



Part 1 – News

I. Introduction (p. 41)

A. Democratic Theory gives the Press a crucial role. A free press results in an informed public opinion, which is the cornerstone of democracy and a weapon against tyranny. A free society rests on the pillars of education and information.

B. Thomas Jefferson: called for a nation with a “free press.” He said that an independent press is “that liberty which guards our other liberties.”

C. Enlightenment Function: refers to the press’ privileged position in society. It urges the press toward responsible behavior.

1. Thomas Jefferson lamented how such a noble enterprise could publish slander and error.
2. Joseph Pulitzer suggested that high ethical standards were needed to make sure papers serve the public.
3. La Bruyere, a French moralist and critic, attacked papers for reporting trivia.
4. John Cleveland cautioned against respecting “diurnal makers.”

D. Expectations of journalistic performance are higher than ever before. There is a heightened need for responsible behavior in the global and digital age (a “self-conscious quality”).

E. Cases in part 1 address perennial questions facing newsrooms: How can journalists fulfill their mission credibly? Should Pulitzer Prizes be given to reporters who use deception to get a story? Should newspapers form an ethics committee? Are codes of ethics helpful? Should journalism schools teach ethics?

F. The idea of a “free press,” the idea that “you cannot chain the watchdog” in light of the First Amendment, often plays tricks on the press’ thinking about ethics. Part 1 advocates freedom of the press, but promotes an accountable news system.

G. [Gallup 2015](#) polls reveal that press credibility remains at a historical low. This is a wake-up call to continue working on media ethics—even in the midst of hard times and uncertain world leadership. The contemporary climate demands that journalism employ restraint and sobriety.

II. Institutional Pressures (Ch. 1, p. 45)

A. Individual's right to publish has been a strongly held convention: "A newspaper is a private enterprise owing nothing whatever to the public, which grants it no franchise" (William Peter Hamilton, *Wall Street Journal*).

B. But journalism is a business—although, of a particular kind. Some realize that "news" is a "business" and as such has certain obligations to the public.

C. How can one separate the media's financial interests from the public's legitimate news interests? The news is free under the First Amendment, but not free from corporate control.

D. Moral questions demanding our attention as moral decision-makers may arise when the public's need for information is connected in some way with the stockholder's profits or advertiser's dollars.

E. The trend toward concentrated ownership of media properties threatens the free press and the public's right to know.

F. The four cases in this chapter demonstrate how media practitioners are often caught in conflicting duties to their employers, to their readers or viewers, and to their own professional conscience.

1. Huffpost (Case 1). Huffpost News is an online news service. Can its news coverage match the depth of the mainline media?
2. Access to the Internet (Case 2): Do the crises in the journalism profession mean that its productivity and stature are lessened?
3. Bankruptcy at The Philadelphia Inquirer (Case 3): This case examines how bankruptcy can affect the newspaper industry by using The Philadelphia Inquirer as an example. What are the impacts of the newspaper being under new management?
4. Paid Journalism Worldwide (Case 4): Dealing with payola, gifts and hush money in South Africa, China and other places in the world. How do these conflicts threaten the news media's credibility with the public?

III. Truthtelling (Ch. 2, p. 670)

A. Truthtelling relates to the press' obligation to print the truth. Almost every code of ethics starts with this duty.

B. Challenges facing the press' obligation to tell the truth:

1. Newspapers must live within the larger ambiguities about truth in Western/Eastern scholarship and culture.
2. Budget constraints, deadlines, reader expectations, editorial conventions, and self-serving sources complicate truthtelling. Journalism is often referred to as "history in a hurry."

3. Journalistic gatekeepers must choose from unceasing news copy generated by emerging information technologies.

C. “Truth” in news reporting must be enlarged beyond a simple facts-only definition. Both newsgathering and newswriting processes must be considered.

D. The opposite of truth-telling is deception, that is, deliberate intention to mislead. Deception in newswriting is rare, but deception in newsgathering is a persistent temptation because it often facilitates the process of securing information.

E. In this chapter, there are five cases that demonstrate the dimensions of truth-telling in journalism and media ethics:

1. Obesity Epidemic (Case 5): How should the press handle an issue in which science, statistics, and social factors complicate what “the truth” means in a culture that is quick to look for a scapegoat?
2. Al Jazeera (Case 6): This case examines the Arab news network, Al Jazeera, an independent news organization based in Qatar. Does Al Jazeera slant its news against the West? Many Western journalists and governments are not convinced that Al Jazeera is neutral or un-biased in its reporting.
3. The Post-Truth Presidency (Case 7). Truth is central to political life. Did the media deal with the post-truth presidency of Donald Trump as creatively as it could have done?
4. Muhammad Cartoon Controversy (Case 8): Just because the press can print something that may be offensive to certain members of society, should the press print it? How can the press develop cultural values?
5. International #MeToo Movement (Case 9). Focusing on the issue of truth, what are the pros and cons of social media platforms for public issues?

IV. Reporters and Sources (Ch. 3, p. 99)

A. Well-informed sources are the journalist’s bread and butter, but such dependence creates genuine complexities.

B. News media do not print sources’ names because sources would speak guardedly or not at all if they knew their names would be printed.

C. To confront the complexity of dealing with sources, journalists often refer to them as “unnamed sources”. Unnamed sources have been referred to as a “safety valve for democracy and a refuge for conscience, but also a crutch for lazy, careless reporters” (Hugh Culbertson).

D. Walter Lippmann distinguished “news” from “truth” in his now classic work, *Public Opinion*. Whereas news referred to fragments of information that come to a reporter’s attention, the pursuit of truth followed explicit and established standards.

E. Journalists face a number of practical considerations under deadline pressure that challenge or test their ability to examine, test, and evaluate information.

1. Example: should they be adversarial or friendly toward their sources?
2. Example: should a reporter rely on an official written document or an interview with an official source who is blinded by self-interest?

F. News gathering agencies have developed procedures to prevent abuses by reporters. Certain industry conventions support sound journalistic practices (e.g., all information must be verified by two or three sources). Also, codes of ethics require reporters to make proper attribution and editors to consider the validity of a reporter's sources.

G. The five cases in this chapter (Cases 10-14) demonstrate the entanglement of reporter-source relations and the difficult ethical issues involved in this relationship internationally.

Data Mining and Algorithms (Case 10). How much freedom should commercial data mining organizations have to collect and use the information collected to define people's behavior?

Stolen Voice Mail (Case 11). Is theft in the name of transparency justifiable?

Reporters without Borders (Case 12). Should a single unregulated organization have the authority to determine the extent of freedom of expression?

Korea Bans U.S. Beef: Candlelight Vigil (Case 13). Should reporting on issues within a country be influenced by the relationships that country has with others?

Crisis in Darfur (Case 14). What role, if any, do journalists have in assisting the international community to stop human rights abuses within a particular nation?

V. Social Justice (Ch. 4, p. 119)

A. The contemporary mood among media practitioners and scholars is for a press that is more reflective and more conscious of its significant social obligations—that is, a socially responsive press that serves the public and not the paper's own interests.

B. Social justice addresses and is concerned with the following questions:

1. How do we represent the disenfranchised in our society? This includes the have-nots, the economically and information poor, minorities, the homeless, and so forth. How should the press report issues relevant to them?
2. Social justice asks: Do the media carry a particular mandate from subscribers and audiences in the same way politicians may sense special obligations to represent constituencies?
3. Does the press have a legitimate advocacy function, or does it best serve democratic life as an intermediary, a conduit of information and varying opinions?

C. The Hutchins Commission (1947) mandated the press to articulate “a representative picture of the constituent groups of society.” The Commission said that minorities deserved the most conscientious treatment possible.

D. The Press says, “We’re free to report whatever we want to report!” Unfettered freedom of expression, or the liberty of the press established by the First Amendment (a freedom that is essential to a free society), is seen by some to be in conflict with the representation of minority interests.

E. Thus, obligating or otherwise pressuring the press to report on various social causes is said by some to cut against its very independence, or the very notion of a free press.

F. Notable achievements have occurred despite the debate over the press’ independence. An example of such an achievement is the abolitionist editors of the 19th century who covered the black movement and television’s role in the struggle for civil rights in the 1960s.

G. The five cases in this chapter that demonstrate typical problems of social justice as it relates to journalism include the following:

1. The Worldwide Refugee Crisis (Case 15). How can journalists practice interpretive sufficiency in their reporting? What obstacles do journalists face in accomplishing authentic disclosure in reporting?
2. “A Hidden America: Children of the Mountains” (Case 16): How can journalists address social problems in a meaningful way in their reporting? How can emotion be paired with deep analysis of social problems in reporting? And, in reporting on social problems, how can journalists avoid stereotyping?
3. Global Media Monitoring Project (Case 17): An examination of the world’s largest research study of gender, advocating change for how women are represented in media. Are these types of studies effective and how can we evaluate our print, broadcast and digital coverage in light of this research?
4. Ten Weeks at Wounded Knee (Case 18): How should the press go about representing conflicting voices in a balanced way? Does fairness require that news coverage reflect the degree of complexity inherent in the events themselves? And, how does the press cover an event that was deliberately staged for the press?
5. Peace Journalism (Case 19): A principle asking us to consider a new way of thinking about reporting on violent conflicts worldwide. How does this concept challenge traditional journalistic thinking of conflict as a value...and independent, balanced reporting when two sides are at war?

VI. Privacy (Ch. 5, p. 146)

A. Privacy has long been a cherished right in Western culture. Samuel Warren and Louis Brandeis formulated the legal concept of “The Right to Privacy” in their 1890 *Harvard Law Review* article.

B. The Constitution does not include the word “privacy.” Defenders of this “right” base its existence on the first eight amendments and the 14th Amendment, which guarantees due process of law and protection against unreasonable intrusion.

C. General parameters of the laws safeguarding privacy include protection “against deep intrusions on human dignity by those in possession of economic or governmental power.”

D. Privacy cases may be classified into four categories:

1. Intrusion on seclusion or solitude;
2. Public disclosure of embarrassing private affairs;
3. Publicity that places individuals in a false light; or
4. Appropriation of an individual’s name or likeness for commercial advantage.

E. Legal definitions, however, are inadequate for the news business. An ethic of privacy that goes beyond the law is important for news people to establish for several reasons:

1. The law that conscientiously seeks to protect individual privacy excludes public officials (N.Y. Times v. Sullivan, falsehoods relating to official conduct of public officials are protected unless made with actual malice or reckless disregard of the facts; later held to include private individuals engaged in public issues).
2. The press has been given great latitude in defining newsworthiness. Courts have ruled material newsworthy because newspapers carried it. How do we distinguish gossip and voyeurism from newsworthy information?
3. Legal efforts ask many questions about the relationships between self and society. How do we balance the individual and the collective?

F. Moral principles that undergird an ethic of privacy for news people (and principles that private information in news accounts must pass to be ethically justified):

1. Principle no. 1: promotes decency and basic fairness as nonnegotiable. Basic fairness rules out falsehood, innuendo, recklessness, and exaggeration.
2. Principle no. 2: proposes “redeeming social value” as a criterion for selecting which privacy information is worthy of disclosure.
3. Principle no. 3: dignity of persons should not be maligned in the name of “press privilege.”

G. The cases in this chapter demonstrate privacy concerns involving both elected and private persons:

1. The Privacy Paradox (Case 20). In everyday internet usage outside of politics and economics, what are the relevant privacy issues that people choose to reveal about themselves?
2. Facebook – Cambridge Analytica Scandal (Case 21): Facebook’s stated mission is “giving people the power to share and make the world more open and connected.” Does this “openness” and “connection” lead to breaches in privacy? Is it ethical for Facebook to allow marketers access to people’s private information?
3. The Controversial USA PATRIOT Act (Case 22): The act expands the information-gathering powers of law enforcement and intelligence agencies in the prevention of terrorism. Supporters praise its protective scope while critics are concerned that it is over-

broad and unconstitutional. How should the news media promote awareness and educate the public regarding the complex issues involved in the debate?