

Has there been a shift from 'fortress' to 'networked journalism'?

'Fortress' journalism is known to have been where 'Powerful, long-established institutions provided the perfect base for strong journalism. The major news organisations could nurture skills, underwrite risk and afford expensive journalism' (Miller, 2009). 'Network journalism' is defined as a synthesis of traditional news journalism and the emerging forms of participatory media enabled by Web 2.0 technologies such as mobile phones, email, websites, blogs, micro-blogging, and social networks (Beckett, 2010a)¹ This essay will discuss whether there has been a shift from 'fortress' to 'networked journalism' by focussing on the transformation of print journalism in the UK following the spread of the Internet and subsequently social media. It will look at changes through history, before reaching a conclusion.

Firstly, print Journalism is known to have been around for many years. According to News media association UK, 'William Caxton introduced the first printing press in 1476, and by the early 16th century, the first 'newspapers' were seen in Britain. They were, slow to evolve, with the largely illiterate population relying on town criers for news. Between 1640 and the Restoration, around 30,000 'news letters' and 'news papers' were printed' (Newsmedia Association, n.d). This was known to be the prime time for print journalism. Due to the development of print journalism such as newspapers the idea of 'fortress' journalism can be embodied as newspapers are known to be a long-established institution which has provided people with strong journalism. Therefore, newspapers would be seen as a 'fortress' as there has been power in the newspaper industry for many years which over time has been built up, also newspapers have been around for many years and they still get published today, which shows that people still read and somewhat trust the news stories on newspapers.

However, journalism had later started to change as it had started to appear on the internet and to some extent it made a change from 'fortress' to 'networked journalism'. In 1983, the internet was born. 'The first commercial public use of the internet was through emails, which happened in 1989' (Waring, 2018). 'In 1994 journalists made their first tentative steps onto the internet and in the same year the electronic Telegraph was launched as the UK's first newspaper website' (Meek.C, 2006). Examples of news websites that provide news stories that can be easily read online even today are The Telegraph, BBC News, Google News, Metro UK and more. It can be said that due to news being published on the internet journalism had changed to being digital and was becoming digital journalism.

Due to the internet being born things had started to change as journalists had to adopt new ways of working and producing more content to publish news on the internet and on newspapers.

To support this, the Advanced Media Institute, said, "news operations are now adopting a "web-first" or "web-centric" approach to organising their work flow. This means having reporter and editors think first about reporting and producing text and multimedia stories for the web, then writing a text story for the print edition" (Grabowics, 2014)

Due to the development of the internet even though things were still limited, it can be said that networking had started to slowly begin as traditional news journalists were emerging with forms of media such as websites and news was being published online by journalists and there was more of an interaction between readers and journalists, this however was

Has there been a shift from 'fortress' to 'networked journalism'?

limited as people didn't have mobile phones to contact journalists with news and at first you could only share text. Therefore, it can be argued that there started to be a change from 'fortress' to 'networked journalism' but it did not completely shift to 'networked journalism' due to networking journalism being very limited.

The final change that made a big difference was the development of social media. Traditional journalists had started to use social media to publish news and post photos and videos. After the development of the internet 'as the millennium changed almost 100 million people had access to the internet'(Rangwala,2017). 'In the early 2000s ..., social media channels had started to develop and grew at exponential rates'(Ahmad,2018a) In those years, channels YouTube, Facebook, Friendster were created. Snapchat was invented in 2011 and Instagram came about in 2014. There are '3.484 billion social media users worldwide' (Ahmad,2018b). Due to social media being born and introduced, there was a big change.

Also due to the birth of social media, mobile phones had changed due to technology and it had now allowed people to share texts, videos and photos instantly. This allowed mobile journalism which was 'a new workflow for media storytelling where reporters are trained and equipped for being fully mobile and autonomous.....In 2007 the release of the iPhone changed everything... it especially changed the way we all of humanity started to create and share content in an easy, fast and global way'².(All about mobile journalism, 2014). As a result, due to social media growing at exponential rates, it allowed citizen journalism to develop this meant that people could post news stories on social media and the internet for stories to go viral.

Lastly, it can be argued that due to the birth of social media there has been a big shift from the 'fortress' to 'networked journalism' as Murdoch said "Power is moving away from the old elite in our industry- the editors, the chief executives and, let's face it, the proprietors" (Jones et al, 2006). Also, the LSE blog website says, "Newsrooms are no longer fortresses for the Fourth Estate, they are hubs at the centre of endless networks" (Beckett,2010b). Therefore, "the actual product of journalistic practice now usually involves networks of various professionals and citizens collaborating" (Haak, Parks, Castells, 2012) which means there is a range of networks where people work together to share/distribute news quickly.

Social media also allows people to express their own opinion on different social media platforms which many people find useful as they can get their voices heard online, both print and online journalism don't allow people to express their views as you can only read the newspaper or read the news articles online. This potentially could be a reason why many people use social media instead as they feel like their opinions are heard and if it's a big news story then something can be done about the issue. The news industry has become so fast paced that there no longer is a 'fortress' as the industry is too competitive due to 'networked journalism' as people either work individually or together to get news stories heard quickly.

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Also, it can be added that 'new media technology such as social networking e.g.: Twitter, Facebook and Blogger, have given everyday citizens the ability to transmit information globally; a power which was once reserved for large media corporations'(Harper,2011). For this reason, due to citizens having rights to share information and collect information to produce a news story, journalism no longer has a 'fortress' that sustains all the power and instead there is 'networked journalism'.

In conclusion, this essay proves that there has been a big shift from 'fortress' to 'networked journalism' due to mainly the birth of social media. Print and online journalism is still around but due to networking power is moving away from traditional journalists and there are now 'endless networks' that sustain more power.

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