Thomas Hanitzsch

Situating peace journalism in journalism studies: A critical appraisal

Kurzfassung: Von den meisten Kriegen würden wir keine Notiz nehmen, wären da nicht die Journalisten, die über sie berichten, und die Medien, die ihre Korrespondeten zum Ort des Geschehens schicken. Gleichzeitig geht die Vorliebe der Medien für Kriege und Konflikte häufig zu Lasten eines positiven Beitrags zur Friedenschaffung. Das Konzept des Friedensjournalismus wird deshalb als eine Alternative zur traditionellen Kriegsberichterstattung verstanden. Der vorliegende Aufsatz macht jedoch deutlich, dass die Idee des Friedensjournalismus nur alter Wein in neuen Schläuchen ist, auch wenn mit einem durchaus noblen Ziel. Viele Protagonisten des Friedensjournalismus übersehen häufig die mannigfaltigen Nuancen im Journalismus und heben das Außergewöhnliche, Spektakuläre und Negative der Kriegs-berichterstattung hervor. Sie überschätzen den Einfluss der Journalisten und Medien auf die politische Entscheidungsfindung, und sie be-greifen das Publikum als eine passive Masse, die mit den Mitteln des Friedensjournalismus aufgeklärt werden muss. Darüber hinaus basiert die Idee des Friedensjournalismus weitgehend auf einer übermäßig individualistischen Sicht, wobei die strukturellen Zwänge im Journa-lismus aus dem Blick geraten: Hierzu zählen ungenügende personelle, zeitliche und finanzielle Ressourcen, redaktionelle Prozesse und Hierarchien, Zwänge der Nachrichtenformate, die Verfügbarkeit von Quellen sowie der Zugang zum Geschehen und generell zu Informa-tionen. All dies deutet darauf hin, dass die Praxis des Friedensjournalismus keine Frage der persönlichen Freiheit ist. Medienstrukturen und professionelle Routinen können wohl kaum aus der Position des individuellen Journalisten heraus verändert werden. Moderner Jour-nalismus manifestiert sich in Prozessen der organisierten Nachrichtenproduktion, wobei den organisationalen und institutionellen Faktoren Priorität eingeräumt wird, ebenso wie Prozessen der beruflichen Sozialisation. Um einen ernstzunehmenden Beitrag für die Kriegsbericht-erstattung und ihre kritische Reflexion leisten zu können, muss auch Friedensjournalismus die strukturellen Bedingungen im Journalismus berücksichtigen. Die Debatte um den Friedensjournalismus - und insbesondere um die praktischen Implikationen – muss an die Journa-lismusforschung angeschlossen werden, wo ähnliche Anstrengungen zur journalistischen Qualitätssicherung unternommen werden.

Abstract: Most wars were not brought to our attention if there were no journalists to report on them and no news media to send reporters to conflict spots. At the same time, the media often give priority to conflict and war at the expense of playing a positive role in attempts to bring about peace. The concept of peace journalism is, therefore, seen as an alternative model to traditional ways of war reporting. This article argues, however, that the idea of peace journalism comes as old wine in new bottles. Although carrying a noble goal, it ignores the manifold nuances in the media and tends to highlight the exceptional, spectacular and negative of war coverage. The idea of peace journalism tends to overestimate the influence journalists and the media have on political decisions; and it often understands audiences in terms of a passive mass that needs to be enlightened by virtue of peace reporting. In addition to this, peace journalism is, to a consid-erable extent, based on an overly individualistic perspective and ignores the many structural constraints that shape and limit the work of journalists: few personnel, time and material resources; editorial procedures and hierarchies; textual constraints; availability of sources; access to the scene and information in general - just to name a few. All this suggests that the conduct of peace journalism is not a matter of individual leeway, and media structures and professional routines cannot be modified from the position of the individual journalist. Mod-ern corporate journalism involves processes of organized news production, thus giving priority to organizational and institutional factors as well as processes of professional socialization. To have any impact on the way the news is made, and its critical scrutiny, the advocates of peace journalism must address the structural constraints of news production. The discussion of peace journalism, and particularly of its practical implications, must be tied to the realm of journalism studies where it resonates with ongoing efforts to promote excellence in journalism.

Introduction

According to the *Conflict Barometer*, an annual conflict analysis published by the Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research (2005: 1-8), the number of conflicts has more or less continuously risen from 74 in 1945 to 249 in 2005. High-intensity conflicts have, for the most part, shown a regular increase from seven to 38 during the last 60 years. The large number of ongoing conflicts, part of which are carried out with a massive amount of violence, prevent entire regions (e.g. sub-Saharan Africa) from political democratization and socio-economic development. In addition, at least after Munich 1972 and even more so with September 11, 2001, terrorism has entered the picture. Wars are increasingly fought by non-territorial forces and global terror networks, with civilians becoming legitimate targets of bombings and hostages.

At the same time it is increasingly argued that public communication is an important factor in the course of events in times of war and crisis. Most wars and conflicts were not brought to our attention if there were no journalists to report on them and no media organizations to send their reporters to conflict spots. Having seen the endless atrocities of war and standing on the brink of professional disillusionment, many journalists started to ask how they can help to make the world a better place. In a similar vein, critical scholars, usually not from inside the realm of journalism studies, began to promote a vision of journalistic practice which extents beyond modern mainstream journalism and its enduring values of objectivity, neutrality and detachment. This coalition of concerned journalists and critical scholars is bound up by the philosophy of peace journalism.

As many other influential concepts of journalistic practice, such as investigative journalism, public/civic journalism and development journalism, peace journalism has its advocates – and also its critics. The controversy about peace journalism, its virtue, practicability and philosophical tenets, is the reason why the editor of *conflict & communication online* has decided to set up a special issue around this important dispute. I have, on several occasions, argued against peace journalism, although I don't think that this journalism concept is *per se* bad. Peace journalism, as it inherits the values of non-violent conflict resolution, entails a very noble goal, that is, to make society more peaceful, which is particularly important in light of the pessimistic outlook given above. However, I will argue that the concept of peace journalism comes, at least for people familiar with journalism research, as old wine in new bottles. It rests, as I shall show, on a sweeping criticism of current media coverage and often ignores the manifold nuances in the media. While in some respects the basic tenets of peace journalism have already been incorporated in recent media coverage, other demands just seem impracticable if we take the workings of professional journalism into account.

The two faces of peace journalism

The concept of peace journalism has been coined in the 1970s by the Norwegian peace researcher Johan Galtung who is a pioneer in the study of news values (Galtung & Ruge, 1965). Peace journalism inherits a normative impetus; it prioritizes "peace" as its central value and analytical starting point. Peace journalism, as a special mode of socially responsible journalism, can be defined as a program or frame of journalistic news coverage which contributes to the process of making and keeping peace respectively to the non-violent settlement of conflicts (Hanitzsch, 2004b: 482).

The advocates of peace journalism draw on a critical examination of the current state of war reporting. Galtung and Vincent (1992: 7) criticize the criteria of news selection that prevail in journalism, most notably the news factors related to negativism, personalization and proximity to elite countries and elite persons. Schicha (1999: 12) complains about the mono-causal explanations of the origins and causes of conflicts, while others expressed their discontent with the fact that the media pay attention to conflicts only when manifest violence is about to occur (Galtung, 1998: 7; Jakobsen, 2000: 132; Kempf, 1999: 20).

Recent developments in war reporting, especially those which became manifest in the coverage of the Gulf War of 1991 and Nato intervention in Kosovo in 1999, have played a crucial role in stimulating a critical debate on conflict and war coverage. Some experienced war correspondents, most prominently Annabel McGoldrick and Jake Lynch, began to promote the idea of peace journalism among their colleagues and established the network *Reporting the World*.[1] McGoldrick (2000: 19-20) described peace journalism as a "new form of journalism" which looks "at how journalists could be part of the solution rather than part of the problem". Lynch (1998: 64; 2002: 22; 2003) situated journalists as "participant-observers" in war zones, as news accounts are "a factor in the sequence of cause and effect" and the people involved in stories adjust their actions according to calculations about the possible effects of media coverage.

There is no single and universal concept of peace journalism, however. The idea of peace journalism is rather driven by a heterogeneous movement which does not always define itself in a clear-cut manner. There are two major strands in conceptualizing peace journalism. One could be labeled *interventionist reporting* and stands in the tradition of advocacy journalism. This form of journalism does actively promote peace through means of public communication. According to the

---

1. http://www.reportingtheworld.org

German political scientist Jörg Becker (2002: 14), the media has the political obligation to participate and stand up for peace of its own accord. Journalism should not only report reality "as it is", rather it should create reality, set examples and call for change. This form of advocacy journalism – to the extent that it is sometimes misunderstood as legitimation for biased coverage – is vulnerable to Martin Bell's (1997: 8) controversial "journalism of attachment" by which he means a journalism that "will not stand neutrally between good and evil, right and wrong, the victim and the oppressor." What makes this view highly problematic is that journalists presume the power to identify victims and perpetrators (Are those being arrested in Guantanamo victims or perpetrators?) or, referring to Becker's view, to determine the direction of social change.

The second strand in conceptualizing peace journalism is closely related to the "classic" tenets of *good journalism*. This mode of peace journalism is not intended to substitute war propaganda with peace propaganda, but "it does imply dismissing simple antagonisms between 'good' and 'evil'" (Kempf 2002: 71). War discourses should be deconstructed in a two-step procedure (Kempf 2003: 8-9): First, "de-escalation oriented conflict reporting", characterized by neutrality and detachment, entails an emphasis on win-win solutions, questioning of the military logic and exploration of conflict information. In the second step, called "solution oriented conflict reporting", the dualistic construction of the conflict, still prevalent in the first step, will be abandoned. The practical suggestions made by Kempf are sympathetic to Galtung's (2002: 261) distinction between peace/conflict journalism and war/violence journalism, and they are, although based on a different approach, somewhat similar to McGoldrick and Lynch's (2000) "peace journalism manual". The major problem in both approaches is that they tend to address journalists as individuals, whereas the structural constraints of news making fade from the radar. While this issue will be discussed in another part of this paper, we will first have to clarify the position of peace journalism in the realm of journalism theory.

Peace journalism and journalism theory

A clear definition of journalism is especially important in a time in which researchers tend to speak about "journalism" without giving any indication as to what conceptualization of journalism they subscribe to. Some limit journalism to the professional activities of people working for news media; others include Weblogs and other forms of "participative" journalism.

According to the well-known work of George Spencer-Brown (1969: 1), observers define objects by making distinctions. In order to define journalism, we have to draw a line between what is journalism and what is not. An effective way to identify journalism is offered by differentiation theory, which is rooted in the work of Émile Durkheim (1893). Differentiation theory holds that increased complexity, selectivity and contingency of modern society require functional differentiation of social systems (politics, law, economy, education, etc.), each of which fulfills a specific function that is essential to maintain order in society.

Public communication can be conceptualized as one of these social systems, it has evolved to function as common, socially binding reference by permanently (periodically) providing information of immediate topicality (Hanitzsch, 2004a: 48). This common reference is vitally important to society because it allows the co-orientation of the social universe. While less complex societies could maintain social co-orientation, coordination and integration through interpersonal communication, public communication has become central to the organization of modern society (DeFleur & Ball-Rokeach, 1989: 319). In other words: The emergence and evolution of public communication as a system is a reaction of modern society to the problems caused by functional differentiation and social disintegration.

The system public communication consists of four arenas in which professional communication activities take place: journalism, public relations, advertising and entertainment. These fields differ in respect to two fundamental dimensions (see Figure 1). The first dimension, the *primary information value*, refers to the traditional distinction between fact and fiction. Because communication messages usually contain complex information, the individual scores have to be seen as rather relative to one another: They make up a continuum that stretches from "mostly factual" (+factual/-fictional) to "mostly fictional" (-factual/+fictional). It is important to note that the distinction between "fact" and "fiction" does only make sense on the micro level. That the sky is blue cannot be denied and is therefore an "objective" fact. "Reality", however, is conceptionally situated at the macro level and is essentially made up of an infinitive number of facts. Journalists select and judge information which produces an inevitably contingent media reality. Increasing complexity of the factual basis means increasing contingency, which results in a growing number of "factually true" combinations.

The second dimension, *communication goals*, is concerned with the origin of a particular message. Communication goals can come primarily from the outside ("externally defined") and are defined by a client, host organization or particular groups of stakeholders. In these cases a communicated message is usually intended to have a particular effect on the attitudes and/or behaviors of those who consume it – for instance, in terms of purchase decisions, positive perception of a company, etc.). Communication goals can also originate from the inside ("internally defined") and are, at least in the first place, not intended to have a particular effect on the audiences. Journalism, according to this view, is made up of messages which are mostly factual, while the communication goals are primarily internally defined.

```
                          + factual
                          - fictional


        Journalism                        Public Relations

Communication goals

◄──────────────────────────────────────────────────────►
+ internal / - external              + external / - internal


        Entertainment                     Advertising


                          + fictional
                          - factual
```
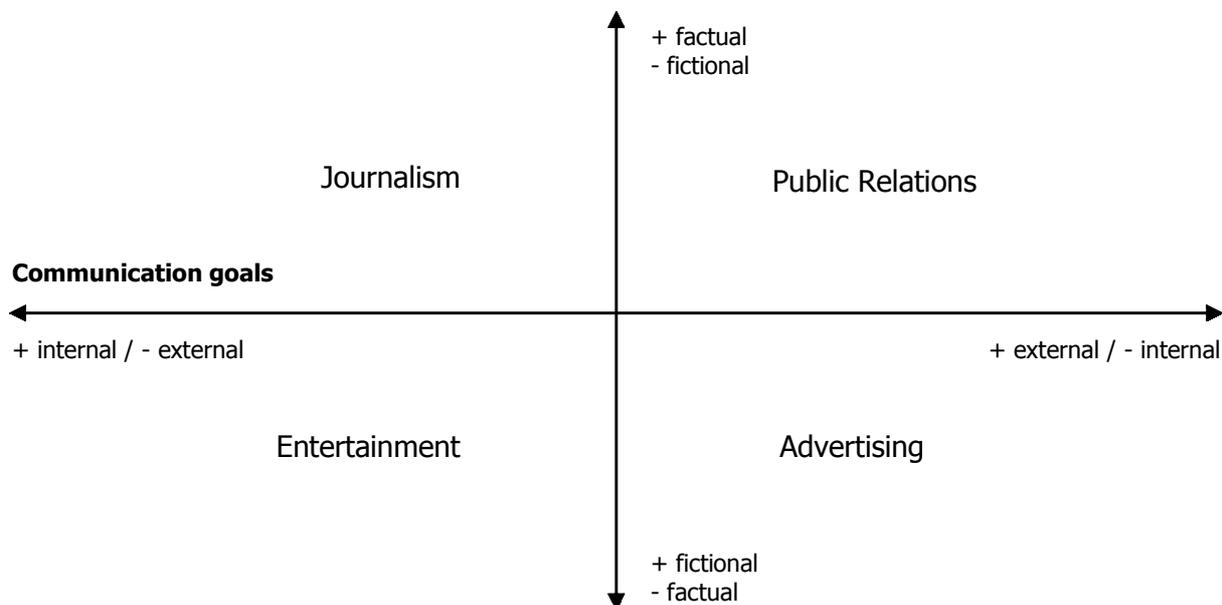
Figure 1: Distinction of journalism, PR, advertising and entertainment

This taxonomy does not attempt to simplify complex social phenomena in binary terms. It does not say that information can be either factual or fictional. To some extent, all fictional stories relate to social reality, the "facts". In a similar vein, it is not uncommon in journalism to include fictional elements in an article, especially in feature stories or the so-called new journalism. The presented model classifies the forms of public communication in relative terms, holding that some information, for instance, is more factual and less fictional than others. This allows us to capture the existing diversity of journalism cultures, including peace journalism. In the journalism quadrant of Figure 1, the traditional Western understanding of objective and neutral "just-the-facts" journalism would be located in the upper left. The diverse forms of advocacy journalism, on the other hand, would be situated to the right, closest to public relations, starting with high factual content in the upper right (e.g. civic/public journalism, development journalism) and moving in a downwards direction as fictional content becomes more prevalent (e.g. partisan/patriotic journalism). Popular journalism, as a manifestation of entertainization and tabloidization in news-making, would be situated close to the entertainment quadrant.

The two different camps in thinking peace journalism occupy different spaces in the two-dimensional coordinate system: The mode of good journalism is located in the upper left in the journalism quadrant, as it is committed to the professionalism model that emphasizes objectivity, neutrality and detachment. The interventionist mode of peace journalism, on the other hand, is situated closely to public relations and may occasionally cross the line to PR when journalists start to actively engage in conflict resolution.

Peace journalism: a critical review

The promotion of peace journalism among professional journalists has not always met an enthusiastic response. The BBC correspondent David Loyn (2003) argues that peace journalism could compromise the integrity of journalists and confuse their role as neutral disseminators: "Our task is always to seek to find out what is going on, not carrying any other baggage. If there is conflict resolution we report on it in context. We do not engage in it." While this point of view may seem simplistic, it is a blunt indicator of the dominant professional ideology as it is deeply inherited by many, if not most, journalists in the Western hemisphere.

This professional ideology, which entails the traditional values of objectivity, neutrality and detachment, is not unchallenged in the study of journalism, however. While some journalists argue that neutrality and detachment draws a moral equivalence between victim and aggressor (e.g. Christiane Amanpour, quoted in Hume, 1997: 6), others believe that journalism "is not a neutral and mechanical undertaking but in some sense a moral enterprise" (Bell, 1997: 11). In a similar vein, objectivity has been scrutinized by several scholars. Some argue that journalism is not objective; others that it cannot be objective; and still others that it should not be objective (Lichtenberg 1991: 238). The objectivity debate is an evergreen in journalism studies because it touches upon the philosophical underpinnings of modern journalism or, more specifically, its epistemological foundation.

Some advocates of peace journalism, most notably Johan Galtung himself, subscribe to a naïve epistemological view on media coverage. They argue that the practice of traditional war reporting results in a distorted representation of reality (e.g. Galtung & Vincent, 1992: 24; Kempf, 2006: 5). I have argued elsewhere that complaints about a "media-biased reality" actually miss the point (Hanitzsch, 2004b: 486), and there is a growing awareness of the fact that the news is not a "mirror" of reality. Rather, the news "is a representation of the world, and all representations are selective" (Schudson, 2003: 33). Any serious inquiry into conflict coverage must acknowledge that news accounts are inevitably based on cognition and contingent (re)construction of reality. While this insight is partly built into the writings of Lynch and Kempf, peace journalism as analytical concept seems to be prone to epistemological realism. To say that reality can be "misrepresented", for instance by drawing on an "incomplete" factual basis (Kempf 2006: 5), assumes that there is a proper and "true" version of reality. However, every representation is inevitably biased, and any "correspondence" between an objective reality and its representation(s) is hardly possible. In everyday journalism, subjective representations can be objictified provided they cohere with other "facts", that is, with what we already know. An "external perspective", as demanded by Kempf (ibid), is neither needed nor possible.

It seems that peace journalism still has to define its epistemological foundation. Such a basis may be provided by standpoint epistemology, a philosophical camp that originated with the feminist critique of the objectivity concept (Harding 1991). Standpoint epistemology holds that less powerful and marginalized members of society enjoy a certain epistemic privilege to see social reality differently from those who dominate society. Such a counter-hegemonic epistemology would require journalists to report conflicts from the perspective of the less powerful and marginalized people. Standpoint epistemology could encourage "journalists to rethink themselves and their craft from the position of marginalized Others, thus uncovering unconscious ethnocentric, sexist, racist, and heterosexist biases that distort news production as it is governed by the dominant news paradigm" (Durham, 1998: 132).

The lack of an explicit-made epistemological foundation is not the only omission made by the peace journalism movement, however. An assessment of the literature reveals that the ideas behind peace journalism as well as its practical implications are often based on an overly individualistic and voluntaristic perspective. This is particularly true for many essays published by (former) journalists, most notably by Lynch and McGoldrick, but also for the work of scholars who argue in favor of a "courageous journalist" (Jaeger, 2002: 29). Their implicit argument seems to suggest that journalists only need to change their attitudes and behaviors, and as a result, they will produce conflict coverage that embraces the values of peace journalism. But this is an illusion.

There are in fact many structural constraints which shape and limit the work of journalists: few personnel, time and material resources, editorial procedures and hierarchies, textual constraints (news formats), availability of sources, access to the scene and information in general, just to name a few. Journalists consistently work under conditions of heavy time pressure, limited resources and tight competition. To the extent that time, space and resources are so limited, journalists need to deconstruct complex and complicated conflicts in terms of ready-made narratives which are easily understood by their audiences. These accessible and commonly shared schemata are particularly salient in news photographs (Griffin, 2004; Trivundza, 2004), and they exactly embody what Fawcett (2002: 221) rightly calls the "constraining nature of the news text". Fawcett further suggests that, in order to encourage journalists to make use of "win-win" frames of conflict, one has "to address the power of these discursive structures, as well as the power of the political and professional cultures within which journalists operate". Wolfsfeld goes even further and maintains that the needs of a peace process are structurally incompatible with the imperatives of journalism:

There is an inherent contradiction between the logic of a peace process and the professional demands of journalists. A peace process is complicated; journalists demand simplicity. A peace process takes time to unfold and develop; journalists demand immediate results. Most of a peace process is marked by dull, tedious negotiations; journalists require drama. A successful peace process leads to a reduction in tensions; journalists focus on conflict. Many of the significant developments within a peace process must take place in secret behind closed doors; journalists demand information and action. (Wolfsfeld 1997: 67)

As a result, the media pays very little attention to the – mostly invisible – successes of preventive diplomacy (Jakobsen, 2000: 133). While media criticism is often concerned with professional news values (Galtung & Vincent, 1992: Chapter 2), it ignores the fact that these values, fundamental as they are in modern journalism, resonate with the expectations of the audience (Eilders, 1997; Tai & Chang, 2002). The main characteristic of news values is that they raise attention; and in our post-modern society public attention is the central currency and thus becomes an increasingly limited good. Consequently, virtually everything in public communication is geared toward public attention, be it journalism, public relations, advertising or entertainment. The mainstream media can ill afford to abandon news values, as this would jeopardize their economic base on which they are forced to operate. Ironically, in order to be successful in the "marketplace of public attention", peace journalism would have to subscribe to the same values as does corporate journalism.

All this clearly suggests that the conduct of peace journalism is not a matter of individual leeway. Modern corporate journalism involves processes of organized news production, thus giving priority to organizational and institutional factors as

well as processes of professional socialization. A long tradition of research suggests that the characteristics, backgrounds and values of individual journalists matter relatively little in the production of media content (Berkowitz, Limor & Singer, 2004; Golding & Elliott, 1979; Weaver & Wilhoit, 1996). "Courageous" journalists and media organizations, when subscribing to the idea of peace journalism, would have to tilt at windmills, unless they reach a critical mass, but this is nothing one should expect for the near future.[1]

Another problem of the peace journalism movement is that their sweeping media criticism fails to take notice of the various nuances of journalism. Similar to the routines of war reporting, media criticism tends to highlight the exceptional, spectacular and negative (Calließ & Raue 2004: 200-5) at the expense of the ordinary and positive, and then making generalizing conclusions about "the media". To the extent that media critics tend to focus on regular news broadcasts and the traditional news sections of newspapers, they ignore the existing diversity of media outlets and alternative, sometimes even counter-hegemonic forms of reporting, such as news features, documentaries and specials, which explore conflict formations and the true causes of violence in much greater detail. There are plenty of differentiated accounts that provide a complex and comprehensive picture, but these accounts are not likely to be found equally often in all media. The different functionality of media outlets goes along with manifold distinctions in journalism cultures, not all of which happen to be clear-cut: serious vs. popular journalism, broadsheet vs. tabloid journalism, public service vs. marketing journalism, to name only a few. All these areas of journalism are oftentimes lumped together, no matter the extent of their similarity is actually very little. For this reason, it is simply unrealistic to expect media like the British *Sun*, the German *Bild* or American *Fox News* to tune in the conduct of peace journalism, unless there is a strong audience demand for it. Due to their specific functionality, not all media will be equally receptive to the ideas of peace journalism.

This brings us to the next critical point: Peace journalism, if it is to survive a critical discussion of its analytic value and practical use, must learn to look at fragmented and active audiences instead of a passive mass that needs to be enlightened by virtue of right and proper reporting. Contingent needs in a society result in an increasingly contingent supply, thus leading to a selective use of the supplied products. For media content is strongly oriented to the disparate needs and expectations of the audience, as measured for instance by market research, the segregation into diverse publics reflects the growing disintegration of society. Furthermore, since the uses and gratifications approach took off in communication and media studies, the view of the audience as an active one gained ground. Uses and gratification theorist suggest that the audience actively uses the media as sources of gratification (Blumler & Katz, 1974). Assuming that there are various choices of media outlets, it is believed that people use those media outlets which promise the highest amount of satisfaction.

Because it is highly unlikely that all media will equally subscribe to the conduct of peace journalism, mainstream audiences may ironically choose the media which contain the least amount of peace journalism. There is no indication in audience research that consumers of mainstream media would prefer peace journalism to traditional news (see Bird, 2000: 31; Tai & Chang, 2002: 262). On the other hand, peace journalism is already present – in the outfit of "good journalism" – in many quality news outlets, many of which are public broadcasting organizations (e.g. BBC, ARD, and NPR). Those who seek this kind of conflict coverage can obtain it by means of their selective media use. People who are interested in bombastic, sensational and sketchy conflict coverage will continue to avoid peace journalism and tune in media outlets which serve their preferences appropriately.

The conduct of peace journalism does also become difficult, if not impossible, when applied in certain conflict constellations. For one thing, journalists reporting on conflicts in their neighborhoods do often belong to one of the groups involved in the violence. In these cases it is difficult to remain impartial and to deliver a balanced and comprehensive account of the conflict. Some of us may remember the clashes between religious groups in Indonesia's province Maluku in 1999. Shortly after the province capital Ambon fell into two territories controlled by either Christian or Muslim militias, there was no way for Muslim journalists to enter Christian territory, and vice versa. The only daily newspaper *Suara Maluku* became biased against the Muslim population as its office was located in Christian territory (Hanitzsch, 2004b: 483). In such a situation of hatred, reporter may risk their lives if they try to give both sides equal say. In the midst of an unfolding conflict, journalists and their media organizations can often enough hardly build a bridge between enemies.

The role of the audience is even more important in this respect. It is hard to convince people of the virtue of peace journalism once they engage in a conflict in which their elementary interests, or even their existence, are at stake. When in 1997 and 1998 two newspapers in Northern Ireland, the unionist *News Letter* and the nationalist *Irish News*, published joint editorials as an effort to reconcile the opposed groups for the annual Orange Order parade, many subscribers felt betrayed and indicated that they would terminate their subscriptions (Fawcett, 2002: 216).

In addition to this, there seems to be a tendency among some peace journalism advocates to overestimate the power of journalism. In one of his recent publications Galtung (2002: 260) claims that with more peace journalism, "the conflict in

---

1. The low significance of individual factors has been acknowledged by some exponents of the peace journalism idea, in particular by those based at the Konstanz University (e.g. Jaeger, 2002; Kempf, 2002: 70, 2003: 3, 2005).

and over Northern Ireland would have entered a more peaceful phase long ago". I believe this is an overly optimistic view. Although journalism does undeniably have an impact on the people, only rarely can journalists move beyond the cultural consensus of their societies in which they live and work. And contrary to what is commonly believed, the influence journalists and the media have on political leaders and decision makers tends to be limited (Jakobsen, 2000; Wolfsfeld, 2004). Wolfsfeld (2004: 33), who hypothesizes a circular relationship between politics and the media, rightly sees the importance of the media in the fact that they *amplify* the impact of political events. Additionally, as public relations is becoming increasingly professionalized and utilized, participants in stories grow to be "media-savvy" (Lynch, 1998: 64), which means they anticipate the workings of journalism in order to get their message through the highly routinized processes of news making.

Conclusion

There is something that makes me suspect that peace journalism is rather mistitled a concept, as it obviously misleads people to conclude that its very intention is the advocacy of peace. Luostarinen (2002: 283) argues that it "is not even necessary to give such journalism a name like 'peace journalism'". Many of the principles of peace journalism are the very essence of excellence in journalism and are deeply embedded in good and many-sided journalism: to make conflicts appear transparent through background information, to give voice to the views of all rivaling parties, to expose lies, cover-up attempts and culprits on all sides and to report on the atrocities of war and the suffering of civilians. It seems that peace journalism oftentimes reinvents the wheel to the extent that it repeats a "classic" debate on quality in journalism that has a long tradition in communication and media research.

Critics may argue that compliance with the values of good journalism is often missing in day-to-day war reporting, but the failures of corporate journalism cannot be overcome by an individualistic and voluntaristic conceptualization of news making. To have any impact on the way the news is being made, and the critical discussion thereof, the advocates of peace journalism must address the structural constraints of news production. The discussion of peace journalism, and particularly of its practical implications, must be tied to the realm of journalism studies where it resonates with ongoing efforts to promote excellence in journalism.

At the same time, there are many elements of peace journalism which do not fit the functionality of journalism and the logic of news production. There are some people who opt for an interventionist mode of peace journalism that regards itself as a vehicle for the advocacy of peace and non-violent conflict resolution (e.g. Becker, 2002: 14). These activists may consider using another field of public communication that, by definition, intends to serve a particular cause: public relations. In order to facilitate peace and non-violent conflict resolution by means of public communication, a concept "Peace PR" seems much more appropriate, but for some reason it has not been developed. "Peace PR" can effectively unfold its public potential if the communicated message "sits consistently with the values and imperatives of those who produce news" (Spencer, 2003: 64).

The inherent logic of news production is another limitation of peace journalism. First, it is an unwarranted assumption that, given the salience and importance of news values in public communication, that peace journalism will prevail in a commercial media system that is driven by market forces. Second, because of their specific functionality, some media (e.g. public broadcasting: BBC, ARD, NPR) are more than others (e.g. yellow press: *The Sun* or *Bild*) sympathetic to the ideas of peace journalism. Third, it is difficult, if not impossible, to implement the values of peace journalism in traditional news formats where space and time constraints do not allow a detailed elaboration of backgrounds and causes of violence as well as its consequences. Fourth, and last, the demand for complexity reduction leads to the use of highly standardized narrative schemes which are often not compatible to the demands of peace journalism.

Critics may complain that I tend to take the media structures and routines for granted and treat them as if they were unable to change. This might be true, but the fact of the matter is that media structures and professional routines cannot be modified from the position of the individual journalist. Quite on the contrary: Cultures must change! Although there are, and will always be, a number of committed journalists who have gained prominence (e.g. Seymour Hersh), they tend to be the exception from the rule and, as such, have only limited power to change the system from within.

A peaceful culture is the *precondition* of peace journalism, rather than its outcome. In a culture in which a life has virtually no meaning and violence seems an appropriate measure of conflict resolution, peace journalism is not likely to evolve. While media critics continue to repeat their mantra-like question of why journalism serves society as poorly as it currently does, I think it is time to turn the question around. We should rather ask: What kind of society do we live in that allows and creates a sort of journalism that has no sense of peace?

References

Becker, J. 2002. Medien im Krieg. In: Albrecht, U. & Becker, J. (eds.). Medien zwischen Krieg und Frieden. Baden-Baden: Nomos, 13-26.

Bell, M. 1997. TV News: How Far Should We Go? British Journalism Review, 8/1, 7-16.

Berkowitz, D., Limor, Y. & Singer, J. 2004. A Cross-Cultural Look at Serving the Public Interest: American and Israeli journalists consider ethical scenarios. *Journalism*, 5/2, 159-181.

Bird, E. S., 2000. Facing the Distracted Audience: Journalism and Cultural Context. *Journalism* 1/1, 29-33.

Blumler, J. G. & Katz, E. (eds.) 1974. The Uses of Mass Communication: a paradigm outlined. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Calließ, J. & Raue, S. 2004. Die Kritik an der Kriegsberichterstattung braucht weitere Horizonte. In: Büttner, C., von Gottberg, J. & Metze-Mangold, V. (eds.). Krieg in den Medien. Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 199-210.

DeFleur, M. & Ball-Rokeach, S. J. 1989. *Theories of Mass Communication, 5th ed*. White Plains, NY: Longman.

Durham, M. G. 1998. On the Relevance of Standpoint Epistemology to the Practice of Journalism: The case for "strong objectivity". Communication Theory, 8/2, 117-140.

Durkheim, É. 1933(1893). *On the Division of Labor in Society*. New York: Macmillan.

Eilders, C. 1997. *Nachrichtenfaktoren und Rezeption. Eine empirische Analyse zur Auswahl und Verarbeitung politischer Information*. Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag.

Fawcett, L. 2002. Why Peace Journalism Isn't News. *Journalism Studies*, 3/2, 213-223.

Galtung, J. 1998. Friedensjournalismus: Was, warum, wer, wie, wann, wo? In: Kempf, W. & Schmidt-Regener, I. (eds.) *Krieg, Nationalismus, Rassismus und die Medien*. Münster: Lit, 3-20.

Galtung, J. 2002. Peace Journalism - A Challenge. In: Kempf, W. & Luostarinen, H. (eds.). Vol. 2: Journalism and the New World Order: Studying War and the Media. Göteborg: Nordicom, 259-272.

Galtung, J. & Ruge, M. H. 1965. The Structure of Foreign News: the presentation of the Congo, Cuba and Cyprus crises in four Norwegian newspapers. Journal of Peace Research, 2/1, 64-91.

Galtung, J. & Vincent, R. C. 1992. Global Glasnost: toward a new world information and communication order? Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.

Golding, P. & Elliott, P. 1979. Making the News. London & New York: Longman.

Griffin, M. 2004. Picturing America's 'War on Terrorism' in Afghanistan and Iraq: photographic motifs as news frames. Journalism, 5/4, 381-402.

Harding, S. 1991. Whose Science? Whose Knowledge? Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Hanitzsch, T. 2004a. *Journalismus in Indonesien. Akteure, Strukturen, Orientierungshorizonte, Journalismuskulturen*. Wiesbaden: Deutscher Universitäts-Verlag.

Hanitzsch, T. 2004b. Journalists as Peacekeeping Force? peace journalism and mass communication theory. Journalism Studies, 5/4, 482-493.

Heidelberg Institute on International Conflict Research (2005) *Conflict Barometer 2005: Crises, Wars, Coups d'État, Negotiations, Mediations, Peace Settlements. 14th Annual Conflict Analysis*. Heidelberg: University of Heidelberg.

Hume, M. 1997. Whose War Is it Anyway? the dangers of the journalism of attachment. Living Marxism Special. London: Inform Inc.

Jaeger, S. 2002. Compatibility of Peace and News Media. Communicator, 37/1, 27-30.

Jakobsen, P. V. 2000. Focus on the CNN Effect Misses the Point: the real media impact on conflict management is invisible and indirect. *Journal of Peace Research*, 37/2, 131-143.

Kempf, W. 1999. Media Contribution to Peace Building in War Torn Societies. In: Diskussionsbeiträge der Projektgruppe Friedensforschung, No. 43. Konstanz: Universität Konstanz.

Kempf, W. 2002. Conflict Coverage and Conflict Escalation. In: Kempf, W. & Luostarinen, H. (eds.). *Vol. 2: Journalism and the New World Order: Studying War and the Media*. Göteborg: Nordicom, 59-72.

Kempf, W. 2003. Constructive Conflict Coverage: a social-psychological research and development program. *conflict & communication online* 2/2.

Kempf, W. 2005. Two Experiments Focusing on De-Escalation Oriented Coverage of Post-War Conflicts. *conflict & communication online* 2/2.

Kempf, W. 2006. Social Constructionism and its Implications for Critical Media Studies. *conflict & communication online* 5/1.

Lichtenberg, J. 2000. In Defense of Objectivity Revisited. In: Curran, J. & Gurevich, M. (eds). Mass Media and Society. 3rd edition. London: Oxford University Press, 238-254.

Loyn, D. 2003. Witnessing the Truth. *openDemocracy.net*, 20 February, URL: http://www.opendemocracy.net/articles/ViewPopUpArticle.jsp?id=2&articleId=993.

Luostarinen, H. 2002. Journalism and Cultural Preconditions of War. In: Kempf, W. & Luostarinen, H. (eds.). *Vol. 2: Journalism and the New World Order: Studying War and the Media*. Göteborg: Nordicom, 273-283.

Lynch, J. 1998. Listening to the Outsiders. Bristish Journalism Review, 9/3, 64-69.

Lynch, J. 2002. Impunity in Journalism. Media Development, 2, 30-32.

Lynch, J. 2003. Journalists Need to Think: a reply to David Loyn. openDemocracy.net, 12 March, URL: http://www.opendemocracy.net/debates/article-8-92-1037.jsp.

McGoldrick, A. 2000. Peace Journalism - An Introduction. In: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (ed.). Medien im Konflikt - Mittäter oder Mediatoren? The Media in Conflicts - Accomplices or Mediators? Bonn: FES, 19-24.

McGoldrick, A. & Lynch, J. 2000. Peace Journalism: How To Do It? URL: http://www.transcend.org/pjmanual.htm.

Schicha, C. 1999. Kriegsberichterstattung zwischen Anspruch und "Wirklichkeit". Kriterien für den Friedensjournalismus. *Zeitschrift für Kommunikationsökologie*, 2/1, 10-13.

Schudson, M. 2003. The Sociology of News, New York: W. W. Norton.

Spencer, G. 2003. Pushing for Peace: the Irish government, television news and the Northern Ireland peace process. *European Journal of Communication*, 18/1, 55-80.

Spencer-Brown, G. 1969. *Laws of Form*. London: Allen & Unwin.

Tai, Z. & Chang, T.-K. 2002. The Global News and the Pictures in Their Heads: a comparative analysis of audience interest, editor perceptions and newspaper coverage. Gazette, 64/3, 251-265.

Trivundza, I. T. 2004. Orientalism as News: pictorial representations of the US attack on Iraq in Delo. Journalism, 5/4, 480-499.

Weaver, D. H. & Wilhoit, G. C. 1996. The American Journalists in the 1990s: U.S. news people at the end of an era. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Wolfsfeld, G. 1997. Promoting Peace through the News Media: some initial lessons from the Oslo peace process. International Journal of Press/Politics, 2/4, 52-70.

Wolfsfeld, G. 2004. Media and the Path to Peace. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

On the author: Thomas Hanitzsch is Assistant Professor in the Institute of Mass Communication and Media Research at the University of Zurich, Switzerland. His main areas of research are comparative media research, journalism studies and war coverage.

Address: Institute of Mass Communication and Media Research, University of Zurich, Andreasstrasse 15, 8050 Zurich, Switzerland, eMail: th.hanitzsch@ipmz.uzh.ch, http://www.thomas-hanitzsch.de