

Investigative Journalism in Montreal: “A Golden Age.”

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ABSTRACT

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Investigative journalism in Montreal is healthy and robust, despite a North American media landscape in flux, where newspapers across the continent have closed or significantly reduced staff. Newsroom budgets have shrunk across the continent, and the migration of print content to the web has not brought with it a comparative level of advertising. This thesis is a case study that researched how Montreal’s investigative journalism environment has fared in light of the perceived newspaper crisis.

The case study consists of a quantitative analysis of Montreal’s *La Presse* and *The Gazette* newspapers, which revealed that since 2009, investigative journalism articles increased in both papers. Additionally, through interviews with eight of Montreal’s most-prominent investigative journalists, I discovered three main reasons why the city has become a welcoming environment for one of the most costly and time-consuming journalistic projects: the rise of Radio-Canada’s *Enquête* program, which created a successful model for an investigative unit; a surge in whistleblowers coming forward and willing to risk their well-being; and finally, strong market competition and an adversarial newsroom culture. Investigative journalists in Montreal have uncovered severe cases of scandal and moral transgressions committed by Quebec’s elected officials and business leaders. Montreal’s investigative reporting has led to the resignations of big-city mayors and the arrests of prominent businessmen and members of criminal organizations. I demonstrate in this case study that there is a measurable increase of investigative work in the recent past and my interviews suggest that there is a perception among journalism stakeholders that investigative journalism is working well in Montreal.

To my mom and dad;
my thesis would have never been
completed without them.

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1. Introduction

In March 2009, the popular investigative journalism program *Enquête*, created by the French-language arm of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, broadcasted a report on the expense accounts of the former head of one of Quebec's largest trade unions (Radio-Canada 2009). Jocelyn Dupuis, up until November 2008, was for 11 years the head of FTQ-Construction, a union of over 70,000 workers, representing the majority of unionized construction workers in Quebec (Ouellet 2013). *Enquête* journalists Marie-Maude Denis and Alain Gravel reported during the 2009 episode that 34 expense disclosures, including 104 bills, revealed that the FTQ union reimbursed Dupuis \$125,000 over a six-month period. The entirety of the expenses were for alcohol and food (Radio-Canada 2009). Gravel and Denis were tipped off to Dupuis' questionable spending by a whistleblower named Ken Pereira, who was the president of an industrial mechanics union affiliated with the FTQ. Pereira told the investigative journalists that he feared for his life after he leaked Dupuis' expense accounts (Radio-Canada 2009). Moreover, Gravel and Denis reported during the same March *Enquête* program that Dupuis was friends with Raynald Desjardins, a well-known member of a violent and organized crime syndicate with ties to Montreal's Rizzuto crime family (Woods and Edwards 2012). Desjardins would be arrested in late 2011 in connection with the murder of another known mafia associate (*Ibid*). Desjardins' name reportedly appeared on some of Dupuis' food and alcohol receipts (Radio-Canada 2009).

Enquête, and the Dupuis episode in particular, are critical components to the discussion of the current state of investigative journalism in Montreal. *Enquête*, according to the data collected for this thesis, was one of the sparks that led to an increase in investigative journalism across the city's news organizations, and what influenced *Enquête* host Alain Gravel to say we are witnessing a "Golden Age" of investigative journalism in Montreal (Gravel 2013). The Dupuis episode was *Enquête*'s first foray into a subject that has since become the main focus of Montreal's news organizations' investigative probing: corruption among Quebec society's elected officials and business leaders.

This thesis is a case study into the investigative journalism environment in Montreal during the period between the years 2007 and 2012 (inclusive). I wanted to provide a detailed analysis of a special moment in time, in Montreal, regarding the ability of the city's journalistic institutions to provide citizens with knowledge about those people entrusted with public money and public trust.

I wanted to determine, in the face of alarm being sounded about the fate of investigative journalism, whether the city's journalistic institutions were able to function at a level that satisfied journalists and those invested in the outcomes of investigative journalism.

First, through a quantitative analysis of Montreal's English and French-language dailies of record, I established that investigative journalism increased significantly in those papers between 2008 and the present. Secondly, interviews with eight of the city's most prominent investigative journalists (print, online, and broadcast) indicated a general consensus among reporters that investigative journalism in Montreal was in robust shape,

and suggested that three critical factors were responsible for this increase: the rise of *Enquête*; the emergence of whistleblowers willing to risk their physical and financial security in order to inform journalists; and lastly, strong market competition coupled with the support from corporate media organizations to produce long-form, in-depth, costly and time-consuming investigative journalism.

I planned to track the decline of investigative journalism in Montreal; instead I documented its revival. My original working hypothesis was that the continent-wide trends of cuts to newsroom budgets, to personnel and to other newsroom resources, would adversely affect the ability of Montreal news organizations to be viable producers of investigative journalism. It was not difficult to assume that Montreal news organizations were in trouble, based on the trends. The journalism industry in North America, particularly the newspaper industry, is currently in financial decline (NAA 2012). The Newspaper Association of America calculated that the U.S. newspaper industry revenue in 2012 decline by 2% (*Ibid*). The NAA tracked 40 companies that owned 330 daily papers in the U.S. and which represented about 50% of the country's paper revenues. Among those companies, total print newspaper advertising declined 9% in 2012 and the growth in digital advertising did not cover the revenue gap (*Ibid*).

The Canadian news industry has not fared better. Canadians continue to read newspapers at steady rates, and circulation rates among the country's newspapers have not dropped significantly over the last 10 years (Ladurantaye 2013). The problem is that advertisers are choosing to spend their money elsewhere. The major Canadian newspapers chains have reacted to this drop in revenue by cutting staff, reducing newsroom resources, and buying out contracts (*Ibid*).

“Postmedia Network Inc., publisher of the National Post and nine other metropolitan dailies, is looking to cut \$120-million from its operating budget as part of a three-year program. Sun Media has cut more than a thousand jobs over the last several years, while the Toronto Star and Globe and Mail have both looked to buyouts and outsourcing to reduce their costs” (Ibid).

The media landscape in Quebec is also scarred from the drop in advertising prices coupled with the financial crisis that began in 2008. One of the county’s largest media companies, Quebecor Inc., eliminated 400 journalist positions in November 2011 (*Globe and Mail* 2011). At the end of May 2013, the largest newspaper group in the country, Postmedia Inc., announced cuts across its chain of newspapers. Almost 50 journalists were to lose their jobs, more than 20 of them at *The Gazette* in Montreal. Quebecor, in June 2012, closed Montreal’s last-remaining English-language alternative weekly, *The Mirror*. Its counterpart, *The Hour*, was closed a few weeks prior (CBC 2012). Montreal’s only-English daily newspaper is not the only Montreal print medium that has suffered over the last several months. Two high-profile disputes over the past several years at the other two large-circulation dailies in the city have also made headlines because the papers’ administrators forced their employees to accept new contracts that included lower pay and lower benefits than prior deals (Denoncourt 2011).

It was initially assumed that based on these trends, Montreal’s news organizations beginning in the early 2000s, and particularly after the 2008 recession, would be unable to produce one of the most costly and time-consuming endeavors: investigative journalism. The Canadian Centre for Investigative Reporting argued that the cuts to newsroom resources have disproportionately affected investigative journalism. The center was created in 2008 and its mission was clearly stated on its website: “CCIR was founded

in 2008 in response to the ongoing attrition of the resources and expertise from Canadian newsrooms necessary to produce in-depth investigative reporting on matters of significant public interest" (CCIR 2012). Ironically, the CCIR closed its doors in April 2013 due to a lack of funding (Tubb 2013). However, the ability of Montreal media to produce investigative journalism has emerged from the financial crisis stronger than before, according to journalist respondents interviewed for this thesis.

The results of this case study are important to the study of journalism because at a time when the news industry is in a financial crisis, this thesis provides a clear analysis of the factors that have led a major North American city to buck the trend. If we believe that journalism – particularly investigative journalism – is critical to the proper functioning of a democratic society, then this case study offers, perhaps not a “roadmap” on how to reproduce Montreal’s success, but at the very least provides tools with which to recognize signs and characteristics that must be preserved in order to sustain a healthy cadre of investigative journalists who monitor the leaders in society who are tasked with representing the public and who manage public money.

2. Review of Literature

I contend that Montreal's investigative journalists work in a socio-culturally situated media system that appreciates their role as watchdogs, a concept rooted in the Enlightenment. Montreal's investigative journalists use a set of practices that serve the public, by first, giving citizens information they need to sustain their democracy, and second, by helping to reinforce and maintain the city's culture. Through a review of the relevant literature, this chapter puts into context the reasons for which I chose to focus this case study's quantitative analysis on two of Montreal's largest paid-circulation daily newspapers and why I believe it was important to try and determine the health of investigation journalism in the city. This review discusses prominent literature surrounding the three main factors, which, according to journalist respondents, led to an increase in investigative journalism in Montreal. I also included a section on literature about Montreal's governance, because I interviewed three municipal politicians whose views provided context and a different point of view with which to contrast the opinions of journalist respondents.

Some have argued that Montreal is an exception to the common narrative that investigative journalism is on the decline across North America and the world (King and Collienne 2010). However, the evidence is anecdotal. This case study aims to establish that investigative journalism has indeed increased over recent years, and to figure out why the increase occurred and what can be done to sustain it.

2.1 Defining investigative journalism

There is no single definition for journalism or investigative journalism (Zelizer 2004). Journalism studies scholar Barbie Zelizer argued that the definition of journalism depends on whom is asked. Journalists, for instance, define their work differently than scholars. For Zelizer, journalists use five “references” to discuss their craft: journalism as a sixth sense, which is the so-called “news sense”; journalism as a container, that is to say it has volume, materiality etc. and is seen as containing the day’s news; journalism as a mirror, as in it reflects society; journalism as a child, which appreciates journalists as caretakers of the news; and finally, journalism as a service, as it provides the tools to be an effective citizen. Academics use five “definitional sets” by which journalism can be defined: journalism as a profession; as an institution; as a text; as people; and as a set of practices (Zelizer 2004, 32-42). Zelizer’s contention that definitions of journalism depend on one’s point of view has influenced my choice to use a triangulated approach to collect data for this thesis. This thesis draws on data collected through a quantitative analysis, a semi-structured questionnaire and interviews with journalism stakeholders. I have chosen to interview three groups that I felt can provide an in-depth representation of the state of investigative journalism in Montreal: investigative journalists; municipal politicians; and stakeholders outside the political-journalistic environment. If the meaning of journalism depends on whom is asked, then it follows that my thesis should involve collecting opinions from various sources.

In order to expand on my contention that journalism is a set of socio-culturally situated practices, I drew on scholars Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel (2001) who both have a background in professional journalism, and who thus bridge Zelizer's two definitional sets. Kovach and Rosenstiel write that journalism – and by extension, investigative journalism - provides people with the information needed to be free and self-governing (Kovach and Rosenstiel 2001, 12). In order to do this, journalists must follow certain steps, or “the elements,” which include the notion that a journalist’s first obligation is to the truth and their first loyalty should be towards citizens (Ibid). Kovach and Rosenstiel’s definition is not universal, however. As Zelizer’s contends, definitions of journalism are socio-culturally contingent. Canadian journalism historian Cecil Rosner (2008) for instance, argued that the belief that journalism must fulfill a watchdog role is rooted in arguments of the Enlightenment, such as John Milton’s call for freedom of expression without the undue influence and censorship from the state in his *Areopagitica*, as well as John Stuart Mill’s defense of freedom of speech with his so-called Harm Principle.

Media scholars Daniel Hallin and Paolo Mancini (2004) argued that this Western, Enlightenment-inspired understanding of journalism is called the North Atlantic or Liberal model, which is the system in which Montreal’s media organizations are located. This model is characterized by a culture that developed press freedom and high circulations early. The media market in this model is dominated by commercial properties, its journalists are considered professionals, and so-called “information-oriented” journalism prevails, which “is less marked by advocacy and commentary style

but rather, tends to keep opinion and advocacy separate. The role of the state is somewhat limited” (Hallin and Mancini 2004, 75). By this logic, a Montreal citizen, would, in theory, define journalism differently than someone living in Italy, whose experiences might stem from the Mediterranean or Polarized Pluralist model, which is characterized by “an elite-oriented press” where “political parallelism tends to be high” (Ibid). In this model, advocacy journalism and commentary-oriented journalism are more prevalent.¹

Investigative journalism, like journalism itself, also suffers from definitional issues and moreover, has largely been undocumented and unanalyzed (Rosner 2008; Zelizer 2004). Rosner describes investigative reporting as “a form of journalism that aims to find the truth about issues of major importance to society. It consistently prods those in authority to be responsive and transparent, and it holds powerful institutions of all kinds into account” (Rosner 2008, 214). Rosner’s definition conforms to Hallin and Mancini’s Liberal model of journalism. Hugo de Burgh (2000) a former journalist and now journalism professor at University of Westminster, defines investigative journalism largely along the same vein as Kovach, Rosenstiel, Hallin and Mancini. The investigative journalist, according to de Burgh, is someone whose “profession it is to discover the truth and to identify lapses from it in whatever media may be available” (de Burgh 2000, 9). The act of doing this is distinct, he argued, from similar work that police, lawyers, auditors and regulatory bodies do because investigative reporting is “not limited as to target, not legally founded and closely connected to publicity” (Ibid, 9). More pointedly,

¹ Hallin and Mancini (2004) note that the media in Quebec are “distinct” from the media in the rest of Canada, for they have different traditions. (2004, 71) For instance, the authors write that Quebec media was different because its journalists placed “greater emphasis on commentary and (had) more of a tradition of political involvement ...” (Ibid, 209).

the investigative journalist is separate from his or her colleagues who are critics, or who write profiles, because he or she seeks out the truth “where it has been obscured, uncovering wrongs and persuading the rest of us to take them seriously, to be affected by their moral reading” (Ibid, 9). De Burgh defines the investigative journalist by his or her practices: meaning it is the motive and values behind journalism, which make its investigative nature distinct.

Ettema and Glasser (1998) further the contention that a definition of journalism is culturally situated. For them, journalism is not only defined by culture, it reinforces and helps to articulate it. These authors argue that journalists – particularly investigative journalists – “articulate the moral order by showing that the actions of alleged transgressors are in fact transgressions” (Ettema and Glasser 1998, 62). Journalists do not simply reinforce what society considers wrong, they highlight what they consider to be most important, help to spark debate and they raise awareness about particular issues. “News judgments depend on a historically given moral order and news judgments have implications for the future of that order” (Ibid). De Burgh furthers Ettema and Glasser’s argument when he writes that although investigative reporters are somewhat less autonomous in identifying breaches of the societal-based moral order, “they may nevertheless be expanding our ideas of what we should think or care about, making us think in a certain way about an event or an issue” (de Burgh 2000, 18).

A theoretical foundation for the contention that journalism articulates and reinforces culture can be found with theorist Emile Durkheim and his concept of organic

solidarity (McLean 2008). Emile Durkheim wrote in his 1893 thesis that as a society moves away from more primitive clan or tribe-based groupings and begins to industrialize, this evolution creates a division of labour that alienates individuals from their original, smaller groups (Durkheim 1893). The question then arises as to how the individual recognizes the social mores, codes and rules in a society that is becoming increasingly complex and heterogeneous. Durkheim does not directly address this question. However, McLean uses the Durkheimian principle to argue that journalism can be understood as a set of practices that are part of the division of labour and these practices raise awareness about those who are setting social policy. “Journalists emerge as a specialized division of labour; their practice involves technologies of mass communication; and they have a communicative role that includes reporting on those with institutional power, those charged with setting the moral and legal standards for society” (McLean 2008, 14).

The view of journalism as a moral and legal standard-bearer corresponds to James Carey’s ritual view of communication (Carey 1990). This view appreciates communication – and by extension journalism and investigative journalism – as a set of practices that are culturally situated and serve as a way to preserve and reinforce that culture. “A ritual view of communication is directed not toward the extension of messages in space but toward the maintenance of society in time; not the act of imparting information but the representation of shared beliefs” (Carey 1990, 15).

Walter Lippmann (1965) writes that journalism, while an interpretation of the day’s events – based on controlled and highly scripted narratives given to journalists by press agents – is essentially about sending a message from one or a small group of people

towards the masses, a process Carey discusses as the “transmission view of communication” (Carey 1990, 16). Carey explains how communication – while also a vehicle of information and knowledge acquisition – also allows a society to invent, develop and maintain itself through space and time. Newspapers, Carey writes, are “a presentation of reality that gives life an overall form, order and tone” (17).

I conducted a quantitative analysis on two daily newspapers in Montreal, papers that I contend help to provide form, order and tone to the city. Newspapers (as opposed to television news programs) were chosen due to the importance they have historically played – and continue to play – as agenda-setters within a city’s media landscape (Starr: 2009). Paul Starr, author and professor of communication and public affairs at the Woodrow Wilson at Princeton University argued that,

Metropolitan newspapers have dominated newsgathering, set the public agenda, served as the focal point of controversy, and credibly represented themselves as symbolizing and speaking for the cities whose names they have carried. They have tried to be everyone's source of news, appealing across the ideological spectrum, and to be comprehensive, providing their readers with whatever was of daily interest to them (Starr 2009).

My quantitative analysis is also important because of the contention that journalism – and investigative journalism – doesn’t just reinforce culture but helps to support democratic institutions (McChesney 1997; Curran 2011; Bagdikian 2004).

2.2 Investigative journalism and democracy

It is not a new concept that journalism is essential to the proper functioning of democracy. Edmund Burke allegedly observed that “there were Three Estates in Parliament; but, in the Reporter’s Gallery yonder, there sat a Fourth Estate more important far than they all” (Baker 2007, 5). A sound theoretical framework for the assertion that a democracy and a free press are connected can be found with Jürgen Habermas’ concept of the “public sphere.” Habermas describes the public sphere as a place where citizens and certain government officials could gather and talk critically amongst one another without the heavy influence of the state, or fear of government reprisal (Habermas 1991). The media – what Habermas described as periodicals which slowly started to be composed of criticism and reviews, were one part of the sphere. These early forms of news media helped citizens slowly evolve to a point where they came together and “readied themselves to compel authority to legitimate itself before public opinion” (25). Simply said, Habermas’ argues that by offering citizens information – coupled with a common location to discuss and debate – helped people formulate opinions and feel confident that their opinions deserved to be acknowledged.

While idealized, the Habermasian public sphere is useful as a framework for the argument that a free press sustains democracy, because the public sphere, in theory, loses its democratic capacity if and when it is taken over by the state, by business interests, or both (McChesney 1997). If the media are part of the public sphere, then it follows that the democratic capacity of society is tainted when the media cannot fulfill its proper function

because of corrupting influences such as the state or business interests. Canada's Senate in 2006 was unequivocal about the role of the media in its Standing Senate Committee on Transport and Communications report:

News and information and the discussion of opinion are fundamental to the successful workings of democracy within modern complex societies ... It is impossible to have democracy without citizens and impossible to exercise meaningful citizenship without access to news, information, analysis and opinion (Senate of Canada 2006, part VI).

Edwin Baker, in *Media Concentration and Democracy*, contends that the media are the most vital aspect of the public sphere (Baker 2007). He argues that the formation of public opinion is essential to a well-functioning democracy because leaders need to be aware of the concerns of their constituencies. Civil society creates various institutional structures that cater to the needs of the population. The media, Baker argues, acts as a “crucial sluice” between the formation of public opinion and the will formation of governing institutions (7). “For this reason, a country is democratic only to the extent that the media, as well as elections, are structurally egalitarian and politically salient” (*Ibid*).

However, the axis of the government, the media and the public does not sufficiently describe the complex web of relationships and structures that exist in a developed democratic society. One must also account for the influence of “organized democracy” (Curran 2011, 78). Interest groups, social movements, political parties, and others, play an important role in influencing public opinion by creating their own media, which often play a watchdog role in society. Curran’s scholarship provided a theoretical framework for why I chose to interview journalism stakeholder groups outside the journalistic environment. And while these groups, which often produce their own media,

aid in sustaining civic engagement, they can also encourage audience fragmentation and lessen the ability of said media to reinforce and sustain culture among wider society.

What is needed in a well-functioning democracy – in which citizens receive critical information they need to be free and self-governing – is a mix of large, national institutional media with large audiences and smaller niche media. Curran writes that “media doing different kinds of journalism can make different contributions to the functioning of democracy” (80).

I have not attempted to qualify changes in civic engagement in relation to the increase of investigative journalism in Montreal – I did not have the tools with which to do so. However, the argument that strong, robust newspapers and investigative journalists are correlated with less corruption and more accountable government has been made by prominent scholars (Boix, Adsera, Payne 2003). A 2003 study by scholars Alicia Adsera, Carles Boix and Mark Payne collected data from 100 countries and revealed that a free circulation of newspapers was a more important factor than democracy regarding whether or not a government was corrupt. “It was a free circulation of newspapers rather than simple democracy that had greater effect of having a government with less corruption” (458).

2.3 Obstacles that curtail the media from performing its role

Habermas (1975) in his later work, discussed what he called “legitimation crisis,” a concept that I argue can be applied to explain the consequences of the current crisis in the newspapers industry. Habermas’ theory on “legitimation” is mainly explained through the modern state’s support and promotion of capitalism. Habermas argued that modern states have nationalized some economic institutions and financially support others, therefore, the state must bridge a paradoxical gap in theory. This gap exists because the government owns or supports capitalist companies that as a consequence, increase inequality in society, and at the same time, the government needs to defend its position by arguing that its management of a capitalist economy is in fact, for the benefit of citizens. This tension eventually manifests itself by citizens losing confidence in many of the institutions run by the government, as well as the governing authority itself. The modern state might maintain power, however it no longer has the consent to govern of many citizens.

News organizations are similarly in a type of legitimization paradox due to their for-profit structure. The profit-maximizing structure of media companies places a strain on their ability to give citizens critical information that is needed for self-governance, because the goal of the companies is to squeeze profit and not necessarily to ensure audiences are particularly well informed. McChesney (1997), Bagdikian (2004), and Gans (2003) all use political economy critiques to argue that the corporate-capitalist

structural model of journalist institutions curtails the ability of said institutions to fulfill their roles as pillars of democracy.

However, my thesis demonstrates that prominent investigative journalists in Montreal believe that despite the corporate structure of their news organizations, journalists nonetheless played a legitimate role in holding politicians accountable and shedding light on moral transgressions. Investigative journalists, I argue in the results chapter of my thesis, believe they have exposed state corruption and helped to influence the decisions by citizens to change the ruling power at the municipal and provincial level.

I also draw on a critical political economy argument to explain why journalist respondents said Montreal has entered a so-called “Golden Age”; I will expand on that argument in the results section of my thesis. A political economy critique looks at several aspects of the structure of media markets and media organizations themselves and makes direct links between the structure and the consequences to news consumers and society (Kidd, McGee, Fairbairn 2005). For example, structural aspects that are analyzed in a political economy critique include the competitiveness of media markets, the dominance of advertising as a primary source of income for media companies, as well as media convergence.

McChesney argues that it is media concentration as well as advertising as the dominant source of operating income for news organizations, as the largest threats to the media’s ability to fulfill its role in sustaining democracy (McChesney 1997). These two factors have several consequences. One consequence is the professionalization of (investigative) journalists, who compromise with authority and dismiss ideas outside

accepted dogma out of fear that not doing so would taint their supposed objectivity.

Journalists became professionalized because they worked for organizations that sought to maximize advertising revenue by catering to the largest possible audience. “Professional journalism’s mission was to make a capitalist, advertising-supported media system seem – at least superficially – to be an objective source of news to many citizens” (14).

Bagdikian (2004) writes that professionalized journalists have internalized the market-oriented, objective model of media organizations and don’t even realize the compromises they make with politicians and others in authority. However, there is little evidence that conglomerate media will homogenize the news and force journalists to slant copy to be more favourable to other firms in that conglomerate (Gans 2003). Nonetheless, Gans writes that that journalists might be critical of the people they source, who are more often officials, but “the sources usually have the first say, thereby putting the critics in a reactive and as such inferior position” (46).

Other scholars contend that conglomerate media that have a near-monopoly in their respective markets can and do influence journalists to slant copy to push a partisan line. Kidd, McGee and Fairbairn (2005), in their political economy critique of the Texas-based Clear Channel radio chain, suggest that the company unabashedly and uncritically supported President George W. Bush in his drive to invade Iraq in the run-up to the 2003 American invasion. The scholars cite Clear Channel’s founder, Lowry Mays, who said, “We are not in the business of providing news, music or information. We’re not in the business of producing well-researched music. We’re simply in the business of selling our customer’s products” (78). Mays said this, despite the fact that Clear Channel has 1,200 radio stations and boasts that it reaches half the adult U.S. population (*Ibid*). A recent

example of media concentration leading to highly partisan coverage was provided by David Folkenflik (2013), in a book where he argues that media organizations owned by Rupert Murdoch were purposefully shielded for years by politicians and the police because of Murdoch's influence in the marketplace. Folkenflik argued that journalists who worked for Murdoch routinely broke the law by hacking into the phones of prominent people, and due to Murdoch's ability to make or break political careers due to the power of his media empire, his journalists were largely protected from prosecution.

The structure of corporate media creates a “propaganda model” which filters facts and narratives before they reach the public (Herman and Chomsky 2002). Herman and Chomsky describe five filters that information is passed through before reaching the public: size, ownership and profit; the dependence on advertising dollars; the choice of sources and who gets to speak in articles; the notion of flak, meaning the worry of receiving strong, negative feedback for something that is propagated; and finally, the ideology behind anti-communism.

Another common refrain from media workers about the so-called crisis in journalism is as follows: “The migration of advertising to the Web, compounded by the 2008-09 recession, has led to a rising number of newspaper closures, and also contractions in news operations, giving rise to increasing alarm” (Curran 2010, 465). Other narratives include discussion on convergence and how the phenomenon has led to many journalists losing their jobs (Bernier 2010; McChesney 1997; Edge 2011), audience fragmentation (Webster and Ksiazek 2012), and the emergence of new competitors and technologies. Pritchard and Bernier (2010) contend that convergence and the Internet are currently the most important influences on Quebec media.

Aside from convergence, media concentration is another phenomenon plaguing the country's media system. It is also a problem that the Canadian government acknowledges. The 2006 Standing Senate Committee on Transport and Communications report notes that in Canada "regions and markets are characterized by high levels of concentration in news media ownership and/or cross-ownership" and "there is no recognized mechanism that allows the public interest in these issues to be discussed and reviewed in an open, transparent and democratic manner" (Senate 2006). However, I contend that Montreal's media market has not (yet?) fallen prey to the similar levels of concentration outside Quebec's borders.

James Aucoin (2005) argues that investigative journalism, particularly in the American context, has ebbed and flowed throughout the history of the country. It often rose during period of distrust among the citizenry towards the government and declined during period of war and other times of domestic conflict (such as the communist scare of the 50s). Most recently, Aucoin argues that investigative journalism in America started to increase in quantity and quality in the late 50s and early 60s, after a lull created by the Second World War and the communist scare. Aucoin contends that the upsurge in investigative journalism during those years was not a new phenomenon "but ... it was an old form of reporting with a long tradition in American journalism that was resurrected and reestablished as a dominant news form" (Aucoin 2005, 80).

According to Rosner (2008), the pinnacle for journalism, particularly investigative, enterprise reporting in Canada, occurred during the 70s. Rosner argued that investigative reporting was seen as a "growth industry" in the 70s, however, the political and economic realities of the early 80s "put an end to that optimism" (Rosner 2008,148).

In the 80s, media companies Thomson (now Thomson Reuters) and Southam (which was bought by Canwest, and which has most recently been bought by Postmedia News Inc.) “came together to carve out monopoly markets in several Canadian cities. With one stroke the competition in several major Canadian cities, which drove much of the enterprise and investigative spirit, was ended. Rationalizations in newsrooms created fewer opportunities for in-depth reporting” (149). That downward spiral aided by media empires consolidating and converging continued in the 2000s.

2.4 Public media, whistleblowers, and organizational culture

Three main themes surfaced in this thesis from the interviews conducted with investigative journalists. The journalists said that CBC-Radio-Canada’s *Enquête* program, the increase in whistleblowers, the competitive Francophone market as well as organizational culture behind Montreal media institutions are the dominant factors as to why investigative journalism has increased in Montreal since 2009. Researching these three factors has highlighted differences between the city’s Anglophone and Francophone media organizations, which are discussed in-depth in the Results and Discussion chapter.

2.4.1 Public Media

Every country in the world must, at some point, consider public broadcasting (Raboy 1995). Raboy writes that the principal consideration regarding public media is as

follows: “What social and cultural goals, attributed to broadcasting require a specially mandated, non-commercially driven organization, publicly owned, publicly funded to the extent necessary, and publicly accountable?” (2) The government of Canada decided that promoting the country’s regions and reflecting its multicultural diversity would be the primary considerations for the creation of CBC-Radio-Canada (CBC, 2013, 19).

A public broadcaster is defined as a medium “supported by public funds, ultimately accountable in some legally defined way to the citizenry, aimed at providing a service to the entire population … (and does) not apply commercial principles as the primary means to determine its programming” (McChesney 1990, 226). As a Crown corporation that gets the majority of its funding from citizens, CBC-Radio-Canada is not entirely focused on producing a profit. Lowe and Berg (2013) describe how private media corporations are “obliged to produce a margin, and this requires an orientation that is profit-centered and governed by demand in differentiated segments of varying economic value to the firm” (Lowe and Berg 2013, 82). However, the authors argue that even though public service media such as the CBC do not fully rely on advertising dollars, they need to be competitive in producing content that is valued by viewers. “Without evidence of genuine strategic development that is clearly focused on renewing and revitalizing the core values that legitimate the public service mission in the first place, (Public Service Media) cannot make a convincing case to validate continuing economic, political or popular support in today’s more complex and complicated environments” (94). Much has been written about whether or not the CBC meets this principle because of its reliance on television advertising revenues as well as its fondness for broadcasting reality television alongside news documentaries (Raboy 1990; Foster 2009).

Raboy (1990) argued that as ideological winds began changing in the late 1980s towards less government involvement in North American economies, the phenomenon affected the public broadcasting sector. CBC-Radio-Canada has not been immune from the shifting ideology of Western governments. The current Conservative government has been cutting the budgets of the public broadcaster for years. CBC wrote in its 2012 annual report that continued government cuts “may affect future funding” to several of the corporations’ services (CBC 2012, 60). The corporation is facing \$115 million in cuts over three years, as announced in the Canadian government’s 2012 budget (*Ibid*). The government in 2012 forced the corporation to cut roughly 10% from the CBC budget. The CBC said it also envisioned another \$85 million in “financial pressures” during 2014-15 (*Ibid*). The CBC said in its 2012 annual report that it would respond to these cuts by “leveraging” its television advertisements, as well as including advertising on some of its music radio programs, ending a four-decade-long ban on radio advertising (*Ibid*).

While the CBC is maintaining its traditional news radio programs free of advertising, it has become clear that its public funding model does not make it immune to the pressures of the marketplace. Furthermore, questions and critiques have been raised concerning the CBC’s ability to focus on its mandate of promoting Canadian culture and expression, as well as to reflect the country’s diversity, while at the same time selling audiences to advertisers (Rowland 2013).

Despite the mandate contradictions and the uncertainty of its future funding, the French side of the CBC, in particular, according to journalist respondents, took the initial risk and invested money into long-form, investigative journalism with its *Enquête* program (Gravel 2013, et al). The corporation took this risk because of its funding model,

journalist respondents said. The fact Radio-Canada had part of its funding secured through taxpayers was critical to the corporation taking the risk – without it knowing how popular or profitable *Enquête* would be. Fortunately for Radio-Canada, and, I argue, for Montreal society in particular, the gambit worked spectacularly.

2.4.2 Whistleblowers

Whistleblowers, also known as “ethical resisters,” are “employees who publicly expose unethical or illegal practices in the workplace” (Glazer and Glazer 1989, 4). That definition, while true and useful, is also somewhat outdated. While whistleblowers are in many respects employees of companies who have an ethical urge to denounce what they believe to be wrongdoing, the rise of websites such as Wikileaks, have expanded the definition of the whistleblower to include international organizations that operate through high-end security technology to act as a drop-box for anything from documents to video, which are “fortified by cutting-edge cryptographic information technologies” (Wikileaks 2013). However, while the eight journalist respondents for this thesis discussed their interaction with whistleblowers and other sources, none mentioned getting information from a Wikileaks-type source. Some journalists mentioned using data from the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists, which published information about global elites hiding cash in offshore bank accounts (Ryle 2013).

Aside from employees at Quebec’s transportation department, large labour unions, construction companies, as well as the ICIJ, journalists interviewed for this thesis said that sources in the police – municipal, provincial and federal – came forward with

information as well (McIntosh, MA et al. 2013). Police sources spoke to journalists for several reasons, according to respondents. Police – and other political authorities - leaked information in order for journalists to publicly expose wrongdoing and force the hand of politicians to affect change (Gravel, McIntosh 2013 et al). For example, former Montreal police chief Jacques Duchesneau, who was responsible for a scathing 2012 report on corruption in the construction industry when he was head of the province's anti-collusion squad, told the Charbonneau Commission that he leaked *his own* report to the media because he feared provincial politicians would hide the report's findings (Banerjee, Levesque 2012). Duchesneau's leaked report stated that not only was corruption rife in the province's construction industry and in labour unions, but organized crime had also infiltrated both industries and provincial political parties were being financed with dirty money (Ibid). His report was widely regarded as having forced the hand of then-Premier Jean Charest to create the Charbonneau Commission (Patriquin 2012).

The way that a news organization works and negotiates its relationship with one or more whistleblowers depends on the way the organization understands its role in the marketplace and in society (Coddington 2012). Mark Coddington calls this negotiation “boundary patrolling,” meaning that a news organization will be more open to working with a source who does not challenge the organization’s beliefs regarding sound journalistic practices, as opposed to one who does (379). “Source-based reporting routines are bound within national contexts” (Ibid). Coddington notes that boundary patrolling will become increasingly important as more actors emerge who are similar to

Wikileaks, and who do not follow the traditional norms of western journalistic news standards of professionalism and objectivity.

Another important issue regarding sources and whistleblowers is the increasing criminalization of leaking information to journalists. The issue is currently more significant for whistleblowers in the U.S., rather than in Canada. U.S. President Barack Obama has charged more people under the U.S. 1917 espionage act than all other U.S. Presidents combined (Politi 2013). The effects are having a chilling effect on the media, according to U.S. journalists, and the so-called “war on whistleblowers” is preventing government workers who learn of abuse to come forward to journalists (Calderone 2013). A May 2013 *New York Times* editorial stated that “The Obama administration has moved beyond protecting government secrets to threatening fundamental freedoms of the press,” with regards to the administration’s cases against journalists whose reporting includes the help of government whistleblowers (*New York Times* 2013).

Mark Mazzetti, another prominent *Times* investigative journalist, said in 2013 that the U.S. government’s desire to charge journalists and threaten jail time over confidential sources “has a chilling effect. People who have talked in the past are less willing to talk now. Everyone is worried about communication and how to communicate, and (asking if there) is any method of communication that is not being monitored. It’s got people on both sides — the reporter and source side — pretty concerned” (Sargent 2013).

Some journalists in the United States have come under increased scrutiny during the past several years for their use of anonymous sources and whistleblowers (Pitzke 2013). One famous example in 2013 is the case of distinguished investigative journalist

for the *New York Times*, James Risen, who was threatened with jail time by the U.S. government if he refused to disclose information relating to the trial of one of his sources. A federal court judge ruled in June 2013 that Risen would not receive first amendment protection that would have allowed him to keep confidential the name of his sources. The ruling was considered to be a significant setback for first amendment rights for investigative journalists working in the U.S. (Pitzke 2013).

Risen, for several years, had his phone conversations and emails analyzed by the U.S. government (Pitzke 2013). Federal appeals court reversed an earlier court decision to allow Risen to protect his sources by claiming that the court had the duty to reconsider the claim of “reporter’s privilege” even though Risen’s lawyers knew that the U.S. Supreme Court had already refused journalists that right. The judge ruled that reporters do not possess more rights than regular citizens if reporters are the only means available to acquire information essential for a court case.

There is no First Amendment testimonial privilege, absolute or qualified, that protects a reporter from being compelled to testify by the prosecution or the defense in criminal proceedings about criminal conduct that the reporter personally witnessed or participated in, absent a showing of bad faith, harassment, or other such non-legitimate motive, even through the reporter promised confidentiality to his source. (United States 2013, 15).

The judge recognized in his ruling that while American jurisprudence affords a judge the ability to create new so-called special privileges that could shield citizens from being subpoenaed, a judge cannot ignore previous Supreme Court decisions in order to do so.

Canadian journalists are given more protection by law regarding confidential sources, but the protection isn't absolute. In 2010, the Supreme Court of Canada made two somewhat contradictory rulings on the right of journalists to protect their sources. The rulings involved reporter Andrew McIntosh at the *National Post* and Daniel Leblanc at the *Globe and Mail*.

Lawyers for the *National Post* argued that the charter right of freedom of the press, the right to unreasonable search and seizure, as well as the Common Law of privilege were enough to prevent the government from demanding that journalists be forced to hand over leaked documents that the government believed were forged. The court ruled that while the public has the right to be informed about information leaked by sources, the right is not absolute, and that right must be balanced against other important public interests, including the investigation of crime (R. v. National Post 2010). Journalists are afforded what was referred to as a "case-by-case model of privilege" (53), that must agree with four criteria, the court ruled. This court protocol is known as the "Wigmore criteria" (*Ibid*).

A promise of confidentiality will be respected if: the communication originates in a confidence that the identity of the informant will not be disclosed; the confidence is essential to the relationship in which the communication arises; the relationship is one which should be sedulously fostered in the public good; and the public interest in protecting the identity of the informant from disclosure outweighs the public interest in getting at the truth (64).

While news organizations considered this ruling a curtailment of press freedoms in Canada (CBC 2010), another Supreme Court ruling months later was lauded by the Canadian media (Makin 2010). The October Supreme Court ruling sided in favour of the

Globe and Mail newspaper because the court ruled that the preceding judge did not use the “Wigmore criteria” test properly in its decision to force Daniel Leblanc to give up his source.

The judge ruled that journalists do have a right to protect their sources – but this right is not absolute, and journalists should not, morally, tell their sources that they will never be forced to give them up. Rather, whether or not a source remains confidential will be judged on a case-by-case basis (McKie 2010).

Only where there would be a real risk that Mr. Leblanc's answer would disclose MaChouette's identity, should the judge ask himself whether, after an assessment of the relevant considerations, the balance of interests favours privilege over disclosure. For example, at the far end of the spectrum, if Mr. Leblanc's answers were almost certain to identify MaChouette then, bearing in mind the high societal interest in investigative journalism, it might be that he could only be compelled to speak if his response was vital to the integrity of the administration of justice. Ultimately, these matters will be for the judge to determine, but he must consider them (Globe and Mail v. Canada 2010, 69).

Although Canadian whistleblowers have not been as threatened with prosecution as their U.S counterparts, journalist historian Cecil Rosner (2013) wrote that several have faced punishment for their ethical transgressions. Rosner, who is head of the investigative unit at CBC Manitoba, wrote in 2013 that there are many examples in Canada “of reporters facing accusations of bias, lawsuits and court orders to disclose confidential source information, all because they reported on what a whistleblower had to say” (Rosner 2013).

There are also cases of the government punishing its employees for going public with secret information. The federal government suspended Sylvie Therrien without pay

in July 2013 after she leaked unemployment insurance documents to the press (“EI whistleblower …” 2013). The Stephen Harper government tried to publicly discredit Richard Colvin, a 15-year-veteran of Canada’s foreign affairs department, after he accused the government of not acting when it knew that captured detainees in Afghanistan were being tortured (MacCharles 2009). Canadian pro-whistleblower registered charity group, FAIR (Federal Accountability Initiative for Reform), accused Canada of being “deficient when it comes to a strong legal framework and the development and administration of protection protocols in corporations and government” (Amber 2013).

2.4.3 Organizational Culture

There is no such thing as one dominant journalist culture (Hanitzsch 2007). The culture of a newsroom – whether or not editors encourage investigative journalism – is not universal (*Ibid*). Himelboim and Limor (2005) write that journalists in a Liberal system rooted in Western ideals of the Enlightenment, and who see themselves as watchdogs of their society’s elite, work within a culture called the “adversarial sequence” as opposed to the “loyal” sequence (Himelboim and Limor 2005, 10). Investigative journalists fall within the “adversarial” sequence. Their work is necessarily adversarial as it seeks to expose transgressions of people in authority. Blumler and Gurevitch (1995) also discuss how the “adversarial model,” which positions journalists as constantly in tension with sources and elites, is the closest model associated to journalists who appreciate their role as watchdogs. Other models exist where journalists are dependent on

their political sources and don't push too hard on them in order to maintain the relationship, a process referred to as the "dependence model" (Tuchman 1978; Manning 2001). A third model has been described as the "exchange model" (Blumler and Gurevitch 1995), which describes a reciprocal relationship between journalists who need information and sources who want publicity.

Journalist respondents said that one of the most important factors to the increased amount of investigative journalism at their companies is an internal culture that is encouraging towards the concept of the journalist as a watchdog. However, if a newsroom does not already possess such an adversarial culture, changing it is difficult and resistance to change among reporters is institutional and cultural (Ryfe 2009). Ryfe argues that the methods a journalist uses to gather information and produce narratives is embedded in who they are, that often "a change in practice might implicate a change in identity" (205). Ryfe argues that "the practice of journalism is tightly bound to its purpose ... (a journalist's) professional identity is tightly bound to practice ... and journalists use a moral vocabulary to express their frustration with what they see as encroachments on their professional turf. To them there is "good" and "bad" journalism (12-13).

Journalists do not change on their own, and if a news organization is going to embark on a plan to increase the production of investigative journalism in a company – or open an investigations bureau – management must provide the tools to do so (Fortin, Seguin, Gravel 2013). Investigative journalism is difficult, time-consuming, and carries a high financial cost (Ryle 2012). ProPublica, for instance, spent \$750,000 and two-years

research time on one single investigative report about the harmful effects of Tylenol (Osnos 2013).

Due to the high costs, it is not a surprise that nearly all of the major investigative stories broken between 2009 and the end of 2012 were done by corporate, mainstream media organizations (see appendix D). I use a critical political economy argument to help partly explain why. Media corporations have the financial wherewithal to finance the costly project that is investigative journalism and to provide legal assistance should an investigative target launch a lawsuit. Hamilton (2009) estimated that it would cost roughly \$500,000 a year to run an investigative bureau consisting of one editor, three journalists, one research as well as travel and legal expenses (Hamilton 2009, 3). The unit would likely only produce roughly 2-3 stories a year, he calculated (Ibid).

However, Montreal's media landscape includes other elements that affect newsroom culture, and which bring to the forefront the cleavages between Anglophone and Francophone media outlets. Many scholars (including several cited in this thesis) contend that a highly concentrated or monopolistic media market is detrimental to the role of the investigative journalist as someone who exposes hidden moral transgressions, and who helps to reinforce and maintain a society's culture and democracy (Bagdikian 1980, Baker 2007, Horwitz 2005). Montreal offers a case of a Francophone media market that is highly competitive (see appendix A) as well as an Anglophone market that is not. Journalist respondents said that the competitive nature of the Francophone media market in Montreal is an important element that helped fuel the increase in investigative reporting since 2009, a phenomenon that will be expanded upon in the results section.

Other elements that are material to the discussion of newsroom culture are internal systems that affect the way news is collected and presented, and which can also highlight the differences between Anglophone and Francophone media in the province. Convergence has had asymmetrical effects across different media organizations. Not all researchers or journalists shun the convergence model that characterizes Canadian mainstream journalism. Some Francophone newsrooms, such as those owned by Quebecor, have the ability to converge their news departments, share resources, and broadcast the content produced by their investigative teams on several platforms such as print, digital, television and radio. In other companies, convergence has laden newspapers like *The Gazette* with significant debt (Marsden 2013), forcing it to cut newsroom resources and layoff journalists.

There are notable scholars who argue that convergence has its benefits. Dupagne and Garrison (2006) argue that there is no single definition of convergence, rather, it is a multidimensional construct with different contexts and conceptions. They cite three examples of convergence: technical, economic and regulatory. Technical convergence is computer-driven convergence, and it occurs when traditional media such as television and print are incorporated digitally. Economic convergence is explained by the authors as the process when content is converged across multiple and integrated media platforms. Regulatory convergence occurs when regulatory bodies create legislation that either groups formerly disparate laws into one body of legislation (partial regulatory convergence) or when legislation “facilitates cross-media services and inter-industry alliances” (Dupagne and Garrison 2006, 240).

While convergence has had different impacts on different media institutions, journalists also share conflicting views. Brin and Soderlund (2010) interviewed executives and journalists at Canadian media conglomerates about several issues, most notably convergence and conglomeration in the Canadian media industry. Respondents were divided along linguistic lines, and Francophone respondents – who worked for Quebecor – were less enthusiastic than their Anglophone peers. The authors said that at Quebecor, journalists were under pressure to promote the arts department of the company and others feared the increased centralization of editorial control. The authors said that the Anglophone respondents outside Quebec were more enthusiastic regarding convergence at their respective media companies.

Bernier (2010) studied Quebec journalists more in-depth and his results note that Quebec journalists in 2010 held pessimistic view regarding media convergence in their industry. He said that journalists lamented the loss of diversity of information, loss of jobs, workload increases and loss of autonomy. Quandt and Singer (2009) describe convergence as “broadly referring to the blending or merging of formerly distinct media technologies, mainly based on digitization processes …” (Quandt and Singer 2009, 130). The authors also cite how converged media organizations are often not models of “full convergence” rather, they “involve cross promotion of the partnered products but retain elements of competition among journalists of the different newsrooms” (Quandt and Singer 2009, 131).

While the differences (and they are many) between Francophone and Anglophone media in Montreal were not the focus of this thesis, cleavages between the province’s two

solitudes emerged during my research and they deserve a certain amount of analysis.

Fletcher (1998) argues that Quebec's French-language media, as opposed to Anglophone media in Quebec and in the rest of Canada, are inward-looking and often ignore issues outside their borders. "It could be said that they have been preoccupied with their own identity crisis, as modernization eroded their traditional religious identity" (Fletcher 1998). Fletcher also notes that "The English media treat Quebec politics more as a domestic matter, but with particular attention to the English-speaking minority in Quebec (Ibid).

Arthur Segal (1977) wrote a CRTC report where he described the differences between the French and English-language branches of the CBC; he concluded,

...the news content patterns can be seen as not contributing in any significant way to a shared sense of Canadian identity. It isn't so much what the newscasts contain...but rather what they leave out [that weakens their role as agents of national integration](Segal 1977, 42)

Fletcher (1998) continues that journalists in Quebec's Francophone media "are an integral part of the intelligentsia, while English journalists have more of an outsider status" (1008). Mendelsohn and Nadeau (1996) using Canadian media data, argue that media directed towards segmented audiences, such as Francophone and Anglophones, encourages and intensifies cleavages in society. Cohen-Almagor (2000) writes that Francophone media during the 1970s actually provoked authorities and created an environment that led to the War Measures Act.

2.5 Montreal governance and Politics

This last section of the literature review discusses the cultural and geographic complexities of the island of Montreal. It was included to give some context to the responses by municipal politicians and stakeholders, which are included at the end of the results and discussion chapter. Montreal's political organization is complex, and its elected officials work in a highly decentralized system that includes several layers of municipal government.

The island of Montreal alone is composed of 34 different entities that act (and are governed) like different cities. The city of Montreal, for instance, is located within the island of Montreal and is composed of 19 boroughs that are politically distinct because each has significant local autonomy – their own borough mayor and city councilors (Hamel and Jouve 2006). The current governing structure of the island of Montreal was created in response to the forced mergers of the early 2000s. The Parti Quebecois, partly in response to a fiscal crisis, forcibly merged all the cities in the Montreal area into one megacity in 2003. After public outcry, the Quebec Liberal Party, once back in power, allowed a demerger process, which was completed in 2004 (Ibid). Aside from the City of Montreal proper, the island of Montreal includes 15 entities that are considered reconstituted cities. The island of Montreal has 34 mayors. Each of the 19 boroughs that compose the city of Montreal proper has a mayor (the Mayor of the city of Montreal is also the mayor of one of the 19 boroughs). Each of the 15 other reconstituted cities also has a mayor. Montreal's City Council is composed of 65 elected officials. The mayor of

Montreal sits on the council with 18 other borough mayors. The council also has 46 elected city councilors. Each of the 15 reconstituted cities has their own elected municipal councilors as well.

Aside from the City Council, there is what is known as the Agglomeration Council, which includes representatives from the 15 reconstituted cities. The decentralization of the city of Montreal has created essentially 34 distinct cities, each with their own political flavor, according to French researcher Bernard Jouve, who wrote in a 2006 article on the demergers of the 15 cities in Montreal, that the new relationship created between the province, the city and the city's different communities was "innovative" and describe this relationship as "hyper-pluralist" (Jouve 2006, 78). He defined Montreal as a hyper-pluralist city because it permits for local mayors of the 19 boroughs – as opposed to the centralized city administration – to be heavily involved in creating policy and applying regulations. More precisely, it's the "dynamic between civil society and its organizations and elected officials" rather than the institutional design of the city's administrative structure, "which is at the head of this transformation and which will have major impacts on Montreal's political organization and the hierarchy of the levels of government" (Ibid).

Other relationships in Montreal exist between community organizations and elected officials. Michael Orsini, from the university of Ottawa, used Montreal's Pointe-St. Charles neighbourhood as a case study in the relationship between civil society and the state. He interviewed community leaders using a semi-structured interview process. His 2006 research asked if community organizations in Montreal are becoming less community-run and more community-based, meaning he tried to find out if the wider

trends of neoliberalism in terms of so-called welfare-state retrenchment are also affecting Montreal. He concluded that: "The analysis presented here might lead one to conclude that the terrain of collective action is shifting in ways that will ultimately delegitimize the "community" voice in setting policy agendas, or at the very least, legitimize some community voices at the expense of others" (Orsini 2006, 182). Jean-Pierre Collin, researcher at a Montreal-based think tank, writes that the city is difficult to govern because of linguistic tensions, its lackluster economy and the fact that the provincial government exerts heavily influence over the municipal government (Collin 2011).

3. Methodology

The case study is often seen as a research project into a specific moment in time that is part of a broader phenomenon and “part of a larger set of parallel instances” (Feagin 1991, 2). “A case study … is defined as an in-depth, multifaceted investigation, using qualitative research methods, of a single social phenomenon” (Ibid, 1). Yin (2009) discusses how case studies are important because they rely on “multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion …” (2009, 18).

For my case study of the investigative journalist environment in Montreal, I used a triangulated, mixed-method approach to collect data. The first part of the triangulated approach is a quantitative analysis of two main Montreal daily newspapers of record, followed by a structured questionnaire and finally, a semi-structured series of interviews with investigative journalists and journalism stakeholders. The quantitative and qualitative data that I captured revealed an increase in investigative journalism since 2009, and helped to explain the factors that led to the increase.

Christian Kolmer (2008) wrote that analyzing a news product quantitatively has become an important tool for scholars. He argued that while scholars have noted that the role of journalists is culturally defined, “the ultimate relevance of these constraints for the daily work of journalists cannot be assessed without reference to the actual output of the journalistic production process” (Kolmer 2008, 267). The quantitative data confirmed that investigative journalism has increased significantly in Montreal since 2009 – but it

did not help to explain why. The qualitative side of the thesis helped to understand the complex relationships that occurred during investigative journalistic production that brought forth an increase in output. For example, while quantitative analysis confirmed that *The Gazette* and *La Presse* have increased their output of investigative journalism since 2007, the qualitative interviews that followed revealed that the surge of whistleblowers coming forward towards end of 2008, was one of the main causes for that increase.

Denzin and Lincoln (2005) wrote that the essence of qualitative research implies a focus on processes that are the opposite of quantitative research. Quantitative research focuses on the “measurement and analysis of causal relationships between variables, not processes” (10). Instead of examining quantity, amount, intensity or frequency, qualitative researchers “stress the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied, and the situational constraints that shape inquiry. They seek answers to questions that stress *how* social experience is created … (emphasis authors)” (Ibid). Denzin and Lincoln describe qualitative research as a complex process, which is a “situated activity that locates the observer in the world” (3). These activities take the world and turn it into a series of representations that attempt to make sense of phenomena “in terms of the meanings people bring to them” (Ibid). Marshall and Rossman (2006) write that qualitative research is fundamentally interpretative.

Using quantitative and qualitative methods together can often be mutually reinforcing (Bryman 2004). Bryman wrote that qualitative research could facilitate the interpretation of the relationship between variables collected by quantitative methods.

However, he also noted that combining a qualitative and quantitative approach is considered problematic by some scholars (452). He cited two common critiques: First, qualitative and quantitative methods are separate paradigms, and second, each other carry distinct “epistemological commitments” (*Ibid*). However, he rejected both arguments because he said there has been no scholarship proving the contention that qualitative and quantitative methods had distinct epistemologies, or that both were indeed paradigms. Bryman added that qualitative and quantitative research have “areas of overlap and commonality between them” (453).

This thesis recognizes that a quantitative method – in this case a quantitative analysis – is a distinct concept that carries with it a different goal than qualitative analysis. However, the distinctions between the two methods do not preclude their mixed use. Rather, as this thesis shows, their distinct thought patterns offer a way to expand knowledge on a subject. The quantitative approach collected measurable and comparable data on the amount of investigative journalism in two Montreal newspapers since 2007, while the qualitative approach helped to explain how and why journalistic output increased. The mixed method approached offered the most complete data with which to answer the principle research question of this thesis, namely

R1: What is the current state of investigative journalism in Montreal in light of a perceived crisis in the North American newspaper industry?

The mixed-method approach also involved triangulation, which was the second method used in this thesis. Within the case study, the triangular approach, qualitative

analysis, structured questionnaire and semi-structured interviews, allowed for the collection of data that were quantifiable, comparable (and with regards to the semi-structured interviews), highly revealing regarding the web of factors that played a role in sustaining a healthy investigative journalism environment. Denzin (1978) defined triangulation as “the combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon.” Jick (1979) wrote that the term triangulation is used to describe the approach because of basic geometry: “multiple viewpoints allow for greater accuracy” (Jick 1978, 602). Similarly, he wrote, “organizational researchers can improve the accuracy of their judgments by collecting different kinds of data bearing on the same phenomenon (Ibid).

3.1 Quantitative analysis

I used a “descriptive” analysis by topic (Bonfadelli 2002, 58) of the texts in two of Montreal’s daily newspapers of record, *The Gazette* and *La Presse*. I then coded for investigative journalism articles on the subject of political corruption, in those two newspapers. I only coded for text in the A section of both newspapers, and strictly collected copy that was considered “news” by the papers, meaning I left out opinion and other non-news copy. I chose *The Gazette* and *La Presse* because they represented the newspapers of record in both of Montreal’s main languages. *The Gazette* is owned by Postmedia Network Inc. and is the largest English-language daily newspaper in Quebec, with a weekly circulation of 683,000 (See appendix A). *La Presse* is owned by Gesca

Inc., (which is owned by Power Corporation of Canada) and has a weekly circulation of roughly 1.4 million (See appendix A).

In order to properly quantify the investigative stories involving corruption in *La Presse* and *The Gazette*, this thesis sought to develop a working definition of investigative journalism, and of corruption.

If journalists exist to better equip citizens to participate in their democracy, then the monitoring of corruption is essential. Mark Warren from Georgetown University wrote how “corruption undermines the culture of democracy. When people lose confidence that public decisions are taken for reasons that are publicly available and justifiable, they often become cynical about public speech and deliberation” (Warren 2004, 65). By informing citizens about the actions and transgressions of their elected officials, journalists give essential information that citizens need to make informed decisions. Corruption is somewhat difficult to define because, like journalism, its definition is culturally specific. What might be considered unethical and corrupt in Canada might not be seen the same way somewhere else. Since the politicians and newspapers that this thesis analyzed are in Canada, I used a Western definition of corruption, described by Harvard political scientist Joseph Nye. He defined corruption “as behavior which deviates from the informal duties of a public role because of private-regarding (personal, close family, private clique) pecuniary or status gains; or violates rules against the exercise of certain types of private-regarding influence” (Nye 1967, 45). He continued that his definition includes bribery, misappropriation, and nepotism. This definition is broad and workable, yet has limitations, as it does not include deviations benefiting one’s ethnic group or political party (Waller, Verdier and Gardner 2002). For

this thesis, stories that include “corruption” will be those that discuss a political figure who is violating rules or deviating from his or her responsibilities for pecuniary or status gains to themselves or members of their friends, political or family circles. This thesis focuses on investigative journalism stories that were enterprising in nature, on political corruption, in *The Gazette* and *La Presse*.

This databases selected for research were Canada News Stand for *The Gazette* and Eureka for *La Presse*. For Canada News Stand, the following formula was used to search for articles between the dates Jan 2007 to Dec. 31, 2012.

pub(The Gazette) AND ab(corrupt OR collusion OR fraud* OR crim* OR bribe*) AND ab("political party" OR politic* OR tremblay* OR charest* OR premier OR mayor OR montreal OR "city hall")*

A second search was conducted with the term “a gazette investigation,” followed by a third search with the term “a gazette exclusive.”

For Eureka, the following search formula was employed to search for articles within the same timeframe as was done with *The Gazette* search:

Corrupt ou collusion ou fraud* ou crim* ou pot-de-vin ou “parti politique” ou politi* ou tremblay ou charest ou “premier* ministre” ou maire ou montreal ou “hotel de ville”*

A second search was conducted using the term “selon une enquête de La Presse,” followed by a third search using the term “exclusif.”

The number of articles found were coded into an Excel spreadsheet and organized by year of their publication.

3.2 Structured questionnaire and semi-structured interview sessions

The second two parts of the thesis consisted of interviews conducted in-person or over the phone. I interviewed eight of the most prominent investigative journalists in Montreal. Respondents hailed from both French and English-language media, as well from print and television (See appendix B). However, although I focused on the journalist respondents, municipal politicians as well as stakeholders outside the journalistic-political environment were also interviewed (See appendix B). The responses from the second two groups were analyzed and discussed separately in this thesis, because their answers were used as a way to put the journalist respondents answers into perspective by comparing them with different points of view. The questionnaire was only given to journalist respondents, as it dealt solely with questions about the environment in Montreal surrounding the production of investigative journalism.²

The structured questionnaire is a list of pre-established questions that are given to respondents and that have a limited set of response categories (Fontana and Frey 2000). (See appendix B and C for full descriptions of interview subjects and sample questionnaire.) Regarding the eight investigative journalists, five were given structured questionnaires in-person as well as interviewed in-person. Three journalists were interviewed over the phone, and they either emailed or faxed their responses to the structured questionnaire. In-person interviews were ideal, because in general, they lasted

² I initially planned to offer a questionnaire to the two stakeholder groups as well as journalist respondents, however, I decided against it due to the fact that the small number of stakeholders would not have provided a large enough data set that would be useful for comparison purposes. I felt their interview responses were sufficient to juxtapose alongside journalist responses.

longer, between 20-30 minutes each, while phone interviews were shorter, between 15-20 minutes each. Three municipal politicians were interviewed, one in-person and two over the phone. Both stakeholder interviews were conducted in-person. All interviews were audio recorded and transcribed.

Fontana and Frey describe the structured interview (questionnaire) as a process whereby the interviewer asks respondents the “same series of pre-established questions with a limited set of response categories” (702). There is little room for variation and flexibility in the responses. Fontana and Frey cite this issue as one of the main problems with structured interviews. The structured interview leaves little room for the interviewer to improvise “or exercise independent judgment” (*Ibid*). This is precisely why this thesis used this method. The goal of the structured questionnaire was to produce quantifiable data that could be compared with the other respondents. The questionnaire also served as a launching point for the discussions during the semi-structured, open-ended interview. The problems that Fontana and Frey cite regarding the structured interview were negated by the use of the semi-structured interview. Fontana and Frey describe the differences between the approaches as follows: Structured interviewing “aims at capturing precise data of a codable nature as to explain behavior within pre-established categories, whereas (unstructured interviewing) attempts to understand the complex behavior of members of society without imposing any a priori categorization that may limit the field of inquiry” (706). For example, during the session with QMI Agency investigative journalist Andrew McIntosh, his responses to the questionnaire revealed that he was optimistic about the future of investigative journalism in Montreal – he circled number two out of five for that question, indicating he rather agreed strongly. His response was contrasted to the two

journalists who worked for English-language media, and who were on the other end of the spectrum: They were strongly pessimistic about the future of their work. Additionally, during the semi-structured interview, McIntosh elaborated on his thoughts regarding the future of journalism, and discussed the need to change the culture at newspapers and other news organizations to foster more investigative reporting. Therefore, the structured questionnaire collected McIntosh's opinion on the future of his work, which could be contrasted with other reporters, and it also served as a lead-in to an interview question which allowed him to expand on the complex relationships that he felt need to be sustained at news organizations in order for investigative journalism to remain robust.

One major problem regarding interviewing people is the fact that interviewees may lie. It is true that those interviewed had an interest in skewing their answers to their benefit. Politicians, theoretically, would not want to make it seem like they believe they can get away with more because the city's media organizations are understaffed; journalists have an incentive to not insult or criticize their employers out of fear of retribution, etc.

Herbert Hyman (1954) discusses bias in interview respondents. He cited a number of studies that revealed that self-administered questionnaires as opposed to one-on-one interviews "permit greater expression of unsanctioned attitudes" (Hyman 1954, 141). This phenomenon is due to what Hyman described as the "interviewer effect" (*Ibid*). Respondents might feel as though they want to impress the interviewer, or might feel shy or embarrassed by having to express opinions, in person, to another human.

Steinar Kvale and Svend Brinkmann (1996) wrote that the validity of interview responses is tied to the quality of the interviewing, “which should include a careful questioning as to the meaning of what is said and a continual checking of the information” (Kvale and Brinkmann 1996, 237). The authors write that validation “becomes the issue of choosing among competing and falsifiable interpretations, of examining and providing argument for the relative credibility of knowledge claims” (240). In short, Kvale and Brinkmann contend that in order for a researcher to try and discern truth from lies, the scholar must be rigorous to continually check, question, investigate and theoretically interpret the findings. “Validity is ascertained by examining the source of invalidity” (241).

He cites several ways to do this: the researcher must be critical, and play devil’s advocate regarding the information offered by respondents. Ways to do this, he says, include, “checking for representativeness and researcher effects, triangulating, weighing the evidence, checking the meaning of outliers, using extreme cases, following up on surprises, looking for negative evidence, making if-then tests, ruling out spurious relations, replicating a finding, checking out rival explanations, and getting feedback from informants” (242).

I felt confident that journalist respondents were honest during the interview sessions because their answers corresponded to the scholarship I included in my literature review and with the data I collected in the content analysis. Investigative journalism production increased in Montreal since 2009, and I couldn’t see what the incentive would be for journalists to lie about how they believed the increase occurred. Furthermore, on issues that journalists had incentives to play down competition, they did not. For instance,

journalists at Quebecor – Felix Seguin, Jean-Louis Fortin and Andrew McIntosh – are in a bitter rivalry with Radio-Canada journalists. Quebecor properties have led the drive to defund Radio-Canada (Ditchburn 2011), while Radio-Canada's *Enquête* program broadcasted an entire show criticizing Quebecor's media practices and questioned the ethics of its journalists (*Enquête* 2011). Despite the acrimony, all of Quebecor's journalists interviewed for this thesis (including other respondents) said that *Enquête* was one of the main reasons why investigative journalism has increased in Montreal since 2009. Moreover, Quebecor journalists said that their bosses copied the Radio-Canada model.

4. Results and discussion

4.1 Quantitative analysis

Seven out of the eight journalists interviewed for this thesis are currently working in Montreal. The eighth, William Marsden, recently left his investigative journalist posting in Montreal to be the Washington correspondent for Postmedia Network. All seven Montreal-area journalists said during interviews that they have noticed an increase in investigative journalism in Montreal over the past several years. Alain Gravel, reporter with Radio-Canada's *Enquête* program, called the state of investigative journalism in Montreal, a "Golden Age" (Gravel 2013). While it was important to collect the opinions of working investigative journalists on the health of their profession, this thesis also gathered data that revealed a less-biased picture of the current state of investigative reporting. This thesis analyzed the A news sections of *The Gazette* and *La Presse* between 2007 and 2012 (inclusive) and counted how many investigative news articles were published on the subject of corruption. Using the search engine formula as described in the methodology section, this thesis collected the following data from both papers:

The Gazette

Number of investigative journalism articles:

2007: 0

2008: 1

2009: 3

2010: 5
 2011: 11
 2012: 14

Total: 34

La Presse

Number of investigative journalism articles:

2007: 2
 2008: 5
 2009: 16
 2010: 10
 2011: 21
 2012: 11

Total: 65

The results reveal that – as defined by my rubric, which was explained in the methodology section - there is a clear increase in the investigative journalism output of both papers since 2009. The results do not give a complete picture of the investigative journalism output for both papers, however, as they only show articles that were written about corruption regarding politicians as well as corrupt state-run services. The results reveal the increase starting to take off around the year 2009; a year that all journalistic respondents said was pivotal to the surge in investigative journalism production. The importance of the year 2009 will be discussed later in the chapter.

The Gazette's investigative output began in 2008 with a series by Linda Gyulai on the secret privatization of Montreal's real estate department. Its assets were worth \$300 million and the city sold off large chunks of its portfolio below market price to private firms, the owners of which were later arrested and charged with corruption and fraud (Gyulai 2008). The majority of *The Gazette's* articles on corruption at the City of

Montreal were written by Gyulai. She reported how often one supplier – made of up several smaller companies – won public contracts from the city, making the field of bidders smaller than it seemed (Gyulai 2011). Gyulai’s reporting helped to highlight the many problems with the city’s water meter contract (Gyulai 2010). Moreover, her reporting revealed that the city would receive far less savings from the \$355 water meter contract than the city claimed it would. Gyulai’s reporting on the water meter scandal helped to increase pressure on the Montreal mayor to annul the contract (See Appendix D). Gyulai’s reporting also focused on donations to political parties in connection with contract tendering. She discovered that despite the fact that Montreal had an official registry listing over 12,500 suppliers, one quarter of city contracts, over a five-year period, were awarded to 10 firms. Construction magnate Tony Accurso – the man who has been arrested several times and charged with multiple counts of fraud, conspiracy, and other violations – gained the most contracts during that five-year period. Accurso-connected companies, Gyulai discovered, received a total of \$270 million worth of contracts tendered by the City of Montreal (See appendix D).

Gyulai and her editors at *The Gazette* provided this thesis with an excellent example regarding how investigative journalists are seen by citizens as people who can affect direct change in society. Gyulai and *The Gazette* also demonstrated how investigative journalists monitor power, how they hold leaders accountable, and provide citizens with critical information needed to be free and self-governing. In order to fully argue that point I need to delve a little deeper into the consequences of what has become known as the water-meter scandal (Gyulai 2010). Gyulai’s reporting on this issue won her the 2009 Michener Award, which is given by the Governor-General to reward the

country's best public service journalism project of the year. It is impossible to claim with 100 per cent certainty that Gyulai was responsible for saving Montrealers hundreds of millions of dollars – but the series of events makes any other scenario unlikely. In her 2010 Michener acceptance speech, Gyulai stated it was “a tip, suggesting the city was getting a raw deal, that launched *The Gazette*'s examination of the project” (Michener 2010). The tip Gyulai speaks of, also clearly suggests that her source believed that *The Gazette* and Gyulai were able – or at least hoped they were able – to affect change and highlight a transgression in the moral code of Montrealers. In response to Gyulai's reporting, then-Mayor of Montreal, said he would ask the city's auditor general to inspect the deal, which led to the mayor cancelling the contract (See appendix D). Here is an excerpt from MA's Michener award speech:

*This speech - which I promise will be short - will take me three times as long to deliver as it took Montreal city council to award the largest contract in the city's history. In fact, that's what motivated *The Gazette* to delve deeper into its investigation of Montreal's \$355-million water-management contract. It took 53 seconds for Montreal city council to unanimously approve the 25-year contract in late 2007. Not a single question was asked and, consequently, barely a headline was written. The deal only came on the public agenda in the spring of 2009 after it was revealed that during the bidding process the chairman of the city executive committee (Frank Zampino) had vacationed on the yacht of a businessman (Tony Accurso) whose firm was a partner in the winning consortium. But it was a tip, suggesting the city was getting a raw deal, that launched *The Gazette*'s examination of the project (Michener 2010).*

La Presse had a significantly larger output than *The Gazette* during the same time period (34 articles compared with 65 at *La Presse*). However, both papers focused on similar subjects relating to corruption among municipal and provincial politicians. In

2008, *La Presse* journalists began to write about how organized crime had infiltrated unions and construction companies in Quebec, and its journalists started to publish the ties between known criminals and union-political circles (See Appendix D). *La Presse*, as opposed to *The Gazette*, was often used as a mechanism for whistleblowers and politicians to propagate messages to the public. For instance, a provincial police source wrote a letter to the newspaper that revealed that members of the force wanted the provincial government to launch a public inquiry into the construction industry – something that the government had initially refused to do (De Pierrebourg and Noel 2011). Chantal Rouleau, the mayor of an East-End borough, who was also interviewed for this thesis, sent a letter she wrote to then-Quebec Premier Jean Charest, to *La Presse*. The letter asked for the creation of a public inquiry, and added that she was helpless to prevent known criminals from obtaining municipal contracts because of a stipulation in Quebec law that forced public contracts to be awarded to the lowest bidder.

La Presse has been a powerhouse of investigative reporting since 2009. My content analysis revealed that the paper has investigated extensively on corruption in Montreal. *La Presse* discovered that the entrepreneur awarded the contract to fix City Hall's roof had connections to organized crime (see appendix D). *La Presse* was the first to report that Montreal planned to ask the province to create a special task force to investigate financial crimes and corruption (See appendix D).

A common theme throughout this thesis was the divide between English and French-language publications and their respective journalists. Moreover, the questionnaire and interview data revealed that journalists who worked for Francophone

publications were more optimistic about the future of their profession than their Anglophone counterparts. All the investigative journalists discussed money and resources as the main reason there was a difference in output between francophone and Anglophone publications. Moreover, pessimism about the future capabilities of Anglophone media to invest in the resources necessary for investigative journalism was also a common refrain from journalists working for Anglo media in Montreal. However, it is important to note that due to the fact that an exclusive story is published in a Francophone newspaper, doesn't mean that it only serves and benefits the audience of that one newspaper. Exclusives in *The Gazette* were picked up by francophone papers and vice versa. Municipal services are divided amongst Montrealers of all mother tongues, and tax dollars are poured into the same coffers. An Anglophone Montrealer benefits equally, compared with Francophone Montrealers, when a French-language publication reveals that tax dollars were being misspent by City Hall politicians. However, the results make it clear that journalists who work for Francophone publications have a different view on the state of investigative reporting than journalists who work for English-language media. The discussion of the linguistic divide is located in the “organizational support” section of this chapter.

4.2 Structured questionnaire

The structured questionnaire was supplied to eight of Montreal's most prominent Francophone and Anglophone investigative reporters. A full breakdown of the questionnaire responses can be found in Appendix C. The goal of the 19-question

questionnaire was to collect comparable, quantifiable data on how the respondents felt about the state of investigative journalism in Montreal, as well as their thoughts on investigative journalism itself. The questions also acted as a segway into the semi-structured interview component of the thesis. The survey asked respondents to circle a number between 1 and 5 for each answer. 1 being they “strongly agree” and 5 being they “strongly disagree.” Three of the respondents were Anglophones while five were francophone, however, one of the three Anglophones, Andrew McIntosh, publishes for a French-language organization, and therefore was included in the Francophone groupings.

Respondents agreed 100% on two questions: Q1: Investigative journalism is an essential tool for democracy because it holds elected officials accountable; and Q7: The audience of my news organizations seeks investigative journalism stories. Other questions on which journalists nearly unanimously agreed included question Q4: Montrealers are better served by investigative journalism than are citizens of other large Canadian cities and Q8: The audience of my news organization recognizes the importance of investigative journalism to the proper functioning of democracy.

Respondents largely echoed Barbie Zelizer’s contention that journalists understand their work through one or more of five definitional sets. The journalists interviewed for this thesis defined their work as a “service,” that is, they believe journalism “provides the tools to be an effective citizen” (Zelizer 2004). Their definition also echoed that of scholars Kovach and Rosenstiel. The investigative journalist respondents also understood their roles as watchdogs of society’s leaders, a concept rooted in the Enlightenment (de Burgh 2000), and representative of the North Atlantic

Liberal model (Hallin and Mancini 2004). Journalist respondents mostly agreed that the work they did was important; that they did a good job at their work, and the people that they wrote for appreciated their work and recognized how important it was. The rest of the answers, particularly involving optimism for the future of investigative journalism, were divided along linguistic lines, such as Q5: Investigative journalism is a priority for my news organization, and Q10: I am given sufficient time and resources by my new organization in order to produce investigative journalism. For both questions, journalists who worked for Francophone organizations were more likely to agree that they received support from their bosses and that their work was valued by management.

The questionnaire also touched on issues involving new journalism and the future of investigative reporting in Montreal (those two topics are discussed more extensively in the semi-structured interview section). Respondents were split on Q12: The Internet and the overall digitization of news production and dissemination have had a net positive effect on investigative journalism. Three respondents put “3” for Q12, thus indicating they were neutral. While journalist respondents recognized the fact that advances in technology (social media, computer-assisted reporting, etc.) helped to organize data and permitted the quicker and broader dissemination of their work, respondents also lamented several aspects of the ever-changing journalistic landscape: shorter shelf-life for stories, competition with celebrity gossip for hits on websites, and other issues discussed at length in the semi-structured interview section.

Six out of eight respondents circled “1” for Q13: My news organization, to my knowledge, is looking for new and creative ways to produce investigative journalism.

However, this response was in somewhat contrast to their answers during the semi-structured interviews. While journalists said they believe their bosses were looking to find new ways for producing content, respondents said that traditional means of presenting investigative journalism were best. Additionally, responses for Q13 were in slight contradiction with Q15: My news organization encourages me to learn new tools (computer-assisted reporting, crowd sourcing – other social media techniques) to produce investigative journalism. While the majority (4) circled “1” for this question, the others were split. The answers suggest that while journalists believe that their bosses are looking for new ways of producing investigative journalism content, no significant breakthroughs have been made or presented to all of the journalists I interviewed.

4.3 Results of semi-structured interviews and discussion

The content analysis and the questionnaire demonstrate that there has been an increase in output of investigative journalism since 2009, and that investigative journalist respondents felt that the public and their news organizations appreciate investigative work. The following data collected during eight sessions of semi-structured interviews with investigative journalists in Montreal produced three general themes that respondents said were the primary reasons why investigative journalism has increased in Montreal since 2009: the rise of Radio-Canada’s *Enquête* program; the increase in the amount of whistleblowers; and finally, market competition and increased support from news organizations.

Enquête symbolizes the power and influence that public media can play (McChesney 1990). Due to the fact that Radio-Canada doesn't operate under the same financial pressures as do the other large media organizations in Montreal, it was able to take a risk on a costly and time-consuming project – an investigative journalism news magazine.

The segment on whistleblowers discusses how investigative journalist respondents feel that their work, and the role of the media in general, is crucial to democracy. Their responses relate to the Durkheimian principle of organic solidarity as well as Ettema and Glasser's contention that investigative journalists help to articulate and reinforce a society's moral order.

Finally, investigative journalists all discussed the importance of the competitive nature of Montreal's news market. Many scholars (McChesney 1990; Bagdikian 2004) have argued that a competitive media market with less concentration produces higher quality and more diverse content. The Montreal media market is an excellent example of the political economy argument in action.

4.3.1 *Enquête*

Enquête, a one-hour investigative journalism magazine on the Radio-Canada network, created a model that other commercial news enterprises followed. It was this program, and its journalists, who helped to spark an investment in investigative journalism by the city's major Francophone news organizations that has led to major political consequences, including the formation of the ongoing Charbonneau

Commission, the resignations of two big-city Quebec mayors, and who helped bring down the nine-year rule of the Quebec Liberal Party (See Appendix D).

According to journalist respondents, *Enquête* took the first risks out of all of Montreal's news organizations of investing money and resources into a program that not only had no certainty of success, but whose subject matter was costly, time-consuming, and risked of dragging the network into lengthy defamation and libel court battles. *Enquête* hosts Alain Gravel and Marie-Maude Denis said that the show took the risks because of Radio-Canada's non-commercial model, which doesn't have profit-maximization as its main objective (Gravel, Denis 2013). Radio-Canada's *Enquête* program started on the public network in 1997, when it was called *Enjeux* (stakes), a newsmagazine show. Gravel said that *Enjeux* did some investigative work, but upper-level Radio-Canada management decided in 2008 that they wanted to take the risks and invest in a show completely devoted to investigations, and which would focus on the construction industry and political parties. Gravel said the show made the decision after himself and Denis told management that there was an increasing amount of people coming forward with information on corruption in the construction industry.

Very rapidly we noticed that there was a lot of material that didn't come out because (society and journalists) had the impression that everything was going well ... But there was a lot of crime, a lot of collusion. And we realized quite quickly that it was a sector that we needed to explore (Gravel 2013).

In 2008, the show was re-named and re-cast with a focus on investigative journalism. The show would look into corruption and collusion in the construction and political spheres (Gravel 2008). 2008 was a pivotal year for the program, as management

at CBC-Radio-Canada decided it was going to re-orient the show's resources to reflect one of the corporations two mandates: investigative journalism and international news, Gravel said. Gravel said that there were significant cuts to the Radio-Canada newsrooms at the time. However, while resources were taken away from certain sectors, resources were shifted and added to *Enquête*. Re-orienting resources from one sector of a company to another was a common refrain from journalist respondents, and which will be discussed in the "organizational support" section of this chapter. Gravel said that *Enquête* took a chance, and it worked. "Just like a commercial enterprise, we realized that the show was profitable, we realized that investigations, which normally aren't money-makers, became profitable. Pierre-Karl Peladeau (former CEO of Quebecor) told us that we created a model (for the success of investigative reporting)" (Gravel 2013).

I argue that investigative journalism reinforces a society's moral order and its culture, and it sustains a society's democracy because it seeks out hidden information that citizens need to be free and self-governing (Kovach and Rosenstiel 2001). However, scholars also argued that the media are often prevented from doing so because of several factors including media convergence, conglomeration and budget cutbacks (McChesney 1990). The CBC is not entirely immune from the pressures that other corporate media face, but its structure, according to Marie-Maude Denis and Alain Gravel, permitted it to produce a model for investigative reporting that might have otherwise not been created if left entirely to the marketplace (Gravel, Denis 2013). The majority of Radio-Canada's funding comes from taxpayers, and while the structure of its funding brings with it

different limits and pressures, maximizing profit is not the primary goal of the CBC (Lowe and Berge 2013, 82).

Marie-Maude Denis, said that Radio-Canada decided to be “very proactive in creating *Enquête* in 2008. We started digging in the construction industry. It was far from obvious at that the beginning that (the show) would achieve what it achieved” (Denis 2013). The other journalists interviewed also brought up *Enquête* as a critical factor that led to the creation of other investigative journalism units.

The real locomotive was Enquête – it pulled everyone in ... Radio-Canada invested in the show Enquête without knowing how profitable it would be. You had the interest of the public - all the ingredients were there. There was investigative journalism before, but never as much. Probably, there were also people who talked. And then other people saw that these people were coming forward and it gave them the push. That probably helped. Things were boiling for years (Larouche 2013).

In the beginning you had investigative journalists, and I named them, Radio-Canada: Marie-Maude Denis and Alain Gravel, who did an exceptional work, and they put the politicians in front of a situation and then La Presse did its thing, but (politicians) were put in a situation where they had to act. Since the revelations of Enquête and Radio-Canada, there was a willingness, a political obligation to do something about corruption and collusion, and then all of society followed what the political actors were doing” (Seguin 2013).

...by 2009, as soon as Enquête came out with the FTQ-Construction stuff, ...with that I felt safer (MA 2013).

Newspapers have often served as “agenda-setters” in large metropolises, setting the tone and the message for the day’s news events because of their capacity to provide in-depth reporting on a wide number of issues (Starr 2009). *Enquête*, while not a newspaper, still acted as an agenda-setter for the Montreal media

landscape. It reported on a niche subject: corruption in the construction industry and the illegal financing of political parties, yet that one subject was so rich in material and was in such high demand by Montreal citizens, that *Enquête* reports were the basis for news articles in various other news organizations. There are many examples of news articles in *The Gazette*, *La Presse*, *Le Devoir* and in *Le Journal de Montreal* that cite investigations by *Enquête*, or quote sources who have spoken to *Enquête* journalists. Other articles, such as the Sept. 27, 2013 article by wire service The Canadian Press, was based entirely on an *Enquête* investigation into why a notorious Montreal organized crime leader received a \$380, 000 cheque from Revenue Canada (Canadian Press 2013). “There was an emulation of us by other news organizations, and when we made the statement to invest massively in investigative journalism, it triggered *La Presse* to do the same thing, and *The Gazette*, and even Quebecor and *Le Journal de Montreal* is trying very hard with their (investigations bureau)” (Denis 2013).

However, simply because *Enquête* became an agenda-setter, it did not mean that the other three large-circulation newspapers in Montreal stopped fulfilling the traditional agenda-setting functions of daily newspapers. The success of *Enquête* was partly due to the fact that it forced *La Presse* and the *Journal de Montreal* and to a certain extent, *The Gazette*, into producing investigative reports. And those reports helped set the agenda for other television and radio news organizations. One of the critical factors that led to the increase of investigative output in Montreal was that a non-traditional agenda-setter became a powerful force in revealing corruption

and holding elected officials accountable. The city's newspapers, in addition to *Enquête*, became investigative journalism powerhouses, cross-reporting each other's stories, expanding one another's coverage, and providing a powerful machine for distributing information about the ethical transgressions of the province's elite.

Aside from its agenda-setting function, *Enquête* also helped expand the number of journalists working on investigative reports about corruption, leading to what several respondents said was a “snowball effect,” which afforded journalists strength in numbers. The journalist respondents described how after they saw how *Enquête* was going after powerful players in Quebec society, it emboldened them to do the same. Media companies like Quebecor and Gesca realized that the Radio-Canada model was effective, and decided that if they were going to follow suit, they had better inject the resources necessary – money, time, training and lawyers – in order to do it properly.

Did the journalists feel more emboldened because of Enquête? I completely agree with that. Enquête made it so that the general view of Montreal journalists who work on touchy subjects felt united in a larger group. They felt less targeted than if they were alone. Enquête deserves a lot of merit because of this (Seguin 2013).

MA, an English-language investigative journalist who wished to remain anonymous, discussed being fearful in 2008 when researching sensitive stories about corruption in the City of Montreal.

I used to get warning, I got shoved – (in 2008) I was actually scared. I actually would go home and look around that no one was in the bushes at my home. And by 2009 as soon as Enquête started to produce, when they came out with the FTQ-Construction stuff, and then you had La Presse working on Contrecoeur, with that I felt safer. There were too many journalists at that point to, you know, what? Are they going to bump us all off? (MA 2013)

Things changed (when Enquête was created). Radio-Canada started spending a lot of time on stories and scrutinizing problems in the construction industry and city corruption in Montreal ... and I think that emboldened some news organizations. Because a lot of reporters were being intimidated by people in the construction industry, in the unions, whenever (Quebecor) tried to do critical stories, these people would come in and send lawyers letters and things like that to shut people up. But people got braver, news organizations decided they would fight lawsuits and keep pushing stories along. And that was a key change in the culture in Montreal (McIntosh 2013).

4.3.2 Whistleblowers

Journalist respondents said that towards the end of 2008 and the beginning of 2009, whistleblowers inside government, unions and police circles began coming forward with information about wrongdoings. Whistleblowers brought journalists expense accounts filed by corrupt union leaders, lists of public contracts that were awarded to a small group of businesses, and many other tips that led to articles exposing corruption at high levels of Quebec society (Gravel, Denis 2013). While whistleblowers in the U.S. have come under increased pressure from the federal government (Pitzke 2013), the same did not occur in Montreal. In fact, municipal politicians set up a whistleblower hotline in response to reports about corruption that were published in Montreal newspapers (Gyulai 2011). However, the hotline was far from perfect, and calls plummeted when the city transferred control of the line away from the arms-length office of the auditor-general, to

the office of the comptroller-general, which is under the mayor's purview (Gyulai 2011). Nonetheless, Montreal investigative journalist respondents said that an increasing amount of whistleblowers fed them a steady stream of material with which to chase, starting in 2009.

Journalist respondents gave several reasons why they believed the amount of whistleblowers increased during and after 2009. McIntosh, who worked in Canada and who spent several years as an investigative journalist in the U.S., said that in his experience, whistleblowers in Canada, and in particular, Quebec, come forward out of a sense of civic responsibility and engage with journalists because they recognize the importance of the media in society. “(In Quebec) people who give tips, it generally serves the public interest. It’s what compels people to get on the phone or write you a letter. There, of course, are people who are trying to manipulate you, but it’s your job to try and figure that out” (McIntosh 2013). Sources, according to McIntosh’s description, subscribe to the principle that the media serves as a vehicle to hold leaders accountable, to ensure that matters that are in the public interest receive an audience (Kovach and Rosenstiel 2001; Ettema and Glasser 1998).

Felix Seguin said that Quebec became corrupt because of a failure of journalists. He didn’t mention the failure of the political system or of the police, but many problems in society were due to the fact that he believed investigative journalists were not around to keep a watch on those in power. “Investigative bureaus have showed us since 2009 that we suffered before with not having enough investigative journalists, not enough watchdogs, not enough for the union people, not enough for the businessmen. And it

proves that we, starting now, we need to keep watch on what our elected officials do” (Seguin 2013).

Jean-Louis Fortin, investigative journalist with Quebecor, said that investigative stories trigger more whistleblowers coming forward. With more whistleblowers came more story ideas. He said the more whistleblowers came forward, the more resources his bosses provided to the investigative department. “After the few investigations, more people came forward, and then we had more resources in the newsroom, and more whistleblowers, there was a sense of one supporting the other” (Fortin 2013).

Ken Pereira, the union president who leaked to *Enquête Dupuis*’ extravagant expense accounts, did not come out of a vacuum. Gravel said the whistleblower movement began out of the 2008 presidential elections for the FTQ-Construction.

There was a war between two clans. Jean Lavallee, who was the king of construction for 25 years and between Jocelyn Dupuis, who wanted to take his place. And in this war the two sides wanted to place their pawns. It was a very tight race and the Hells Angels tipped the sides for Jocelyn Dupuis for the spot of general director. This event was one of the elements that made people start talking (Gravel 2013).

The people who started talking to journalists didn’t only come from the construction sector, according to the journalist respondents. Journalists said bureaucrats and especially members from Quebec’s police forces began to open up around the end of 2008 and early 2009. McIntosh said that police informants were critical to his investigations.

There have been some key players who have been instrumental in assisting the journalists - key players in the police force (McIntosh April 2013).

Journalists also cited the state of the economy as one of the reasons why whistleblowers began coming forward towards the end of 2008 and early 2009. The worldwide recession hit its nadir in 2008-09 (Cable 2009), eroding investor's stock portfolios, tightening credit lending by financial institutions, forcing companies to lay off employees and creating a general economic meltdown across the world. Gravel said the recession made citizens angry, and news consumers were hungry for elites to be held accountable. Moreover, he said whistleblowers were forced to speak to journalists – because the regular avenues for justice – elected officials, the courts and the police – were unable to affect change (Gravel 2013).

There were extraordinary people at high levels who had a lot of courage. Confidential sources who came to us and said this and this happened. But if they came to us it meant that nothing else was happening. It always starts with the sources. The job of the investigative journalist is to validate the sources. Before investigative journalists (come out with a story) people have to talk to us, and if people are talking that means that nothing else is working (Gravel 2013).

Gravel's contention that sources came forward to journalists because "nothing else was working" implies that whistleblowers were hoping that news organizations would be able to fix what was ailing society. Durkheim's principle of organic solidarity helps to address this phenomenon, which occurs in large, complex societies, where the media act as moral and legal standard-bearers by articulating a moral order. This ritualistic aspect of communication, as articulated by James Carey (1990), regarding the role of investigative journalism in society, also helps to explain why whistleblowers were compelled to leak information to journalists when they felt that their traditional moral order was collapsing.

MA said they believed another reason was partly responsible for the surge of informants. MA said that political dynasties had been in power for a long time, and opposition figures saw an opportunity and pounced. MA mentioned that Gerald Tremblay had been mayor of Montreal for 12 years before he resigned (See appendix D). Gilles Vaillancourt, mayor of Laval, Quebec, just across the north river from Montreal, had been mayor for over 23 years before he stepped down (*Ibid*). And in 2009, Jean Charest, leader of the provincial Quebec Liberal party, who initially resisted pressure to open a public inquiry into the construction industry, had been in power since 2003 and resigned after his party lost the September 2012 elections (*Ibid*).

People really started turning up the pressure on the Liberal government of Jean Charest. He was unpopular and had been there for a long time. There was a groundswell of opposition and there was the impression that all the (corruption stories went all the way up to the Liberals. I think there was a lot of political maneuvering to create and to help create that groundswell. Especially because (Charest) was refusing to hold the inquiry made a lot of people question what he was hiding (MA 2013).

MA said that if Quebec in 2009 was led by a new Parti Quebecois government there wouldn't have been as much pressure and the public inquiry wouldn't have been created, and there also wouldn't have been as many disgruntled politicians and bureaucrats who wanted to come forward to journalists.

4.3.3. Organizational support and competition: the Anglophone and Francophone divide

All eight journalist respondents discussed the importance of organizational support and market competition to the increase of investigative journalism in Montreal. These are two important factors and will be discussed separately. This section also discusses how organizational support and competition differed between the city's English and French-language publications.

The data collected for this thesis demonstrated the importance of a healthy, competitive news market for the maintenance of investigative journalism. The political economy argument that media concentration leads to a dearth of voices, decrease in quality of news, less coverage, and is dangerous for democracy, has been made by many scholars, many of whom are cited in my literature review (Bagdikian 2004; McChesney 1997; Curran 2011). The data collected for this thesis conforms to those arguments. Montreal presents a test case for a political economy argument because the city's media landscape includes a healthy robust competitive news market – the Francophone newspapers market – as well as a concentrated, uncompetitive market, which is the Anglophone newspaper market. Montreal has three, daily, French-language, paid-circulation newspapers that compete against one another for readership and according to journalist respondents, for investigative scoops on political corruption (See appendix A). *The Gazette* is the only English-language paid-circulation newspaper. All journalist respondents pointed to the importance of competition as a primary reason for what they considered to be high levels of investigative journalism output in the city.

Aside from enjoying a more competitive market and more resources from management, Francophone journalists and those working for Francophone publications enjoy a more privileged status in Quebec society, argued Fletcher (2008). He wrote that Quebec's Francophone media are "an integral part of the intelligentsia." Anglophone journalists, in contracts, "have more of an outside role (Ibid.)."

Bernier (2010) noted that Francophone journalists in particular, had more pessimistic views regarding the effects of convergence in their industry, as opposed to English-language journalists. Bernier's research runs in contrast to the opinions stated by the thesis' journalist respondents, who did not criticize their organization's ability to run content across multiple platforms. Rather, all respondents recognized the strategic advantages that convergence offered. However, by and large, respondents claimed that the high level of competition in Montreal's Francophone media market was the single greatest difference between Anglophone and Francophone media.

Jean-Louis Fortin said that the high competition among Montreal media outlets forced news organizations to add value for readers. When *Enquête* came out with their investigations, and Quebecor knew that *La Presse* was starting its own investigations bureau, Quebecor knew it had no choice but to start producing investigations of its own lest it lose market share to competitors (Fortin 2013). Journalist respondents said *Enquête* proved to media owners that there was money in investigative journalism. The show proved that there was material to uncover, that the media-consuming public was hungry for this material, and that if Montreal media didn't invest in investigative journalism they would be left behind in the city's competitive market. What is most surprising about the

emulation of *Enquête* is that corporate media organizations, specifically Gesca and Quebecor Inc. decided to invest resources into producing one of the most costly forms of journalism. A factor not lost on Gravel, who said, “We were not surprised that Radio-Canada was doing it, but we are more surprised when commercial private companies embarked on (investigative journalism). All the companies (in Quebec) want in on this – how long will it last? But for the moment, it’s here and readers are getting used to it” (Gravel 2013).

However, while Francophone media companies recognized that they had to keep up with the competition, *The Gazette* did not operate in that kind of environment, which speaks to the linguistic divide regarding investigative journalism in Montreal. *The Gazette* no longer has an investigations bureau. Andrew McIntosh, who used to work at *The Gazette*’s investigations bureau in the 90s, said that he “saw the writing on the wall” in the late 90s, and realized that *The Gazette* “was losing readers in a declining market” and that the paper’s owners were not going to inject large amount of money into the organization (McIntosh 2013). William Marsden, who used to work for *The Gazette*’s investigations desk in the 1990s, said that the managerial support for investigative journalism for the English-language market is lacking.

There used to be investigative stuff at the CBC (in Montreal) there is nothing like that anymore. At CTV, there is nothing like (investigative journalism) anymore. What’s changed is that you have few bodies – journalists – on the line, who are working these kinds of stories and who are given the resources and the time to work these stories (Marsden 2013).

MA agreed with Marsden, and was far more pessimistic about the future of investigative journalism in Montreal than MA's French-language counterparts. MA said that their organization supports the work that MA does, but the investigative stories are done on MA's initiative – and MA has weeks to research and complete a story, not months as before, and furthermore, while MA researches long-form investigative pieces, MA is writing other articles and heading to other news events at the same time. MA is not solely dedicated to investigative journalism because their news organization has not put the resources into a unit focused on investigations.

No one else is doing what I'm doing (at my news organization). And it's largely because I push hard to write these stories. I have huge support, but my stories are self-generated. I have the sources after all these years, I have the critical thinking (MA 2013).

With less competition comes less organizational support. Marsden explained that *The Gazette*'s owner, Postmedia Network, is not based in Quebec, unlike the owners of the three Francophone Montreal dailies (See Appendix A). Marsden said that Postmedia, which is saddled with debt, off-loaded much of that debt onto *The Gazette*. “*The Gazette* is a money-making newspaper that is owned by a company that was in bankruptcy five or six years ago ... (the company) buried *The Gazette* (and other papers in the chain) in debt and that hasn't ended” (Marsden 2013). Marsden said the “street boy” mentality of *The Gazette*'s owners is concentrated on paying down debt and maximizing profit for shareholders.

The owners of the other newspapers in Montreal are not as fortunate to be able to run a local daily without any competition. However, competition doesn't mean that the

Francophone news organizations have not had to cut back financially. The migration of advertising dollars from print to the web has affected both French and English-language papers alike. Media owners across the country have been slashing jobs and making deep financial cuts. However, investigative journalist respondents said that the ability of a media organization to produce investigative journalism is a question of priority. Media organizations in Quebec have shifted resources away from certain internal sectors, and re-positioned them in investigative journalism units. At Quebecor, for instance, its investigative unit used to be comprised of McIntosh and one researcher, who worked in a small office at the QMI Agency bureau in Old Montreal. McIntosh said that Quebecor managers visited the offices of investigative journalism organization, ProPublica, to learn about its donation-funded model (McIntosh 2013). He said Quebecor decided it wasn't going to go down that route, and instead "they were going to start small and build (their investigative unit) up" (2013). Within three years Quebecor re-positioned journalists from its other companies into the burgeoning investigative unit. Television broadcast journalist Felix Seguin was transferred from the TVA office to the investigative unit – which has since moved to its own offices in the city's financial district. Jean-Louis Fortin was transferred into the unit from his print job at the *Journal de Montreal*. The unit now consists of more than 6 journalists and 1 researcher, all working out of the same offices, and stories are published on different platforms. The unit will work together on a story, which will be published in print, on TV, on the radio, and on the websites, all owned by Quebecor. "I have more resources now than I ever had," McIntosh said. He added that Quebecor didn't hire additional journalists, but moved around human resources it already had, in order to produce what it saw as a priority: investigative journalism.

The theme of organizational support was mentioned by all the investigative journalist respondents. All of the major stories that broke between 2009 and the end of 2012 were produced by mainstream, institutional, corporate journalism institutions. Henry Aubin of *The Gazette* wrote about this issue where he claimed that the “Old media have proved their worth” (Aubin 2009). The journalist respondents said that corporate media producing the vast majority of investigative journalism is not by accident.

The bosses know ... they know the big investigations generate the viewers and the readers, I think makes them realize that the public wants this (Seguin 2013).

However, when Radio-Canada first created its investigative unit, before any other news organization did, it was far from obvious that it would breed success, said Marie-Maude Denis, “but we had some tremendous support from our bosses” (Denis 2013). Alain Gravel said that managers at Radio-Canada “abandoned certain types of coverage” (Gravel 2013) and re-oriented resources to its investigation team, “and then the show was successful and we realized that investigative journalism is profitable and that the population wants it.”

The number one thing that really forces a journalist to start investigative work is the support from their organization. I say often that if I was an independent journalist, I wouldn't do investigations because I wouldn't have the time, the money or the means to defend myself in court from lawsuits by millionaires who impose slap suits against you. The organization behind you is key (Fortin 2013).

You need people to put the resources and the money – and they have to accept that investigative journalism costs money and it takes time and it doesn't go fast, you need bosses who want to invest the time and money (Larouche 2013).

4.3.4 The future of investigative journalism in Montreal

Journalist respondents said they questioned whether the future of investigation journalism will remain as strong as it currently is. Their level of optimism was contingent on the language of their news publication. Francophone journalists were significantly more optimistic about the future of investigative journalism in Montreal than their English-language counterparts. The questionnaire and the semi-structured interviews both reflected this. Francophone journalists stressed the need for their bosses to continue providing the resources necessary to sustain healthy levels of investigative journalism, while Anglophone journalists discussed the need for their organizations to explore collaborations with universities and foundations. Another theme discussed was the need to change newsroom culture at organizations that don't produce investigations, so that investigative journalism is encouraged by management. Journalists also discussed the advent of new media on their investigations and touched upon how Quebec society has grown over the recent years to expect news organizations continually publish investigations.

In 2013, Alain Gravel won Quebec's Gala Artis prize in the category of best host of a public affairs show, which is a prize voted on by Quebecers (Radio-Canada 2013). Gravel said his win shows how deeply investigative journalism has cut into the fabric of Quebec society since 2008 ("Gala Artis ..." 2013).

It's not a prize that usually goes to investigative journalists – it's a poll. And for me, it's huge as a prize. Investigative reports are not that sexy,

they are numbers, columns, it's complicated. If the population says it's me they like then they are saying investigative journalism is what they want (Gravel 2013).

Vincent Larouche said he was “neutral” regarding the future of investigative reporting in Montreal because he said a consistent production of investigative journalism is contingent on media companies continuing their level of support for the work of their journalists (Larouche 2013). On the English side, Andrew McIntosh echoed Larouche’s sentiment. He said he currently has more resources than he’s ever had to produce investigative journalism, but added that he recognized that the outlook of investigative journalism depends on what company you work for. He said he is quite pessimistic about investigative journalism among the city’s English-language journalism institutions. He said there will likely be less investigative journalism in Montreal in the future, not more.

While (the industry) might be spending more right now (on investigative journalism) the CBC is facing substantial cutbacks on the English and French sides and there is going to be less. They will be less able to tackle more complicated stories than they have in the past. ... and the political uncertainty in Quebec, and the increased tension over language – that's not going to help (English-language media organizations) because it will erode their readership even more (McIntosh 2013).

MA is not optimistic about English-language investigative journalism in Montreal either. MA said news organizations need to invest in newspapers – whether in hard copy or online. MA said that print allows for in-depth coverage and is the format best suited for investigative reporting (MA 2013).

While all the French-language journalists were optimistic, they tempered their answers with caution. The current good health of investigative journalism in Montreal

was not taken for granted by any of the journalist respondents. Many journalists expressed concern about what will happen after the Charbonneau Commission ends, or if there is an extended lull where no stories are broken.

As soon as the Charbonneau Commission ends and as soon as this wave of arrests and attention dies off (politicians) will be up to their old tricks” (MA 2013).

Investigative journalists need to be one step ahead to detect what will be the next big issue in Quebec – it’s easier said than done, but I think good stories will get public interest. And that interest will bring news organizations to sustain that type of investment. Of course the big challenge will be to sustain that interest (Denis 2013).

Felix Seguin said he believes investigative journalism works in cycles. And the cycle of the Charbonneau Commission will last for another couple of years at a minimum. He said after the commission fades from public view, journalists will have to find new scandals and new problems in society. “Investigative bureaus are more useful than ever right now,” Seguin said. “I think we have showed since 2009 that we suffered by not having enough investigative journalists” (Seguin 2013).

4.3.5 New media and investigative journalism

Scholars have also argued that advances in new media have “dumbed down” journalistic content (Franklin and Murphy 1998; Bailey and William 1997; Pilger 1998). Arguments include that competition from the web has forced journalists to provide only the news that can attract viewers to websites, or as John Pilger wrote, the web has turned newspapers into “vehicles of narcissism” (Pilger 1998, 535). Investigative journalist

respondents lamented aspects of the new media environment, however, all of the journalists who discussed new media said that the tenets of investigative journalism, which they describes as verification, source-gathering, and research, were more important than the presentation.

While journalist respondents said that the Internet and social media helped distribute their reporting to larger audiences, they were also critical of new media, and questioned whether advances in technology were deeply significant for investigative journalism. The majority of the investigative journalists interviewed for this thesis said that the vehicle for the presentation of investigative journalism is not as important as the actual content. Jean-Louis Fortin said the digitization of journalism has brought positive and negative consequences for investigative journalism. Stories can reach larger audiences more quickly than in previous decades, but the sheer amount of information that competes with investigative articles drowns out the message and impact. Moreover, he said the Internet and the volume of information have shortened the shelf life of investigative stories.

The digitization of information has brought so much ridiculous information that it hurts our investigations. A photo essay of Britney Spears doing something stupid has the same value (in terms of clicks to the website) as an investigation that has taken us months to complete (Fortin 2013).

Larouche talked about the spread of false rumours online, which he said makes readers question all online content.

Presenting content of investigative stories online is positive. But Enquête, for example, presents its stories in 30 minutes to an hour of TV and it's efficient. Watergate was a big column of text. It's a plus for us to have all the bells and whistles of what the online presence can offer, but for investigative journalism, that stuff doesn't really make that much of a difference (Larouche 2013).

McIntosh, Gravel, Denis also discussed advances in technology. They said that technological advances help with the information-gathering process. For instance, McIntosh recently won a Canadian Association of Journalism award in the computer-assisted reporting category. However, the three reporters said that investigative journalism needed to be presented in a long-form format, either in print (web or newsprint) or on television, in order to present a full picture of what is often a complex, lengthy investigation.

4.3.6. Collaborations: universities and foundations

Many scholars have pointed to foundations and charities as being beacons of hope for the future of journalism (Guensburg 2008; McChesney and Nichols 2010). However, Harry Browne (2010) argues that the power that foundations are given when they fund journalistic content is not unproblematic. Browne wrote that what is known as “non-profit” news can have similar problems as commercial news, such as money used to serve ideological agendas as well as conflicts of interest (Browne 2010). Edmonds (2002) discusses how a “benevolent fog” can obscure some of the self-serving and ideological interests that foundation-driven investigative journalism can promote, under the guise of its non-commerciality. Some of the journalist respondents had the same concerns, others

did not talk about problematic scenarios that could manifest under a foundation-driven journalistic model.

Wendy Bacon (2011) from the Australian Centre for Investigative Journalism asks whether investigative journalism created by a university professor can be counted as research – and moreover, be published as such and have an influence in society. Bacon argues “the time is ripe” to push for university research departments to include investigative journalism as part of research projects (Bacon 2011).

McIntosh said the future of investigative reporting at English-language media in Montreal lies in collaborations. “In Montreal, collaborations are the only way *The Gazette* is going to be doing (investigative journalism) in the future” (McIntosh 2013). Marie-Maude Denis discussed the significance of the International Consortium for Investigative Journalists and the story about the leaked names of wealthy individuals across the world who use offshore bank accounts to circumvent tax laws (ICIJ 2013). She said “there is great potential” in working with students, universities and foundations (Denis 2013).

Marsden said he’s worked with the ICIJ for the last 13 years. He said the U.S. is far ahead of Canada with regards to news organizations working with foundations. He said there isn’t as much money in Canada as there is in the U.S. and that is one of the reasons why foundation-driven journalism isn’t as prevalent in Canada.

(Canadians) believe that our government should do the work and the money should stay in hospitals or this that or the other. There isn't that much imagination on the journalism side because there isn't a lot of money. If you're going to give money in Canada, you're probably going

to give it to cancer or children or poor people or this sort of thing (Marsden 2013).

MA said that partnerships and collaborations with students and foundations are possible, but it's essential that the organization partnering with journalists have the same mission and ethics as the journalists. MA said secrecy towards sources and towards the goals of investigative articles was also important.

I find it that as a journalist, it's unethical to discuss what I'm working on with anyone by my editor. So it's not a reflex to go and discuss what I'm working on with anyone. (If I was to partner with a university) it would have to be with people bound by the same professional standards as me, they would have to be journalism students (MA 2013).

Enquête has entered into a partnership with journalism students at the University of Montreal. The partnership is new, and Gravel and Denis did not want to go into too many details, but the partnership involves Gravel speaking with the students three times a year and explaining how *Enquête* produces its content (Gravel, Denis May 2013). Gravel said he speaks about *Enquête*'s stories and discusses the tools that are used to conduct investigations. "It's a win-win for everyone," Gravel said. "The journalists who come out of schools will be more informed than during my time (when I graduated) – it's not a bad idea."

Andrew McIntosh discussed the importance of training young journalists. He said that since he's been hired by Quebecor, he's been around the country giving presentations about proper investigative journalism techniques to journalists who work for Quebecor. He said that a reason why he's pessimistic about the future of investigative journalism

among the English-language publications is due to the break of information transmission between retiring journalists and the new ones entering news organizations. He said young journalists aren't trained properly to do investigative work because there isn't the time or the resources at news organizations to teach young people critical investigative journalism skills. One way that investigative journalism in Montreal can move forward – aside from continuing and sustainable funding levels for investigative units – is teaming up with a third party stakeholder to produce content. Journalist respondents discussed positive and negative benefits of doing so. MA, Denis, Seguin, in particular, were open to the possibility of working with third-parties to produce content, but all warned that what was most important – and essential – was for the collaborators to be people they can trust, and who have truth as their main goal. MA said that they have turned down several collaboration requests by organizations in Montreal – notably by Montreal Ouvert, a group dedicated to lobbying the City of Montreal and other public institutions to make data free and accessible. MA said they couldn't work with such groups because MA questioned their politics, their motives, and MA didn't want to be seen as promoting a particular group's interest (MA 2013).

Aside from collaborations, journalist respondents also discussed the need to keep investigative journalism alive in Montreal. All journalist respondents expressed their desire to see it stay alive, but most didn't offer concrete suggestions about how to do that. Many discussed their concerns about what would happen after the Charbonneau Commission findings faded from headlines or if the economy picks up to an extent where citizens have less interest in holding elites accountable. Many also worried about how

long their bosses would want to keep funding investigative journalism. McIntosh said that fundamentally, investigative journalists are not born, they are created.

You cannot just throw a bunch of people into a room and say ‘Do investigative journalism!’ You need to change the culture, to show your newsroom that investigative journalism is wanted and welcome and it will be supported at the management level. And you need to train people to do it. You identify people who want to do it and you go forward (McIntosh: 2013).

4.4 Investigative journalism stakeholder discussion

Curran (2011) takes the Durkheimian principle of organic solidarity further by suggesting that a developed society is comprised of much more than mainstream media organizations that reinforce and maintain a moral order. Curran writes that one must account for the influence of what he describes as “organized democracy” (Curran 2011, 78). Interest groups, social movements, political parties, and others, play an important role in influencing public opinion by creating their own media, which often play a watchdog role in society. Curran’s argument is the basis for why I chose to interview municipal politicians and others outside the investigative journalistic framework. The data gathered during semi-structured interviews with three municipal politicians from two political parties, as well as a high-level university administrator and a project officer for a major Montreal-based charitable foundation, provided important context for the responses of the investigative journalists.

4.4.1. Politicians and investigative journalism in Montreal

The two elected officials from the left-leaning Projet Montreal political party were more favourable to the assertion that investigative journalism was essential to democracy and to holding public leaders accountable. Both Projet Montreal councilors Alex Norris and PA (name withheld) said that investigative journalism has directly contributed to political reforms necessary for making Montreal more transparent and its leaders more accountable. Norris said that before the surge in investigative reporting in Montreal there was a sort of “lethargy” that had taken over the province’s institutions with regards to fighting corruption. However, he said it was investigative journalists as opposed to whistleblowers who were the key to holding politicians in Quebec accountable.

I think that if anything, the wave of arrests of both political and construction industry figures suggested a certain lethargy on the part of law enforcement agencies. And I think one could argue that were it not for the insistence of certain investigative journalists to pursue certain lines of inquiry, that law enforcement might not have been prodded as they were into finally taking action. I think the role of investigative journalism in the current cases has been critical to the outcome that we are witnessing today (Norris 2013).

Norris said that part of the reason why corruption had taken hold so deeply in Montreal was due to the year-2000 municipal mergers. The newly formed megacity inherited a legacy of opaqueness due to a lack of a culture of investigative journalism in those districts.

When Montreal absorbed the former suburbs of Saint-Léonard and Ville-Saint-Laurent, and Lachine and Lasalle, where the counterweights of civil society – the organs like the press – that you expect to keep watch over the exercise of power were comparatively weaker. That's one reason why we ended up inheriting a more corrupt culture at the highest levels of decision-making (Norris 2013).

PA, another Projet Montreal city councilor, said investigative journalism was “the fourth pillar of democracy” (PA 2013). However, he said that he assumed that his political party was the rightful beneficiary of Montreal’s investigative journalism. He said the work of the city’s journalists should lead to increased political capital for Projet Montreal because he said the former municipal administration was exposed – by investigative journalists – to have been highly corrupt. “We’ve been reading the investigative journalism of Linda Gyulai (at *The Gazette*) and obviously if we make no progress during the election then I’m not going to be happy” (PA 2013). PA, like Norris, said that it is journalists, before anyone else such as politicians or the police, who “get the ball rolling” when it comes to shining light on wrongdoing and other transgressions of society’s moral code.

Chantal Rouleau, a East-Montreal borough mayor who was part of a more right-leaning party, Vision Montreal (and who recently became part of the political party run by former federal Liberal Party cabinet minister, Denis Coderre), was less optimistic about the role played by investigative journalists. Rouleau, who leaked her letter admonishing the former Premier of Quebec Jean Charest to *La Presse*, disagreed that it is investigative journalists who hold politicians accountable. “The elected official is de facto accountable to the public. If the investigative journalist sees something that is not right then it’s more of a reaction” (Rouleau 2013). She, unlike Norris and PA, said that

whistleblowers were as important as journalists during the push to make City Hall more transparent.

(City Hall) was too secret before. We are getting more transparent, it's not easy. But it's true that it was very, very secret. There is something that changed at City Hall (Rouleau 2013).

Rouleau admitted however, that investigative journalists were critical to the push to start reforming politics in Montreal and in Quebec. “Yes, I agree, we would not have had the Charbonneau Commission without investigative journalists” (Rouleau 2013).

4.4.2 Collaborations with universities and foundations

Some journalist respondents that said the future of investigative journalism in Montreal – particularly for the Anglophone media – is through collaborations with foundations and with universities. Journalists such as MA, said that it was important for those who journalists collaborate with to have the same goals as journalists: the search for truth. Linda Kay, former chair of the head of the Department of Journalism at Concordia University in Montreal, said academics and students also have concerns.

Kay said that students have had their school projects broadcasted on television, but have not yet produced work that was destined for news organizations (Kay 2013). However, the CBC has decided to partner with a Concordia journalism class to produce online content. Kay said that these collaborations are new because journalism schools like Concordia are just beginning to think differently about the role that schools could play with regards to their links to media organizations.

We've never had a course like that (which produced investigative journalism for media organizations). We've never had a course that was built around that. We never thought in those terms. We thought: internships, placement of students (Kay 2013).

However, Kay said that the potential for collaborations “is very exciting.” She said that journalism schools are also looking at ways to reform their curriculums in order to produce graduates with the skills necessary to succeed in the changing media landscape. She said that one of those ways is through collaborations: “We are just beginning to make those connections and that’s the future with journalism schools, I think that’s where it’s going to go.”

Kay said that if students were to produce content for news organizations, or engage in a partnership to produce investigative journalism, students would have to be paid – particularly if the organization stood to make money off the content, which they likely would. Having students partner with media institutions would also better prepare students for the job, Kay said, because editors have for years told her that graduating journalism students are not sufficiently competent to work as journalists – at least not right away (Kay 2013). Kay said the editor at the CBC who is coordinating the new partnership between the public broadcaster and Concordia, said that Kay was sending students who didn’t know what the CBC was expecting. “She said you’re sending us students who don’t know what we do. That was shocking” (Kay 2013).

Journalist respondents also discussed the possibilities of working with foundations. That possibility, at least in the short term, is far more difficult in Canada than in the U.S.

for legal reasons, explained Vani Jain, program officer with the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation. She said that in order for journalists to be considered eligible for grants from foundations in Canada their organization must be registered as a charity. Without that charitable designation, organizations cannot receive donations from foundations, unlike in the United States (Jain 2013). Moreover, she said foundations in Canada do not really give money for investigative journalism, but for the results of investigative journalism. Meaning that foundations such as hers would only consider giving money to a group of journalists if they are planning to produce content that would affect the foundation's mission.

We would be looking for a rationale for why investigative journalism is an important piece of addressing an important social issue. Investigative journalism would be the tool – so we wouldn't be viewing our donations as funding investigative journalism, but funding a project that would uncover information that is pertinent to decision-making (Jain 2013).

Jain and Kay helped to provide some context to the journalist responses, but the context is by no means definitive. This case study has not been able to provide a clear, and perfect portrait of the state of investigative journalism in Montreal. However, this thesis did offer a snapshot of an important moment in the history of investigative journalism in Canada, as told by some of the most prominent journalists in the country.

The data collected for this thesis confirms that investigative journalism has been increasing in Montreal since 2009. I am convinced that the increase in investigative journalism also had a significant influence on the desire of Montrealers to be more civically engaged, however, this case study does not have tools with which to measure

that kind of engagement (an issue I explore in the concluding chapter). What is clear is that *La Presse* produced twice as many investigative journalism articles between 2007 and 2012 than did *The Gazette*. Nonetheless, according to journalist respondents and political events in Montreal (see timeline in appendix D), both papers have had significant influence on city governance. The mayors of the largest and third-largest cities resigned in shame as a result of pressure that was placed in part, by the city's investigative journalists.

The structured questionnaire produced comparable and quantifiable data that highlighted some of the differences between journalists who work for Anglophone and Francophone media. However, I revealed that despite the language a journalist works in, all journalist respondents had a deep sense that their work was critical to the proper functioning of Montreal's democracy, and moreover, they also all equally believed that citizens recognized the importance of investigative journalism. The questionnaire revealed that journalists see themselves as public servants and as watchdogs who help to support democracy.

Finally, the semi-structured interview sessions with journalists, municipal politicians and stakeholders produced highly revealing data into the state of investigative journalism in Montreal. Much of the data support a political economy critique. The rise of Radio-Canada's *Enquête* program supported the concept that media that are not driven by profit-maximization – but that are still well-funded – have the ability to take risks on content that can ultimately be of service to citizens. However, it was the competition of Montreal's media market – another aspect of the political economy critique – that forced other for-profit media institutions to replicate the Radio-Canada investigative bureau

model, which ultimately also served society. The semi-structured interviews also revealed cleavages between Anglophone and Francophone media, however, I argue that the data indicates that the differences in investigative journalism output have more to do with resources, money, and a competitive market, as opposed to innate variations in the culture of Francophone and Anglophone newsrooms.

5. Conclusion

The results of this case study were surprising because my initial hypothesis was based on a sense of a North American newspaper industry in decline. I thought that Montreal news organizations would be suffering and incapable of producing a significant amount of investigative reporting. However, what started out as a project mapping the decline of investigative journalism in Montreal turned into a case study documenting its so-called Golden Age. I documented the increase in journalistic production between 2007 and 2012 of two of Montreal's most highly regarded news organizations. Moreover, I collected data that provided a portrait of the reasons why Montreal is witnessing an investigative journalism Golden Age, as told by eight of the most prominent investigative journalists in the city.

The results are important to the ongoing study of journalism because they offer insight into what is needed for a large metropolitan city to maintain and nurture a cadre of professional and dedicated investigative journalists who monitor power and who help to articulate and reinforce a society's moral order and who support its democracy by giving citizens critical hidden information needed for self-governance. However, it is important to note that this case study is a snapshot of a moment in time in a long history of investigative journalism in Montreal. The results of this case study are not exhaustive, but capture the opinions of relevant figures in the investigative journalism environment in Montreal, during a specific period.

Cecil Rosner (2008) writes that investigative journalism is cyclical in nature, and news organizations' ability to produce hard-hitting enterprising reporting ebbs and flows over time. He discussed how there were periods in U.S. and Canadian history where investigative journalism was more prevalent than during other decades, depending on the mood of society and demand by readers, among other factors. Rosner argues that the 1970s was a particularly strong period of investigative journalism in Canada, and I argue that the late 2000s and early 2010s is also a particularly strong cycle of investigative journalism for Canada, most notably for Montreal. All of the journalist respondents for this thesis discussed the cyclical nature of investigative journalism. They all recognized that while the state of enterprise, investigative reporting in Montreal is currently healthy, good times can vanish quickly.

I was not able to provide a clear picture of the state of investigative journalism in Montreal with this case study. The main reason for the lack in clarity, I argue, is that the subject matter – investigative journalism - is subjective and its causes and effects are also contingent on one's point of view. While I clearly established that investigative journalism relating to corruption increased in two newspapers, the reasons for that increase are complex. The reasons for the increase involve a web of factors, and this case study specifically looked at the opinions of journalists, not administrators of media companies, or the CEOs of the conglomerates that owned the news organizations.

Moreover, I only looked at investigative journalism relating to corruption among public officials and institutions – I necessarily left out other subject matters. This thesis cannot provide a clear articulation of the current state of investigative reporting because there isn't one. However, this case study did collect insightful opinions on the causes of

the increase in investigative – related to corruption –and this project will serve as an important resource for researchers in the future, should they want to know what the prominent reporters in Montreal through about the state of their craft in 2013.

What has emerged from my interviews is the sense that it is not only Montreal's investigative journalists who believe that what they do is of critical importance. The success of the city's reporters is due in large part, I argue, to the fact that the owners of media institutions as well as citizens *also* believe it to be true. I have argued in this thesis that journalism and investigative journalism is largely understood in Montreal as a set of practices (Zelizer 2004) that are rooted in the Enlightenment (Rosner 2008) because they see journalists as people who have an adversarial relationship with those in power (Himelboim and Limor 2005) and act as watchdogs (Tuchman 1978). This model is defined as the North Atlantic Liberal Model (Hallin and Mancini 2004) and it appreciates journalists as workers who strive to uncover hidden truths (de Burgh 2000) and who help to represent a shared culture and belief system (Carey 1990).

Through the structured questionnaire and semi-structured interviews, I collected data that indicated how investigative journalists all agreed with the aforementioned scholars. I argue that three themes surfaced out of the data, as reasons why Montreal's news organizations have been undergoing an investigative journalism Golden Age since 2009: the rise of Radio-Canada's *Enquête*, the increase since 2009-8 of whistleblowers willing to come forward with information despite the heavy risk, and finally, market competition as well as organizational culture of the city's media institutions. I argue that all three themes demonstrate that the wider public also believed that Montreal's journalists are critical to society.

First, regarding public media, Marie-Maude Denis, host of *Enquête*, said that she and co-host Alain Gravel, had “tremendous support from our bosses” when they first suggested that more resources should be oriented towards investigative journalism. I argue that the Radio-Canada’s financial model, which is supported primarily with public money, is the main reason why *Enquête* was the first of Montreal’s news organizations to open an investigative bureau. I drew on the scholarship of researchers such as McChesney (1997), Bagdikian (2004), and Baker (2007) to show that public media have more of an incentive compared to for-profit media to produce public service journalism. However, the management of Radio-Canada also believed that not only was it the role of investigative journalists to monitor those in power, but that the risk was worth it. Gravel and Denis said that they, along with the management of Radio-Canada, believed that the public wanted this information.

Second, journalist respondents said that whistleblowers began to come forward towards the end of 2008 and the beginning of 2009. Gravel said that whistleblowers did so because the courts, the police, politicians, and the internal mechanisms in construction companies were unable to affect change and root out corruption (Gravel 2013). However, I argue that whistleblowers wouldn’t have come forward if they hadn’t believed, along with journalists, that the media would be able to effect change. The surge of investigative journalism in Montreal occurred because workers in the police force, in government – municipal and provincial – in labour unions and in construction companies as well as in engineering firms, also strongly believed that investigative journalists exist to hold those in power accountable and that journalists have the ability and the duty to articulate and reinforce a society’s culture an moral order.

Third, Montreal's competitive news market, I argue, reflects the contention among journalists respondents that citizens are hungry for investigative journalism and demand that their city's journalists continue to produce exclusive stories that highlight transgressions in the moral code. The city's competitive news market conforms to the political economy critique that describes how an uncompetitive, concentrated news market undermines democracy (Baker 2007). I demonstrate in this thesis that Montreal's competitive Francophone news market has forced news organizations to spend money on investigative bureaus and compete to produce articles that reveal scandal and wrongdoing. The result has been a surge in investigative reporting that has forced significant political and social reform including the resignation of two big-city mayors, as well as changes in provincial and municipal legislation. Investigative reporting has also forced the creation of a public inquiry into the construction industry, and led to the arrests of major construction millionaires and members of organized crime (See appendix D).

I also argue that the political economy of Montreal's media market accounted for the differences in output between the Anglophone and Francophone media. I have demonstrated in this thesis that the Francophone media have extensive capabilities to produce investigative journalism while the Anglophone media organizations are struggling. I argue that the unfortunate situation of Anglophone media institutions is due to convergence among English-language conglomerate media companies that don't want to invest heavily in the Montreal Anglophone market because of its size and the lack of competition. I did not come across evidence in my research suggesting that Montreal Anglophone journalists believe they should be any less adversarial towards sources than their Francophone counterparts, nor did I get the sense that Anglophone journalists

believed their role to be any less critical to democracy than French-language journalists. In fact, *The Gazette*, which has significantly less staff and resources than *La Presse*, was able – and continues to be able – to produce hard-hitting investigative journalism articles, on issues such as the water-meter scandal. *The Gazette's* capability to do this, I argue, demonstrates, that given the same resources, the city's Anglophone media would be just as competitive as its Francophone media.

I also interviewed politicians and other investigative journalism stakeholders for this thesis. Their interviews helped to contextualize the journalist responses. Municipal politicians agreed with the journalists that Montreal and provincial Quebec politics were in dire straits before 2009: corruption was rampant and the functioning of City Hall was opaque. The three politicians interviewed also agreed that investigative journalism played a critical role in pushing through much-needed reforms at City Hall – including the resignations of two long-serving mayors of the province's largest cities.

The stakeholder interviews provided insight into the fact that journalism students are often not properly trained for the realities of the work requirements at news organizations. Moreover, Canadian regulations make it more difficult than in America for journalists to receive grants and other financial help from charities or foundations because of the corporate structure of news institutions.

5.1 Limitations

This case study was wide-ranging. The benefit is that its triangular approach permitted me to collect both qualitative and quantitative data sets. However, the mixed approach was also limiting in that neither approach was used in-depth. For instance, the quantitative analysis produced objective data that demonstrated an increase in investigative journalism, but it did not go further. The analysis could have extended into the sources used by the journalists. Moreover, the analysis could have systematically collected information about the investigative stories and tabulated which journalists in the city had the most investigative output. The case study also only collected investigative journalism articles related to political corruption – other types of investigative journalism looking at racial politics in Montreal, labour rights, and other issues relating to citizens were not included.

There are several other significant limitations to this thesis. I have only gathered data about Montreal and I did not speak with investigative journalists outside of the city. I did not compare Montreal with other cities in Quebec, nor did I compare my data with cities across the country or across North America.

It is also unclear if the rise in investigative journalism in Montreal was due to the fact that the city is simply more corrupt than other cities in Canada or in North America. I did not have the resources or came across any research that compared Montreal's corruption with that of other large Canadian and North American cities.

Another significant limitation to the study is that I only spoke with investigative journalists in Montreal who are publishing consistently. I did not speak with reporters

who wanted to but could not produce investigative reporting. During my interview with Felix Seguin, for instance, he said that a reporter at a small circulation newspaper outside of Montreal gave him a tip about the possible corruption of a local politician. Seguin said the reporter was unable to report on the story because the reporter's bosses wouldn't let him – the editors of the small-circulation paper feared retribution.

Another limitation in this thesis is the fact that we do not have a full accounting of the consequences of the increase in investigative journalism. This thesis established only that journalistic output had increased and those responsible for the increase – including journalism stakeholders – believe that journalism had a direct impact on Montreal politics. However, this thesis has not proven that the increase in investigative journalism was directly related to the mayors of Montreal and Laval resigning, or to the creation of the Charbonneau Commission, or to the arrests of major figures in the political and business circles in the province. Moreover, none of the big names arrested have been convicted. By the end of 2013, none of the trials have begun for any of the arrests that are described in the timeline of this thesis (see appendix D). It is also unclear if an investigative journalism has lead to more engagement by Montreal's citizenry.

Despite these limitations, I argue that Alain Gravel was correct when he said that Montrealers are witnessing a "Golden Age" of investigative journalism in their city. While media organizations across North America suffer serious financial setbacks, cutting staff and losing readership, Montrealers are well-served by their investigative journalists.

5.2. Suggestions for further research

While I argue that Montreal is privileged to have a healthy cadre of investigative journalists able to hold politicians accountable, the environment they work in is fragile. The three themes that emerged during my interviews with investigative journalists as to why investigative journalism has increased, are not a given – far from it.

Radio-Canada is a well-funded public broadcaster that has been able to finance the costly venture that is enterprise reporting, however, the institution is constantly threatened, particularly by the current federal government as well as the corporation's rivals. Aside from the budget cuts previously mentioned in this thesis, the Conservatives tabled legislation (Bill C-60) in 2013, which would give the government the right to approve salaries and other benefits of CBC employee (Naumetz 2013). The move drew criticism that the government was attempting to interfere with the administration of the CBC and place party-friendly people on the corporation's board of directors (Huffington Post 2013). Further research should look into the future ability of the country's public broadcaster to maintain its current role of supporting investigative journalism.

The rise of whistleblowers in Quebec since late 2008 has been critical to the increase in investigative journalism, according to journalist respondents, but that could change if government – provincial or federal – begins to place more restrictions on the rights of whistleblowers. Any future research on investigative journalism in Canada should include current whistleblower legislation and an analysis of whether or not there are any attempts to make it more difficult for citizens to leak information to journalists.

Market competition is the third factor that has propelled Montreal's investigative journalism environment. However, mergers and acquisitions in the city's media market are not that difficult to envision. The media industry is currently in flux, particularly for newspapers, a topic discussed in the literature review, and if print copy continues to migrate to the web without a corresponding increase in advertising revenue, then the strength of Montreal's four, paid, daily circulation newspapers will continue to be at risk. A deeper look into the political economy of Montreal's media market could also provide important insight into the future ability of journalists to produce investigations.

Journalist respondents also discussed the future of investigative journalism as it related to new media. One of the biggest Canadian news events of 2013 was the introduction of *La Presse*'s news application for tablets, a \$40 million project that took over two years to research and complete (Ladurantaye 2013). The tablet application is updated once a day in the morning, and its journalists work separately from the newspaper and website staff (Ibid). The president and publisher of *La Presse* said the tablet, which is free and includes interactive advertising, is a "complete reinvention" of the company's business model (Ibid). Moreover, the publisher said that giving away the app was necessary because the phenomenon of young people assuming that news will be free is "irreversible" (Ibid). Important questions arise regarding the application's future ability to be able to fund investigative reporting if the tablet eventually replaces the company's newspaper edition. And if the *La Presse* free tablet model is the future of journalism, future research should study how the new presentation and funding model will affect the production of investigative reporting.

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Appendix A: Main mainstream print and television media offerings:

Daily paid circulation newspapers:

The Gazette

Owner: Postmedia Network Inc.

Circulation: 683,000 weekly

Postmedia owns most of the largest-circulation dailies in Canada, and while a public company, it doesn't provide the revenues for individual papers. Rather, the numbers in its annual disclosures are for the company as a whole. Postmedia is drowning in debt, which at the end of fiscal 2012 stood at over \$810 million. The increases in digital advertising revenues have not kept pace with the decreases in print advertising revenues, which decreased the total value of the company (shareholder equity) by over \$81 million between fiscal 2011 and fiscal 2012, to \$233.4 million. (Postmedia: 2012) In 2012, Postmedia introduced a pay wall for several of its news websites, including the site for *The Gazette*.

La Presse

Owner: Gesca Inc., (wholly-owned subsidiary of Power Corporation of Canada)

Circulation: 1,363,000 weekly

Gesca owns seven newspapers in the provinces of Ontario and Quebec. Like Postmedia, Gesca's parent company, Power Corp., does not provide the public with a breakdown of the cost structure of its subsidiaries. Power Corp collected revenue at the end of fiscal 2012 of almost \$33 billion and the total equity of the company was over \$25 billion. The company has about \$245 million in liabilities. It's a massive global firm that has ownership stakes in other multinationals including insurance and investment firms, as well as international water treatment companies. (Power Corp. 2012) While specific financial details of the publishing arm of the company aren't made public, Gesca Inc. has made significant investments in 2013 regarding its digital offering of *La Presse*. The newspaper spent \$40 million over the last three years and hired 100 people to launch a digital, tablet-based version of the newspapers – and made it free for consumers. (Ladurante 2013)

Le Journal de Montreal

Owner: Quebecor Inc.

Circulation: 2,014,000 weekly

The Journal de Montreal is Quebec's largest paid circulation daily and is owned by Quebecor Media Inc., the communications branch of Quebecor Inc., the parent company, which is a telecommunications giant, with assets primarily in Quebec. Quebecor owns companies that provide cell phone and landline services as well as cable TV and Internet. Quebecor has stakes in magazines, newspapers, newsletters and book publishing, and owns popular news and entertainment television channels. Quebecor does not publicize the financial structure and revenues of all its properties, including the

Journal. Its newspaper business announced in late 2012 that it was planning to cut \$45 million from its annual budget. This has translated into layoffs in many of its newsrooms across the country. The company listed in its 2012 annual report that its newsmedia revenues decline almost 6% between 2011 and 2012. However, the company as a whole is profitable, due mainly to its telecommunications branch. Quebecor Inc., made \$4.3 billion in 2012, up 3.5% from the previous year, which including a profit of over \$200 million (Quebecor: 2013).

Le Devoir

Owner: Privately owned.

Circulation: 208,000 weekly

Le Devoir is the only independently owned paid-circulation daily newspaper in Quebec. It is a private company and does not publicize many details of its financial structure or figures. The company states that it made a profit of \$1.2 million in 2010, which are the latest public financial figures for the company.

*Circulation figures from Newspapers Canada, 2012, newspaperscanada.ca

Main television stations offering news:

TVA

Owner: Quebecor Inc.

The TVA television network is owned by TVA Group, a subsidiary of Quebecor Inc. TVA Group owns several local TV stations across Quebec. TVA Group also has a 49% stake in the English-language 24-hour news network, Sun News Network (the other percentage owned by Sun Media corp., which is also owned by Quebecor Inc.) TVA Group also owns the all-news French language station LCN, and the all-sports station, TVA Sports. TVA Publications, also owned by TVA Group, publishes more than 75 magazines. Quebecor's broadcasting operations had revenues of \$461 million in 2012, an increase over the previous year of \$15.6 million. TVA and its all news channel, LCN, is the main televised conduit for the investigative reporting of Quebecor's investigative bureau (Quebecor 2012).

Radio-Canada/CBC

Owner: Crown Corporation

The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and its French-language arm have annual revenues of roughly \$1.8 billion. \$1.2 billion comes from government funding. The rest of the funding comes from advertising (20%) and what is listed as "other funding" (7%). Both branches of the CBC provide Canadians with content on several platforms including radio, television and online. The CBC owns 27 television stations and 82 radio stations across the country. CBC-Radio-Canada lists \$153 million (debt) that is sold in what it called "long-term receivables" which the corporation says helps to pay for budget

shortfalls due to the late-2000s recession. The operating expenses of the CBC are larger (\$877 million) compared to the French branch (\$600 million). The corporation wrote in its most recent annual report that the Canadian government has been decreasing its funding for the public broadcaster, and stated that further cuts “may affect future funding.” Radio-Canada’s Enquête program, acts as the “investigative bureau” for both linguistic sides of the company, and its reporting is re-packaged for use on all of the corporation’s platforms such as radio, TV, and web (CBC-Radio-Canada 2012).

CTV news channel

Owner: Bell Canada Enterprises

BCE is a telecommunications giant, the largest of its kind in the country. Aside from its cell phone, Internet, cable and landline offering, BCE also controls radio stations, television networks and online content that the company claims reaches 92% of Canadians. BCE also claims to operate the largest Wi-Fi network in Canada. BCE stated in its 2012 annual report that it made \$3.1 billion in profit from revenues of just under \$20 billion. The company also lists its long-term debt at about \$13.9 billion. CTV’s presence in Montreal is limited to a local affiliate and the station does not have an investigative bureau (BCE: 2012).

Appendix B: Interview Respondents

Journalists:

Andrew McIntosh: Head of investigations for QMI Agency
Jean-Louis Fortin: Member of investigations desk, QMI Agency
Felix Seguin: Member of investigations desk, QMI Agency

Alain Gravel: Host, *Enquête*, Radio-Canada

Marie-Maude Denis: Host, *Enquête*, Radio-Canada

William Marsden: Washington Bureau Chief, Postmedia Network, Inc.

Vincent Larouche: Member of investigations desk, *La Presse*

MA: English-language Montreal print journalist (name withheld at the request of respondent)

Municipal Politicians:

Alex Norris: City Councillor, Le Plateau-Mont-Royal, member of Project Montreal.

PA: City Councillor, member of Projet Montreal (name withheld at the request of respondent)

Chantal Rouleau: Mayor of Pointe-Aux-Trembles, member of Equipe Denis Coderre

Stakeholders:

Linda Kay: Chair of Department of Journalism, Concordia University

Vani Jain: Project Officer, J.W. McConnell Family Foundation

Appendix C Sample questionnaire and results table

Investigative journalism in Montreal

Please circle the number that best corresponds to your opinion. The number one equals “I completely agree,” number three means you are “neutral” and number five equals “I completely disagree.”

Investigative journalism is an essential tool for democracy because it holds elected officials accountable. 1 2 3 4 5

In general, I feel that Montreal’s investigative journalists sufficiently inform the public about the work of elected officials. 1 2 3 4 5

In general, investigative journalists in Montreal are able to sufficiently monitor the actions of elected municipal and provincial officials. 1 2 3 4 5

Montrealers are better served by investigative journalism than are citizens of other large Canadian cities. 1 2 3 4 5

Investigative journalism is a priority for my new organization. 1 2 3 4 5

I am satisfied with the amount of investigative reporting that my news organization is producing on an ongoing basis. 1 2 3 4 5

The audience of my news organizations seeks investigative journalism stories. 1 2 3 4 5

The audience of my news organization recognizes the importance of investigative journalism to the proper functioning of democracy. 1 2 3 4 5

My news organization has had financial cutbacks which have significantly affected its ability to produce investigative journalism. 1 2 3 4 5

I am given sufficient time and resources by my news organization in order to produce investigative journalism. 1 2 3 4 5

I have the full support of my news organization to conduct a full investigation into any subject of my choosing. 1 2 3 4 5

The Internet and the overall digitization of news production and dissemination have had a net positive effect on investigative journalism. 1 2 3 4 5

My news organization, to my knowledge, is looking for new and creative ways to produce investigative journalism. 1 2 3 4 5

My news organization is seeking to (or does) team up with foundations and universities in order to pool resources and money to produce investigative journalism. 1 2 3 4 5

My news organization encourages me to learn new tools (computer-assisted reporting, crowd sourcing – other social media techniques) to produce investigative journalism. 1 2 3 4 5

I am optimistic about the future of investigative journalism in Montreal. 1 2 3 4 5

The structure of my news organization allows for it to have a sustainable future for investigative reporting. 1 2 3 4 5

The current structure of corporate news organizations in Montreal will engender sustainable investigative reporting in the future. 1 2 3 4 5

Student media, alternative media, and other smaller, independent media are able to compete with my news organization with regards to producing investigative journalism. 1 2 3 4 5

Questionnaire responses*

1 = Strongly agree

2 = Agree

3 = Neutral

4 = Disagree

5 = Strongly disagree

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9
1	8	1	1	2	6	3	8	6	1
2	0	4	3	4	1	3	0	2	3
3	0	2	3	2	0	1	0	0	0
4	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	0
5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4

	Q10	Q11	Q12	Q13	Q14	Q15	Q16	Q17	Q18	Q19
1	4	4	2	6	1	4	2	2	0	0
2	2	2	2	1	0	2	3	4	2	2
3	1	1	3	1	1	1	2	0	2	0
4	1	1	0	0	2	1	1	1	3	3
5	0	0	1	0	4	0	0	1	1	3

*The numbers in bold represent the choices respondents could have circled, on the questionnaire. The numbers under the Q1 through Q19, indicate the number of journalist respondents who chose the corresponding answer.

Appendix D: Investigative reports and major political events in Montreal

This thesis does not draw a direct relationship between investigative journalism and civic engagement, nor does it claim to be able to measure the direct consequences on municipal politics of investigative reporting – if there are any. However, while the effects of investigative journalism might not be able to be measured – at least not with the tools used for this thesis – respondents for this thesis said that investigating reporting has had consequences. Moreover, significant political events have occurred in Montreal and in Quebec, relating to information that was first brought to the attention of the public through investigative journalists. The following timeline offers a picture of the significant investigative journalism stories published and broadcasted since 2008 along with the major political events that have occurred during the same period.

Sept. 19, 2008. *La Presse*

The ties between organized crime and the construction industry are laid bare in article by Andre Noel and Andre Cedilot. The article is one of the first times that the Rizzuto crime family is tied to construction entrepreneur Frank Catania. The information provided in this article was only years later confirmed during testimony at Quebec's construction inquiry (Noel and Cedilot 2008).

Nov. 12, 2008. *La Presse*

Andre Noel reports that the publicly owned real-estate arm of the City of Montreal sold a large property to a company tied to entrepreneur Frank Catania. The property was sold for significantly less than at which it was valued (Noel 2008).

Nov. 13, 2008. *The Gazette*

Linda Gyulai reports that the City of Montreal secretly sold off the assets of its real estate company (assets worth \$300 million) to private firms. In subsequent articles, Gyulai described that the city did not choose the highest offer when making the decision of which company was to be awarded the assets (Gyulai 2008).

Oct. 17, 2008. *La Presse*

Andre Cedilot profiled the Rizzuto clan, led by Nicolo, the embattled patriarch of the Rizzuto crime family. Cedilot described how organized crime in Montreal used its contracts and influence to mediate between construction companies during disputes (Cedilot 2008).

Dec. 13, 2008. *La Presse*

The newspaper's investigation reveals that the reported cost of decontaminating a piece of city-owned land in east Montreal was exaggerated, and which allowed entrepreneurs Frank and Paolo Catania to buy it cheaply from the City of Montreal. The piece of land is called the Faubourg Contrecoeur (Noel 2008).

March 5, 2009. *Enquête*

Jocelyn Dupuis, the former head of one of Quebec's largest construction unions, is discovered to have expensed thousands of dollars in restaurants and alcohol bills. The

union accepted all the expenses. Readers learn that Dupuis had ties to a known high-level organized crime (Rizzuto) associate, Raynald Desjardins (Radio-Canada 2009).

June 15, 2009. *La Presse*

Andre Noel reports that the provincial police are investigating a claim by construction entrepreneur Paul Sauve that he was asked by organized crime members to pay \$40,000 after he received a contract to repair the roof of Montreal's City Hall building. Noel reports that his sources stated that the money was supposed to be headed towards two unknown people close to the mayor, Gerald Tremblay (Noel 2009).

July 10, 2009. *The Gazette*

A Linda Gyulai investigation revealed that the City of Montreal would receive far less savings from a \$355 million water-meter contract than the city claimed it would receive (Gyulai 2009).

Sept. 11, 2009. *La Presse*

La Presse discovers that the mayor of Montreal will ask the province to create a permanent police unit to investigate financial crimes and other corruption. A week prior, the City Hall opposition Leader Benoit Labonte asked that Quebec create a permanent anti-corruption force (Champagne 2009).

Sept. 22, 2009.

Montreal Mayor Gerald Tremblay cancels \$355 million water meter contract after auditor general releases scathing report describing the irregularities regarding how the contract was awarded. He had asked that the city's auditor general investigating the water meter contract after investigative reports questioned the integrity of the contract and after Frank Zampino, president of the Mayor's executive committee, admitted to vacationing on the yacht belonging to Tony Accurso, who was bidding for the water meter contract, and who won the contract (Gyulai 2009).

Oct. 16, 2009. *Enquête*

Enquête journalists report that they received an audio recording of construction entrepreneur Lino Zambito suggesting to elected officials to collude together to ensure that Zambito's candidate for mayor runs unopposed in the upcoming municipal elections of a Montreal suburb (Enquête 2009).

Oct. 22, 2009.

Quebec government creates the "Hammer Squad," the main goal of which is to fight corruption and collusion in the construction industry. The move followed continue revelations by investigative journalists that there is widespread corruption and organized crime infiltration inside the province's construction world (Touzin 2009).

Oct. 22, 2009. *CBC-Radio-Canada*

Montreal opposition leader Benoit Labonte admits to taking donation money from entrepreneur Tony Accurso. He tells the CBC that Montreal City Hall is run by a "mafia-

like” system. He resigned from office a few days prior to the surfacing of the allegations against him (Noel 2009).

Feb. 18, 2011.

The creation of the UPAC, the permanent, anti-corruption squad that regroups and coordinates former corruption units (such as the Hammer squad) into a larger, more unified police structure with the goal to investigate corruption within the various levels of government in Quebec as well as the business sectors (Noel 2011).

Sept. 17, 2011. *Enquête*

Marie-Maude Denis received a leaked copy of the anti-collusion squad’s report on the construction industry. The report provided a scathing analysis regarding the corrupt practices of the construction industry and its ties to the financing of political parties. Author of the report, Jacques Duchesneau, admits in June 2012 during his testimony at the Charbonneau Commission, that he leaked the report himself, because he feared that its conclusions would be ignored by the Liberal provincial government (Enquête 2011).

Sept. 23, 2011. *La Presse*

An unnamed member of the provincial police who is “well-connected” according to *La Presse*, writes a letter to the newspaper claiming that SQ officers want the provincial government to create a public inquiry in corruption into the construction industry, something the government has consistently refused to do (De Pierrebourg and Noel 2011).

Oct. 6, 2011. *The Gazette*

Despite having an official registry of over 12,500 suppliers, the City of Montreal has awarded nearly one quarter of city contracts to 10 firms over a five-year period, Linda Gyulai reported. Companies tied to construction magnate Tony Accurso gained the most contracts over that period, with a total of \$270.7 million since 2006 (Gyulai).

OCT. 19. 2011.

Quebec Premier Jean Charest said that he has read the Duchesneau report and after years of stalling, said he will create a public inquiry into the construction industry (Journet and Lessard 2011).

NOV. 9, 2011.

After heaps of public, media, and political pressure, Charest announces he will give the inquiry full powers to subpoena witnesses and officially enacts the inquiry on this date (Dutrisac).

Oct. 11, 2011. *La Presse*

La Presse receives a copy of a letter that the mayor of an east-end borough wrote to Quebec Premier Jean Charest. In her letter, Chantal Rouleau said that she is helpless from giving contracts to corruption businessmen because of current provincial legislation. She adds her voice to the chorus of prominent Quebecers demanding the government follow

through with its promise to create a public inquiry into the construction industry (Rouleau).

Oct. 23, 2012. *The Gazette*

Linda Gyulai revealed that more than two-thirds of the contributors to the political party of the mayor of Laval, Gilles Vaillancourt, either receive municipal contracts or provide other services to the city, which is located across the north river from Montreal (Gyulai 2012).

April 17, 2012.

Construction magnate Tony Accurso is arrested and charged with fraud. Thirteen other people are arrested on this date, and police lay 47 charges in total (Peritz and Leblanc).

May 18, 2012.

The police's "Hammer Squad" arrests nine people in connection with the alleged fraud at the Faubourg Contrecoeur, including the former president of the city's executive committee, Frank Zampino, as well as Paolo Catania, and Bernard Trepanier, the man formerly responsible for the finances of ex-mayor Gerald Tremblay's political party (Noel 2012).

Nov. 5, 2012.

Montreal Mayor Gerald Tremblay resigns from office after a witness at Charbonneau Commission said the mayor knew that his political party was illegally financed (Woods 2012).

Nov. 9, 2012.

Gilles Vaillancourt, mayor of Laval, Quebec's third most populated city, resigns from office amid corruption allegations (Montgomery 2012).

May 9, 2013.

Gilles Vaillancourt is arrested by UPAC and is charged with fraud and gangsterism. Police allege he orchestrated a complex kickback scheme for anyone who wanted to do business with Laval City Hall. (Perreux and Peritz 2013)

June 17, 2013

Michael Applebaum, Montreal's interim mayor, is arrested for fraud and conspiracy. The charges related to a land deal in the city borough of which he used to be mayor (Panetta and Blatchford 2013).

Appendix E: Codebook for content analysis

Investigative journalism content analysis in *The Gazette* and *La Presse*, between Jan 1, 2007 and Dec. 31, 2012.

The coding for this thesis was quite simple and did not include the use of coding software. I counted the number of codable articles in each newspaper. No other figures were coded. I included a content analysis as part of my thesis so that I could get a general sense of whether investigative journalism was increasing in Montreal. To do this, I decided to code only for investigative journalism articles that focused on corruption. The content analysis did not provide a complete picture of the state of investigative journalism in Montreal, but it did, however, provide a measurable foundation of data that could be used to contextualize the responses of the eight investigative journalist respondents.

Which articles must be coded:

All news and feature articles in the A section of the two newspapers must be coded. Only include articles from this section. Do not code for columns, editorials, op-eds or other opinions pieces.

All articles must be minimum 300 words.

For both newspapers, use the three layers of search formulas (outlined in the methodology section) with the appropriate search engine (also outlined in the methodology section of this thesis).

Characteristics of articles to be coded:

Code for investigative journalism articles that were enterprising and related to corruption of public officials or public institutions.

The definition of investigative journalism and corruption is outlined in methodology and literature review sections of this thesis.

An enterprising article is defined as an article written by one or more journalists and that includes *new* information on a subject relating to corruption. The new information must have come from the initiative of the journalists(s), meaning the information was not distributed through a news conference or other public announcement. The new information in the article may have come from a tip from a whistleblower or another named or anonymous source. The new information may be about an issue that had previously not been reported, or it may advance a story that had already been uncovered and had already been widely reported in various media.