. Then, reporters have to fill out a correction form that goes to the standards editors. After that, whoever is involved in the mistake has to correct the issue and has to write an explanation for the readers explaining "how the mistake happened." Corrections are then clearly marked, often without showing the mistakes but stating that the original article included a particular problem.

The handling of corrections differed across the varied news organizations in this study. This may be due to the fact that, as a *Washington Post* reporter pointed out, no industry-wide standards for corrections exist:

> Some people put a correction online at the top of the article. Some put it at the bottom. Some people strike through. Some people don't even tell you that

something was wrong. They just change the copy and update the thing and you never knew there was a correction, that anybody made a mistake in the first place. You know, and I can see the wisdom in each of these. But there is no standard.

According to the interviewed journalists, individual news outlets have developed their own correction policies. Generally, journalists indicated that news organizations define case by case what a substantial mistake might be that has to be corrected, often depending on the level of public awareness, legal consequences, or harm to the organization's reputation.

5.3.1.5. Use of Social Media

Journalists indicated that they use social media platforms such as Facebook and primarily Twitter to give audiences (at times) a look behind the scenes. The interactions on these platforms allow news audiences to ask questions about particular news stories, which can result in learning more about journalistic processes. A junior *CBS News* producer said, "[S]ocial media has absolutely broken down the barriers between the journalists and the consumer every day. Our correspondents often will do Facebook chats. They will tweet with news consumers." A veteran *ABC News* producer said that interactions on social media are very useful to let the audience in on the journalistic production process: "Our correspondents or producers go back and forth with some of their Twitter followers. 'Why we did something or headlined something?' That is . . . an organic way of making the process more available to people."

Yet while the theoretical potential of social media to show more of journalists' work was widely recognized, several reporters said transparency on social media might be a side product. A *Wall Street Journal* reporter explained:

> Social media is one of the things that probably helped us appear more transparent. The reason we are using those things are actually really more to drive readers to but I think it helps us appear more transparent.

An *ABC News* correspondent echoed that sentiment and said that social media is used to engage audiences. "I don't think the goal is transparency. The goal is doing something unique . . . as a byproduct it sheds light on the process." Many journalists agreed and suggested that social media may allow for some transparency but Twitter, Facebook, and other platforms are primarily promotional tools. I will elaborate on that notion in section *5.5.,* which addresses the issue of transparency as a strategy.

5.3.2. Producer Transparency

The main aspect of producer transparency is to learn more about the reporter and/or news organization. Producer transparency allows audiences to see whether journalists or news organizations have conflicts of interest or possibly bring a particular perspective to the news production process. A news organization would, for instance, disclose possible biases that could affect the production or understanding of a story. For example, a senior *NBC News* producer said that during George Zimmerman's trial, Zimmerman sued NBC. "We were reporting on the trial and we were saying 'full disclosure!' NBC is party to a lawsuit." A *CBS News* producer explained a similar practice:

> At *CBS* we do a lot of work with book companies, like Simon and Shuster, which is a *CBS* company. So we are very transparent to say if we do an interview with someone about a book that is being published by a *CBS* company. . . . It is better to be transparent than not, because you want to protect yourself.[4]

A *Washington Post* editor also said that if "the Washington Post is involved in a business arrangement that affects the story we always mention that."

On a more individual level, producer transparency can show more about a reporter's track record and biographical development that could inform audiences about personal factors that may influence the reporting. A *CNN* producer said:

> TV reporters are literally coming into your living room…. It gives them more depth and when you know more about them then you can make your own judgment. … For instance the *Backstory* anchor: "Michael has been a reporter since he was sixteen and he cut his teeth in the Mid-East on the first Intifada, and he speaks these languages and he got shot in Iraq." All these things combined that make you go: "That guy is real and I trust! As opposed to: "I am Bob Jones, I am a reporter and you should value my opinion.". . . You just can't go wrong with giving people more information about that kind of stuff.

Aspects of personalization may in fact provide some form of transparency, as it can provide context beyond simply giving the name of a journalist. An *NPR* producer said that a reporter's religion could influence how he or she covers someone who is Muslim or Christian. A *CNN* producer added:

> Obviously a reporter who is from the West Bank is going to have a different perspective on covering the situation in the Mid-East than a person who is from

[4] A report about the attack on the U.S. embassy in Benghazi by *CBS News* journalist Lara Logan allegedly did not include such a disclosure practice. The report included some other journalistic oversights that led to Logan's temporary suspension.

> Jerusalem and who is Jewish. I mean that is an oversimplification but I think it gives depth.

Some journalists, however, see this increased personalization as a problem, especially as on social media. An *ABC News* producer said journalists risk changing themselves from independent observers to journalists with an “attitude” because they “are expected to have a take or a buzz on things when they should be just telling people what they know and what they have seen.”

While many journalists indicated that revealing some very general information about their lives such as age, education, or marital status is acceptable, disclosing certain personal preferences may go too far. An *NBC News* producer said:

> Here is a good example. We had a correspondent covering some story that had to do with homosexuality, and someone pointed out, “well isn’t that person gay?” Should they be forced to tell people that they are gay if they are going to cover that story? I thought about that for a little bit. Well, people aren’t forced to tell people that they are straight when they are covering the story.

A number of journalists also pointed out that disclosing personal information can hurt one’s reputation. A *Wall Street Journal* reporter said some information can be used against you:

> Once the attack machine gets going, it can destroy someone. It is harder on social media, like I will tweet about work, but I will also tweet about sports. Teams I like. That is obviously revealing something about me. My Facebook page reveals things about me. . . . This is who I am, but it is something we have to be careful about….

Concerns regarding equity, equality, and safety can limit what journalists are willing or are allowed (by their news organization) to make public about themselves. Moreover, disclosing information about the journalists runs against a long-standing assumption about journalists as neutral, objective observers and collectors of facts. This is an idea that a *Washington Post* reporter described as “a little bit naive” but real:

> We know that people have biases. Some news organizations will post bios of every one of their reporters; we do this. They will post archives of their stories in order to give readers a better opportunity to understand where this person might be coming from. On the other hand, it doesn’t necessarily tell you where they are coming from, lets see their voting record; let’s hear their opinions; lets make a full disclosure of all of it. We are not going to do that. There is a zone of privacy around that. But my point is; we are only going to get so far with self-disclosure.

A *Wall Street Journal* reporter said staff bios are “pretty basic. I get to decide how much information I want to divulge. There is not a push to divulge a lot of personal information. I’m sure there would be if it were relevant.” Several journalists indicated that staff bios often show little more than where someone went to school or worked but don’t give much information that might be useful to audiences.

Even though there is a trend to disclose more information about the journalists, a number of journalists said that producer transparency information is not a reference point or a marker for quality journalism. An *NBC News* producer said, “[T]he work is what speaks volumes about whether there is a bias or not. I don’t know if you have to reveal it you just have to demonstrate it through your work.” An *NPR* producer added, “I am not the news; if I become the news that is a big problem.”

The notion that journalists should not be the story may also explain why producer transparency is limited and that likes and dislikes don't feature frequently in reporter bios or on social media. A senior *Washington Post* editor said, reflecting the institutional standpoint, there should be limitations to what journalists can make public: "There is your professional career, and there is your life outside of work. Of course we have restrictions in terms of being able to be involved in political causes and signed petitions." Many of these restrictions and possible conflicts of interests are not made transparent to the public, but are handled internally. News organizations ask their journalists on an annual basis about possible biases or conflicts of interest. A *Chicago Tribune* editor said everybody in the newsroom receives a hard copy of the ethics code and a questionnaire:

> They have to sign off that they have read the code, and have reviewed it, and filled out any potential conflicts of interests. . . . If people participate in things that are conflicts of interests, we discuss them on a personal level and review them every year.

A *Wall Street Journal* reporter said the news organization follows a similar procedure. "Internally, we have to obviously divulge a lot, just to make sure we're not doing anything that would go against our ethics. But to the outside world we only give as much personal information as necessary."

5.4. Transparency and Trust

For many of the interviewed journalists, transparency does not appear to be part of their daily work. Furthermore, journalists do not think each news story needs transparency, because a lot of the information regarding the journalistic process may not add to the understanding of a story or provide any information useful to audiences. Nevertheless, a majority of the editors, reporters, and producers agreed that transparency would benefit journalism and is vital to the institutional standing of the profession. A *USA Today* editor said:

> Ultimately, transparency shores up trust, trust with your audience. Nothing can be more damaging to credibility then leaving the impression that you are hiding something. The more open, more frank you can be . . . it establishes a stronger relationship with the audience that you serve as a journalist . . . the audience will ultimately continue to come back to you because they believe that you will provide them with all the information; not only what they need to know but perhaps what they might want to know.

Transparency, an *NBC News* producer added, is an adequate mechanism to build a reputation because being transparent shows audiences they can trust the journalist:

> So to me transparency is kind of the ultimate calling and providing a public service. It is also the ultimate way in inspiring and telling our audiences that we serve, here are the facts, this is true, and we did our jobs.

A *Washington Post* reporter added, journalism is the "most transparent or institutional activity" currently around:

> I mean, nothing goes online now that doesn't, within five minutes, gets tweeted, that you won't get a reaction to, that you won't get criticized for. It does make the process better. Some of it is unfair but it does make us better because it makes us more aware and more accountable.

Many journalists agreed with the general notion that transparency can shore up trust by showing more of the journalistic process and the people behind the news. However, journalists said transparency becomes especially important to gain or regain trust when a mistake occurred. A *Los Angeles Times* editor said: "I think it is beneficial if we fess up to things that we maybe did . . . actual outright errors we made. Especially when the criticism is public."

Some news organizations like the *New York Times* experienced public criticism regarding questionable journalistic practices. A *New York Times* reporter said that the paper became more open and transparent after its credibility was "damaged" by Jayson Blair and Judith Miller:

> For a while any story that was at all controversial, someone either in the comments or letters to the editor would bring up Jayson Blair and say: "You are obviously making this up because *The Times* makes things up, look at Jayson Blair." That has become less and less over time. People still do it. There wasn't, I don't think, a big drop in readership that can be tied to problems with credibility but it was a more active and more vocal questioning of *The Times'* credibility and the ability of those people to be heard. I am sure in the 1800s when people stood in City Hall Park lambasting the *New York Times*, a limited number of people heard them.

A *CBS News* reporter and a *CBS News* producer both pointed out that transparency at their organization became prominent after high profile reporter Lara Logan's *60 Minutes* report about the attack on the U.S. compound in Benghazi that left Ambassador Chris Stevens and three more Americans dead. In that report, Logan built her story on a statement by an ex-security officer, which later turned out to be false or fabricated (CBS, 2013). A *CBS News* producer said:

> The head of standards at *CBS News* launched an investigation and put all of his findings out publicly. . . . It basically is a way to say we take this incredibly

> seriously. This is where we went wrong. Now that we know this, that won't happen again . . . that kind of transparency is important for your credibility.

Journalists generally said that trust and credibility are central to journalism or, as a *CBS News producer* put it, "At the end of the day, the most important commodity we have is trust." For audiences to gain that trust, a *USA Today* reporter said, transparency about the journalistic process is essential, "otherwise how are they [audiences] going to trust you?"

5.5. Transparency a Professional Strategy

Several of the interviewed journalists agreed that transparency about the journalistic process can be a mechanism to shore up trust with audiences. This is, as a *NPR* producer said, because transparency in the digital age allows audiences to "reverse-engineer stories." In that respect, transparency in journalism may also be understood as a form of communication strategy to invoke trust. The journalists interviewed for this study pointed to a number of strategic uses of transparency such as engaging audiences, promoting news organizations, journalists, and the journalistic product in addition to defending themselves again possible criticism from outside stakeholders. In section *5.5.1.*, I discuss how journalists use different forms of transparency to engage audiences. Then, in section *5.5.2.*, I examine how journalists understand the promotional side of transparency. Lastly, in section *5.5.3.*, I look at to what extent journalists conceptualize transparency as a defense mechanism to protect themselves from criticism.

5.5.1. Engaging Audiences

Journalists agreed that technology-induced transparency allows audiences to see more of the journalistic process and to learn more about the news producers. A *New York Times* reporter said, “[I]t was smart of newsrooms to use the new tools that are now available to bring more transparency. But, is this transparency or engagement?” As a matter of fact many of the interviewed journalists suggested that opening up meant to first engage audiences and then possibly to be transparent. In particular, interactions on social media between news organizations and their audiences cut both ways; it engages and shows audiences more about how journalism is done. A *USA Today* editor said:

> Technologies provide us more avenues to reach our readers or for our readers to reach us. . . . There is just a natural characteristic to all of that that speaks to more transparency. We definitely are big on user/reader engagement. We have an editor who is dedicated to that on our social media mobile staff. I think a lot of news organizations have audience engagement editors who do much of the same thing.

Several interviewees suggested that audience engagement is employed with a particular goal in mind. A *Los Angeles Times* editor said: “I think that it is the ultimate goal is to drive traffic to LATimes.com and to retain and develop loyal readers of [the website], give them reasons to keep coming back.” Moreover, audience engagement is used to learn more about audiences and to perhaps reconsider some newsroom decisions. According to an *ABC News* producer: “We do try to have those interactions with people all the time. . . . It does produce some story ideas; it does produce some dialog.” As such, transparency can be seen not as a primary concern; more likely, it is a secondary or tertiary concern in these interactions. A *Chicago Tribune* editor similarly said that opening up the newspaper serves, above all, to improve coverage.

Another way of engaging audiences can be a very personalized reporting style akin to producer transparency (i.e. disclosing more about an individual's interests, likes, and dislikes). An *ABC News* reporter points out that some television companies use personalization to develop loyal viewers:

> They [*ABC*] absolutely encourage that. I think that is more about creating a connection with the audience, and they [*ABC*] have come to believe that people are connected to personalities, so if you can establish that with the audience, it is better for everyone.

Audience engagement for news organizations is key to building a loyal customer base and to subsequently attracting a larger advertising revenue. Transparency may be a vital part of this practice, but as journalists pointed out, transparency itself is often not the goal.

5.5.2. Transparency as a Promotional Tool

Beyond engaging audiences, many of the interviewed journalists said that some of the transparency practices that allow audiences to see what journalists do and who they are, are used to cast and promote a positive and favorable image of their news organization. Journalists frequently used words like "promotional" and "marketing" to describe their social media practices and other program engagement practices. A *CNN* reporter said:

> If I want to take behind-the-scenes pictures, I take them on my phone and send them to the web producer. If they think that it's promotionally valuable, then

> they'll put them up on the Twitter page and on the Facebook page and they'll do that right away. Absolutely trying to get as much commercial bang as they can . . . so to me, this is a promotional branding thing, not a transparency thing.

A *CNN* photojournalist added, "[T]hey (*CNN*) love it if you just bang out an Instagram picture and put a tweet on it and go, 'Met Celine Dion today.'" In contrast, an *NBC News* reporter refused to be on social media on the grounds that the connections between journalists and audiences on these platforms are somewhat pretentious. The *NBC News* reporter said the information that audiences get on social media "is not information; it is promotion. It is teasing and I hate it. To me, that is a perfect example of a lack of transparency."

Other journalists also acknowledged that some transparency practices are particularly useful to strategically promote the news organization or the content. A *Los Angeles Times* editor said: "If people are thinking about transparency, it may be more like as a promotional tool, which it can be also." A *Fox News* producer suggested that *Fox News* doesn't "want to be transparent, but they have to do it just for marketing or press reasons. I really don't think that their intention is for anybody to know more than they already know." A *CBS News* producer also pointed out that many audience engagement activities are organized by the public relations department: "It is not like the executive producers are like, 'Hey! Do a Facebook chat!' . . . The way they get people to be more transparent is to make it more in their self-interest."

A *CNN* producer said that TV segments like *Backstory* offered audiences a good look into the organization while also strengthening "the brand." However, a *CNN* photojournalist said:

> I don't think it [*Backstory*] is promotional, actually. I think, it's cheap television because the crews are already in the field . . . and generally the way these [stories] are being done is that they'll have a producer or a correspondent with a small camera shoot them, so it doesn't really cost the company any more. Instead of just getting one news story out of it, they're getting two news stories out of it, three stories, whatever it is. Without being too cynical about it. It really is the two things that *CNN* really cares most about: cost and journalism.

Showing more about the journalistic process is also connected to financial constraints and considerations. What audiences can see may often depend on how much it costs to produce a story, have reporter chats, or write editorials. Transparency and brand promotion may go hand in hand on the managerial level, a veteran *ABC News* producer said.

> The network had planned to stream everything that happened in the newsroom because the digital technologies allowed such a practice. On one hand, some *ABC* management said such streaming was good on the merits because people should be able to see what was going on. Other people looked at it and said that is a way we could get more viewers, we could get more of an audience, we can make a virtue out of being open and we can label ourselves as the people who are unafraid and want you to see the process and this quite frankly was looked at by some people as an essential marketing tool.

5.5.3. Transparency as Defense Mechanism

Some journalists said that letting audiences see more of the journalistic process not only adds value to the product, but also promotes it. At the same time, journalists said that increased transparency can protect news organizations from criticism. Several of the interviewed reporters, editors, and producers mentioned that audiences think of journalists as liberals and that transparency would allow the public to see that this is largely a misconception. An *NPR* producer said:

> People probably assume because I am working for *NPR* that I am a raging liberal and I can't help that; but I can tell them, "Wait a minute I worked for *USA Today* and I don't think that is a liberal publication" and I don't think that you can see anything that I have ever written that would give you that sense [of me being liberal]. I never expressed an opinion about anything more important than who should be in The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

A *CBS News* producer voiced a similar concern that transparency may be the antidote to media criticism, that is, "people accusing others of bias and malfeasance, and misinformation." The producer said that transparency with respect to where information comes from is necessary to prove the network's reliability, which is in contrast to the rampant "rumormongering of the blogosphere:"

> It is about protecting yourself, and distinguishing yourself as a legitimate organization. The more you can do that [be transparent], the less criticism there is of your work. . . . I am not saying we are doing transparency to avoid criticism, I the less room people would find fault with it.

An *ABC News* producer likewise argued that letting people take a look into the newsroom can be "a self-defense mechanism to let people see . . . we are not biased, we are not trying to decide in some evil way what the public gets to hear or not hear but it is a very open discussion." A *New York Times* reporter suggested that showing readers more about the journalistic process was a way of being accountable, ensuring audiences that no one is making things up. "Before Jayson Blair, we didn't have a lot of problems with people making things up and so it was to guard against that." A *CNN* photojournalist also suggested that transparency "assuages any sort of fears" by showing that these are not "a bunch of crazed left-wing journalists but these are hardworking people, who have done a lot of hard work to tell the stories, so that you will be better informed."

A *Washington Post* media reporter said that in an age when "everybody is a publisher," criticism of "how we are wrong . . . and/or how we missed something" is swift. This "does make us more self-aware; [it] does make us more defensive, I guess, in some cases. . . . But it does have the effect of being a kind of critical feedback loop." While part of this increased self-awareness may help to improve journalism, a political reporter with the *Wall Street Journal* suggested that at the end of the day transparency "is more of a defense mechanism. Organizations won't disclose too much until they have to explain why something went sideways."

5.5.4. Controlling Disclosure

Transparency as a promotional tool or defense mechanism suggests a strategic disclosure of information that is beneficial or will reflect positively on news organizations and their journalists. The interviewed journalists were also keenly aware that disclosing everything about the journalistic process might not always be advantageous. In that respect, journalists acknowledged that while some factors (e.g. protecting proprietary information) limit transparency, news organizations attempt to appear as open as possible. A *Wall Street Journal* reporter said, "[I]t's about the optics of transparency. . . . [I]f we go too far people are going to use it against us . . . and it'll just lead to more problems than good." A *Fox News* producer similarly suggested that news organizations are interested in a strategic and limited way of transparency. "I think it's more of a smoke and mirror. I really don't think that people that produce the news where I work and have worked really care about viewers points of view."

Journalists said that there is a tendency by news organizations to control how much and what kind of information will be made available to audiences, particularly on social media. Journalists frequently expressed that social media use was at times very closely monitored. A *CNN* reporter said, "the company really acts like they own you…."

5.5.4.1. Social Media Presentations

As indicated by the research literature, journalists' use of social media, especially Twitter, has become fairly normalized, particularly among national news media outlets (Lasorsa, 2012; Lasorsa, Lewis, & Holton, 2012). In other words, journalists rarely disclose anything personal and behave on Twitter according to journalistic norms of balance and neutrality. A *Wall Street Journal* reporter said:

> On Twitter you can be a little more mouthy, you can show a little more leg so to speak, but [the managers] don't want you to be opinionated, particularly on stuff directly related to your beat. If I would comment on Miley Cyrus twerking, they would be fine with that, but they would also be like, "That's kind of irrelevant to your beat and that is not why people follow you, so don't do that."

An *ABC News* producer similarly said, "sure people can talk about their favorite football team . . . but we try to keep opinion to a minimum." A senior *NBC News* producer acknowledges that a certain control may be required because social media can be tricky for journalists to navigate:

> I do think for the professional there are consequences, because you lose the public trust, "How can this guy behave one way professionally and another way personally." . . . I think, whether in your private life or your professional life you should behave the same. It should never be different.

Many journalists mentioned that they are indeed careful about what they are saying on social media because they constantly hear about colleagues getting into trouble. A *CBS News* producer said:

> Obviously you don't want anyone to take offence and you become the story, people realize that this is a very slippery slope. You want to protect yourself, your news organization, and your employer, which is also protecting yourself because you want to have your job.

Journalists, in general, try to be cognizant of what they say on social media, as they recognize that voicing opinions or comments on social media can negatively affect their livelihood. Overall, many of the interviewed journalists said they are aware — as a *NPR* producer put it — that "you are not just representing yourself, you are representing [the company]."

5.5.4.2. Social Media Guidelines

Journalists frequently said that foregoing opinions on social media is simply applying common sense. But many of the interviewees also mentioned that their companies have detailed guidelines and that social media training is mandatory. A *USA Today* editor explained:

> We do have social media guidelines that all our employees as well as our journalists are governed by. It is not a public document though. . . . When we

> rolled it out we did do extensive training for all our employees . . . and it is part of ongoing digital training efforts here, mobile, social.

A *CBS News* producer said the network sets clear rules in terms of how to behave on social media, and "we have to read the documents about the social media guidelines and sign it." A *Los Angeles Times* editor added that journalists need to be made aware of possible legal implications and "people have been coached from our newsroom attorney, our newsroom council."

Journalists repeatedly said that they are wary that their social media activities are being watched. A veteran *ABC News* producer said, "[W]e are very careful about monitoring anytime anybody is speaking on behalf of the organization." A main concern, according to the producer, is to avoid complaints about journalists. A *NPR* reporter similarly said that news organizations appear to take great interest in journalists' social media use. "They want to know, because within two hours after I sent 'Here's my Twitter site,' I got a message, *NPR's* following you." A *Fox News* producer said he never has seen any regulations, but from his own experiences "the general thumb is, don't say anything:"

> I put up a couple of pictures of what I saw [in a foreign country] and the day I got back I was told I by the company to take that stuff down. That is work related. We don't want anything that you do on the road put into any sort of social media at all. Keep that stuff private. Putting it on Facebook is not private. . . . And I say, well that's just for my family. We don't care take it down.

While many journalists voiced their concerns about organizational rules and social media guidelines, several others said that even though guidelines exist, they often don't know the exact regulations because they never read them. A *Wall Street Journal* reporter explained "we have policies for everything, but like most journalists I just click on those things like 'okay, yeah whatever' and move on." A comment by a *Washington Post* reporter summarized a rule of thumb that many journalists mentioned: "Don't step outside of the boundaries of what you would report in a news story" because:

> We are supposed to be perceived as honest brokers between all of the sides and it's not our opinion that matters, it's the opinion of the people we report on. . . . You will make yourself radioactive if you are perceived as a partisan.

5.6. Limitations of Transparency

Several journalists said that how much audiences can see about the journalistic process is often determined by a number of factors. Professional rules of conduct, social media guidelines but also financial and technical constraints can effectively limit transparency. A *NPR* reporter said:

> How transparent is a story when you hear a six-minute radio piece, if you want to know more about it, you can go on our webpage, but basically all you're going get are a few more pictures and maybe the transcript. So is that transparent?

An *ABC News* producer admits that very little of the actual process is made transparent because much of the decision-making to cover a story, for instance on Capitol Hill, is extremely tedious:

> [All] the things on Capitol Hill that happen on any given day, which we have the capability of covering. . . . which ones we think are ultimately worth our covering, and which ones of those make it to the point where we might decide it is worth putting on a particular platform . . . all those decisions, some of them involving

> money, some of them involving personal, some of them involving technical capabilities of us and other networks . . . I don't know how that gets relayed to the audience and I am not sure if they'd be all that interested.

In particular, in print and broadcast, technical or space/time restrictions determine what can be reported or made transparent. An *NBC News* national correspondent pointed out, "TV time is money . . . we are tight for time." A *Fox News* reporter similarly stated there is "not enough time on the air to show the process. . . . just saying, 'I waited outside the courthouse, and here's what I found from the district attorney.' That is the extent."

Online platforms have no space limitations yet several journalists expressed reservations about showing the entirety of the journalistic process to audiences as they considered it too mundane or not informative to audiences. A *Washington Post* reporter said it "would be boring" in a lot of cases:

> I called up so-and-so and he told me this, and I called another person and he told me that . . . it's not that mysterious. People have the wrong idea, I think, about journalism. It's basically people sitting in an office talking on the phone to other people and finding out what they say and then looking up stuff. I mean we've got these movie and TV images of reporters running to a battlefield and it's really not like that.

The *New York Times* attempted to show audiences more of the daily grind by streaming the daily news meeting where editors and journalists talked about page-one stories. After a few months, the news organization stopped their live streams because, as a *New York Times* reporter said, they "quickly realized that you give the competitors a view of what you are doing and in a situation like that people start acting." In other words, the camera changed the dynamic of these meetings and discussions were not authentic.

A *Chicago Tribune* editor said that they occasionally broadcast editorial endorsement debates or some interesting editorial board meetings. "But we don't live stream our news meetings because those are working sessions and everything in there is proprietary and there is no certainty that the stories will appear in that form."

The extent to which audiences may see the journalistic process is then influenced by concerns about how informative and engaging the information is and by the possibility of giving away proprietary information. Like several other journalists, a *Wall Street Journal* reporter said, "I don't even know if readers even want [this kind of transparency information]." An *ABC News* reporter said:

> We certainly don't have a nothing to hide, but we consider the making of the sausage if you will, it doesn't seem to be of much use to the audience, so I think we don't really place as much value on it for that reason. . . . It is something that we [journalists] are interested in, this little bit of navel gazing. "Let's show them the process because it is so important." But I don't think the audience cares about the process they care about the product.

While several journalists acknowledged that providing transparency for each single story does not appear useful, they also suggested that some transparency, especially in connection with special investigative stories, might be more interesting to audiences. A *CNN* producer said "people like to see a little bit of making the sausage but they don't really have to see everything, because this is just like more information than anybody needs." An *NBC News* producer said it isn't always necessary to talk about the process but news organizations should always explain themselves when asked. "Especially in big decisions, it is important for news organization to talk about why they did what they did! Big stories, big decisions."

Another aspect that frequently came up during the interviews is that too much transparency may be harmful and could hurt the news organization or an individual journalist and, as such, would limit disclosure. A *Wall Street Journal* reporter pointed out that "people are going to be more worried about the potential negative than the positive" aspects of transparency. Thus, many journalists and news organizations will be careful what they will make publically available.

Transparency, a number of journalists said, is very labor intensive. Particularly, in shrinking newsrooms, being transparent becomes, at times, very difficult. A *Fox News* producer said they can do very little extra because "we are bare bones, skeleton staffed. We are the smallest staff per person in the business." A *Los Angeles Times* editor pointed out that being transparent is an extra strain in the daily work of journalists.

> They're trying to write, they've got to do their reporting, they've got to write for tweet, now the interactive team wants them to do a Google Hangouts. . . . It's just one more thing that takes their time and they're busier and busier.

5.7. Conclusion

According to the interview data from 27 journalists, transparency is far from being a central value in journalism. Interviewees said that much of the information that audiences receive about the journalistic process is limited and does not allow much of an understanding of what journalists do and why. Instead, transparency in journalism is frequently managed and determined by what news organizations deem to be beneficial to strengthen their brand. Many of the reporters, editors, and producers suggested transparency is often a byproduct when news organizations engage audiences, promote news content, or try to produce better news. Moreover, journalists mentioned that explaining the news process or being transparent is a defense mechanism against public criticism. Furthermore, journalists suggested that the majority of transparency efforts that news organizations currently employ were triggered by digital technologies.

While many journalists acknowledged that letting people see how the "sausage is made" can improve journalism, they also pointed out that transparency is seldom a concern in any newsroom. An *NBC News* reporter said:

> We don't say things that aren't true, we don't give our opinion . . . we try to be neutral, honest, objective, get two, three sources for everything we report. But in terms of being transparent with our viewers, of how we do what we do, I wouldn't say that it is a discussion that we are having on a regular basis.

Journalists often referred to transparency when talking about sourcing (i.e. showing audiences where information or facts come from) that is used in reporting. Journalists stressed that describing source information will allow audiences to verify that the reporter worked accurately and without bias. A number of journalists suggested that transparency only becomes an issue at their news outlets when a professional transgression occurred. An *ABC News* national correspondent said "when there is some question of integrity or errors, that's where opening up becomes interesting to people and useful."

Another long-standing value of journalism that was frequently associated with transparency was balance. An *NPR* reporter said that the station wants to be "perceived to be balanced." This goal of being perceived as balanced may also impact the degree of disclosure. In particular, social media and other ethical guidelines can restrict transparency, said the *NPR* reporter, because even "bumper stickers on cars are discouraged. . . . and in some ways it's less transparent because you're not putting anything out there." Several journalists said that news organizations' main concern is objectivity or balance, not transparency. A *CNN* reporter said:

> I think the type of reporting that *CNN* does, the positions that *CNN* takes is transparent because it allows the viewer to look at the reporting and say there is no agenda. There is no agenda here because we're not trying to sway you to either side. I'm telling you a story and you are left to make a judgment at the end.

Many news organizations uphold very high standards in reporting and have mechanisms in place to catch possible biases and conflicts of interests. Yet such regulations are not made transparent to the public. An *ABC News* producer said that basically audiences have to trust that "what you are seeing on *ABC News* . . . is an honest result and is the product of work that is thorough, objective and unbiased." A *Washington Post* reporter echoed a similar sentiment:

> Nobody comes to a news organization for its transparency. They come to a news organization for its accuracy, and credibility, and the quality of its reporting. If the *Washington Post* is reporting inaccurately about things, people would stop reading the Post, no matter how transparent we were. If we can't deliver fairly and accurately then no amount of transparency makes any difference at all.

The normative literature promotes transparency as a necessary norm for current day journalism so that audiences can discern possible points of view in the reporting (McBride & Rosenstiel, 2014). In that respect, a *NPR* producer suggested that in the digital age "transparency is better than objectivity, because in an age of links, you can absolutely reverse-engineer" news stories. But the interview data shows that transparency did not play a crucial role in the varied newsrooms and journalists did not implement transparency on a daily basis.

The interviews did not point toward major differences regarding journalists' conceptualization or even implementation of transparency across the various news outlets. Yet journalists' responses suggest that there are at least gradual distinctions, with newspapers attempting to be more transparent than broadcasters. *NPR,* as a broadcast news organization, is a notable exception.

Fox News and *CNN* appear as the least open news companies, according to the responses of journalists at the two cable networks. Both stations restrict very tightly what audiences can learn about the journalistic process. Corrections at both cable networks are rare and transparency practices are predominantly used to promote the brand and to engage audiences, rather than inform then. Journalists at *ABC News*, *CBS News*, and *NBC News* also said that transparency does not play a major role at their networks — on the air or online. Nevertheless, journalists indicated that their stations are increasingly attempting to bring audiences into the journalistic process.

Newspapers, in general, and *NPR* appeared to care most about transparency, as journalists mentioned that their news organizations employed several avenues to show audiences the journalistic process. Newspapers and *NPR* journalists also pointed out that corrections are taken very seriously. Interviewees also said that institutional regulations at newspapers give journalists a bit more autonomy in deciding what they can disclose about themselves and the process when compared to broadcasters. The *New York Times* appeared to be relying especially on their staff's good judgment. Yet the general rule is don't express opinions or points of view.

Overall, the journalists' responses suggested that transparency as a norm in journalism may needs to be re-conceptualized, taking institutional practices and limitations of journalism into account. For the majority of journalists, transparency enables greater accountability by strengthening core journalistic values such as accuracy and balance. Transparency may then be understood as a mechanism that enforces long-standing professional norms and practices. Several journalists pointed out that news consumers turn to professional news outlets for reliable information and not to fact check everything. Yet a *USA Today* editor said that just as accuracy, fairness and diversity are considerations, "transparency has to be a factor in every story."

Chapter 6: Implementing Transparency Online: Findings of the Content Analysis

According to the research literature, transparency is an important element of today's journalism, which is increasingly marked by the adoption of particular points of view (McBride & Rosenstiel, 2014). Transparency, scholars have argued, may assist audiences in discerning how the views of journalists or news organizations impact a news story (Singer, 2007; Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007). Researchers have started to explore the degree to which news organizations and journalists embrace this new transparency norm in their reporting, on Twitter or on newspaper websites (Karlsson, 2010; Larsorsa, 2012; Hellmueller et al., 2013). Such examinations of the adoption of the transparency norm started even before professional and education organizations such as the Poynter Institute and the Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ) began to promote transparency as a new professional guideline in 2014.

Larsorsa (2012) and Hellmueller et al. (2013) found that transparency is far from being a norm among journalists, while values such as balance and objectivity remain strong. However, Karlsson's (2010) study showed that newspapers (*New York Times* (United States), *Dagens Nyheter* (Sweden), *The Guardian* (United Kingdom) ritualistically display online transparency features such as hyperlinks, time stamps, staff biographies, audience comments, email contacts, and more. Like Tuchman's (1972) "rituals of objectivity," Karlsson's (2010) "rituals of transparency" can be considered markers of journalistic craftsmanship, which signal audiences that news stories abide by professional norms and standards of journalism. In other words, news organizations' use of transparency features can signal audiences that journalists and news outlets embrace the new norm of transparency.

In order to explore to what extent national news organizations in the United States actually embrace the transparency norm, I investigated the implementation of various transparency features on the news item level across 12 national news organizations (*ABC News, CBS News, NBC News, CNN, Fox News, NPR, Washington Post, New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, Los Angeles Times, Chicago Tribune, USA Today*). For this purpose, I collected 12 news stories a day from each news outlet over the course of one week in January 2015. I analyzed each single story to determine how often news organizations utilized various transparency features at the level of a single news item or news story.

The examination of 1,008 online news stories revealed that news organizations regularly use transparency features. These features include time stamps, hyperlinks, comments, staff biographies, etc., as described in the research literature. *Tables 3 & 4* list the different transparency items this content analysis returned. The transparency features employed by the 12 news organizations were classified as production transparency (information regarding the process of news production, see *table 3*) and producer transparency (information about the news producer, *table 4*).

The implementation of transparency features across the news organizations differed slightly, at times, such as in variations of time stamps — from simply giving a date (*Washington Post*) to providing several time stamps detailing each single update (*Los Angeles Times* and *Chicago Tribune*). Whereas a simple time stamp only indicates that a story was published at a particular day, detailed updates allow audiences to identify if and when an article was modified and possibly to what extent. Nevertheless, the majority of the observed transparency features do not provide extensive information about the journalistic production process or the news producers, resulting in a limited or minimal form of transparency. As such, the transparency features found in this content analysis should possibly be termed indicators or cues of transparency, as they provide very little information that would enable audiences to reconstruct or understand the journalistic process that went into the production of a particular story. These findings stand in contrast to the normative literature, which has suggested that transparency in journalism allows audiences to reconstruct or discern how a news story is produced (McBride & Rosenstiel, 2014).

In this chapter, I describe in detail the extent to which news organizations use transparency features. In section *6.1.,* I examine the use of production transparency features across the 12 news organizations. In section *6.2.,* I discuss news organizations' implementation of producer transparency (i.e. information about the journalist behind the story). In section *6.3*., I detail how news organizations differ with respect to their use of transparency features and their efforts to allow audiences the proverbial look behind the curtain. In section *6.4*., I summarize the findings of the content analysis and argue that current transparency features may need to be re-conceptualized, as they provide little information about the journalistic process. Therefore, these features may be of limited use to audiences.

6.1. Production Transparency Implemented

The content analysis showed a number of items that fall under the category of producer transparency (time stamps, hyperlinks, corrections, editorial explanations, and comments). However, not all production transparency features mentioned in the literature or by the journalists I interviewed (see chapter 5) were found on the news item level. Reporter blogs and chats, for example, were not featured on the 1,008 webpages examined. In contrast, the most frequent feature used by each of the 12 news organizations was time stamps, which allowed audiences to discern when a news article was published and/or updated.

Time stamps

The two newspapers owned by the Tribune Publishing Company, the *Los Angeles Times* and *Chicago Tribune*, exhibited the most detailed time stamps. Both the *Los Angeles Times* and *Chicago Tribune* displayed the original publishing date and time and each subsequent update to the minute. When updates were available, they were located at the bottom of each story. Next to the update-time stamp a brief explanation was provided as to what was updated or added to the article. *NBC News* offered a similar service for readers, which included a number of updates at the bottom of the story detailing the changes to the text. Overall, however, such detailed updates were extremely rare. *NBC News* had only two detailed updates, and the *Chicago Tribune* had published one detailed update. The *Los Angeles Times* provided the most of such updates with 22 stories. *NPR* also stood out by including 11 updates. Depending on the story, *NPR* either labeled updates with a simple time stamp or they also included the information that has been added.

Table 3 - Production transparency features across 12 national news organizations at the news item level

News Outlets	ABC News	CBS News	NBC News	CNN	Fox News	NPR	Chicago Tribune	LA Times	Wall Street Journal	Washington Post	New York Times	USA Today	Total
	N=84	N=85	N=84	N=83	N=84	N=84	N=84	N=84	N=84	N=84	N=84	N=84	N=1008
Production Transparency													
Time Stamps	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Publication	100%	100%	100%	0%	100%	100%	100%	100%	44%	100%	100%	100%	87%
Publication & Update	0%	32%	2%	0%	0%	13%	1%	26%	0%	1%	0%	4%	7%
Update only	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	56%	0%	0%	0%	13%
Corrections	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	10%	0%	0%	10%	0%	7%	1%	2%
Link to Corrections on page	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	17%
Hyperlinks	96%	89%	83%	89%	56%	86%	82%	52%	90%	90%	95%	58%	81%
Editorial Explanation	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0.2%
Audiences Comments	100%	100%	100%	6%	65%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	96%	99%	89%
Reader contribution published	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Reader collaboration wanted	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Reader news	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Audience Call to Report errors	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Reporter Blogs/ Chats	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Polls	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

The *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* display the publishing date of the story without the exact time or any indication regarding possible updates. In contrast, the *Wall Street Journal* provided the exact time and date. Yet, the *Journal* only displayed either the exact time of the publication or an update. Audiences may struggle with such a use of time stamps, as one cannot always determine when the publication came out in and how much later an update was made. *USA Today* also provided detailed publishing time stamps (time and date), and while the paper also pointed out at the top that a story was updated, no details about the update were published.

Fox News and *CNN* never provided any 'significant' updates. While *Fox News* only displayed a publishing date without the exact time, *CNN* labeled all of its stories as updated, not giving any indication when the story was first published. Interestingly, this default use of "updated" time stamps may allow *CNN* to make updates or corrections whenever the news organizations sees fit.

While each news organization used time stamps, no industry-wide standard dictates how much information should be provided regarding story updates. The lack of a standard shows that some news organizations appear to care more about transparently displaying changes to a news story than others. While *CBS News* frequently (32% of 85 stories) indicated when the last update was made, the news outlet did not highlight what exactly was changed or updated. Conversely, the *Los Angeles Times* and *NPR* attempted to give audiences more information by detailing the additions or changes made to the text. The *New York Times* did not offer any update information (at least in this sample data).

Hyperlinks

Hyperlinks are a common feature of news stories across all 12 news organizations. Hyperlinks are often used to provide additional information or context, and occasionally point to original documents that were used in reporting. The use of hyperlinks varied only slightly across the 12 news organizations. While *Fox News* (56%), *Los Angeles Times* (52%) and *USA Today* (58%) used hyperlinks less extensively, the overall average of using hyperlinks was 81%. In contrast, *ABC News* used hyperlinks most often (96 %).

All news organizations tend to link internally, that is to other stories on similar topics or to extra information concerning a location, source, etc. When the *New York Times* hyperlinks a word like Saudi Arabia in a news story, the link would thus take audiences to a site with a number of stories about that country, listed in chronological order of publication. If a source in the article has a hyperlink, the link primarily points to a list of stories about this individual; sometimes, as in the case of the *Wall Street Journal*, a description and image of the source are provided. Yet, such links are neither standard nor will all sources in a text be linked internally or externally.

External links were generally rare, regardless of the news outlet. *ABC News* and *Fox News* linked to stories of other news organizations. Yet, external links to original information appeared to be the exception. While this content analysis did not list each single internal and external link of the 1,008 stories because of time constraints (several stories had more than ten hyperlinks), a more in-depth examination of the use of hyperlinks will be part of future research.

Overall, the use of hyperlinks does not appear to provide audiences with much of a glimpse of the journalistic process on a daily basis. Internal hyperlinks appear to be the standard for news organizations and external links — whether to sources or original documents — are rare. As such, audiences seldom have the opportunity to scrutinize source information and cannot frequently evaluate whether journalists correctly interpreted the original data or source information.

Editorial explanations

Another aspect of production transparency that, at least theoretically, should allow audiences to learn more about the journalistic process, is editorial explanations that explain the work and decisions that went into the production of a particular story. Across the sample data, only *NBC News* provided editorial notes. *NBC News* offered two explanations tied to investigative news stories, described below. As suggested by many of the journalists interviewed for this research, only "big stories" would be accompanied by editorial explanations. Therefore, the overall lack of editorial notes or explanations may not be too surprising because the majority of news stories in this sample were not part of an investigative project.

One of the two editorial notes was located at the bottom of a story by the *NBC News* investigative unit. A brief paragraph had been added detailing the sources used to construct the narrative of the story. Furthermore, most of the source materials mentioned were not explicitly detailed in the news story itself. Yet, the brief passage did not offer any other information that would illuminate specific decisions or processes regarding the news production that would allow audiences to reconstruct or discern how this particular story came to be produced. Moreover, the note did not offer an explanation as to why the source materials were not referenced in the story. In the second example, *NBC News* provided only a quick note about a published story that simply stated that the article has been condensed from a longer version to which a link was provided.

Presumably, if the sample data had included more investigative stories the content analysis would have returned more stories with editorial explanations. Nevertheless, since the data only returned two very brief editorial notes, the findings suggest that editorial notes are not a common feature for day-to-day news stories.

<u>*Corrections*</u>

Five news organizations displayed corrections publicly, which accounted for about 2% of all stories in the sample. Corrections were displayed either right at the top of the story (*USA Today*) or at the bottom of the story (*New York Times, Wall Street Journal, NPR, ABC News*)[5].

In the case of corrections, again, there are no industry-wide standards as to what news organizations may consider worth correcting or label as corrections online. For example, *CNN* displays time stamps as updates, allowing the organization to, at least theoretically, correct possible mistakes without clearly identifying such a correction. *CNN* also did not have and still doesn't have a corrections page (Silverman, 2010). Yet, *CNN Money,* a *CNN* subsidiary, runs a corrections page for its stories (CNN Money, 2015).

Corrections online seem to be handled differently across the news organizations analyzed in this study. For instance, the data returned one correction issued by *ABC News*. But the news outlet didn't label the correction of a mistake as a "correction" but as an editorial note (Ferran, L. & Ross, B., 2015):

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[5] Newspapers generally print corrections (predominantly on page 2) on a daily basis, often with a brief explanation as to what went wrong.

> This report has been revised to clarify that Mascheroni's statement about "doing it for the money" was made to his wife and not to the undercover federal agent, as the original version of this report implied.

Such labeling of an apparent correction as an "editorial note" does not appear to be an "honest" or transparent effort by *ABC News* to admit that an error was made. In contrast, *USA Today* clearly indicates corrections at the top of a news story labeled "corrections & clarifications."

Generally, corrections pointed out factual errors. Most corrections addressed misspellings of names, wrong dates, or false attributions. Detailed explanations about how the error occurred online or in which part of the story the mistake was made were not provided. The *New York Times* corrected a misspelled name from "Yakuwa" to "Yukawa" (Nordland, 2015), which may have been a simple typographical error.

Karlsson (2010) argued that the frequency of corrections might be linked to publishing stories online too quickly. Karlsson seemed to suggest that the internal review process may have failed, resulting in the pre-mature publishing of a news story. Yet, publishing corrections may be tied to a news organization's commitment to transparency rather than fast publishing. Notably, the *Wall Street Journal*, *New York Times* and *NPR* published the most corrections, while *CNN, Fox News, CBS News, NBC News, Chicago Tribune, the Los Angeles Times, and the Washington Post* did not publish any corrections. This apparent divide in the sample data, between the various news organizations, does not automatically lead to the conclusion that some news organizations publish their stories faster with what could be considered a less than thorough review process or that some news organizations are more transparent about correcting possible mistakes. Nevertheless, according to the interview data and the findings of the content analysis, neither *CNN* nor *Fox News*, for example, appear very transparent about mistakes. In fact, both news organizations do not operate corrections pages online.

Karlsson's assumption that corrections are tied to the speed of publishing may explain mistakes, but it does not necessarily explain the policy about publicly correcting errors. In fact, the literature on accuracy in journalism has suggested that many more mistakes occur than are corrected (Kampf & Daskal, 2014; Cremedas, 1992; Nemeth & Sanders, 2001; Maier, 2007; Mensing & Oliver 2005). Thus, the publishing speed and the number of publicly visible corrections may not be directly correlated but may hinge on a news organization's commitment to transparency. On the one hand, no matter how the size or scope of a mistake, when news organizations correct those errors publicly they underline their commitment to transparency. On the other hand, a lack of corrections could indicate either that news organizations make no mistakes or that they may mend errors invisibly, unless an error may be too egregious to ignore.

<u>*Comments*</u>

Audience comments can also be understood as a form of production transparency. During the interviews, journalists from *NPR* and the *Washington Post* suggested that audiences often use comments to question or criticize news content or to point toward a mistake in a story, giving journalists the opportunity to respond and explain their work. The majority of news organizations allow for comments underneath each news story. A notable exception is *CNN*, which didn't provide audiences the opportunity to post comments in 94% of all *CNN* stories in the sample. Only stories through *CNN's Money* blog, which are distributed via the *CNN* website, offered comments. This lack of audience comments certainly limits *CNN's* efforts to open up and to allow audiences to directly critique news content.

Fox News allows audiences to comment and in 65% of the analyzed news articles, comments were enabled. Yet, one-third of the stories available through *Fox News* did not have a comments feature, frequently stating that comments were temporarily disabled, without explaining why. Additionally, the *New York Times*, on occasion, did not allow for audience comments, and while the news organization has a policy outlining when comments are enabled (Sullivan, 2012), the news outlet does not provide any explanation at the news item level itself as to why the comment function was disabled.

Generally, news organizations implement production transparency features such as time stamps, hyperlinks, and comments. While theoretically these features allow for audiences to learn about the journalistic process, in practice, very little background information is actually available. Audiences can gauge when a news story was published or updated, but in most cases news organizations provide little or no information about possible changes or updates. Thus, news audiences gain very little useful information from these transparency features to actually be able to re-trace or reverse engineer how a news story came to be published.

6.2. Producer Transparency Implemented

Producer transparency discloses information about the people or organization behind a particular news story. News organizations increasingly provide profiles of journalists or staff biographies that may or may not have photos of the journalists. Staff bios allow for an enhanced personalization of journalists and, as such, may be understood as an

Table 4 - Producer transparency features across 12 national news organizations at the news item level

News Outlets	ABC News	CBS News	NBC News	CNN	Fox News	NPR	Chicago Tribune	LA Times	Wall Street Journal	Washington Post	New York Times	USA Today	Total
	N=84	N=85	N=84	N=83	N=84	N=84	N=84	N=84	N=84	N=84	N=84	N=84	N=1008
Producer Transparency													
Staff bio	1%	14%	58%	0%	5%	0%	0%	0%	0%	96%	0%	4%	15%
Staff bio via link	83%	0%	0%	20%	4%	95%	0%	94%	100%	0%	100%	100%	50%
Photo of Journalist	0%	5%	31%	1%	8%	24%	0%	0%	0%	80%	0%	33%	15%
Byline	96%	44%	98%	100%	26%	99%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	89%
Email contact	1%	0%	0%	0%	4%	0%	61%	45%	94%	2%	0%	1%	17%
Personal Twitter	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	15%	21%	0%	0%	0%	2%	3%
Company Twitter	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Company Facebook	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Company Tumblr	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	8%
Company Reddit	0%	100%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	100%	0%	100%	100%	0%	50%
Company Pinterest	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	100%	0%	100%	100%	100%	50%
Company LinkedIn	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	100%	0%	100%	100%	0%	42%
Company Google Plus	100%	100%	100%	100%	0%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	92%

extension of what Schudson (1978) called an indication of subjectivization — a notion associated with the introduction of bylines about 100 years ago. Theoretically more information about a newsmaker could inform audiences about certain predispositions of a journalist or news organization that may have influenced the production of a particular news story.

Staff Bios

Many news organizations provide very short staff biographies. The majority of news outlets provide links to such profiles rather than displaying such producer transparency information on the news item level, which would allow audiences an easier access to such information. Again, the display of staff bios does not follow a particular standard across or at times even within news organizations. During the interviews, many journalists indicated that they themselves decide how much information goes into a staff bio. According to the results of the content analysis, the amount of information provided differs dramatically within a single news organization. Sometimes only a name is given (even via link); conversely, one can read several paragraphs about the professional career of a reporter.

The *Washington Post* has established a standard to post brief staff bios at the bottom of each story. These bios, accompanied by a photo and not more than a line or two in length, described the particular specialization or expertise of a journalist. In rare cases, the biographies also provided information about previous postings or the career of a journalist. While the bios highlight the expertise of the particular journalist, audiences may learn very little about journalists' points of view or personal likes or dislikes, which could have possibly influenced the production of a news story.

NBC News also frequently (58% of the time) provided information about their journalists at the bottom of a story. *NBC News* staff bios are predominantly about a line or two long and come with a small photo of the journalist. Other news organizations like *USA Today*, *ABC News,* or *Fox News* provided staff bios occasionally at the news item level, but these were exceptions. In some cases, however, audiences can learn more about an individual journalist via a link. The *New York Times* did offer longer bios of their reporters via links, describing journalists' careers over a couple of paragraphs while also offering access to an archive of their stories.

Overall, news organizations did offer audiences some background information about their journalists. But in the majority of cases producer information was extremely sparse and didn't provide much information, which would allow audiences to discern if a journalist comes to a news story with a point of view. In particular, some personal information may be informative to audiences. During the interviews, a *USA Today* reporter suggested that while personal information about family should not be disclosed, sharing personal interests with readers that influence the professional work are fair game.

Contacts: Social media and emails

Contacting journalists directly, via email or social media, allows for greater audience engagement and personal exchange, which can provide more information about an individual reporter, editor or producer. News organizations encourage journalists to use Twitter and other social media for that purpose. All news organizations offer audiences the opportunity to connect through various social media platforms. While *CNN* offers the widest array of social media connections (Twitter, Facebook, Tumblr, Reddit, Pinterest, LinkedIn, Google Plus), *Fox News* had the least (Twitter, Facebook). Yet, the social media connections, which are a default feature on each news item, mostly allow audiences to connect to the news outlets' general social media account. Direct contacts to journalists were only occasionally provided at the bottom of a news story.

During the interviews, several journalists mentioned that they are asked to respond to emails but direct email contacts of journalists are not a regular feature. The *Wall Street Journal* provides email contacts of journalists at the bottom of nearly each news story to subscribers of the newspaper. The papers belonging to the Tribune Publishing Company, *Chicago Tribune* and *Los Angeles Times,* also frequently offer audiences the chance to contact journalists directly. Journalists at both papers provided email contacts (*Chicago Tribune,* 61%; *LA Times,* 45%).

Overall, audiences have no easy task if they want to contact journalists in a more direct or personal way. Of all 1,008 news stories in this content analysis, only about 17% included email contacts. Journalists shared even less frequently their personal Twitter handles — only 3% of all stories contained personal Twitter handles. During the interviews several journalists said that if audiences follow them on Twitter, audiences can sometimes learn more about the journalists, about their likes, dislikes (what stories the journalist may re-tweet and is interested in), and what the journalist may generally care about (a football team or a movie).

6.3. Transparency: Differences Between News Organizations

All 12 news organizations employ several transparency features that on the surface seem similar but may differ in the degree of utility for audiences. *CNN* and *Fox News* were the least transparent news outlets, according to this content analysis. Both companies provide very limited information through their time stamps that don't allow audiences to discern when exactly a story was published or when a news item was updated or changed. While *CNN* termed every published story as updated, *Fox News* simply provided a publishing date. Both companies didn't issue any corrections, which could indicate that they didn't make any mistakes during the time the sample was drawn. But *CNN* and *Fox News* also do not have general corrections pages online, a fact that raises doubts concerning the news organizations' general commitment to publicly correct errors on a regular basis or to transparency.

CNN and *Fox News* also do not provide much information about the journalists behind the news stories. While *CNN* generally provides bylines of journalists, more information about a particular author was only available for 20% of the stories via a byline link. *Fox News*, on the other hand, only mentioned a quarter of individual journalists through bylines, and staff bios were only available in 5% of the examined stories. Personal contacts through email or personal social media accounts were also rarely available, restricting direct interactions between audiences and journalists. This practice, as a result, limits producer transparency. Moreover, *CNN* generally does not allow for audience comments while *Fox News* provided comments 65% of the time.

The broadcast companies *ABC News*, *CBS News,* and *NBC News* are slightly more transparent online than *CNN* or *Fox News*. While the three networks did not provide much information about their journalistic production (with the exceptions of *ABC* News providing one correction and *NBC News* publishing two editorial notes), they did offer audiences more avenues to learn about the journalistic process through staff bios, bylines, social media, or comments. *CBS News (*14%) and *NBC News* (58%) both provided brief staff bios at the news item level. As such, they allowed for more producer transparency than *CNN* and *Fox News*. But the three broadcast networks are still less transparent in contrast to the newspapers in this study (*USA Today, Wall Street Journal, Washington Post, New York Times, Los Angeles Times, and Chicago Tribune*) and *NPR*.

The tendency of newspapers and *NPR* to provide corrections or to provide slightly more detailed information regarding updates online (*Chicago Tribune, Los Angeles Times*), made these news outlets more transparent than the other broadcast news organizations in this study. Similarly, newspapers and *NPR* in general offered more information about or access to individual journalists than the broadcast companies mentioned above. While only a few outlets provided direct email addresses of journalists on a regular basis (*Wall Street Journal, Los Angeles Times, Chicago Tribune*) all newspapers and *NPR* offer bylines, frequently with hyperlinks to staff bios. The *Washington Post* was the only newspaper that regularly offered staff bios directly at the news item level.

While the newspapers and *NPR* in this study can be considered the most transparent news outlets, their use of the various transparency features differs. The

New York Times does not normally publicize email contacts of their journalists, while the *Wall Street Journal* does. The *Washington Post* provides staff bios (mostly with photos) under each story but the *Wall Street Journal* does not. By themselves, these differences did not allow for a definitive quantitative assessment of which news outlet may be most transparent because the various transparency features are not equally weighted in importance. Thus, to determine which news organization is the most transparent, an analysis of what audiences deem most important in terms of transparency may be required.

6.4. Conclusion

Overall the results of the content analysis of a sample of 1,008 news stories across 12 national news organizations websites showed that no single news organization provided any substantial information — such as explaining why particular sources were used or chosen for a news story and not others, or describing what was updated in a story that was labeled as such — that would allow audiences to actually retrace the journalistic production process. The publication of corrections highlighted that mistakes occurred and indicated the rectification of an error, but no detailed information were given as to why, how, or where a mistake occurred in the text. Editorial explanations that could have provided more depth about why and how a particular news story was done were basically not found, apart from two editorial notes that offered little useful explanations about the journalistic production process.

Audiences also may find it difficult to access information about journalists. The staff bios that news organizations provided are rarely available on the news item level — only 15% of all 1,008 news stories. But even when staff bios and photos of journalists are provided, the usability of this information is questionable with respect to the ability of audiences to discern possible conflicts of interest, biases or points of view. Lasica (2004, 2005) and Singer (2007) pointed out that bloggers frequently disclose such information for the sake of transparency. But in the case of the analyzed national news outlets, staff bios rarely offered more information than a journalist's beat or specialization; they only highlighted that a particular journalist is an expert of a particular field or topic he or she is covering. Moreover, direct contacts to journalists via email or social media are also limited, as only about 17% of all news items included journalists' email contacts and only 3% carried journalists' personal Twitter handles.

The analysis of news at the item level did not return any links to reporter blogs, Google Hangouts, reporter chats, polls, or similar interactive features that were mentioned by several journalists as transparency features during the interviews (see chapter 5). Additionally, the content analysis did not find, as suggested by Karlsson (2010), calls for audience collaboration or instances of publishing audience content — features that have been seen as ways of letting readers into the news production process.

The installation and implementation of the various transparency features by news organizations appears to be only an attempt to be transparent rather than giving information that would allow audiences to hold news organizations or journalists accountable or understand the reporting process, as the normative literature has suggested (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007; Singer, 2007, 2010; Plaisance, 2007;

McBride & Rosenstiel, 2014). Online transparency features may provide more information about the journalistic process than newspapers, radio, or television were previously able to provide. In fact, these features do provide slightly more information, but the amount, quality, and usability of this information for audiences appears to be institutionally limited. Journalists and news organizations appear to hold back and not open up to a degree that would allow audiences to have access to information about the journalistic process regarding individual news stories. This may be, as a *Los Angeles Times* editor suggested during the interviews section (see chapter 5), because transparency is just one more thing to do.

The limited transparency information available may also be due to the lack of industry-wide standards of implementing the various transparency features. As transparency becomes an increasingly important norm in journalism, a standardized implementation of transparency features could indeed strengthen the overall perception of journalistic professionalism.

Chapter 7: Testing the Effects of Transparency on Trust: Experiment Results

The literature on trust has suggested that more information about an actor can reduce uncertainty and facilitate trust (Simmel, 1950; Lewis & Weigert, 1985; Kollock, 1999; Coleman et al., 2012). Transparency provides additional information about journalists and the journalistic process that could reduce uncertainty and instill trust in journalism. This dissertation's first experiment tested and explored this main assumption, that transparency will impact audiences trust perceptions. Over 1,000 participants were randomly assigned to a news article with six different transparency conditions[6] online. After reading an article participants were directed to a survey to answer 11 questions, based on Kohring's and Matthes's (2007) multifactor model of trust in journalism (see *table 5* below). The experiment design was modeled after a study in Germany (Meier & Reimer, 2011), which found transparency effects on audiences' trust evaluations (see *Figure 1* below).

The collected data was examined using MANOVA, Spearman's rank-order correlation, and regression analysis to test seven hypotheses. The data analysis showed that none of the transparency conditions impact audiences' trust evaluations significantly. Participants' perceptions of trust did not differ across all conditions. In other words, the presence or absence of transparency features or the type of

[6] 1. no-transparency; 2. production transparency includes hyperlinks, comments, time stamps, corrections, call for audience participation, editorial comments; 3. producer transparency includes byline, email and social media contacts of journalist, photo and bio of journalist; 4. producer transparency negative - same as condition 3 but includes partisan bio information; 5. full transparency combines conditions 2 and 3; 6. full transparency negative same as condition 5. but includes partisan bio information. For more details see chapter 4.

transparency information did not impact how audiences trusted the news story. Thus, all hypotheses[7] were rejected.

In this chapter, I detail my data analysis. In section *7.1.*, I briefly explain the rationale of the various statistical approaches to examine the data. In section *7.2.*, I discuss each single hypothesis and discuss demographical and other factors that impacted participants' trust evaluations. In section *7.3.*, I outline the limitations of the first experiment and propose several factors that may explain the findings. This last section of the chapter draws on the data of the second experiment to provide a better understanding of why participants in this study didn't perceive any differences in trust across the varied transparency conditions. Moreover, I suggest avenues for future research to further explore the link between transparency and trust in journalism.

7.1. Approaching the Data

Kohring and Matthes (2007) wrote that trust in journalism is a latent factor of second order comprising four first order factors: trust in selectivity of topics (excluded), trust in selectivity of facts (F_1), trust in accuracy of depictions (F_2), and trust in journalistic assessment (F_3). In turn, each of the first order factors consists of four items, which can be directly tested (see *table 5*).

[7] All hypotheses and results are discussed in detail in section *7.2.*.

Table 5 - Kohring & Matthes' (2007) multifactor model - "trust in the news media."

Trust dimensions:	Latent trust factor items:
Trust in the selectivity of topics (excluded)	1. The topic receives necessary attention. 2. The topic is assigned the adequate status. 3. The frequency with which the topic is covered is adequate. 4. The topic is covered on the necessary regular basis.
Trust in selectivity of facts (F1)	5. The essential points are included 6. The focus of the article is on important facts 7. All important information regarding the topic is provided. 8. The reporting includes different points of view.
Trust in accuracy of depictions (F2)	1. The information in the article would be verifiable if examined. 2. The reported information is true. 3. I think the article recounts the facts truthfully. 4. The facts that I received regarding the topic are correct.
Trust in journalistic assessment (F3)	1. When criticism is expressed, it is done in an adequate and well founded manner. 2. The journalist's assessments regarding the topic are useful. 3. The journalist's evaluations of the topic of nanotechnology are well founded. 4. I feel that the journalistic assessments regarding the topic are useful.

Following Meier and Reimer (2011), my first experiment utilized 11 items (see *table 2* in chapter 4) across three factors (F_1, F_2, F_3), without the factor "trust in selectivity of topics." The factor "trust in the selectivity of topics" was excluded because this factor does not assess elements within a specific news item. Instead, the factor explores how news audiences contextualize the overall news media coverage of a particular topic. Similarly, one item from the factor “trust in journalistic assessment” (F_3) was excluded because the item (“I feel that the journalistic assessments regarding the topic are useful.”) referred to the topic generally. As such, the item cannot assess the impact of the various transparency features tested in the experiment.

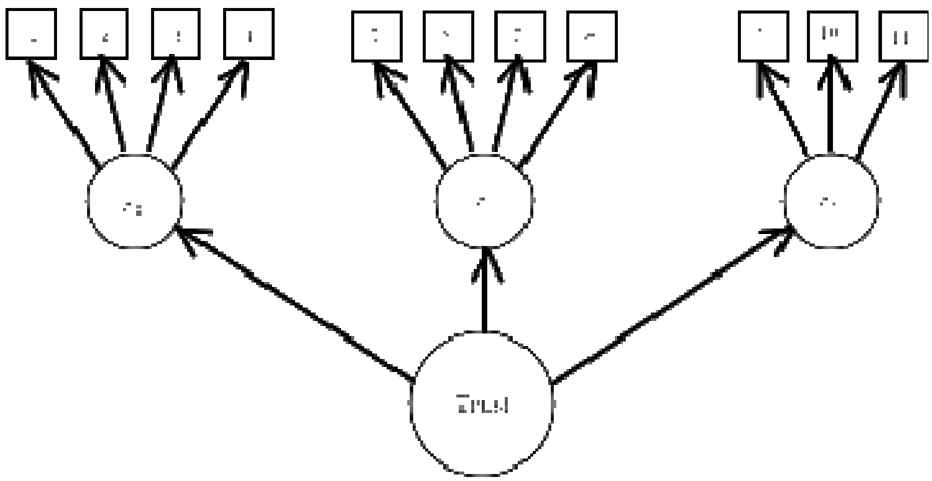

Figure 1 - Modified model of trust in journalism

The complexity of the multifactorial model of trust in journalism (Kohring & Matthes, 2007) and the rich data set (N=1,021) allow for various statistical explorations of the data. To examine the main effect of varied transparency conditions on news audiences’ trust perceptions, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) and a Spearman’s rank correlation were employed. Then, a regression analysis was used to estimate the effects of a number of explanatory (demographic and other) variables on the dependent variable (DV) trust.

A MANOVA was conducted with six levels of transparency (independent variables - IVs) on four factors of trust, treated here as dependent variables (DVs). I examined whether the three factors (F_1, F_2, F_3) independently and taken together (F_{sum}) differ across the six transparency conditions. The MANOVA was used to reduce the probability of Type I error. Moreover, a MANOVA allows for a combination of the different variables, which can produce more meaningful results than employing individual ANOVAs that may not show significant main effects on the DV. Further, a MANOVA takes intercorrelations between the dependent variables into account. As trust in journalism is considered a multifactorial construct, such intercorrelations are particularly important to examine.

In a second step, I compared each one of the 11 trust items across two conditions to analyze the strength and direction between transparency levels (IVs) and trust (DVs). A Spearman's rank-order correlation was employed as both variables (DVs and IVs) are considered ordinal rather than interval and the relationship between the two variables is monotonic (i.e. as transparency increases, trust should increase). Transparency conditions five and six were excluded from the Spearman correlations, as they cannot be considered monotonic. Transparency condition five is similar to the full transparency condition four, and condition six is similar to condition three, yet these two conditions (5 and 6) differ as they contain negative producer transparency information.

Finally, I ran a regression analysis to examine whether other factors or predispositions may help explain or predict participants' trust perceptions on the news item level. Regressions were run on covariates such as age, gender, ethnicity, news media consumption, general trust in the news media, and political leanings. In the next section, I detail all the findings, hypothesis by hypothesis.

7.2. Hypotheses: A Detailed Analysis

As pointed out above, all the tests employed in this study showed no significant differences in participants' trust evaluations across any of the tested transparency conditions. Thus, all hypotheses were rejected.

The MANOVA test results show a very low variability across all the latent factors of trust not only in isolation (4 items' factor F_1, M = 14.12, SD= 2.46; 4 items' factor F_2, M=14.42, SD= 2.29; 3 items' factor F_3, M=11.29, SD=1.74), but also taken together (11 items' factor F_{sum}, M=39.82, SD=5.41) to begin with (see *Figure 2* below). The means for each factor (F_1, F_2, F_3) varied only minimally across all six transparency conditions (see Appendix D). The MANOVA revealed a non-significant multivariate main effect for transparency, Wilks' λ = .985, F (15, 2796.85) = 1.033, p = .417, η^2 = .005. Observed power to detect the effect was .646. The MANOVA test concluded to retain the null hypotheses as no significant differences among the groups were found, leading to a rejection of all hypotheses (H1 – H7).

The MANOVA showed that transparency may only explain a very small part of participants' trust evaluations. Wilks' lambda (λ) is a measure of the percent of variance in the dependent variable (trust) that is not explained by differences in the level of independent variables (O'Rourke, Hatcher, Stepanski, & Hatcher, 2005). In other words, the independent variables or different transparency conditions only explain 1.5% (Wilks' λ = .985) of participants' trust evaluations in the experiment.

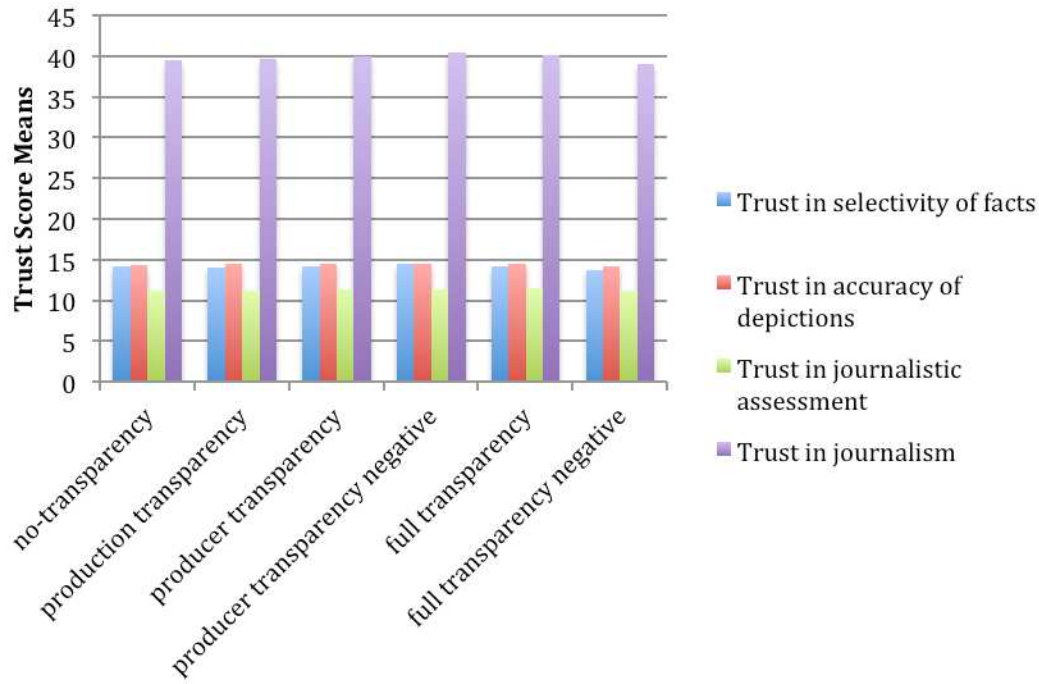

Figure 2 - Variability of trust means across six transparency conditions

As the MANOVA test did not show any significant results of varied transparency conditions on trust, a Spearman correlation (r_s) was conducted to tease out possible differences on each of the eleven trust items of the multifactor model of trust in journalism (Kohring & Matthes, 2007).

Hypothesis 1 (H1) predicted that a production transparency news item will be trusted more than a non-transparent article. A comparison of the 11 trust items across the two conditions showed that none of the correlations were significant. Audiences' trust perceptions did not differ between a text/website that had no transparency features and a text/website that had hyperlinks to original documents, corrections, time stamps, reader comments, call for reader participation, and an editorial text explaining the production of the news article. In other words, despite the fact that the producer transparency text/website offered much more information about the journalistic process, this extra information did not impact participants' trust perceptions in this study. Thus, H1 was rejected (see *table 6)*.

Table 6 - Spearman correlation (transparency version 1 & 2)

	Spearman correlation between transparency level and trust perceptions – article version (1) and (2)		
	No-transparency (N_1 = 166) & production transparency (N_2=178)		
	Items	r_s	Sig.
F_1	1. The essential points are included	-0.036	0.51
	2. All important information regarding the topic is provided	0.012	0.83
	3. The reporting of the article includes different points of view	0.015	0.78
	4. The focus of the article is on important facts.	-0.067	0.21
F_2	5. The information in the article would be verifiable if examined.	0.089	0.10
	6. The reporter information is true.	0.054	0.31
	7. The facts I received are correct.	0.025	0.65
	8. I think the article recounts the facts truthfully	-0.059	0.27
F_3	9. When criticism is expressed, it is done in an adequate and well-founded manner.	0.039	0.47
	10. The journalist's assessments regarding the topic are useful.	-0.061	0.26
	11. The journalist's evaluations of the topic are well founded.	0.079	0.14

Similarly, hypothesis 2 (H2) predicted that a producer transparency news item will be trusted more than a non-transparent article. This hypothesis was also built on the theoretical assumption that more information about the author would translate into an increase of trust in the news item. As *table 7* shows, participants in this study did not evaluate any of the eleven trust items as significantly different across the non-transparent and producer transparency news articles. More information about the journalists (photo, staff bio, byline, email, and social media contacts) did not impact participants trust evaluation concerning the same article they read. H2 was rejected.

Table 7 - Spearman correlation (transparency version 1 & 3)

	Spearman correlation between transparency level and trust perceptions – article version (1) and (3)		
	No-transparency (N_1 = 166) & producer transparency (N_3=166)		
	Items	r_s	Sig.
F_1	1. The essential points are included	-0.073	0.35
	2. All important information regarding the topic is provided	0.134	0.09
	3. The reporting of the article includes different points of view	0.086	0.27
	4. The focus of the article is on important facts.	-0.041	0.60
F_2	5. The information in the article would be verifiable if examined.	0.038	0.63
	6. The reporter information is true.	0.050	0.52
	7. The facts I received are correct.	-0.007	0.93
	8. I think the article recounts the facts truthfully	0.063	0.42
F_3	9. When criticism is expressed, it is done in an adequate and well-founded manner.	0.121	0.12
	10. The journalist's assessments regarding the topic are useful.	0.034	0.67
	11. The journalist's evaluations of the topic are well founded.	0.052	0.51

Hypothesis 3 (H3) explored whether the combination of producer and production transparency (i.e. full transparency) will be trusted more than a non-transparent article. The comparison of the two transparency conditions showed that 10 out of the 11 items from the trust model showed no significance (i.e. participants did not see a difference in trust) (see *Table 8*). But item 5 (F_2 - trust in accuracy of journalistic depictions) showed a weak but significant correlation. Participants' trust perceptions in the full-transparency condition differed significantly from the participants in the non-transparent condition for item five. Thus, transparency did impact participants'

trust evaluations with respect to the information in the article being verifiable if examined. The full-transparency condition, including information about the production and producer, appears to have given participants the impression that they would be able to re-engineer the facts of the story. Nevertheless, because only one of the 11 trust items was significant and the correlation was rather weak, H3 was rejected.

Table 8 - Spearman correlation (transparency version 1 & 4)

	Spearman correlation between transparency level and trust perceptions – article version (1) and (4)		
	No-transparency (N_1 = 166) & full transparency (N_4=168)		
	Items	r_s	Sig.
F_1	1. The essential points are included	-0.082	0.29
	2. All important information regarding the topic is provided	0.039	0.61
	3. The reporting of the article includes different points of view	0.097	0.21
	4. The focus of the article is on important facts.	-0.042	0.58
F_2	**5. The information in the article would be verifiable if examined.**	**0.153**	**0.05**
	6. The reporter information is true.	0.037	0.63
	7. The facts I received are correct.	-0.076	0.32
	8. I think the article recounts the facts truthfully	0.048	0.53
F_3	9. When criticism is expressed, it is done in an adequate and well-founded manner.	0.123	0.11
	10. The journalist's assessments regarding the topic are useful.	-0.041	0.59
	11. The journalist's evaluations of the topic are well founded.	0.131	0.09

Hypothesis 4 (H4) stated that a full-transparency news item will be trusted more than a production transparency article. Again, none of the correlations were significant and participants' trust evaluations across these two article versions did not differ (see

table 9). The additional producer information within the full transparency condition did not seem to play any role in assessing trust. Hypothesis 4 was also rejected.

Table 9 - Spearman correlation (transparency version 2 & 4)

	Spearman correlation between transparency level and trust perceptions – article version (2) and (4)		
	production transparency (N_2 = 178) & full transparency (N_4=168)		
	Items	r_s	Sig.
F_1	1. The essential points are included	-0.020	0.79
	2. All important information regarding the topic is provided	0.000	1.00
	3. The reporting of the article includes different points of view	0.002	0.98
	4. The focus of the article is on important facts.	0.058	0.44
F_2	5. The information in the article would be verifiable if examined.	0.062	0.41
	6. The reporter information is true.	-0.089	0.24
	7. The facts I received are correct.	-0.139	0.06
	8. I think the article recounts the facts truthfully	0.095	0.21
F_3	9. When criticism is expressed, it is done in an adequate and well-founded manner.	0.036	0.63
	10. The journalist's assessments regarding the topic are useful.	0.023	0.76
	11. The journalist's evaluations of the topic are well founded.	0.080	0.29

Hypothesis 5 (H5) predicted that a full transparency news item will be trusted more than a producer transparency article. Again none of the correlations in this pairwise comparison across 11 trust items were significant (*table 10*). Participants' trust evaluations did not differ between the full transparency article (combined producer and production transparency) and the article that provided only information about the journalist (news producer). Hypothesis 5 was rejected.

Table 10 - Spearman correlation (transparency version 3 & 4)

	Spearman correlation between transparency level and trust perceptions – article version (3) and (4)		
	producer transparency (N_3=166) & full transparency (N_4=168)		
	Items	r_s	Sig.
F_1	1. The essential points are included	0.053	0.50
	2. All important information regarding the topic is provided	-0.074	0.35
	3. The reporting of the article includes different points of view	-0.046	0.56
	4. The focus of the article is on important facts.	0.052	0.51
F_2	5. The information in the article would be verifiable if examined.	0.049	0.53
	6. The reporter information is true.	0.043	0.58
	7. The facts I received are correct.	0.007	0.92
	8. I think the article recounts the facts truthfully	-0.011	0.89
F_3	9. When criticism is expressed, it is done in an adequate and well-founded manner.	0.054	0.49
	10. The journalist's assessments regarding the topic are useful.	-0.047	0.55
	11. The journalist's evaluations of the topic are well founded.	0.100	0.21

The first five hypotheses tested whether an increase of transparency information would positively impact audiences' trust perceptions. In contrast, hypotheses 6 and 7 suggested that negative information about the journalist (producer transparency) will negatively influence participants' trust assessment about a news item. The hypotheses were tested using regression analysis.

Hypothesis 6 stated that (H6) a full transparency news item will be trusted more than a fully transparent article, which includes biased information about the producer. A regression analysis was used to test if a negative transparency item will significantly predict participants' ratings of trust. A regression analysis that controlled for other variables (gender, race, political leanings, news consumption, general trust in news media) indicated that negative transparency did not significantly show that participants' trust perceptions differ across these two conditions *(p* = .97*).* Participants did not see a difference between the two full transparency conditions, which in one case disclosed partisan views (supporting Republican party) and possible conflicts of interest (former public relations consultant for one of the largest nanotechnology companies worldwide).

Hypothesis 7 (H7) explored a similar relationship as H6 but the conditions provided less information about the journalistic process by simply focusing on the producer or journalists of the story. The conditions included a photo, byline, bio, and contact information (email, social media). The assumption to test these conditions was that the limited transparency information might allow audiences to focus in greater detail on the provided transparency items. H7 stipulated that a producer transparency news item with neutral personal information will be trusted more than a producer transparency article with biased information. A regression analysis again indicated that transparency did not significantly predict participants' trust evaluations (p = .12). See Appendix D for all the results of the omnibus tests.

7.2.1. Predispositions and Demographical Predictors of Trust

As all of the hypotheses were rejected and transparency appeared, at least in this study, not to be a predictor of trust in journalism, other factors were explored to determine if certain predispositions might have impacted audiences' trust evaluations. A multiple regression analysis was conducted to explore whether other factors such as gender, age, news consumption, etc., are better predictors of trust than transparency. The returned results of the whole model did not provide a satisfying explanation as to what influences participants trust. While the omnibus test is significant ($F(31, 989) = 3.072$, $p < .0001$), the model only explains about 9% of the variance in trust scores ($R^2 = .088$). Nevertheless, the multiple regression analysis showed that two factors, age and general trust in the news media, were significant predictors of trusting a specific journalistic story. Gender also approached significance ($p = .07$), with women being less trusting than men.

The variable age showed that with increasing age participants trusted the news story less. The regression analysis indicated, while holding other factors constant, that trust scores for participants' aged 55 to 64 significantly differed (by two points of the trust sum score) from participants aged 18 to 24 ($p < .004$). Participants in the 55 to 64 age group trusted the news story they encountered significantly less than the 18 to 24 age group.

General trust in the news media similarly predicted participants' trust evaluations in this study. The regression analysis showed that participants who indicated that they trust the news media 'sometimes' or 'most of the time' (values 3 and 4 on five-point Likert scale) trusted the news article they read significantly more (sometimes, $p < .0001$; most of the time, $p < .007$) than participants who reported to never trust the news media.

Overall, these findings do not seem too surprising; people who already trust the news media would be expected also to display greater trust in the article they encountered in the experiment than people who do not trust the news media. Yet, the finding that participants' trust evaluations in the news article decreased with increasing age may suggest that trust in the news media erodes over time on the basis of possibly cumulating negative experiences. The findings of the experiment suggest that trust in the news media may be predicted primarily by people's pre-existing conditions, habits, and opinions about the news media and not by transparency information.

7.3. Discussion: Putting the Findings in Context

Participants' trust perceptions in this study did not seem affected by any of the transparency features they encountered across six different transparency conditions. Participants trusted a non-transparent news article as much as a full-transparency article with or without biased information regarding the journalist (negative producer transparency). The findings of this experiment stand in contrast to Meier and Reimer's (2011) study within the German news media context, which found weak but significant correlations between transparency and trust. As the first experiment in this dissertation was modeled in many aspects after Meier's and Reimer's approach, the lack of significant effects of transparency on trust among U.S. study participants may be explained by cultural differences.

News consumers in Germany and the United States might differ in recognizing, decoding, or processing the varied transparency information. Yet, Meier and Reimer's (2011) study also differed in one particular aspect: the non-transparent news article version in Germany did not include any source related information (no expert names or other source-related context) within the text of the news article. This dissertation did not employ such a condition. While for an experimental setting such a non-transparent condition may be useful, it lacks external validity. News texts from national news outlets in the United States are never fully devoid of source information and, as such, a "fully non-transparent" article does not exist outside a laboratory setting. This particular difference between the non-transparent conditions used in Germany and the United States may, in fact, be crucial, as the second experiment in this dissertation suggests that audiences pay more attention to the content of the text than to transparency features that are peripheral to the actually news story.

7.3.1. Explaining the Results

The second experiment was conducted to test whether participants differentiate between and recognize various levels of transparency. In particular, the experiments explored whether participants would be aware of and recall features like hyperlinks, editorial comments, journalist's bio, and more. The underlying rationale for the second experiment was that if readers do not recognize transparency features or their intended function, they would not evaluate transparent news stories any differently than a non-transparent news article.

Participants were randomly assigned to one of five different transparency conditions[8] (no- transparency to full transparency, including a full-transparency condition with negative producer information). After reading the article, participants were directed to a post-experiment survey. The first survey question asked

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[8] 1. no-transparency; 2. production transparency includes hyperlinks, comments, time stamps, corrections, call for audience participation, editorial comments; 3. producer transparency includes byline, email and social media contacts of journalist, photo and bio of journalist; 4. full transparency combines conditions 2 and 3; 5. full transparency negative same as condition 5. but includes partisan bio information.

participants to what extent they would evaluate the article or website they just saw as transparent. The following definition of the term "transparent" was provided: "Transparent is defined as being open regarding its sources, journalistic methods and decisions as well as possible biases and intentions." Participants were then asked to rate the article or website on a five-point Likert scale (1 - not transparent to 5 – very transparent). A one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare participants' evaluation of transparency across the five conditions. The test did not show any significant effect on participants' transparency evaluations [M= 3.72; SD= .86; $F(4, 299) =2.33$, $p=.056$]. But as the ANOVA result approached significance, independent t-tests were conducted to compare the different transparency conditions pair by pair. Comparing participants' evaluations of transparency across the five different conditions returned one significant result. The t-test indicated that participants' transparency evaluations differed between the non-transparent (N= 58, M = 3.47, SD = .92) and full transparent (N=60, M = 3.92, SD = .72) conditions [$t(116) = 2.97$, $p < .004$]. Participants perceived the full-transparency article as more transparent than the non-transparent news article. All other pairwise comparisons were not significant. Notably, participants' transparency evaluations seem to form an inverted U related to an initial increase of available transparency information (conditions one to four) and possibly the perception of negative producer transparency information within a full transparency condition (condition five) (see *Figure 3*).

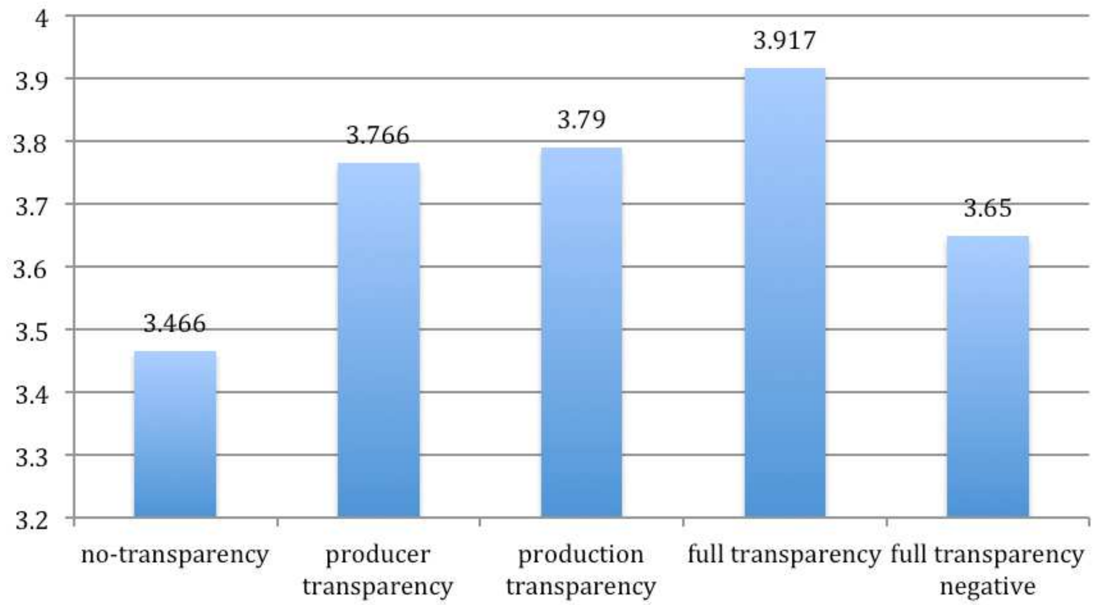


Figure 3 - Variability of transparency perceptions across five transparency conditions (transparency mean scores)

As participants in the second experiment only seemed to differentiate between the non- and full transparency articles, I explored to what degree participants paid attention to the transparency features in each of the five conditions. The post-experiment survey of the second experiment asked participants to recall which transparency features they had encountered. In that respect, I also investigated how closely participants paid attention to details in the text across the varied transparency conditions by asking a number of control questions.

Overall about 53% of the participants in the second experiment were able to recognize or recall the various transparency features that they saw in their randomly assigned condition. This number consists of all participants that recalled more than 50% of the transparency features to which they had been randomly assigned. In contrast, only 20% of all participants identified all transparency features correctly within their assigned condition (see *table 11*).

Table 11 - Recalled/ recognized transparency features

Transparency Clues **Total: 53%** recalled/ recognized clues **N_{Total}=304**	**Non-transparent N=58**	**Producer Transparency N=64**	**Production Transparency N=62**	**Full Transparency N=60**	**Full Transparency (negative producer transparency) N=60**
No transparency features	**50%**				
Producer Transparency		**35%**			
Production Transparency			**56%**		
Full transparency				**57%**	**65%**

Participants' recall and recognition of transparency features varied at times quite strongly. While 79% of participants were able to recall that their condition had a staff biography, only 48% were able to identify correctly a detail from that biography (i.e. which college the journalists attended). Similarly, 84% of the participants who were randomly assigned to a condition that included a photo of the journalist (author) recalled having seen a photograph but only 34% were able to correctly identify the actual journalist depicted on the website. Moreover, 53% of the study participants, who were randomly assigned to a condition with an editorial explanation, recalled seeing it. Yet, only 26% of the participants assigned to these conditions were able recall a detail from the editorial (i.e. a number of articles the journalist wrote). This number (50) was prominently displayed and visible to audiences without clicking on or reading the entire editorial text.

Participants in the second experiment seemed to have no problems recalling visually prominent transparency features such as editorials, a photograph of the journalist, or short biography, but they paid little attention to the information within these features. Conversely, 66% of participants were able to recall a name of a particular source from the article. Even more participants were able to recall a detail from the text that referred to a number of research articles that have been written on the subject of nanotechnology. Of all 304 participants, 74% recalled that number (6,000) correctly.

The findings of the second experiment provide a possible explanation as to why participants' trust evaluations were not significantly affected by the different transparency conditions in the first experiment. The data suggested that participants may have paid more attention to details in the text than to the transparency features that provided extra information about the journalistic process. According to the few data points available, participants more accurately recalled specific information that was provided in the article than they recalled information that was given through transparency features such as a staff bio or editorial explanations, which are peripheral to the news story.

While study participants did not seem to pay much attention to the various transparency features, they did, however, express that transparency in journalism is a value they care about (see *table 12*). In fact, 90% of the 304 participants in the second experiment reported that a news article that is transparent about its methods, sources, possible mistakes, and biases is very and extremely important to them (M=4.24, on 5-point Likert scale).

Table 12 - Importance of transparency among news audiences

Assessing importance of transparency among news audiences (N=304)		
Survey questions (5-point Likert scale)	M (mean)	Participants selected 4 & 5 on 5-point Likert scale
How important is it to you that a news article is transparent about its methods, sources, possible mistakes, and biases?	4.24	90%
How trustworthy are news articles that explain all processes and decisions that went into the production of a story?	4.03	78%
How trustworthy is an article if you see the biography and photo of the journalist?	3.4	43%
How trustworthy are news stories that show mistakes and explain corrections made by journalists?	4.03	79%
To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "I trust a news story that is transparent **more than** one that is not transparent." (*A transparent story explains all production and decision processes including mistakes and sometimes possible biases)?	4.35	91%

Moreover, 78% of all participants agreed that a news article that explains all processes and decisions that went into the production of a story is trustworthy or very trustworthy. By that token, 91% of the participants agreed and strongly agreed that they would trust a transparent story (that explains all production and decision processes, including mistakes and sometimes possible biases) more than a news story that is not transparent (M=4.35).

The dichotomy between what participants think about transparency as a concept and how they perceived current transparency practices in journalism suggests that the link between transparency and trust in journalism might need to be re-conceptualized. At the same time, what research in journalism currently considers as features of transparency may in fact provide very little useful information to audiences.

The normative literature in journalism suggests that transparency will increase trust and/or credibility (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007; McBride & Rosenstiel, 2014; Plaisance, 2007; Karlsson, 2011; Singer, 2007; Allen, 2008). But how exactly this link between transparency and audiences' trust perceptions is established remains an open question. Simply providing additional information may not be enough to instill trust, as the first experiment in this dissertation indicated. Providing additional information about the journalistic process may not be very useful or interesting to audiences when such transparency information is not part of the story and only accessible on the periphery through transparency features. Both experiment results of this dissertation suggest that audiences may not pay a lot of attention to these peripheral transparency features. Yet, at the same time participants in this study indicate that transparency is important to them and increases the trustworthiness of a news article.

Transparency as a factor impacting audiences' trust perception in journalism may also needs to be conceptualized differently, possibly as a dormant factor that becomes active when a problem occurs. In other words, audiences' default expectation is to have access to or find transparency information about the production and the producer when needed. If audiences encounter something inexplicable or problematic in a story, transparency information may become of more interest and utility to help explain possible discrepancies. Audiences may then, if at all, seek additional transparency information in order to comprehend or contextualize a story.

Scholars have pointed out that audiences and users online developed an expectation to find transparency information (Singer, 2007). The link between transparency and trust comes into play when audiences may find or not find the information they are seeking. Therefore, trust would be shaken if audiences could not easily find transparency information. News organizations would then have to provide such information prominently and in a user-friendly manner so that audiences can effortlessly find and process such transparency information, when needed.

As transparency may be most crucial during incidents that question the veracity of journalism or undermine trust, the concept of trust in journalism also requires a theoretical revision. The functioning of journalism in democratic societies may be taken for granted. As such, audiences generally trust the institution of journalism to function or to do business as usual, no matter their preconceived notions and political believes. That people then will take for granted that journalism is a part of their daily reality (Holzner, 1973; Luhmann, 1988). Therefore, trust in journalism may only become relevant when peoples' expectations are not fulfilled or challenged. Consequently, audiences' trust evaluations may only differ in situations when journalism fails, and as such, cannot be taken for granted to function correctly. In other words, only when the institution of journalism experiences a problem do trust perceptions' vary significantly.

Communicating the intended meanings of transparency to audiences, as a mechanism of accountability, may also bear a problem. If audiences do not pick up on the intended meanings of transparency features as forms of opening up and signs of journalistic professionalism, trust evaluations may not change. Audiences would need to first understand transparency features as meaningful, symbolic keys of openness that are crucial for successfully communicating (Goffman, 1974) the concept of transparency. The participants in this study did not share the same knowledge base as journalists or news organizations regarding the various transparency features, thus resulting in a failed communication of the meanings of transparency efforts. This failure is reflected in the non-significant findings of the first experiment.

A frequently mentioned concern regarding transparency is information overload (Heim & Craft, 2009). Transparency information that is provided peripherally to a news text could indeed be non-consequential to readers, as they may not have the capacity to process such information in detail. The results of the second experiment indicate information overload as a possibility, as participants seemed to pay little attention or were unable to recall peripheral information as accurately as information that was provided in the news stories. As mentioned above, 84% (N=184) of participants in this study recognized that their conditions included a photo of a journalist, but only 34% were able to correctly identify the journalist.

7.3.2. Limitations

The experiment of this study has a number of limitations that might have affected the findings of the first experiment. The research literature on trust indicated that the number of interactions between two exchange partners can be crucial for establishing trust relationships (Berg, Dickhaut, & McCabe, 1995; Kollock, 1994; Tsfati, 2010).

The experiment in this study only tested a one-shot interaction, which may have prevented forming a trust relationship between the presented news outlet and the participants in this study. The lack of repeated interactions could have prevented audiences from drawing on previous experiences (interactions) that could have influenced their trust evaluations vis-à-vis the news article they encountered.

The online experiment setting, while increasing the external validity, can also be considered a limitation as participants may not have experienced the same conditions as they would in a lab experiment. The varying conditions for each participant may have influenced participants' attention or focus during the experiment. This concern may be particularly valid in respect to the sample population recruited for the experiments. The research literature has pointed out that workers at Amazon's Mechanical Turk (AMT) have shown demographic diversity and as such, AMT can provide an ideal sample population for behavioral research (Buhrmester, Kwang & Gosling, 2011; Paolacci, Chandler, & Ipeirotis, 2010; Mason & Suri, 2012). Yet, the rapid increase of research studies on AMT and the increased exposure of AMT workers to numerous academic experiments and surveys (PBS, 2015) may have led to problems with the population sample. Chandler, Mueller, and Paolacci (2014) wrote "many workers have completed dozens, and likely hundreds, of experiments and surveys" and thus "the pool of MTurk workers presents a 'commons dilemma' for researchers: It should not be assumed that respondents are naïve…" (p. 128). The frequent use of AMT to recruit academic research participants can be a significant factor limiting the outcome of the first experiment.

Nevertheless, previous studies that explored the relationship between transparency and credibility with national samples in Sweden (Karlsson et al., 2014) as and college students and readers of a local newspaper in South Carolina (Roberts, 2007) also found no significant results. Taken together. these findings suggest that audiences may not pick up on the meanings of various transparency features. In other words, perhaps audiences lack a form of online media literacy that would allow them to discern transparency features online as symbolic signifiers of professional and quality journalism. Overall, the non-significant findings of the first experiment also suggest that transparency in journalism (at least in its current form) may not be as impactful as the normative literature suggests.

7.3.3. Future Research

The findings of the first experiment of this dissertation show that the use of transparency features does not predict participants' trust evaluations on a news item level. As suggested above the link between transparency and trust in journalism may need to be theoretically re-conceptualized. Future research should explore more thoroughly (as attempted in the second experiment) to what extent news audiences pick up on transparency features and what these additional information sources mean to audiences. Moreover, the link between transparency and trust may need to be measured as a loss in trust rather than a gain, particularly when audiences search for explanatory clues, and transparency information is not available. As suggested above, trust in journalism may be understood as something that is, at least to a degree, taken for granted. As such, audiences would trust a news article unless the story violates audiences' expectations, which could create an internal inconsistency and trigger a form of cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1962). Audiences might be motivated to search for more information (transparency information about journalistic production and producer) that could explain and possibly reduce this internal inconsistency. An exploration to what degree transparency information can reduce such cognitive dissonance may be useful to address the question of utility of transparency information for audiences.

Chapter 8: Conclusion: Transparency in Journalism – Not a Reality Just Yet

Many scholars, news practitioners, and professional organizations have hailed transparency in journalism as a crucial, effective, and necessary practice to bestow trust and credibility in the news media (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007; McBride & Rosenstiel, 2014; Deuze, 2005; Singer, 2007, 2010; Sullivan, 2013). This dissertation examined the degree to which transparency is practiced, implemented, and embraced as a professional norm among national news outlets in the United States. Moreover, this dissertation explored whether the normative assumption that transparency increases trust can be empirically supported.

In order to investigate the degree to which journalists embrace, news organizations implement, and audiences perceive transparency, a mixed method approach was employed. In a first step, 27 journalists from 12 national news outlets were interviewed (*The New York Times, Washington Post, The Wall Street Journal, USA Today, Los Angeles Times, Chicago Tribune, NPR, CNN, Fox News, ABC News, CBS News, and NBC News*) in order to examine to what degree journalists consider and practice transparency in their day-to-day work. In a second step, a content analysis explored to what extent news organizations utilize different transparency features (hyperlinks, editorial explanations, corrections, staff bios, etc.) to provide audiences some information about the journalistic process. Lastly, two experiments tested whether the various transparency features impact audiences' trust perceptions of a news item and whether participants were, in fact, able to recognize the various transparency features.

Overall, the mixed method study showed that transparency in journalism — at least among the 12 national news outlets examined in this study — is a theoretical ideal that seldom is a guiding principle in the journalistic production process. Instead, the results suggested that news organizations' use of technological features (hyperlinks, time stamps, standardized staff bios, and social media engagement) make them appear to be transparent without actually providing much information to audiences. Several journalists interviewed for this study said that many transparency features are "promotional" tools used to draw in audiences but not necessarily to reveal much about the journalistic production process or the inner workings of a particular news organization. A *Wall Street Journal* reporter spoke of the "optics of transparency." In other words, news organizations want to be perceived as transparent in order to garner legitimacy and trust among audiences without necessarily revealing a lot about the journalistic process or about themselves. During the interviews, journalists repeatedly said that transparency is neither a value or practice that they consider on a day-to-day basis, nor do they discuss or think about ways of being transparent to audiences. Thus, the norm of transparency is not (yet) guiding journalists in their daily practices.

Journalists in the trenches of news production are still grappling with the notion of implementing transparency in their daily work; meanwhile, news organizations are primarily using technological features to be seen as transparent. Some of these features, such as hyperlinks, detailed time stamps, social media contacts, or extended staff biographies, at least in theory, may provide audiences with information about journalists and their work. Yet, the content analysis showed that these technological features currently offer audiences very little information about journalists and the news productions process. In other words, the predominant function of these features is that they may provide the appearance of transparency but, in reality, they offer very little substantive information. Audiences, meanwhile, also don't seem to take note or may not recognize the intended meanings of the "rituals of transparency" (Karlsson, 2010). While survey data from the second experiment shows that audiences care about transparency in journalism and consider transparent news stories more trustworthy than non-transparent stories, the results of the first experiment indicate that audiences' trust perceptions of news articles did not significantly differ across six news stories that varied in their degree of transparency (from non-transparent to fully transparent).

This dissertation set out to answer three main questions regarding transparency in journalism: How do journalists think and implement transparency? How can transparency be effectively communicated from journalists via news organizations' websites to audiences? And how does transparency effect audiences' trust? The results of the dissertation brought up more questions than answers. Findings showed that transparency is far from being essential to journalism and suggested that the normative assumptions about transparency may require revision. Nevertheless, the research around transparency in journalism is still in its infancy and much remains to be explored.

In the first section, *8.1.*, of this last chapter of the dissertation, I summarize in more detail the integrated results of the three different data strands analyzed in this study. In section *8.2.*, I discuss a different way of theorizing and thinking about transparency and trust. More specifically, I suggest that transparency should be considered a dormant factor. I also propose how transparency in journalism may be implemented in order to effectively let audiences into the process of journalism. In section *8.3*., I propose the need to establish a culture of transparency in order for news organizations to open up to audiences. I also suggest that disclosing transparency information is tied to the notion of impression management, which suggests that individuals and organizations tend to present favorable information about themselves. A culture of transparency, I argue, could change the discourse of what is considered favorable and unfavorable information about journalists, which in turn could influence information disclosure. Finally, in section *8.4.*, I indicate the limitations of this study and suggest a number of future research projects regarding the role and effects of transparency in journalism.

8.1. Findings of the Mixed Method Approach – A Summary

One overarching aim of this dissertation was to explore how transparency (message) is communicated from the sender (journalists) to audiences (receivers). The underlying assumption is that if transparency is part of the professional role, similar to norms like independence, balance, and objectivity—that is, if transparency is indeed a norm—then journalists and news organizations should increasingly show audiences more of the news production process (Tuchman, 1972; Schudson & Anderson, 2009). Therefore, the implementation of transparency would be a conscious and visible process that informs journalists' work.

The interviews conducted for this dissertation showed that, overall, the participating journalists neither think or talk frequently about transparency, nor do journalists consider, on a regular basis, ways of showing audiences more about their reporting practices. At the same time, however, journalists pointed out that news organizations use various standardized technological features such as comments and social media contacts that facilitate a greater engagement with audiences, which have the potential to provide extra information about the journalistic process.

While journalists repeatedly expressed in the interviews that transparency is important to their work, they also said that transparency doesn't guide their work and that discussions around transparency thus far have been rare in newsrooms. One reason for this may be grounded in their assumption that audiences don't care. A *Washington Post* reporter said that audiences do not turn to a news outlet for transparency but for accurately reported and relevant news stories. Strang and Meyer (1993) pointed out that the acceptance of a new norm by members of an institution involves what the researchers call "theoretical thinking," which in the case of transparency in journalism would require discussions among members of a newsroom. The fact that journalists do not frequently think about or practice transparency in their reporting suggests that communicating the norm of transparency to general audiences may be limited.

In fact, journalists repeatedly said they do not show audiences more about the journalistic process because providing more background and context about their work is "just another thing to do." Another frequently mentioned reason why journalists shy away from actively implementing transparency is to avoid the criticisms that may follow after disclosing information about the “messy” processes of journalism. In theory, audiences who have a fuller understanding of processes may criticize journalists for, among other issues, their craftsmanship and perceived biases or conflicts of interest.

However, according to the interview data, transparency may still be in the process of becoming of greater importance in journalists’ daily practices. Journalists, to a varying degree, disclose more information about themselves in staff bios and on social media than was previously available, that is before the introduction of digital communication technologies. Yet institutional regulations, such as social media guidelines, may hinder a growing culture of transparency among national news outlets, as journalists are reminded that they are also representing the company on Twitter or Facebook. Journalists pointed out that disclosing opinions, viewpoints, or simply talking about the journalistic process by posting photos, etc., can, at times, affect people’s livelihoods. Several journalists mentioned how colleagues had gotten into trouble or even lost their jobs because they posted something online that, as these journalists suggested, seemed “innocuous.” Thus, many interviewees said they are cautious regarding what they express on social media and often apply the same standards on Twitter or Facebook as they do in their reporting.

The tendency to institutionalize the communication on social media platforms can be seen as a form of self-regulation of transparency information. The reference points for this self-regulation are long-held journalistic values such as balance and objectivity. The majority of journalists interviewed for this study stressed that journalists should report accurately, fairly, and in a balanced fashion. Journalists saw transparency primarily as a way of making their stories more objective by providing as much information as possible about their sources. Thus, journalists pointed to transparency as a mechanism rather than a goal in itself. But while journalists acknowledged that transparency as a tool can strengthen quality journalism, the interviews showed that reporters use journalistic transparency sparingly and primarily to indicate where they got their information for a particular news story.

Transparency in journalism has been recommended by scholars (Allen, 2008; Singer, 2007; Plaisance, 2007; Karlsson, 2010, 2011; Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007), professional and educational organizations, (SPJ, 2014; McBride & Rosenstiel, 2014; RTDNA, 2015) and by some practitioners (Sullivan, 2013). Yet, the empirical interview data showed that transparency has not been widely embraced by the journalists participating in this study. As transparency has only become an increasingly important issue within the past 10 to 15 years, journalists still seem to grapple with embracing the new norm.

While journalists at national news outlets wrestle with transparency in their daily work, news organizations such as the *New York Times* declare that they have "embraced that move toward transparency, through social media, Web-based chats with journalists," and the employment of a public editor (Sullivan, 2013). The content analysis part of this dissertation examined the degree to which leading national news organizations in the United States have indeed embraced and implemented transparency. The analysis of more than 1,000 online news articles showed that news organizations utilized several transparency features from social media, time stamps, hyperlinks, and, to a lesser extent, corrections and staff bios.

Each examined news item had at least one transparency feature (i.e. time stamps). As such, the analysis on the news item level could suggest that news organizations adhere, at least to a degree, to the new transparency norm. But the use of these primarily technological features of transparency does not automatically translate into a strong commitment by news organizations to be transparent.

Overall, news organizations provided very little usable information for audiences to reconstruct or understand how a particular news story was produced. The majority of hyperlinks did not connect to original documents; rather, these hyperlinks connected to news stories from the same news organization. Similarly, staff bios provided very little information about the news producers, often too little for audiences to discern if journalists' backgrounds may impact their reporting. Editorial explanations are rare; direct access to journalists is not a standard, industry-wide feature. The *Wall Street Journal* and *Los Angeles Times* frequently provided journalists' email addresses, but the other news organizations in this study mostly provided access to the news company's social media accounts, which does not facilitate much of a personal exchange between journalists and audiences.

News organizations employed a number of transparency features at the news item level online, yet these features were often peripheral to the news content. As such, news organizations may predominantly strive to appear transparent without actually providing a lot of useful transparency information that would allow audiences to learn about the journalistic process or journalists' points of view. News organizations may, in fact, utilize technological transparency features to strategically garner legitimacy. Such a practice could then be considered a form of organizational impression management (Elsbach & Sutton, 1992).

The results of the content analysis suggested that news organizations across the board provide little information about the journalistic process. However, news organizations differed, at times significantly, in the implementation of the various transparency features. *CNN* and *Fox News* offered the least usable information for audiences to determine if and what kind of updates were made to a particular story. Moreover, *Fox News* seldom displayed bylines; rather, the organization referred to "Fox News" as the producer of a particular news item. On the other end of the spectrum of best practices in transparency, *NPR,* the *New York Times, USA Today* and the *Wall Street Journal* clearly indicated who was behind each story and also provided corrections, direct contact to journalists via email (the *Wall Street Journal*), and, at times, offered extensive staff bios (via link). The *Los Angeles Times* also visibly indicated updates or changes to a news story through detailed time stamps and explanations describing particular changes.

The implementation of any of the various transparency features did not follow any industry-wide standards; news organizations developed their own principles as to what and how much they may made transparent or accessible to audiences. But a content analysis can only be considered a first step in examining news organizations' transparency efforts. A textual analysis of news organizations' web portals combined with a closer analysis of news scripts, which may reveal "invisible" corrections and updates, could provide more insights about news organizations' transparency practices.

Considering the act of communicating transparency to audiences, the content analysis echoed the findings of the interviews. The interview data already indicated that journalists rarely think about or implement transparency. As message senders, journalists seldom show or communicate transparency in their daily work, while the content analysis showed that news organizations shared or provided very little information of substance about the journalistic process. As such, communicating transparency to audiences becomes a challenge, as the message itself (i.e. transparency information) carries very little useful information for audiences.

The dissertation also examined how transparency impacts audiences' trust perceptions. This research asked: Do audiences receive or understand the message (i.e. transparency)? One experiment tested whether the various transparency features impacted audiences' evaluations of trust and the second experiment explored whether participants recognize different transparency features as measures of transparency. Although the content analysis showed that transparency features provide information of only limited utility to audiences, the design and theoretical assumption behind the experiment assumed that audiences would nevertheless be impacted by the sheer presence of transparency features, as these features provide extra information.

The premise for the experiment was based on the idea that trust in journalism (Kohring, 2004; Kohring & Matthes, 2007) is tied to access to information about another social actor. In other words, the trust relationship between audiences and journalists is based on the interaction between two social actors — professional and client (Parsons, 1970). Such a professional-client relationship is often asymmetrical; journalists can be seen as experts holding a competence or knowledge advantage over audiences. Parsons wrote about a competence gap, which Hardwig (1985) described as epistemic dependence. This competence gap can be overcome by trusting the intentions of the other social actor, often based on the available information. Simmel (1950) located trust somewhere on the dimension of knowing and not knowing. So trust appears to be directly related to the amount of information one has about another actor. In the context of the professional-client relationship of journalists and audiences, more information or more knowledge about journalists and their work should influence audiences' trust perceptions. Transparency provides more information about the journalistic process (production transparency) and about the journalist (producer transparency), which can influence audiences' trust perception. A directional relationship was assumed, that with an increase of information trust would also increase.

The experiment showed that no matter how much extra information was provided, audiences' trust perceptions did not differ across the various transparency conditions. The findings of the first experiment suggested that audiences did not recognize the intended meanings of the varied transparency features. Audiences may not see these transparency features as providing more information about the journalistic process and, therefore, did not trust a news item with hyperlinks, corrections, editorial explanations, staff bio, comments, etc., any differently than a news item with none of these features — no byline, no time stamp, and so on.

Nevertheless, because the content analysis showed that the information provided through the transparency features may be of very limited utility to audiences, study participants in the experiment may have considered these features as peripheral to the news item. In other words, current forms of transparency may only be "noise" or too much information (Craft & Heim, 2009) for audiences to process. Participants survey responses collected during the second experiment provide another indication that audiences may have not picked up on the utility of the various transparency features tested in the first experiment.

The second experiment also tested whether participants can differentiate between transparency conditions. While participants indicated that they would trust a transparent news story more than a non-transparent story, the experiment showed that participants could not easily differentiate between five transparency conditions. In fact, they only perceived a significant difference between the non-transparent and fully transparent condition. The data suggested that while participants care about transparency, they may not consider the additional information provided through transparency features as useful and do not recognize the features as attempts by news organizations to be transparent. As such, audiences may not be fully attuned to what professional newsmakers and communication scholars consider features or means of transparency in journalism. At the same time, the second experiment showed that participants paid much more attention to details provided in the actual news story than to information within the transparency features, which were peripheral to the text.

The interview data, content analysis, and the experiment all indicated that journalists and news organizations do not effectively communicate 'transparency' to audiences. As message senders, journalists do not clearly conceptualize and integrate transparency. The message or transparent content on the news item level may be of little utility to audiences and, therefore, may be considered tangential or even without significant meaning. Finally, audiences did not seem to recognize transparency, as transparency features did not affect participants' trust perceptions in this study.

News organizations' attempts to signal a greater openness to audiences may be futile if these efforts continue to rest on the currently used transparency features. That said, audiences may also need to become media literate about certain transparency features that are available. Nevertheless, news organizations still appear to hold on to long-standing journalistic values such as neutrality, independence, balance, and even objectivity. Journalism may be changing and a journalism with a point-of-view may be on the rise, as McBride and Rosenstiel (2014) suggested, but as the findings in this dissertation indicated, journalists and news organizations are still keeping a close watch at their "gates" (Bruns, 2005) as to what goes out to the world about themselves and their work.

8.2. Transparency in Journalism: A Dormant Factor?

Scholars have deemed transparency as one concept to enable greater accountability in journalism by allowing audiences to examine the internal work of news organizations and journalists. Transparency in journalism, as a concept and practice, is primarily a pro-active and voluntary way for journalists and news organizations to show audiences whether journalists worked accurately, attempted to be objective, and, if not, to display what point of view reporters may have adopted. Transparency information does not need to be tied to the news story itself, and may only show that the craftsmanship that went into the production of a story was adequate.

Scholars have argued that simply providing or giving access to information about the journalistic process may be enough to shore up trust among audiences (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007; Singer, 2007, 2010; Plaisance, 2007). Weinberger (2009) suggested that in an "age of links," transparency is a "way for us to see what assumptions and values may have shaped it [a news story], and lets us see the arguments that the report resolved one way and not another." Transparency, then, would give audiences "more reason to believe a report than the claim of objectivity did," which often was built on credentials and authority alone. Theoretically this line of argumentation makes sense, that is, that providing more information and context would also provide proof of certain claims and assertions, which consequently could result in greater audience trust. Weinberger added, "anyone who claims objectivity should be willing to back that assertion up by letting us look at sources, disagreements, and the personal assumptions and values supposedly bracketed out of the report."

However, as this dissertation and two other experiments on transparency and credibility (Roberts, 2007; Karlsson et al., 2014) showed, the simple availability of information about the journalistic process did not increase audiences' trust or credibility perceptions. An explanation of these results may be that simply providing access to information is not enough to impact audiences' evaluations of trust and credibility. Providing information about the journalistic process may be vital only when audiences feel the need to examine journalists' or news organizations' motivations and possible points of view or when audiences doubt the evidence provided in a news article. Thus, audiences may need to verify whether a story complies to the highest journalistic standards only when their trust in a particular news story or news organization is shaken. Therefore, transparency could be considered a dormant factor that becomes active when audiences that seek information cannot access or find any information regarding the journalistic process. In such an instance, the pro-active disclosure of information becomes relevant, and available transparency information may be able to at least sustain audiences' trust and credibility perceptions. A news organization that is not transparent or open in serving the needs of information-seekers may, in contrast, be trusted less. Thus, the absence of transparency information may be recognized rather than the presence. In other words, perhaps transparency only matters when information-seekers cannot find what they are looking for.

Transparency as a dormant factor should be conceptualized as a multifactorial concept that includes ease of access and processing of information, usability of information, and completeness of information. In particular, the ease of access to transparency information may be crucial. The results of the second experiment showed that participants paid more attention to the content in the news text than to the information in the peripheral transparency features, while simultaneously expressing that they deeply care about transparency in journalism. In that respect, transparency information should increasingly become part of the narrative, which would allow for easier access or processing of transparency information. Yet, not every story may require transparency information. As such, a clear access point to retrieve or access transparency information may be useful to signal information-seekers regarding where to look for additional information. In other words, the entry point for audiences to access information about the journalistic product needs to be unmistakably identifiable for audiences. Such a clear point of access to transparency information may be pivotal for audiences to recognize and understand the transparency efforts of a news organization.

Beyond offering a clear entry point to transparency information, providing usable information and a complete account about the journalistic production and functioning of a news organization are important factors that must be considered when audiences seek out information. The sheer amount and complexity of transparency information would require an adequate structuring of the information that is being made accessible to news audiences. Transparency information may be offered in the form of a pyramid to satisfy the different needs of information completeness for individual information seekers. Audiences may seek additional information about the production process, including sourcing and decisions regarding news angles; audiences may want to understand algorithms used to collect data or create data visualization. In such cases, hierarchical information stratified in a pyramid form (from less to more information — top to bottom) could satisfy the various needs and interests of audiences who are seeking to learn more about the journalistic process.

Nevertheless, such stratification of transparency information may still require a level of media literacy on the part of audiences, while news organizations also have to ensure they provide transparent information that is useful to audiences. The currently employed transparency features, which often offer little information about the journalistic process, may not be the best vehicles to disseminate easily understandable and usable information that can assist audiences in evaluating journalistic work.

The pyramid transparency model could also minimize the dangers of information overload that have been repeatedly associated with transparency information in journalism. At the same time, providing transparency information in such a pyramid form with a clear entry point could be easily standardized, which would also allow audiences to easier and more quickly recognize the purpose of a particular transparency feature. Generally, news organizations may be well advised to provide transparency voluntarily at all times but should expect that such information may be accessed only when needed.

Theoretically the idea of transparency as a dormant factor is based on the notion that news audiences more or less take for granted the existence and functioning of journalism. This is to say that news audiences trust the news media by default until this trust is undermined. I argue that trust in journalism needs to be understood as a form of general trust in an institution (Luhman, 1988; Holzner, 1973) that at least in its initial stage is not directly dependent on the individual knowledge or information gained from an interactive exchange between a professional and a client. This theoretical consideration does not necessarily account for partisan positions, meaning news audiences that hold strong beliefs about specific news organizations or the news media, in general. But as partisan news audiences are often seen as systematically processing information (Gunther & Storey, 2003), easily accessible transparency information could also have an impact on their evaluations of the news media and specific news content.

<u>8.3. A Culture of Transparency: Limitations and Opportunities</u>

In order to implement greater transparency in journalism, the existence of a culture of transparency may be required. The amount and type of information that will be disclosed or made transparent may greatly depend on what is socially acceptable. During the interviews for this dissertation, several journalists mentioned that they are cautious not to disclose anything that could harm their reputation. The disclosure of opinions or points of view was seen as something that can make a journalist potentially "radioactive," according to a *Washington Post* reporter. Many other journalists suggested that such forms of transparency are problematic, as such disclosure stands in conflict with values like objectivity, balance, and neutrality, which are traditional markers of professional journalistic behavior. In that respect, what journalists or news organization are willing to disclose may hinge upon what both news professionals and news audiences deem as acceptable professional behavior. In fact, I argue, transparency in journalism is currently utilized primarily to disclose information that benefits news organizations. This also includes the public correction of mistakes, as a veteran *NBC News* reporter suggested:

> It is a good thing, because the implication is that you care about truth, that you are not perfect, that you recognize when you made mistakes, and that you are willing to admit mistakes. I think it not only keeps people informed, and corrects an error that should not go uncorrected, but it also adds to the credibility to whatever else you say.

News organizations, therefore, may institutionalize transparency primarily to disclose information that is ultimately favorable to the organization and its reputation. In that respect, the institutionalization of transparently providing information about the journalistic process, the people, and news organizations can limit what audiences may learn about the journalistic process. When the new norm of transparency becomes part of journalistic professional role behavior, transparency becomes part of what Goffman (1974) called the front stage or the idealized presentations of the journalistic self. In contrast, the backstage is the realm where the presentation of the front stage or all "impressions are openly planned and constructed" (Goffman, 1974, p. 114). Opening up the journalistic work or process to audiences can thus be seen as enabling audiences to look behind the curtain, into the backstage (Meyrowitz, 1985; Karlsson, 2010, 2011; Chadha & Koliska, 2014). This division of front stage and backstage describes the basis for impression management (i.e. the presentation of an idealized self), which is often utilized to claim legitimacy.

While Goffman (1974) described a process that takes place in face-to-face interactions, on an organizational level a similar mechanism may be found in the implementation of an institutional myth. New institutional theory suggests that legitimacy on an organizational level is often claimed through the institutional myth (Meyer & Rowan, 1977). The institutional myth condenses an organization's practices, norms, and values, including products, services, techniques, policies, and programs as rationalized institutional rules. As such, the institutional myth is similar to the front stage — an idealized presentation of an entity. Researchers have frequently pointed out that the institutional myth is often decoupled from institutional practices (Meyer & Rowan, 1977; Hallet, 2010; Hallet & Ventresca, 2006) in the same way the front stage is divided from the backstage. Showing institutional myths and practices together may threaten organizational legitimacy (Dowling & Pfeffer, 1975, p. 122) because the "continued flow of support is threatened" (Meyer & Rowan, 1977, p. 350). In other words, when myth and practices are made available to institutional outsiders (in the case of journalism, to audiences), unacceptable or unexpected activities of an institution may come to light. Elsbach and Sutton (1992) indicated that by decoupling the idealized presentation "from less acceptable core activities or goals, organizations can enhance the legitimacy conferred by powerful actors, even when their core practices and goals conflict with those desired by such actors" (p. 700). Indeed, during the interviews, journalists repeatedly pointed out that disclosing the "messy" process of journalism could be problematic.

As the norm of transparency is increasingly becoming part of the front stage or institutional myth of journalism, transparency also becomes part of an institutional structure and expectation, which is used to authenticate a claimed professional role in society. These claims are highly idealized because the concepts of "presentation of self" and "institutional myth" are often disconnected from the backstage or actual institutional practices. Thus, I argue that transparency or how much one can actually see of backstage processes may be limited to the mechanics of impression management, which in turn depends on socially accepted behavior in a given time and place. Meyrowitz (1985) argued that impression management mechanics may not disappear:

> [S]ocial behavior continues to be based on projecting certain impressions and concealing others, behaving one way here, and another there. What has changed are the dividing lines between here and there; what is different is the number of distinct social settings (p. 320).

Meyrowitz's assessment suggested that transparency of institutional processes may increase with the change of social discourse about what is considered idealized and accepted behavior of journalists. This change in discourse, I argue, will ultimately regulate or influence information disclosure as the social discourse frames what is considered sensitive, private, possibly harmful, or desirable information (Foucault, 2002).

Shifting the social discourse around transparency, journalism may need to start from the bottom up instead of through prescribed ethical norms that aim to foster a "culture of transparency." I suggest that a "culture of transparency" must be established between journalists and their community to avoid the exploitation of transparency as a strategic tool to manage impressions of openness. Community engagement and a form of journalism akin to James Carey's (2009) concept of the ritual view of communication may be necessary to open up the news production process. Communication as a ritual and dramatic act capable of reaffirming and renegotiating particular views of the world through constant interactions and engagement between journalists and news organizations and their communities may be crucial in changing social expectations about journalism and educating community members about the journalistic process. Such community-oriented engagement may be essential to change what is socially acceptable and could eventually lead to greater transparency within journalism.

8.4. Limitations and Future Research

This dissertation has several limitations. First, because the investigation of transparency in journalism focused on national news organizations in the United States, the findings cannot be expanded to local and regional news organizations and journalists. Moreover, many of the journalists interviewed for this study were news media professionals for more than 10 years and, as such, have been socialized in a newsroom culture predominantly shaped by traditional journalistic norms such as neutrality, balance, and accuracy. The more recent phenomenon of transparency, which is closely linked to the still ongoing technology-triggered paradigmatic shift in journalism (Elliott, 2009), may be more important among younger news professionals, who have been socialized in an environment of greater access to information through the internet and other digital communication technologies. As such, the sample population for the interviews represents an older generation of journalists, which could represent a significant limitation.

Previous research also showed that journalists from national news outlets tend to be less transparent, particularly on social media (Lasorsa, 2012; Lasorsa, Lewis & Holton, 2012). With this in mind, journalists at local or regional news organizations may be more transparent in disclosing their motives, decisions, and possible conflicts of interest. Therefore, the interview data is only representative for those journalists who work for national legacy media and have had several years of experience.

Second, because the content analysis of transparency features on the news item level also focused on legacy media outlets, the findings may not be representative for emerging or native online news organizations such as Slate.com, Salon.com or VICE media. Moreover, a more thorough examination of the various transparency features may be necessary to more accurately assess the transparency efforts of the different news organizations. A textual analysis may be a better method for exploring the quality and quantity of transparency information. The limitations concerning the experiments were discussed in detail in chapter 7 — highlighting factors such as the population sample, single-shot interaction, and the experiment design that may have influenced the outcome of the experiment.

8.4.1. Future Research

Much is left to explore regarding transparency in journalism. Transparency in journalism appears to be a moving target and the little empirical data that currently exists may need to be updated as journalistic practices evolve. Future research should further explore the effects of transparency on audiences' trust perceptions. A longitudinal study or at least an experiment that tests several interactions rather than one (as in this dissertation) may be able to bring significant results regarding the effects of transparency on trust. But the link between transparency and trust may be ideally explored in a setting that requires participants to seek transparency information in order to test the proposed concept of transparency as a dormant factor.

As the practice and implementation of transparency is closely tied to the emergence of digital communication technologies, investigating journalists' behavior at native online news outlets may be important to determine to what degree transparency is considered in non-legacy newsrooms. At this point, very little is known about transparency efforts at local news media outlets, as well. An expansive analysis of transparency at local news media outlets may be particularly interesting, as journalists at such local and possibly regional news organizations have closer ties to the community than do national news media organizations. The personal connections of local news outlets may contribute to a different openness about the journalistic process.

Moreover, if the level of transparency or disclosure is dependent on what is socially acceptable (as proposed above), a study that explores generational differences may be useful. Younger journalists have been raised and socialized with digital technologies and in an environment of seemingly unrestricted access to information; as such, their willingness to disclose more about themselves and their work may differ significantly from older journalists.

Appendices

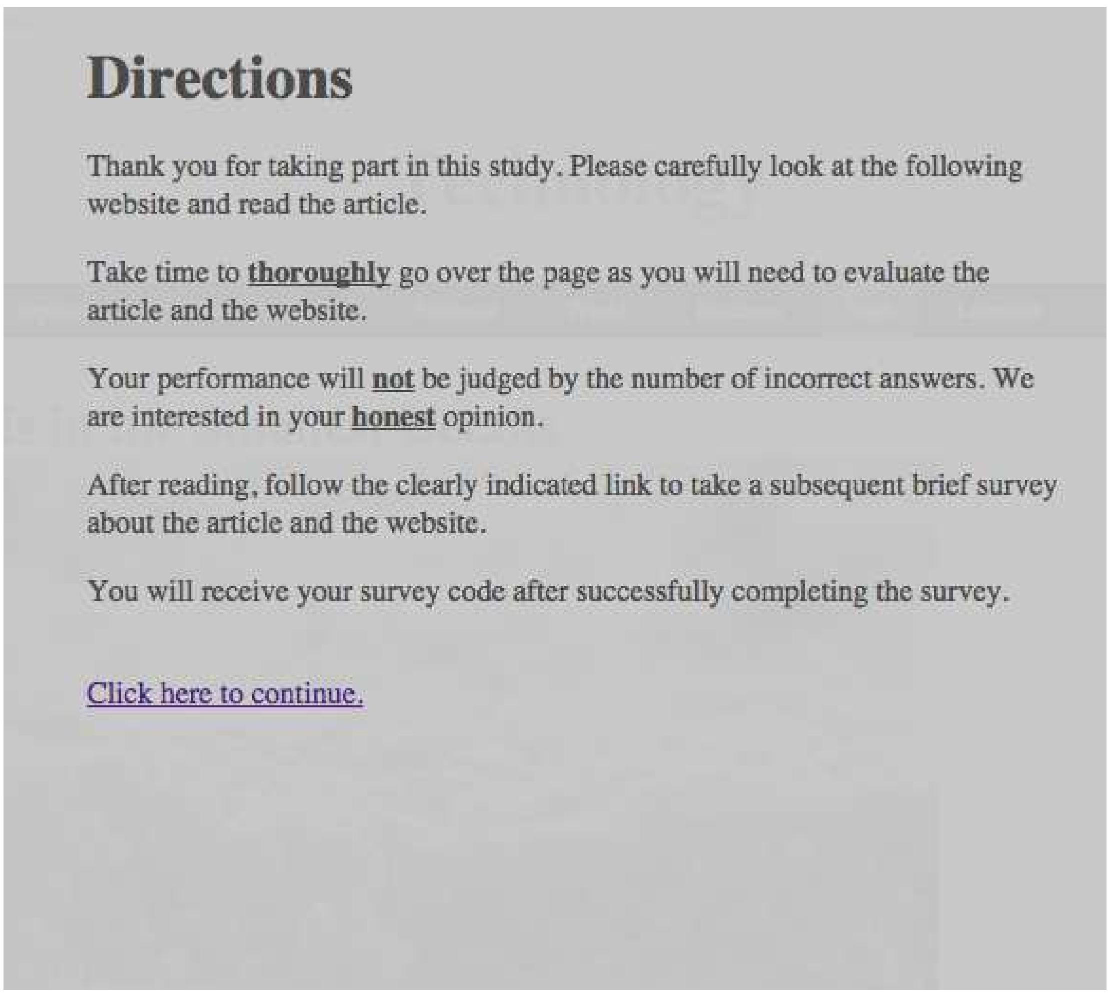
Appendix A – Screen shots of instructions and webpage (6 transparency conditions)

Appendix B – Posttest questionnaire experiment 1

Appendix C – Posttest questionnaire experiment 2

Appendix D – Regression and MANOVA outputs

Appendix A – Transparency Conditions 1-6



Directions

Thank you for taking part in this study. Please carefully look at the following website and read the article.

Take time to **thoroughly** go over the page as you will need to evaluate the article and the website.

Your performance will **not** be judged by the number of incorrect answers. We are interested in your **honest** opinion.

After reading, follow the clearly indicated link to take a subsequent brief survey about the article and the website.

You will receive your survey code after successfully completing the survey.

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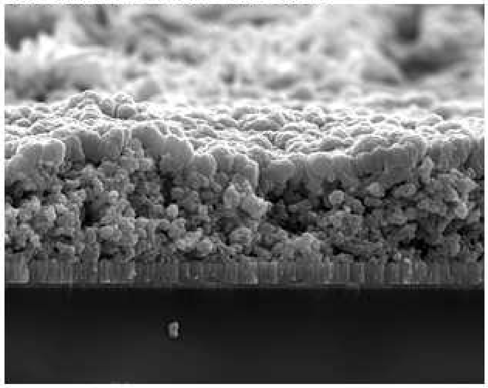

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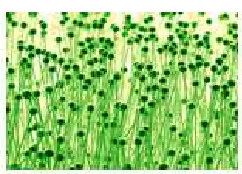

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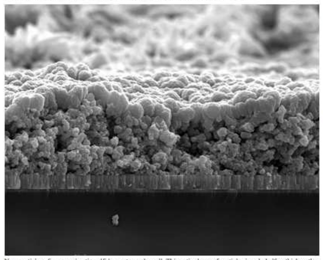
Published Online 05/14/2015 - 4:15pm - updated 05/15/2015 at 6:17 and 6:30 pm



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Backstory - How and why we did "The Devil is in the Smallest Details"
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Reader collaboration wanted: Please Email us at ireporter@news-flash-news.com if you have any suggestions or information that can help us to make this story better.

Open for comments. Sign in or create an account to join the discussion.

Mark Lebow - Milwaukee, WI
5 minutes ago
The future of tomorrow is here but are we really safe as this article claims? If all and everything will have nanoparticles won't there be more stuff our bodies and environment will have to handle?
Like Reply Share

Chico - Laconia, NH
27 minutes ago
My uncle's son is receiving cancer treatment through nanotechnology. So far I can only say good things about it. Other than normal chemotherapy nanotechnology can zero in on the cancer and not kill the human body as chemo does.
Like Reply Share

Howard G. - New York
29 minutes ago
If these engineered nanoparticles are so small that they can get anywhere how can one ever be sure until it may be too late?
Like Reply Share

Yoda - DC
30 minutes ago
6000 journal articles all wondering if nanotech can be unhealthy - wow! Feels a bit like there must be something to it. Shouldn't there be more transparent labeling?
Like Reply Share

David Devonis - Davis City, IA
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Isn't that all a good thing? Materials designed on the atom level if you can get mix this with 3D printers we can soon create everything that we want! Sci-Fi is becoming reality.
Like Reply Share

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Mike - San Diego
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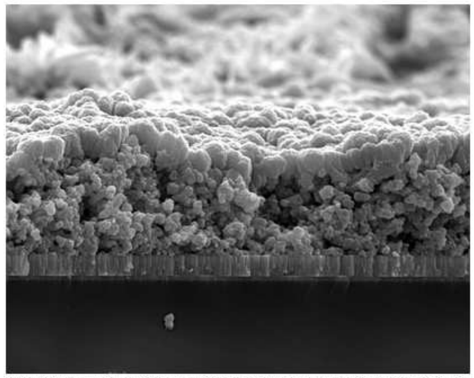
The Devil is in the Smallest Details

By Owen Gibson



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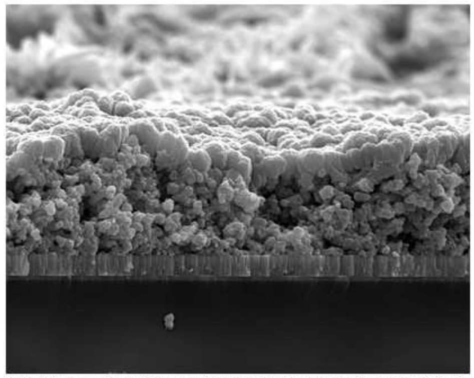

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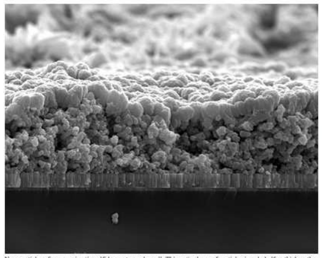

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Mark Lebow - Milwaukee, WI
5 minutes ago
The future of tomorrow is here but are we really safe as this article claims? If all and everything will have nanoparticles won't there be more stuff our bodies and environment will have to handle?
Like Reply Share

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correspondent. From 2007 to 2013 he was social media editor, covering the rise of emerging digital technologies. Prior to that he was The Washington Post's science correspondent. Gibson received a Master's degree in Journalism from Columbia University in New York and Bachelor's degree in Biomedical Engineering from Bucknell University. He is married and has two daughters.

Backstory - How and why we did "The Devil is in the Smallest Details"
We decided to put a veteran reporter on this story, who is our expert on nanotechnology. The reporter has covered the topic for several years and written over 50 articles about...
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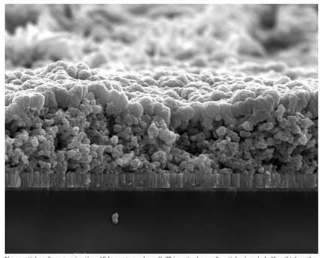
Technology

The Devil is in the Smallest Details

Published Online 05/14/2015 - 4:15pm - updated 05/15/2015 at 6:17 and 6:30 pm
By Owen Gibson



Nanoparticles of copper zinc tin sulfide create a solar cell. This entire layer of particles is only half as thick as the average human hair. (Oregon State University)

Owen Gibson is chief technology correspondent. Previously he was a PR manager for Zyvex Technologies, a specialist in Nanotechnology development and a technology advisor to the George W. Bush administration. Gibson owns stock in OCSiAl, a world leader in Nanomaterials. He received a Master's degree in Political Science from Yale and a Bachelor's degree in Biomedical Engineering from Bucknell University. He is married and has two daughters. He supports the Republican Party.

Backstory - How and why we did "The Devil is in the Smallest Details"
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Nanotechnology is getting researchers closer to designing and engineering materials atom by atom. Materials as small as your DNA already revolutionize the production of drugs, cosmetics, cars, the treatment of cancer, or the decontamination of water.

This is just the beginning. The technology of this trillion dollar industry can be found anywhere from cottage cheese to computer chips. Chances are that the device you're reading this on does what it does because of nanotechnology. Batteries, digital memory and display screens all perform better because they use engineered nanoscale materials.

But the extremely small size makes nanotechnology controversial. Research shows that the invisible particles can cause harm if they get into your body or out into the environment.

"We do not know how many products there are on the market that contain nano-particles," said Wolfgang Dubbert, a scientist with Germany's Federal Environment Agency. "Consumers worldwide can't avoid the particles because, apart from sunscreen, products are not labeled as containing nano-particles."

The FDA recently issued new but nonbinding recommendations regarding the safe use of nanotechnology and labeling of products containing nanoparticles. The agency cautions manufactures to test all foods carefully that contain nano-sized particles. Yet, how this is done, is mainly up to the manufacturer. The food industry got special attention for active food packaging labels that use nanoparticles to indicate the presence of contaminants or spoilage.

For more than a decade now, there has been a massive global investment in research into the health and environmental impact of engineered nanomaterials. More than 6,000 academic papers have examined the possible negative effects of nanoscale materials and how these may be averted.

Magnetic iron oxide nanowires can be used to kill cancer cells as researchers at the University of Georgia have recently shown. (University of Georgia)

A recent article in American Journal of Industrial Medicine found that a chemist developed symptoms that included throat irritation, nasal congestion, facial flushing and skin reactions after working with a powder consisting of nanometer-sized nickel particles. According to the authors of the report, this is "case one in our modern economy" of exposure to a nanotechnology product causing an individual to become ill.

But, Susanna Priest, a professor of risk communication at the University of Nevada Las Vegas, said, "the jury is still out. Previous studies did not provide clear evidence that nanotechnology triggers diseases." Andrew Maynard, a leading health risk expert at the University of Michigan, agrees. "The latest study concerning the use of nickel nanoparticles (above) does not show that nanomaterials are detrimental to our health but that the incident was more a case of bad exposure management."

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that 10 to 20 percent of Americans are allergic to nickel, and inhaling nickel particles can increase this allergic reaction. Maynard said: "It shouldn't come as a surprise that handling nickel nanopowder in an open lab without exposure controls is not a great idea." Priest, the UNLV professor added: "What remains is a sense of uncertainty paired with a let's wait and see attitude among consumers. There are only a few among us who really want to be the one yelling Fire!"

Correction History

05/15/2015 - 6.17 p.m.
In a previous version of the article we identified Wolfgang Dubbert as a spokesperson with Germany's Federal Environment Agency but he is in fact a scientist with the agency.

05/15/2015 - 6.30 p.m.
An earlier version of this article contained a wrong link to an original document of the Center for Disease Control and Prevention. The new link leads to the correct document, which indicates that 10-20 percent of Americans are susceptible to nickel allergies.

Reader collaboration wanted: Please Email us at ireporter@news-flash-news.com if you have any suggestions or information that can help us to make this story better.

correspondent. Previously he was a PR manager for Zyvex Technologies, a specialist in Nanotechnology development and a technology advisor to the George W. Bush administration. Gibson owns stock in OCSiAl, a world leader in Nanomaterials. He received a Master's degree in Political Science from Yale and a Bachelor's degree in Biomedical Engineering from Bucknell University. He is married and has two daughters. He supports the Republican Party.

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Open for comments. Sign in or create an account to join the discussion.

Mark Lebow - Milwaukee, WI
5 minutes ago
The future of tomorrow is here but are we really safe as this article claims? If all and everything will have nanoparticles won't there be more stuff our bodies and environment will have to handle?
Like Reply Share

Chico - Laconia, NH
27 minutes ago
My uncle's son is receiving cancer treatment through nanotechnology. So far I can only say good things about it. Other than normal chemotherapy nanotechnology can zero in on the cancer and not kill the human body as chemo does.
Like Reply Share

Howard G. - New York
29 minutes ago
If these engineered nanoparticles are so small that they can get anywhere how can one ever be sure until it may be too late?
Like Reply Share

Yoda - DC
30 minutes ago
6000 journal articles all wondering if nanotech can be unhealthy - wow! Feels a bit like there must be something to it. Shouldn't there be more transparent labeling?
Like Reply Share

David Devonis - Davis City, IA
30 minutes ago
Isn't that all a good thing? Materials designed on the atom level if you can get mix this with 3D printers we can soon create everything that we want! Sci-Fi is becoming reality.
Like Reply Share

Tom - Pittsburgh, PA
30 minutes ago
There is much to be said about the advantages of nanotechnology and hysteria wont help making sound decisions. I commend this down to earth approach of talking about the dangers of technology that does in fact changes our lives. Good journalism!
Like Reply Share

Mike - San Diego
34 minutes ago
Last year I got sunscreens that used nanoparticles. It definitely lasted longer even after swimming. Wonder what happens if this stuff gets into the sea and then into fish and then onto my plate! Love seafood! But no unwanted extras!!!
Like Reply Share

BobW - Ann Arbor, Michigan
51 minutes ago
I find it rather disconcerting that this article does not examine the real problems of nanotechnology a bit more. It appears that there is certainly more than enough data that questions the safety of this technology and nanoparticles in general!!!
Like Reply Share

More Comments...

Click here to take the survey!

Appendix B – Questionnaire 1st Experiment

Transparency - Questionnaire 1st Experiment

Please read each question carefully.

We want your honest opinion.

There are NO incorrect answers in this survey (please don't use screenshots etc).

You cannot skip questions.

After completing all questions, you will receive your survey code.

The next items are related to the article/website you just visited. Please read carefully and select to what extent you agree with the following statements!

In respect to the news story you just read - to what extent do you agree with the following statement?

The essential points are included.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Select one	O	O	O	O	O

In respect to the news story you just read - to what extent do you agree with the following statement?

All important information regarding the topic (possible dangers of nanotechnology) is provided.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Select one	O	O	O	O	O

In respect to the news story you just read - to what extent do you agree with the following statement?

The reporting of the article includes different points of view.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Select one	O	O	O	O	O

In respect to the news story you just read - to what extent do you agree with the following statement?

The focus of the article is on important facts.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Select one	O	O	O	O	O

In respect to the news story you just read - to what extent do you agree with the following statement?

The information in the article would be verifiable if examined.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Select one	O	O	O	O	O

In respect to the news story you just read - to what extent do you agree with the following statement?

The journalist's evaluations of the topic of nanotechnology are well founded.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Select one	O	O	O	O	O

In respect to the news story you just read - to what extent do you agree with the following statement?

The reported information is true.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Select one	O	O	O	O	O

In respect to the news story you just read - to what extent do you agree with the following statement?

The facts that I received regarding nanotechnology are correct.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Select one	O	O	O	O	O

In respect to the news story you just read - to what extent do you agree with the following statement?

I think the article recounts the facts truthfully.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Select one	O	O	O	O	O

In respect to the news story you just read - to what extent do you agree with the following statement?

When criticism is expressed, it is done in an adequate and well founded manner.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Select one	O	O	O	O	O

In respect to the news story you just read - to what extent do you agree with the following statement?

The journalist's assessments regarding the topic of nanotechnology are useful.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Select one	O	O	O	O	O

In respect to the news story you just read - to what extent do you agree with the following statement?

The journalist responsible for the story appears trustworthy.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Select one	O	O	O	O	O

To what extent would you identify the article/website you just saw at the beginning of the experiment as transparent?

(*Transparent defined as being open regarding its sources, journalistic methods and decisions as well as possible biases and intentions)

	Not at all transparent 1	2	3	4	Very transparent 5
Select one	O	O	O	O	O

How closely did you read the article? Please answer honestly; your answer will not affect your payment or the evaluation of your work!

- I didn't read the story.
- I skimmed over the text.
- I read the beginning of each paragraph and then jumped.
- I read at least 3/4 of the story.
- I read everything.

Finally, a few demographic questions.

What is your age?

- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65-74
- 75 years or older

Gender

- Male
- Female
- Other (please describe):

Please specify your ethnicity.

- White
- Hispanic or Latino
- Black or African American
- Native American or American Indian
- Asian/ Pacific Islander
- Other

How often do you consume news (watching, reading, listening)?

- Never
- Less than Once a Month
- Once a Month
- 2-3 Times a Month
- Once a Week
- 2-3 Times a Week
- Daily
- Several times a day

What is your current occupation?

How would you describe yourself politically?

	conservative 1	2	3	4	liberal 5
Select one	O	O	O	O	O

What is the highest degree or level of schooling you have completed?

Do you trust the news media?

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Most of the Time
- Always

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Appendix C – Questionnaire 2nd Experiment

Transparency - Survey 2nd Experiment

To what extent would you identify the article/website you just saw as transparent?

(*Transparent defined as being open regarding its sources, journalistic methods and decisions as well as possible biases and intentions)

	Not at all transparent 1	2	3	4	Very transparent 5
Select one	O	O	O	O	O

Which of the following information did you see on the website? Please read carefully and select all that apply!

- ☐ corrections
- ☐ audience comments
- ☐ time stamps
- ☐ hyperlinks to sources and original documents
- ☐ editorial explanations about the article
- ☐ publishing date
- ☐ social media contacts
- ☐ email contact
- ☐ call to readers to report and share their experience
- ☐ hyperlinks to expert profiles
- ☐ photo of journalist
- ☐ journalist biography
- ☐ identification of sources
- ☐ all of the above
- ☐ none of the above

Did you see a biography of the journalist?

- Yes
- No

Which school did the journalists attend?

- NYU
- Yale
- Columbia

How trustworthy are articles written by this journalist?

	not trustworthy 1	2	3	4	very trustworthy 5
Select one	O	O	O	O	O

How important is it to you that a news article is transparent about its methods, sources, possible mistakes, and biases?

	Not at all Important	Very Unimportant	Neither Important nor Unimportant	Very Important	Extremely Important
Select one	O	O	O	O	O

Which of the following people mentioned below were featured in the story? Select all that apply

- [ ] Martin
- [ ] Maynard
- [ ] Mayer

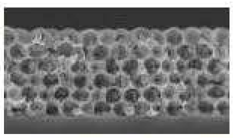
☐ Ruppert

☐ Duppert

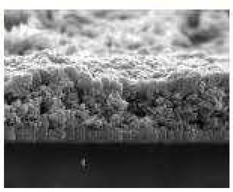
How trustworthy are news articles that explain all processes and decisions that went into the production of a story?

	not trustworthy 1	2	3	4	very trustworthy 5
Select one	○	○	○	○	○

Which image appeared in the article?

○ 

○ 

○ 

What elements make a news story more open or transparent to audiences? Please read carefully and select all that apply!

☐ journalist's contact info

☐ biographical information about the journalist

☐ photo of journalist

☐ time stamps

- [ ] admitting mistakes through the display of corrections
- [ ] discuss and critique article through comments
- [ ] editorial explanations about the article
- [ ] hyperlinks to sources and original documents
- [ ] social media contacts
- [ ] audience participation
- [ ] disclosing biases by the journalist
- [ ] all of the above
- [ ] none of the above

Did you see an explanatory text about the making of the news article?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

In the editorial explanation called Backstory: How many articles did the journalist write about nanotechnology?

- ○ more than 30
- ○ more than 40
- ○ more than 50

How trustworthy is an article if you see the biography and photo of the journalist?

	not trustworthy 1	2	3	4	very trustworthy 5
Select one	○	○	○	○	○

Did you see the photo of the journalist on the website you just visited?

- Yes
- No

From the people below, whom did you see on the website?

- 
- 
- 
- none

How trustworthy are news stories that show mistakes and explain corrections made by journalists ?

	not trustworthy 1	2	3	4	very trustworthy 5
Select one	O	O	O	O	O

According to the article you just read, how many academic papers have been published in the past years about the effects of nanoscale materials?

- 4000
- 6000
- 8000

To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "I trust a news story that is transparent **more than** one that is not transparent."

(*A transparent story explains all production and decision processes including mistakes and sometimes possible biases)?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Select one	O	O	O	O	O

Finally, a few demographic questions.

What is your age?

- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65-74
- 75 years or older

Gender

- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to say

Please describe your current occupation in a couple of words!

How would you describe yourself politically?

	conservative 1	2	3	4	liberal 5
Select one	○	○	○	○	○

Do you trust the news media?

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Most of the Time
- Always

What is the highest degree or level of schooling you have completed?

Please specify your ethnicity.

- White
- Hispanic or Latino
- Black or African American
- Native American or American Indian
- Asian/ Pacific Islander
- Other

How often do you consume news (watching, reading, listening)?

- Never
- Less than Once a Month
- Once a Month
- 2-3 Times a Month
- Once a Week
- 2-3 Times a Week
- Daily
- Several times a day

Appendix D

Regression – Omnibus Test (across 6 conditions of transparency)

	Estimate	Std. Error	t value	Pr(>|t|)	
(Intercept)	40.87311	2.24048	18.243	< 2e-16	***
Trans 2	0.04627	0.57434	0.081	0.9358	
Trans 3	0.22985	0.58645	0.392	0.69519	
Trans 4	0.637	0.58727	1.085	0.27833	
Trans 5	-0.32003	0.58301	-0.549	0.58317	
Trans 6	0.79824	0.57959	1.377	0.16874	
Gender F	-0.62046	0.34486	-1.799	0.0723	.
Age 25-34	-0.53512	0.49404	-1.083	0.279	
Age 35-44	-0.57297	0.5646	-1.015	0.31044	
Age 45-54	-0.96036	0.67804	-1.416	0.15698	
Age 55-64	-1.99716	0.69886	-2.858	0.00436	**
Age 65-older	-2.56039	1.40023	-1.829	0.06777	.
Hispanic	0.34378	0.67386	0.51	0.61005	
Black	0.88825	0.65617	1.354	0.17615	
Native	-2.01852	2.0045	-1.007	0.31418	
Asian	-0.56796	0.66965	-0.848	0.39656	
Other	-0.46369	1.43345	-0.323	0.7464	
news.con2	-2.93781	2.1571	-1.362	0.17353	

news.con3	-2.44923	2.27537	-1.076	0.28201	
news.con4	-2.03299	1.99188	-1.021	0.30768	
news.con5	-3.1059	1.99351	-1.558	0.11955	
news.con6	-3.66217	1.92408	-1.903	0.05729	.
news.con7	-3.5487	1.90926	-1.859	0.06337	.
news.con8	-3.49031	1.92565	-1.813	0.07021	.
politics2	0.37091	0.77757	0.477	0.63346	
politics3	-0.33897	0.71498	-0.474	0.63553	
politics4	-0.11594	0.71139	-0.163	0.87057	
politics5	-0.17311	0.74425	-0.233	0.81612	
trust.media2	0.94726	1.2344	0.767	0.44304	
trust.media3	3.21029	1.19976	2.676	0.00758	**
trust.media4	5.18825	1.24419	4.17	3.31E-05	***
trust.media5	5.30345	3.93589	1.347	0.17814	

Signif. codes	: 0 ‘**	*’ 0.001 ‘*	*’ 0.01	‘*’ 0.05	‘.’ 0.1 ‘ ’ 1
Residual standard error: 5.244 on 989 degrees of freedom					
Multiple R-squared: 0.08783, Adjusted R-squared: 0.05924					
F-statistic: 3.072 on 31 and 989 DF, p- value: 5. 3.80E-07					

Regression – Omnibus Test (Producer transparency conditions 3 pos. and 6 - neg)

	Estimate	Std. Error	t value	Pr(>|t|)		
(Intercept)	27.10354	5.95796	4.549	2.00E-05	***	
Transp 6	1.89649	1.22285	1.551	0.12509		
Gender F	0.26151	1.16191	0.225	0.82253		
Age 25-34	-3.97294	1.76347	-2.253	0.02715	*	
Age 35-44	-3.48586	1.97792	-1.762	0.08202	.	
Age 45-54	-2.11355	2.42355	-0.872	0.38591		
Age 55-64	-3.4865	2.6893	-1.296	0.19875		
Age 65-older	-9.87924	5.66052	-1.745	0.08498	.	
Hispanic	-2.01395	2.93251	-0.687	0.49432		
Black	2.08007	1.88143	1.106	0.27239		
Native	-4.56036	5.47267	-0.833	0.40729		
Asian	0.41748	2.06551	0.202	0.84036		
news.con3	-0.80521	4.66836	-0.172	0.86352		
news.con4	2.21607	3.15173	0.703	0.48413		
news.con5	-4.57932	3.17078	-1.444	0.15279		
news.con6	0.93047	2.91071	0.32	0.75009		

news.con7	-0.41196	2.70512	-0.152	0.87936		
news.con8	-1.47895	2.85589	-0.518	0.60606		
politics2	-0.08594	2.94683	-0.029	0.97681		
politics3	0.63495	2.78591	0.228	0.82032		
politics4	0.87959	2.7211	0.323	0.7474		
politics5	0.25341	2.93009	0.086	0.93131		
trust.media2	12.37448	5.79695	2.135	0.03601	*	
trust.media3	14.72321	5.80538	2.536	0.01326	*	
trust.media4	17.82779	6.01209	2.965	0.00404	**	
trust.media5	13.88537	8.37819	1.657	0.10158		

Signif. codes	: 0 '**	*' 0	.001 '*	*' 0.01	'*' 0.05	'.' 0.1 ' ' 1
Residual standard error: 5.139 on 76 degrees of freedom						
Multiple R-squared: 0.389, Adjusted R-squared: 0.0816						
F-statistic: 1.359 on 25 and 76 DF, p-v alue: 0.1 554						

Regression – Omnibus Test (full transparency conditions 4 pos. and 5 - neg)

	Estimate S	td. Error	t value	Pr(>|t|)		
(Intercept)	51.99339	6.4978	8.002	5.73E-13	*	**
cat5	-0.03024	0.8714	-0.035	0.9724		
genderF	-0.108	0.93479	-0.116	0.9082		
new.age2	-0.25138	1.21148	-0.208	0.8359		
new.age3	-0.68829	1.3869	-0.496	0.6205		
new.age4	-2.21864	1.65438	-1.341	0.1822		
new.age5	-3.09736	1.67602	-1.848	0.0669	.	
new.age6	3.84968	3.8442	1.001	0.3185		
new.age7	-0.36501	5.21469	-0.07	0.9443		
race2	0.332	1.67217	0.199	0.8429		
race3	-0.13112	1.53366	-0.085	0.932		
race4	-1.66149	3.09108	-0.538	0.5918		
race5	-1.6046	1.61169	-0.996	0.3213		
race6	-0.57564	5.19998	-0.111	0.912		
news.con2	-10.69782	6.2535	-1.711	0.0895	.	
news.con3	-10.84407	6.16764	-1.758	0.081	.	

news.con4	-9.70227	5.4811	-1.77	0.079	.	
news.con5	- 10.43497	5.35791	-1.948	0.0536	.	
news.con6	- 12.72237	5.28355	-2.408	0.0174	*	
news.con7	- 10.37481	5.27383	-1.967	0.0513	.	
news.con8	-9.0208	5.31412	-1.698	0.092	.	
politics2	2.98047	1.96667	1.515	0.1321		
politics3	1.7198	1.71898	1	0.3189		
politics4	2.44028	1.72585	1.414	0.1597		
politics5	-0.3553	1.85468	-0.192	0.8484		
trust.media2	-4.71318	3.81341	-1.236	0.2187		
trust.media3	-2.83512	3.76671	-0.753	0.453		
trust.media4	0.69959	3.85838	0.181	0.8564		

Signif. code	s: 0 '***'	0.001 '**	' 0.01 '	*' 0.05 '	.'	0.1 ' ' 1
Residual standard error: 4.959 on 131 degrees of freedom						
Multiple R-squared: 0.2383, Adjusted R-squared: 0.08134						
F-statistic: 1.518 on 27 and 131 DF, p-v alue: 0.06428						

MANOVA – Results across 6 Transparency Conditions

Descriptive Statistics

	site	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Sum1	1	14.11	2.361	166
	2	14.04	2.496	178
	3	14.12	2.396	166
	4	14.18	2.502	168
	5	13.75	2.520	170
	6	14.49	2.460	173
	Total	14.12	2.461	1021
Sum2	1	14.33	2.273	166
	2	14.43	2.292	178
	3	14.55	2.231	166
	4	14.50	2.128	168
	5	14.20	2.569	170
	6	14.53	2.243	173
	Total	14.42	2.291	1021
Sum3	1	11.13	1.779	166
	2	11.20	1.795	178
	3	11.38	1.760	166
	4	11.51	1.472	168
	5	11.13	1.851	170
	6	11.39	1.741	173
	Total	11.29	1.740	1021
Sumtotal	1	39.56	5.289	166
	2	39.66	5.501	178
	3	40.05	5.186	166
	4	40.19	5.128	168
	5	39.08	5.879	170
	6	40.40	5.379	173
	Total	39.82	5.407	1021

Multivariate Tests[a]

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power[d]
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	.982	18746.949[b]	3.000	1013.000	.000	.982	56240.846	1.000
	Wilks' Lambda	.018	18746.949[b]	3.000	1013.000	.000	.982	56240.846	1.000
	Hotelling's Trace	55.519	18746.949[b]	3.000	1013.000	.000	.982	56240.846	1.000
	Roy's Largest Root	55.519	18746.949[b]	3.000	1013.000	.000	.982	56240.846	1.000
site	Pillai's Trace	.015	1.034	15.000	3045.000	.416	.005	15.509	.693
	Wilks' Lambda	.985	1.033	15.000	2796.848	.417	.005	14.258	.646
	Hotelling's Trace	.015	1.032	15.000	3035.000	.417	.005	15.486	.692
	Roy's Largest Root	.008	1.592[c]	5.000	1015.000	.160	.008	7.958	.559

a. Design: Intercept + site

b. Exact statistic

c. The statistic is an upper bound on F that yields a lower bound on the significance level.

d. Computed using alpha = .05

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power[e]
Corrected Model	Sum1	47.882[a]	5	9.576	1.586	.161	.008	7.928	.557
	Sum2	15.471[b]	5	3.094	.588	.709	.003	2.941	.217
	Sum3	21.166[c]	5	4.233	1.402	.221	.007	7.008	.499
	Sumtotal	197.747[d]	5	39.549	1.355	.239	.007	6.777	.483
Intercept	Sum1	203298.029	1	203298.029	33659.270	.000	.971	33659.270	1.000
	Sum2	212204.219	1	212204.219	40338.990	.000	.975	40338.990	1.000
	Sum3	130004.357	1	130004.357	43041.471	.000	.977	43041.471	1.000
	Sumtotal	1618246.776	1	1618246.776	55455.861	.000	.982	55455.861	1.000
site	Sum1	47.882	5	9.576	1.586	.161	.008	7.928	.557
	Sum2	15.471	5	3.094	.588	.709	.003	2.941	.217
	Sum3	21.166	5	4.233	1.402	.221	.007	7.008	.499
	Sumtotal	197.747	5	39.549	1.355	.239	.007	6.777	.483
Error	Sum1	6130.480	1015	6.040					
	Sum2	5339.432	1015	5.261					
	Sum3	3065.751	1015	3.020					
	Sumtotal	29618.519	1015	29.181					

Total	Sum1	209612.000	1021						
	Sum2	217692.000	1021						
	Sum3	133158.000	1021						
	Sumtotal	1649048.000	1021						
Corrected Total	Sum1	6178.362	1020						
	Sum2	5354.903	1020						
	Sum3	3086.917	1020						
	Sumtotal	29816.266	1020						

a. R Squared = .008 (Adjusted R Squared = .003)
b. R Squared = .003 (Adjusted R Squared = -.002)
c. R Squared = .007 (Adjusted R Squared = .002)
d. R Squared = .007 (Adjusted R Squared = .002)
e. Computed using alpha = .05

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