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Canada

Agency and Structure in Cultural Production:
A Case Study of News Work at Canada's CBC Newsworld.

David Hogarth

A Thesis

in

The Department of
Communication Studies

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at
Concordia University
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ABSTRACT

Agency and Structure in Cultural Production: A Case Study of News Work at Canada's CBC Newsworld

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News and current affairs work at the Canadian all-news television service CBC Newsworld is used as a case study of agency and structure in cultural production. Drawing on participant-observation work at Canada's all-news television service, and on secondary research outside the field of news sociology concerning the nature of cultural practice, a theory of journalism as "cultural agency" is developed in which the structural conditions of news work are seen to both mediate and emerge from the daily activities of news workers. News work is thus seen to truly generate culture in a recursive sense. This view of news work is argued to be significant both as a social theory: as an alternative model of cultural practice; and as a potential intervention in the production process: as a way to begin thinking about changing the way news is produced.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION: SOCIOLOGICAL THEORIES OF NEWS WORK

1. Theories of Social Control: the Functionalist Model
 - Social Control in Canadian News Organizations
 - Functionalist Theories of Journalistic Practice
2. Constructivist Theories of News Production
 - Goffman: News as an Interactive Production
 - Tuchman: News as Frame
 - Hall: News as Code
3. News Work as Structurated Agency: an Alternative Approach
4. Methodology

CHAPTER 2

ALL-NEWS TELEVISION SERVICE IN NORTH AMERICA: INSTITUTIONAL FOUNDATIONS

1. All-News Television Service in the United States
2. All-news Television Service in Canada: Licensing; Promises of Performance

CHAPTER 3

INTERNAL SOCIAL CONTROL AT CBC NEWSWORLD

1. Organizational Control at CBC Newsworld: the Relationship with the CBC
2. Internal Control: Supervision of All-News Television Production

3. Internal Social Control: Documentation of All-News
Television Production

CHAPTER 4

PROFESSIONAL CONTROL

1. Autonomy in the Newsroom
2. Practical Knowledge in the Newsroom
 - Production Week at "The Week Starts Here"
 - Informal Talk
 - Routines and Practical Knowledge
3. News Workers' Understanding of the Institutional
Dimensions of Their Work

CHAPTER 5

NEWS WORK AS CULTURAL AGENCY

1. Journalistic Views of Effective News Work
 - Case 1: The Toronto Transit Strike Story
 - Case 2: Constitutional Coverage, 1989-1991
 - Case 3: The Chatham Flood Story
2. Sociological Reframing: Constructivist Views of Effective
News Work
3. News Work as Cultural Agency

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

APPENDIX

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Chapter 1

Introduction: Sociological Theories of News Work

In this thesis, I want to question a virtual article of faith in news sociology: the notion that the daily activities of news workers are somehow peripheral to the real business of making news. News work is an essentially uninteresting phenomenon in news sociology. In the discussion that follows, I want to offer a critical appraisal of current sociological theories of journalistic practice and then develop an alternative model of news work as agency: as a social practice which generates and sustains culture. Using cable news work at Canada's CBC Newsworld service as a case study, I want to argue that news work is a practice which really matters in cultural production.

The "sociological approach" to news production which I call into question here can be summarized as follows. Briefly, functionalist studies of news work by Breed (1955), Gieber (1956), Sigelman (1974) and others suggest that news work is a fundamentally constrained activity - an ongoing response to given institutional variables which come into play during the news production process. Functionalist authors have recognized that constraints alone cannot produce news and have, over the years, developed a set of key institutional variables - such as professional and

organizational norms - which effectively double as both limiting factors and positive motivational forces. In the functionalist model, institutional structures of news production effectively overwhelm the daily activities of working journalists, leaving news work grounded as a dependent and lifeless variable.

What I call constructivism refers to a somewhat more eclectic body of work - including symbolic interactionist studies by Goffman (1959; 1961; 1963; 1969; 1974; 1981; and 1983), Silverstone (1985) and Tuchman (1972; 1973; 1978; and 1983) and the cultural studies work of Hall (1973; 1978; 1979; 1980) and Connell (1981) and, in North America, Gitlin (1980) and Ericson (1987; 1989). These studies, varied as they are, agree that news work is a positive social accomplishment mediated by social codes, frames or discourses. Rejecting linear models of communication, most of this work has avoided the more obvious agent-structure dualisms implicit in functionalist news sociology; and it is these insights I wish to draw upon in my case study of cable news work at Canada's CBC Newsworld service.

But I will argue that neither a functional theory of motivational impulses nor, on the other hand, a theory of code, frame or discourse-governed creativity holds up as a credible, substantive theory of journalistic practice. What is missing from news sociology is an account of the

knowledge and skill necessary to produce a daily news package within an institutional environment. Journalistic competence is a side issue in most studies of news production. It is the focus of this dissertation.

My argument will proceed as follows. In chapter 1, I will critically appraise some of the classic sociological studies of social control in the newsroom, and some constructivist accounts of the autonomy or relative autonomy of journalistic practice. In the second half of the chapter, I will suggest an alternative model of news as structured agency in which institutionalized rules and resources can be seen as both the medium and outcome of the daily activities of working journalists.

In the remainder of the thesis, I seek to establish the links between agency and structure in Canadian cable news work. Chapter 2 is essentially an institutional history of cable news production in North America, in which I conceive of North American all-news television practices and the Canadian broadcasting system as *structural mediations*: sets of rules and resources which govern what can and cannot be said on the Canadian news channel. Chapters 3 to 5 of the dissertation focus on all-news television production practices in Canada today and the way they operate in conjunction with this institutionalized broadcast structure. Chapter 3 is concerned with what I call

internal social control mechanisms - the means by which institutionalized rules and resources come to mediate production activities in specific organizational settings. Chapter 4 focuses on "professional control mechanisms", the means by which news work is managed and controlled by news workers themselves. The fifth chapter of the thesis examines news workers' own notions of being able to make a difference in the production process and explores on-the-job definitions of good and bad cable news work. The final chapter, takes a last critical look at sociological theories of news work in light of journalists' own self-understandings, and in light of the concepts developed in this paper. I conclude by considering the importance of this work for mass communication research and theories concerning the production of culture.

The field research for this paper was conducted from 1989 to 1991. My initial focus was on "The Week Starts Here", a weekly news and current affairs digest produced by the Ottawa bureau of CBC Newsworld for national broadcast on Sunday mornings. I chose the program as a research site partly for convenience (Ottawa is a two hour drive from Montreal where I live), partly because of its apparent suitability for my research problematic: I wanted to examine whether and in what sense news work still mattered in a constrained production setting and Newsworld, as a production setting, seemed to be constrained (see section 2

of this chapter for the sociological definition of constraint in news production; see section 7 for my own list of the production constraints at the service).

With this research problematic in mind, I began sitting in at "The Week Starts Here" 3 days a week, 6 hours a day, from October to December 1989, observing as closely as possible the selection and preparation of current affairs items, production meetings and on-air broadcasts. In the Fall of 1990, I began a second round of interviews with staff and senior management at New world and the American CNN network concerning strategies of public affairs coverage at all-news television services, (this for a report I submitted with Bill Gilsdorf to Canada's Royal Commission on Electoral Reform; Hogarth and Gilsdorf, 1991). In September, 1991 I conducted a final study of production at the Halifax-based "CBC Morning News", broadcast nationally at 7 a.m. - 9 a.m. local times on the CBC's main channel and at 6 a.m. to noon local times on the Newworld network. Through field observations and interviews, with staff and management, at a variety of locations I was thus able to examine both the daily interaction contexts and institutional foundations of cable news production since its establishment in Canada in 1989.

That was no mean feat. Gaining regular access to news organizations has been historically problematic for news

sociologists. They have found news workers to be busy, creative and generally wary of social theory projects. CBC Newsworld presented some particular difficulties in this respect. The all-news service was somewhat sensitive about publicity because of its ongoing scrutiny by a variety of institutions such as the parent CBC network, employee unions such as NABET and the Canadian Wire Services Guild, the Canadian Auditor General's office and the Canadian Radio-television Telecommunications Commission (discussed in chapter 2 of this dissertation).

Corporate politics presented further difficulties. Declining advertising revenues, lower-than-expected cable subscription rates and cutbacks at the CBC forced the all-news service to lay off 6 journalists and cut 4 hours of original programming in 1991; "The Week Starts Here" itself was reduced to a 2 hour show from its original 3 1/2 hour format (Globe and Mail, April 4, 1991, p. C1). I will have more to say about these research conditions and the methodology of this paper towards the end of this chapter. But for now suffice it to say that I am grateful to the staff of the "Week Starts Here" and the "CBC Morning News" and others at Newsworld and the CBC who took the time to patiently explain their activities in the face of this institutional strain.

1. Theories of Social Control: the Functionalist Model

I begin this discussion with a critical assessment of the more important sociological accounts of how news is made, focusing on the status of journalistic practice in these models. Organizational, ethnomethodological and cultural studies models all offer some account of how news is produced on a daily basis in relation to a structured or functional environment. The relationship between agency and structure is perhaps most clearcut in the functionalist model of "social control" in the newsroom and it is to that model which I now turn.

Social control has long been a central theme in functionalist news sociology. Functionalist studies have recognized that production takes place within organizations, that functioning organizations require some degree of conformity from their producers, and that this conformity is not automatic. Social control theories represent one attempt by news sociologists to reconcile journalistic practice with organizational needs.

Warren Breed's "Social Control in the Newsroom" (1957) is a particularly enterprising and influential study of this question which is perhaps worth reviewing in some detail. Breed's functional problematic is that:

how is policy maintained even when it conflicts with the norms of journalistic practice? Breed's three key variables--norms, roles, and policy--have by now become familiar in the organizational literature. Professional norms may be technical--concerned with the "efficient production of news"--or ethical--representing the newsman's obligation to his readers and his craft (eg. accuracy, impartiality, fairness; *ibid.*, p. 327). These ethical norms frequently conflict with organizational norms and policies. "Policy" is defined as the "more or less consistent orientation" of the media organization concerning its selection and presentation of issues and events (*ibid.*, p. 327).

Breed's newsmen are organizational men (there are no women respondents in his study). They seek the status the newsroom offers. They are guided by its punitive and positive sanctions (eg. its opportunities for mobility, "ingroupness", etc.). And they are discouraged from reflecting critically on organizational policy because of the sheer rush of events in the newsroom. Conformity, Breed stresses, is strongly motivated by needs and dispositions but it may not always be deliberate. Policy is a latent force in the newsroom. It transcends rational scrutiny; it is often "not manifest to those who follow it" (*ibid.*, p. 329) and is, therefore, rarely openly contested. Breed makes it clear

that many journalists do have formal resources, such as personal status and sources of information with which to resist the organization's policy line be they so motivated. Generally, however, they are not. Socialization in the newsroom tends to be a largely unproblematic process in which workers "absorb" or "discover and internalize" the organization's norms through formal and informal channels.

The "norm", then, is the key means by which individual and organizational needs are reconciled. Breed typically conceives of the norm as an element of an individual's personality and as a basic constituent of the functioning news organization. As internalized in the personality, norms provide the motives for the conduct and practice of the working journalist. As situated in the institution they form a sort of atmospheric moral consensus. Thus, social control is achieved through a happy conjunction of these psychological and social determinants. This theme is frequently picked up in later studies of newsroom order. Sigelman states it quite nicely in his 1974 study of "selective self-recruitment" in the newsroom: norms "establish in the employee himself attitudes, habits and states of mind leading him to reach that decision which is advantageous to the organization" (Sigelman, 1974, p. 136).

Of course the problem of social order may not be so easily resolved as all that--as Breed himself seems to have recognized. Control for Breed remains an administered "achievement" and he has been criticized by later organizational theorists for his concern with normative dysfunctions in the newsroom and the fragility of the social order. Since Breed, organizational theorists have focused instead on consensual forces at work in the newsroom. This focus is particularly evident in more recent uses of "role and policy" as control variables.

Functional models of news organizations have allowed for two types of "role strain". Tension may arise between an actor's behavioral needs and the normative prescriptions of his job (Gieber, 1956; Sigal, 1973; 1974). Or the multiple roles taken up by an actor may themselves come into conflict. Gieber and Johnston, for instance, discuss how newsroom beats impose conflicting roles on journalists (Gieber and Johnston, 1961). Tunstall and Johnstone have similarly examined the tensions between news gathering and news processing roles (Tunstall, 1972; Johnstone, 1976). Janowicz sees "neutral" and "participatory" conceptions of journalism as offering newswriters two conflicting roles in their craft (Janowicz, 1975). Role

conflicts thus take place either between given roles and individuals' psychological dispositions or amongst the given roles themselves.

The organizational environment supplies the roles to which the journalist adapts as best she or he can. The bureaucratic structure, as Judd puts it, "imposes roles on the reporter who responds and reacts to its controls" (Judd, 1961, p. 37). The choice of reaction and response includes accommodation, rebellion or schizoid dissociation (ibid.). Recent non-functionalist organizational studies have suggested in fact that the contestation of role prescriptions is a characteristic feature of power struggles in organizations (Crozier, 1974; Giddens, 1984). Basic normative conflict is, however, almost entirely absent from traditional organizational models of the newsroom.

The traditional concept of "policy" is even more problematic in this respect. For Breed, as we have seen, policy is a stable consensually constituted set of organizational norms and in most models of the news organization it functions as a clear and pervasive source of social control. Sigelman typically offers a case study of a newsroom with "clear and stable editorial traditions" known, as he puts it, "all over Southeast City and the whole state"

Sigelman, p. 134). Via such control mechanisms as self-recruitment and on-the-job socialization, policy is able to govern both the production rhythms and the "bias" of the newspaper. Thus is achieved an efficient production schedule and a coherent organizational line.

However, the organizational literature offers few credible accounts of how policy is actually generated and sustained in practice. At best, these studies offer static correlations between the "editorial line" and surrounding organizational variables. Donohew draws a line between policy and "publisher attitude" for instance (Donohew, 1967, p. 17). For Epstein, policy is a "statement of organizational requisites necessary for the organization to stay in business (Epstein, 1973, p. 17). By this he seems to imply that the absolute scarcity of news resources determines the organization's "policy" or response to its environment. Policy, of course, is only "necessary" insofar as there is unanimity among policy makers as to what is efficient and as to the absolute value of efficiency itself for the organization; such unanimity is assumed. Epstein's study is unique only in that it rather explicitly reifies policy.

Social Control in Canadian News Organizations

The implications of bureaucratization are not always fully worked out in the literature but some common ideas do emerge. To begin with it may be said that in the face of these uncontested organizational forces journalistic practice becomes a relatively uninteresting phenomenon. Practice becomes the passive, routinized response to non-negotiable constraints. Bureaucratic journalism is alienated practice in the extreme. Journalism has become a segmented process in which the journalist is further and further removed from control of the news product. Moreover, power in the newsroom becomes consolidated among an ever-smaller managerial élite making the practice of most journalists ever more ineffectual. There is little evidence offered of journalists resisting these new divisions of labour.

These are compelling ideas in both social science texts and strike manifestoes but I think some points must be treated with considerable reserve. First of all, news workers have historically not simply responded, passively or otherwise, to changes in the means and relations of news production. Worker jurisdiction over introduction of new communication technological and management systems is a perennial demand of journalists in this country (see, for example, the Montreal Gazette, Sept.

12, 1981, p. 18; Globe and Mail, Nov. 8, 1986, p. C2; and the Globe and Mail, July 21, 1990, p. C3 concerning the centrality of these issues in recent CBC disputes.) CBC Newsworld, for instance, has recently established a joint labour-management monitoring group in order to keep the contentious issue of video technologies off the bargaining table (FN/07/09/90, p.1). It would be difficult to maintain that labour actions have not influenced the way management and technology systems have been introduced into Canadian newsrooms over the last ten years. Most organizational models have simply not addressed this issue of what Giddens and others call the "dialectic of control" in modern bureaucracies (Giddens, 1984; Thompson, 1985).

There has, as well, been little hard evidence offered to indicate an "iron law of oligarchy" at work in contemporary news organizations. Newsroom studies often focus on large, minutely segmented news production lines; Tunstall, for instance, examines an 8-stage gate-keeping process from wire to news desk (Tunstall, 1972, p.33). Most North American news production, however, continues to take place in relatively small news organizations (McFayden, and Hoskins, 1980, p. 77; Jonstone, 1976, p. 78, p. 183) where, despite intense exploitation of news labour, hierarchies and specializations may be expected to be somewhat

flexible (Porter, 1984; see also chapters 3 and 4 of this dissertation).

Recent critical theories of organizations have further suggested that many of the time and space arrangements which organizational models have generally regarded as expressions of consolidated social control may in fact offer workers such as journalists significant spaces of autonomy in the production process (Crozier, 1974, p. 78; Giddens, 1982). Large centralized newsrooms constituted as a network of hierarchical but interdependent work relationships, for instance, may offer news workers considerable opportunities to effectively disrupt social control. (?)

Functionalist Theories of Journalistic Practice

Recent organizational studies suggest that bureaucratized news production is *unconsciously* carried out by functioning journalists (see, for example, Clarke [1982] and Porter [1985] on Canadian news production in bureaucratic settings). In this view, production regularly and completely escapes critical monitoring by working journalists; production becomes "unproblematic" and routine. Journalists may simply find themselves overwhelmed by the historical bulk of a preexisting organizational structure, or as Gieber put it some 50 years ago "trapped in a straitjacket of

mechanical details" (Gieber, 1956, p. 423). Or they may find this work schedule too pressing to allow for critical reflection. The main point seems to be that newswriters are unable to purposefully or effectively intervene in the production process and various explanations have been offered as to how that process is, to all intents and purposes, able to regulate itself. Early functional models, taking issue with the intentional "gatekeeper" paradigm, have stressed the "latent functions" of the newsroom (Judd, 1961; Breed, W. 1955). Golding and Elliott emphasize the "long-term, non-deliberate organizational forces rather than the short-term deliberate acts of a journalist (Golding and Elliott, 1979, p. 8). Routine "takes on its own life and becomes its own monitor" (Ibid., p. 19). Cybernetic approaches give a somewhat less cryptic account of how organizations regulate themselves, focusing instead on the role of information control mechanisms in the production process. In the control model, news processors "respond" to news inputs with "appropriate action" (Robinson, 1970, p. 350). (3)

All para self-regulatory models, I would argue, must be considered somewhat suspect, at least as all-embracing theories of news production. Particularly problematic is the operation of routine as

a control variable. While we may concur that routine renders daily activity "unproblematic" for the actor, (Feiger and Luckmann, 1966), to conclude that journalistic practice is a mere reflex response to organizational stimuli is probably an unwarranted theoretical move. A vital feature of routine, "unproblematic" practice is that actors do not feel the need to offer reasons for their conduct. Indeed, as Giddens notes, they may be unable to do so on a discursive level (Giddens, 1979, pp. 57-9). But this is not to say that they have lost touch with the reasons or contextual meanings of their actions, nor that those actions are merely blind fulfillments of "organizational needs". Routine practice, Giddens argues, while largely non-deliberate and not directly or immediately "motivated", remains reflexively monitored and, thus, grounded in the practical knowledge of the actor (Giddens, A., 1979, p. 128). I will return to this subject below in the discussion concerning reflexive self-monitoring and journalistic agency in organized news production.

2. Constructivist Theories of News Production

Organizational studies of news production have traditionally concerned themselves with the phenomena of "partiality" and "bias". Key variables - roles, norms and policy - are those which, day in and day out, block and

limit an ideal, complete picture of reality. In constructivist approaches to newsmaking, however, news is not simply constrained reflection but a more active accomplishment of reality. This is perhaps the defining feature of constructivist theory and I take this position to be the starting point of any useful discussion concerning journalism as a cultural practice. In this section I will critically review recent symbolic interactionist studies of news work by Goffman, Silverstone and Tuchman and the cultural studies work of Stuart Hall, Todd Gitlin and Richard Ericson, all of which I believe are exemplary studies in the constructivist tradition.

Goffman: News as an Interactive Production

First Goffman. Symbolic interactionism has stressed the importance of action and interaction in social life, essentially suggesting that actors employ practical stocks of knowledge to produce everyday social encounters (see, for example, Goffman, E., 1959; 1969; 1974; and 1981). Social life is thus accomplished by agents in specific social contexts. The term "agency" and "context" have rather peculiar meanings here. First of all, Goffman has insisted that context-settings are not just the spots where activities happen to occur. Setting is seen to be constitutive of the activity itself. According to Goffman, knowledgeable social agents monitor and then draw upon

temporal and spatial boundaries at hand to sustain encounters. Goffman's concept of "strips of talk", for instance, suggests that meanings are organized, specified and employed through the sequencing of talk and the management of facial expressions in "situations of copresence" (see, for instance, Goffman, 1981, p. 22).

In Goffman's view then, institutions provide the constitutive settings for all social interactions. At the same time he wants to insist that they do not bring about the interactive performances they contain. Action, according to Goffman, does not "express" institutional settings. It is rather established "in regard of" institutional settings (Goffman, 1983, p.9). Action essentially involves both understanding what one is doing and using that understanding as part of doing it (Goffman, 1974, p. 24). Thus, the concept of "guided doings": actors routinely monitor institutional contexts and use their social understanding to guide their actions.

What does this say about the relationship between agency and structure in social production? Goffman makes no claim for the primacy of one social order over another. He merely insist that the interactive order of social agents must be recognized as a substantive domain in its own right (Goffman, E., 1983, p.2). In fact, he has some difficulty specifying any sort of relationship between interactive and

institutional orders (see, for example, Giddens, A., 1987). In *Frame Analysis*, he goes so far to claim that symbolic interactionism is not very important for structural sociology (Goffman, E., 1974, p.13). In later works he seems rather less sure of this position (Goffman, E., 1983). But the methodology in Goffman's case studies is fairly consistent: institutional processes may be bracketed out, except insofar as they have a "direct and immediate" impact on interactive performances.

In *Forms of Talk* (1981) Goffman provides us with a rather strict interactionist analysis of the news production process and here some of the difficulties with the approach - particularly its lack of clarity concerning the role of broader social dynamics - becomes clear. Goffman typically focuses not on the rules or constraints of media institutions but instead, rather singlemindedly, on the "guided doings" of individual newsmakers themselves. Goffman argues that it is newswriters themselves who routinize and, if necessary, "repair" the speech structures of news. The ethnomethodological notion of frame thus replaces traditional "social control" variables. Frame covers all the practical means by which news workers as agents make sense of and control their work activities (see also Goffman, E., 1974, p.7).

Interestingly, Goffman's "case studies" in *Forms of Talk* are not really organizational sites at all. They are in fact anonymous voices picked at random from "broadcast blooper" records. Institutions simply do not exist in this study. Silverstone's (1985) study of science news work, however, working in a similar tradition, makes a more systematic effort to implicate media work in its institutional conditions. Silverstone describes the production of a science documentary for the BBC as an ongoing negotiation between a rather intransigent set of political, aesthetic, technological and bureaucratic constraints on the one hand and a knowledgeable agent on the other who well understands these organizational limits. A critical space is thus left for strategic purposive intervention in the production process. Silverstone's documentary producer faces a "narrowly-bounded, deeply-entrenched set of constraints and expectations" in which there is "room for radical work, if not much" (Silverstone, R., 1985, p. 166).

But Silverstone, like Goffman, never really *relates* cultural practice and cultural institutions. In *Framing Science* structural constraints remain the unexplained parameters within which filmmakers go about their business. They are the "givens" with which a producer "negotiates" on a daily basis. Here, as in Goffman's work, we see a consistent preoccupation with purposive agents and their

relative autonomy from background structures, a preoccupation which, I will suggest later, tends in fact to understate the transformational character of journalistic practice even in its most regimented, compulsively routine form.

Tuchman: News as Frame

Gaye Tuchman's work on "news as frame", on the other hand, makes a more systematic effort to relate the institutions and daily practices of journalism within a model of the "social production of news". Tuchman's Making News has become one of the standard sociological texts concerning the process of media production and the "construction of reality" within an organizational environment. One of the book's main themes is that news work is a structured process: that is, a practice "sedimented in the temporal and spatial arrangements of the news organization" (Tuchman, G., 1978, p. 123). News workers essentially "typify" idiosyncratic events, Tuchman argues, and they do this according to the temporal and spatial needs of their employers.

But such routines are more than just organizational dynamics in Tuchman's view. News events must be typified or "classified according to meanings constituted in the situation of their use" (Tuchman, G., 1972, p. 112)

Typifications are thus grounded and constituted in everyday practice. To be sure, they are in one sense "organizational" routines which mobilize journalists in the service of "organizational needs" and Tuchman often regards them as such (see, for example, her chapter on "flexibility and professionalism" in Tuchman, G., 1978, ch. 4). But they are routines which must be *made to happen*. This lends the production process an organized, but at the same time, "practically contingent" dimension, a dimension which is largely absent in the functionalist newsroom studies reviewed above. Routines, in Tuchman's work, exist only insofar as they are competently invoked by social agents. They cannot be explained away as mere organizational secretions. It is on the basis of these considerations that Tuchman feels free, at times, to use the terms "news worker" and "news organization" interchangeably - not because news workers are mere organizational "dopes" but because news organizations depend - chronically - on employees to competently reproduce their rules of operation in everyday practice. (6)

Beyond that insight, however, Tuchman never really integrates the institutional and interactive orders of news production. Wider power relations - wider than that of reporters' own strategic purposes and the office room relations of production - are given rather sketchy treatment even in Tuchman's more recent works, works she evidently

means to remedy this defect (see, for example, Tuchman, G., 1983). Tuchman has stressed that the journalistic "frames" employed by news workers often have a long shelf life; they have become "formal institutions" in journalism. But as yet she has offered no really credible account of *frame maintenance* - or of news work as a practice which is structurally implicated in the constitution of society. In this sense then, Tuchman's model of news work as frame-governed creativity is an essentially dichotomous account of agency and structure in cultural production.

Hall: News as Code

The British cultural studies tradition has given a far more rigorous definition to the concept of structure in cultural production. Indeed, the approach is taken by many contemporary critical news sociologists to be a necessary corrective to the lack of social contextualization provided in American symbolic interactionist research (see, for example, Hackett, 1984). Structure as a sedimented order of rules governing cultural production is explicitly "bracketed in" in the cultural studies model and it is featured prominently.

But first a word about "the model" we are examining here. In the last decade, theories of cultural practice have been revised quite extensively within the cultural studies

tradition. I want to make it clear, however, that these revisions are not my primary concern in this discussion simply because virtually all the existing cultural studies research to do with news production has taken as its basic model of cultural practice the encoding-decoding model developed by Stuart Hall and others at the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies in Birmingham in the 1970s and early 1980s (see Turner, 1990 for an overview and bibliography of this work). It is to that model which I now turn.

Stuart Hall's early work on encoding-decoding views cultural practice as an exhaustively mediated production. News itself, for instance, is not a final text which emerges from newsroom "interactions" or organizational "routines". It is rather a circulated meaning complex. Hall breaks quite radically in this work with linear models of information transmission, emphasizing instead the historicity and essential circularity of meaning structures. In "Encoding/Decoding" (1980) and further in "The Determination of News Photographs" (1980) and "The Unity of Current Affairs Television" (1981) he describes a running series of structured interrelations between cultural production, consumption and reproduction. There are no real beginnings or ends to a discursive circuit here, no definitive statements and no final texts - merely constellations of meaning specific to particular moments of communication.

All of this suggests a model of cultural practice with several distinct features of interest. First, practice as conceived in the encoding-decoding model is not a discrete stage in the communications process - not, for instance, the parochially-grounded "interactive performances" or organizationally-circumscribed sequence of actions described in interactionist and functionalist models. In Hall's system, wider societal concerns can never be bracketed out as such. Meaning formation, from this perspective, is animated and sustained by temporally-sedimented and institutionally-entrenched social codes.

Second, Hall insists that although cultural practice of any sort, including news work, is only "relatively autonomous" from other social practices, it is not trivial. In other words meanings don't just emerge from texts; they are made to appear through ideological work. At this stage in his work, Hall called this practice "signification" - essentially the combination of codes, each with its own "autonomy and sense" but each which must be appropriately encoded and decoded to have its communicative "moment". Structuralism certainly informs Hall's critique of the author as a privileged creative presence; meanings, he stresses, are not scripted by any particular cultural agent. At the same time, Hall wants to retain a modicum of practical contingency in the cultural production process.

I believe the encoding-decoding model falls down on this second point, however. It is difficult to see how practice really matters in code theory. The contingency in encoding and decoding - and the securing of a discursive moment - centers on a fairly mundane communicative competency: the ability to employ pertinent discursive rules. In a study frequently cited in contemporary news sociology, Hall describes a communications system in which different meaning complexes "pass under the discursive rules of language" (Hall, S., 1980, p. 130). These rules seem to have been accorded a theoretical status well above and beyond the discursive practice which makes use of them. Codes may be knowledgeably and skillfully employed but they are never really practically sustained. (7)

It is worth noting that many of these difficulties have been resolved in Hall's more recent (1985; 1990) discussions concerning the "articulation" of race in cultural production. Here, Hall seems to suggest that specific linguistic acts may bring about specific structural interventions. For instance, "connotative chains" - the order of discursive difference on which speakers draw in discourses on race - seem to have a definitive recursive status, constituting, but being themselves constituted through, language practice. As noted, however, this work seems to have had little impact in cultural studies.

approaches to news work. The latter have largely restated the encoding model along with the agent-structure dichotomy it suggests.

This encoding-decoding influence is particularly evident in the North American literature. Gitlin's (1980) study of news coverage of the American student protests, for instance, portrays news work in terms earlier suggested by Hall et al., as a "secondary definition" of events primarily defined elsewhere. In Gitlin's version (some might say misreading) of the theory, news work emerges as a thoroughly structured, and thoroughly dependent, variable with journalists employing sets of hand-me-down frames - hegemonically given patterns of "cognition, interpretation and presentation, selection, emphasis and exclusion" (Gitlin, 1980, p.6) - which are drawn upon to legitimate particular social formations. Gitlin has been much criticized by American news sociologists for his characterization of news work as irredeemably ideological (see, for example, Meyers, M., 1992). More pertinent to this discussion, however, is his apparently less controversial assertion that news work has little to do with frame maintenance - period. We should remember that frames, in Gitlin's view, are the product of an interaction between "given newsroom routines and outside political negotiations" (ibid., p. 70). Thus, and this is key, news work has little or no role in generating the discursive "organizing

principles" Gitlin is talking about; in other words, it has no discernible impact whatsoever on its own discursive conditions of production. The result of all this is that news work per se has little if any defineable role in the production of culture. Newsrooms are certainly not centers for the production of meaning in Gitlin's model. They are not even secondary sites at which given social frames can be meaningfully "negotiated". They are rather ideology factories: tertiary areas where tried and true frames are appropriated according to the hegemonic needs of established social forces.

Recent cultural studies-based approaches have questioned the "secondary definition" model, but the agent structure dichotomy that goes with it remains largely intact. In Canada, for instance, recent (1987; 1989) research by Ericson, Baranek and Chan has focused on the relative autonomy of journalistic practice. These studies of the news coverage of deviance essentially make the case that journalists are not just "observers" of a given social order but rather "participants in the process of giving meaning to texts" (p. 14). The authors insist that journalists have more latitude to choose between news frames than the cultural model has suggested ("not a full picture of the complexities of negotiating news", as they put it; *ibid.*, p. 14). Journalists are thus seen as "information brokers" in the production of meaning.

Note the focus here on news workers' "control of the flow of information" rather than on the expressive dimensions of news work. In other words, Ericson and his colleagues are concerned with journalists' power to "channel" given codes as opposed to their ability or inability to generate meaning through communicative skill (In Visualizing Deviance, for instance, Ericson et al. are concerned with how journalists "patrol facts" to construct social categories; Ericson, Baranek and Chan, 1987). What emerges then is not so much a model of cultural agency as a model of journalistic autonomy: a model of more or less free journalistic practice within a given cultural order.

My point here is that out of all these British, North American, revisionist and non-revisionist cultural studies approaches to news work, there has yet to emerge a real model of news work as agency: a model in which

- a) news work contributes to a discursive structure with
- b) such a structural intervention being facilitated or hindered by the communicative skill of the speaker. It is in this sense that cultural studies, like its symbolic interactionist counterpart, has yet to demonstrate that news work really matters in news production.

3. News Work as Structurated Agency: An Alternative Approach

Thus far I have argued that neither constructivism nor functionalism have adequately captured the recursive dimension of organized journalism: the dimension in which both agency and the structures of organized news work are implicated in the production of culture. In this thesis I want to take the position that news is a structured discourse, but a discourse whose regimens of use are, in a substantive sense, "practically sustained" by working journalists themselves. Recursivity in social practice is a central notion in recent work in structuration theory and could be further developed in a model of what I will call "structurated news".

Theories of structuration have clearly implicated practice in processes of social production. Giddens and others have argued along broadly ethnomethodological lines that competent social actors are generally at least tacitly aware of the social meanings of their actions and draw upon this practical knowledge to sustain their activities. But they have gone further, insisting that these "guided doings" mediate, while being themselves mediated by social structures. Structure is defined by Giddens as the properties of a social system carried in reproduced

practices embedded in time and space (Giddens, A., 1984, p. 170). Structure thus relates to practice recursively: that is structure mediates social practice and is at the same time reproduced in social practice. Thus, and this is a crucial point, social reproduction is not merely "astutely monitored" by actors - as ethnomethodological studies have demonstrated. Social reproduction is structurally grounded in the knowledgeable application of rules and resources by actors in situated social contexts (Giddens, 1984, p. 376).

Structuration theory is intended to be a fundamental theory of the constitution of society. Here my more precise concern is this: to present a credible account of news work as a social production which constitutes and is constituted by its institutional conditions. Specifically, I seek useful definitions of the terms "practice", "institution" and "text": central phenomena in the social production of the news. "Practice", as I use the term, is essentially a continuing flow of conduct in time and space. This is in part an ethnomethodological definition featuring as it does notions of daily context and the "strategic presence" of social actors. But ethnomethodology has reached somewhat of an impasse in these areas (see Thompson, J.B., 1985). In that tradition, "presence" registers as a practical intervention in a social encounter, "context" as the temporal-spatial dimensions of the encounter specifically identified by its actors (Goffman, E., 1961, p.7-10).

Working with these somewhat restrictive definitions, traditional ethnomethodologies of news production have left almost entirely unexplored conditions beyond the social understanding and practical grasp of working journalists.(4)

Structuration theory may be viewed as a critical reworking of these central ethnomethodological concepts. Recent discussions concerning the practical rationalization and structural mediation of social action (Willis, P., 1977; 1978), and various models of "stratified presence" mediated by institutions and structural "conditions of possibility" (Bhaskar, R., 1978; Dunn, J., 1987; and Op. Cit., Thompson, J.B., 1980) are obviously meant to establish links between the strategic and structural dimensions of social action. Giddens' work on strategic motivations serves a similar purpose (Giddens, A., 1979, pp. 112-117) as does Thompson's theory of "critical hermeneutics" which seeks to provide the framework for a "depth interpretation" of situated cultural activity (Thompson, John B., 1981). These discussions essentially examine practical consciousness as it operates in conjunction with the unacknowledged conditions and unintended consequences of social action. Purely strategic or structural analyses of social affairs are thus rejected by this approach in principle. British political theorist John Dunn claims that such work can, at best, be regarded as "methodological shorthand" in which certain dimensions of

social activity are simply bracketed for the sake of procedural clarity (Dunn, 1987).

"Practice", then, has a central though somewhat indefinite status in structuration analysis. In Giddens' work, for instance, it is not so much a series of contained activity episodes as a "stream of conduct" across time and space (Giddens, 1984, p. 17). Giddens' definition stresses not just individual human agency but the essentially non-intentional mediations of institutions and structures in social action: it is institutions - temporally and spatially sedimented social practices - which connect a string of contexts in the "continuous life of the individual" and thereby "enter constitutively" into day-to-day practice (Giddens, 1984, p. 372). Practice, from this perspective, is a sort of moving presence across institutionally-patterned settings.

Working with this definition, I want to define the news "text" as both a strategic and institutional project. I believe the intentions of journalists - which constitute the "strategic" dimensions of news work - are institutionally circumscribed in a number of ways. First, I think that texts are not discrete articulations of journalists' intentions because intentions are not constituted as such. Here I want to draw in part on Schutz's definition of "intentionality" as organized by overall life

projects, to suggest a view of intentions as institutionally-grounded projects. Not only does this view acknowledge that structural and ideological conditions of news production may supercede journalists' intentions. It sees these intentions themselves as constituted in conjunction with the unacknowledged conditions and unintended outcomes of cultural practice. With similar considerations in mind, Thompson defines the text as a "continuing process of monitored cultural production" (Thompson, J.B., 1985). In this case study, I conceive of the text as an ongoing reflexively monitored process of production which at Newsworld has been institutionalized in the weekly production meeting (see below, chapter 4). In this sense, I believe the dichotomy between structural conditions and subjective intentions in news production might be at least partially resolved.

A second point concerning the practice, institutions and texts of cable journalism: The intentions of journalists - even conceived as institutionally-grounded projects - may only occasionally be relevant to textual analysis simply because the meanings of texts escape the intentions of their authors through processes of what Ricoeur calls "objectification and distanciation" (Ricoeur, P., 1974). The broadcast of a Newsworld text across Canada almost necessarily involves a profound distanciation between producers and their audiences. This phenomenon is rarely

acknowledged in the industry itself: corporate discourse at the CBC, for instance, likes to portray broadcasting as a sort of ongoing "dialogue" with a nation at large (CBC Newsworld Implementation Plan, 1988, p.2). But the fact remains that Newsworld is a temporally and spatially dispersed cultural product, disseminated across a vast national territory, often stored and retrieved for later use in distant markets. And in this context, cable broadcasts are chronically separated from the initial projects of their "authors" and various organizational handlers.

Newsworld producers' control of their text is, for reasons such as these, partial and problematic. I view this partial authority as "professional control", which though circumscribed by its institutional conditions, is nonetheless routinely implicated in the organized production of a news text. As a text, I view cable news as a medium and outcome of news work reflexively monitored, reproduced and repaired by its various authors and handlers within an organization setting - specifically the Ottawa and Halifax offices of CBC Newsworld.

5. Methodology

This thesis is based on field work I conducted at the Ottawa and Halifax bureaux of CBC Newsworld in October, November and December of 1989 and September of 1991 and on a series

of interviews I conducted in 1990 with cable news officials in Atlanta, Washington and Toronto for a report to Canada's Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Finance (Hogarth and Gilsdorf, 1992) concerning election coverage by cable news services. The 1990 interviews included formal and informal conversations with Tom Hannon (CNN's Political Director), Karen Dassauer (Director of CNN's Political Unit in Washington), Trina McQueen (the CBC's Director of News and Current Affairs Television), Elly Alboim (CBC Television's parliamentary news editor), Joan Donaldson (former director of Newsworld), Michael Harris (director of Newsworld), John McQuaker (executive producer, Newsworld Calgary), Sandy McKean (executive producer, Newsworld Calgary), Lionel Lumb (executive producer, Newsworld, Ottawa) and Barry Kiefl and Philip Savage (research officers at the CBC). The rest of my respondents wished to remain anonymous in this study.

The primary field research for this study was conducted at two production sites: at "The Week Starts Here", a weekly news and current affairs digest, produced by the service's Ottawa studios for national broadcast Sunday mornings from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. local times; and at "The CBC Morning News", a daily news program produced in Halifax for national broadcast at 7 a.m. to 9 a.m. local times on the regular CBC Network, and at 6 a.m. to noon local times on the new channel. I was able to observe most phases of cable news.

production at close hand and at length. At "The Week Starts Here", I managed to sit in two days a week for nearly three months during the fall of 1989, attending production meetings, editing sessions and program tapings on Thursday and Friday mornings. At the "CBC Morning News", I observed production routines for only nine production days in September of 1991, though on a somewhat more intensive basis (sitting in from 8 to 16 hours a day during all phases of the 24 hour production schedule). Newsworld managers and staff gave me fairly ready access to most areas of production (9), and I was able to examine incoming wire copy, cumulative news files and finished scripts, and question the show's writers and producers as to their choice and presentation of stories.

On the basis of such a study I sought to develop a critique of sociological theories which seemed to suggest that news work was becoming, or always had been, unimportant in the production of culture. The Ottawa and Halifax production sites were pertinent to my thesis for a number of reasons. First of all, each covered a wide range of program formats now being featured on the CBC news channel: each provided a fairly representative picture of cable news work as it is practiced in Canada; and each dealt with a variety of aspects of news and current affairs production. Secondly, and more importantly, each constituted a fair case study - that is each site embodied to a large degree the various

bureaucratic constraints which organizational theorists have frequently cited as evidence of bureaucratized news production and the deskilling of journalistic practice. Research at these sites provided at least some evidence that news work, even chronically constrained news work of the sort practiced at CBC Newsworld, continues to matter a great deal in the organized production of news.

The thesis itself began as a simple ethnography. My initial project, which stemmed from a Master's research project at McGill University in Montreal, was to observe practical journalistic skills at a national news service, to chronicle competency in news production so to speak. The epistemological difficulties with descriptive ethnographies of this kind have been well-considered elsewhere (see, for example, Cicourel, A., 1968; Willis, P., 1980; and Cohen, I.J., 1984 concerning the transposing [and transforming] of descriptions in everyday accounts); but here I wish to focus on some specific issues associated with observation techniques and, more generally, the concept of "practical contextualization".

To begin with, let me reiterate that the aim of my current project is, firstly, to determine what cable news journalists actually do, and, secondly, to determine whether, and in what sense, what they do really matters in

news production. To my mind each problematic brings with it its own methodological challenges.

There are, I think several procedures by which one might try to understand journalistic knowledge and practice. Standard interview techniques - employed in a variety of occupational and organizational studies of news production (see, for example, Samuelson, 1962) - carry with them certain procedural difficulties and I think have come to constitute something of a "terministic screen" in sociology's traditional perspectives on journalistic practice. A review of the major field studies of news organizations suggests to me that journalists have over time proven extraordinarily indifferent and/or inarticulate when confronted with sociologists who question their motives. The relative unproductivity of this line of research has, I think, led to somewhat of a standoff in the field, with a number of researchers concluding that journalists don't know much, or have much control over, what they do (Gieber's [1956] interviews with news sub-editors are a case in point). While probably underestimating the practical as opposed to discursively formulated self-knowledge of their subjects, traditional interrogation techniques may have seriously overestimated many journalists' overall adjustment to their working conditions. Organizational studies, and I think some constructivist works as well, have tended to assume that if organized journalists can't formulate

alternatives to what they do - bureaucratic press release work, for instance - they must actually like what they do, or at least have accommodated themselves to it. In short, "skill-testing question" techniques have tended to position journalists as either organizational dopes or ideological dupes.

One way around this methodological impasse might be to adopt a wider definition of discourse than just propositional statements, as Paul Willis has done in his (1977) study of working class students on their way to working class jobs. Willis measures his subjects' "discursive penetration" of their position (within the labour reproduction cycle) not just by what they say, but by what they do - by how they employ body language, gesture, tone and the like to express an understanding of their collective predicament. I think we might view the cynical anti-authority banter so endemic to newsrooms (at least the ones I have observed or worked in) in just this light. Because that sort of talk is not generally expressed as a propositional critique of institutional conditions, it has frequently been written off by researchers as discontent without weight (Elliott, 1970) or, worse, as a "self-esteem mechanism" designed to deal with the everyday humiliations of journalistic life (Samuelson, 1962). But chronic cynicism with respect to authority relations may involve just the sort of partial penetration Willis is talking about. More

open-ended research techniques might allow researchers to capture this dimension of newsroom interaction in their accounts.

My second research problematic involves critically assessing journalistic knowledge as fallible belief and here I think even more innovative ethnographic techniques cease to be of much help. With some exceptions - Tuchman's work being a case in point - news ethnographies, like most ethnographic work, seem to have rejected a revelatory model of social theory; that is, in contrast to harder scientific accounts of journalism, most ethnographies have set out to understand journalism in journalistic terms, basing their accounts rather strictly on the self-knowledge of news workers themselves (Goffman's [1982] work being a case in point).

I think one way to overcome this dichotomy between critical explanation and understanding is to distinguish between journalism as knowledge and journalism as fallible belief, belief which can be approached by researchers as partial or inadequately grounded according to criteria of evidence employed in the social sciences (I am basing this on John Thompson's [1982] "critical hermeneutic" method). For example, I believe studies of newsroom interaction should offer at least some account of the institutional (often unacknowledged) conditions of organized journalism -

its political and discursive grounding and its various structural conditions of possibility. Fishman's (1980) work on "bureaucratic phase structures" is exemplary in this regard. Moreover, I think ethnographic studies of strategic interaction should "bracket in" accounts of the unintended consequences of news work: for instance accounts of the reproduction of institutionalized ideology through procedures of objectivity; accounts of the constitution of institutionalized relations of authority through self-styled anti-institutional criticism; accounts that is of the overall partial nature of control which journalists as authors exercise over their texts. Again Fishman's study of bureaucratic journalism, which takes into account both journalists' self-knowledge and the structural consequences of that knowledge, is a good example of such research. Sociological critiques of journalism may not have about them the cloak of epistemological certainty - they may not be grounded social theories in Habermas' sense - but they can perhaps carry with them some degree of persuasive force both inside and outside the academy and - this is key - gain a critical dimension by changing their object of study - the understanding of news workers themselves.

This is a point I want to pursue further in my doctoral work. Interpretive researchers have rightly pointed out that research preference is necessarily implicated in the contexts it "describes", a point perhaps most forcefully made by

Cicourel with regard to the direct confrontations which occur between researchers and their subjects (Cicourel, A., 1968). The hermeneutic "moments" in my current doctoral work - my regular insertion into a newsroom "interaction order" - have been generally awkward, often spectacularly so. As I proceeded with my field research, my subjects frequently had to stop what they were doing, reflect upon what they were doing, explain to me what they were doing, anticipate what I was doing and eventually, in December of 1989, make it clear they couldn't go on doing all of this with me watching them. At this point participant-observation work came to an end. In short, at each stage of my research, I found it impossible to prevent my presence from becoming part of what this study was to be "about" - the making of cable news.

But the epistemological problems of my fieldwork were, I think, somewhat more complicated than that. One's research "presence" is, after all, routinely carried beyond face to face encounters and the immediate time-space frames of fieldwork. This is partly due to what Brown calls the institutionalized "learning capacities" of organizations (Brown, G., 1979). As I discovered during research for a master's thesis at Radio Canada International, government policy papers, histories of Canadian broadcasting, personnel testimonies, newspaper accounts, industry journals, internal and external management studies - and academic research papers - are routinely surveilled by organizations such as

"Newsworld" as part of an ongoing process of institutional reflexive self-monitoring. The "laws" of organizational reproduction, as posited in these studies, are routinely appropriated as rules and resources for further organizational development. This process is perhaps most evident in the continual definition and redefinition of an organizational mandate at Newsworld's parent organization, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. But it is also evident in cable journalists' changing more reflexive attitudes towards their profession (FN/1/12/89, pp.2-4; see also chapter 4). My point is that news theory - whether it be found in management reports or cultural studies manifestoes - has become a condition of news work to an extent unrecognized in current news sociology.(10)

News sociology, like news itself, constantly and irredeemably becomes part of what it is "about". In this sense any sociological methodology, including that concerned with news work, must relinquish any substantive claims of objectivity.

If field research cannot be objective, if it cannot remain disengaged from the "field", may it nonetheless claim for itself a degree of general applicability? In my view even this degree of generalizability is somewhat problematic. My broadest claim in this dissertation, for instance, is that knowledgeable practice is endemic to the most routine forms of news making: in short, I want to claim

that news making is a significant form of cultural - and ideological - agency. However, generalizations of the sort posited in traditional news sociologies - and here I have in mind both the various organizational laws and epistemological codes discussed above - lend what I call "news structurations" an altogether more rigid and static character than I believe they possess. I hope this case study will provide at least some support for the view that many of the so-called "institutional anchors" of news making - critically articulated as social laws - often reflect not fixed patterns of unintended consequences but rather what Garfinkel has called "maxims of action" (Garfinkel, H., 1969; 1972), applied as rules and resources by both management and staff at Newsworld. The standards of organized cable news making are, I believe, put into practice, and in a substantive though circumscribed sense "managed", by cable journalists themselves.

At the same time, I don't think this concern with the specific daily activities of a group of journalists has completely parochialized my research vistas. This paper does say something about current conditions of Canadian news making, if only because action contexts within the Canadian broadcasting industry have never been temporally and spatially "contained" as such. In recent years Canadian news services have set about standardizing these contexts -and to a substantial degree they have succeeded.(11) I will be

examining some of these general institutional and structural conditions of Canadian news making in this paper. But generally my discussion focuses on Newsworld as a specific structured and institutionally-grounded project and, in turn, as a strategic accomplishment produced in interaction. While "The Week Starts Here" and the "CBC Morning News" may reflect institutional patterns at work elsewhere in Canadian journalism, here I focus on these programs as temporally and spatially defined projects - dependent upon a particular mix of intended and unintended conditions of action.

Endnote

1) The term is Clarke's referring to what she sees to be the increasing reliance by Canadian news processors on foreign, mostly American news sources (Clarke, 1981).

2) And in Canada they have done so, quite frequently. See, for example, "CBC TV and Radio Shut Off as 2100 call a strike," Globe and Mail, May 4, 1981, p. 1; and "CBC Strike, Junos could be affected," Montreal Gazette, Nov. 8, 1986, p. C2.

3) Bruck offers a model of discourse production which nonetheless similarly conceives of practice as a positive response (to [discursive] structural conditions). "It is the work of the producer" he argues "to interpose the place [of the story] using the right [discursive] formation. Once the location has been determined he has just to follow suit" (Bruck, Peter A., p. 303).

4) Newsworld's subscribes to the Associated Press (AP), Agence France Presse (AFP), Reuters, and Canadian Press/Broadcast News wire services and has also concluded a number of program and documentary exchange agreements with foreign broadcasting organizations in the United States, Great Britain, Japan, France and Belgium.

5) Newsworld operated on a budget of just \$ 19.4 million in its first year of service. (Globe and Mail, December 8, 1988, p. C1). By 1991, the budget had risen to almost \$ 26 million (Globe and Mail, December 8, 1991, p. A 19), still less than 1/10 that spent by the US based Cable News Network for its operations.

6) It perhaps bears repeating at this point that journalistic practice may be "competent", yet on a discursive level, completely uninformed. Indeed, routine conduct typically escapes discursive monitoring by the producer. For the uneasy mix of the "deliberate" and the "non-deliberate" in Tuchman's work see her study of "objectivity as a strategic ritual" (Tuchman, G., 1971). Tuchman also points out that while the practical grounding of typifications makes them subject in principle to revision at any moment, as routines they rarely become problematized as such. Skilled journalism may not be particularly dynamic or creative journalism. By competently invoking their stock knowledge of the past to deal with the present, journalists create a "means not to know". It is in this sense that journalism is an ideological practice.

7) As noted above, Ericson, Baranek and Chan's (1987) work in Visualizing Deviance runs into similar difficulties. According to Ericson et al. journalists are not just

"relatively autonomous" but very "relatively autonomous": that is, they have the power to choose between existing social discourses and to resist others, a power they exercise more frequently than many cultural studies accounts of news production would suggest (Ericson, Baranek and Chan, 1987; 1989). However, journalists, in the Ericson model, are never shown to actively constitute the structural conditions of their work, as a theory of agency would suggest. What Ericson and his coauthors call the "vocabulary of precedents", for instance, - the established set of social discourses which journalists draw upon in their work - is apparently not carried in cultural practice: it is rather a preexisting pool of discourse which journalists draw upon to negotiate meaning. In this sense, Ericson et al. essentially restate the constructivist dichotomy between journalistic practice on the one hand, and its structural "backdrop" on the other.

8) Hall's view of the production of culture still lacks a really convincing account of the role of communicative skill: of the way audiences come to recognize themselves as subjects of discourse because of the power and skill with which they are addressed. The cultural studies model may not preclude a discussion of these issues. But it does not add much to them either.

9) In the course of my field research at Newsworld I was consistently denied access to the organization's financial records. However, virtually all other material concerning production and management was made available to me.

Newsworld has, as a condition of license, agreed to turn over its accounts to the Auditor-General of Canada to ensure that no transfer of funds take place between the CBC and the new independently financed cable news service. (Globe and Mail, July 29, 1989, p.C3)

10) Some of the source material for this paper was collected directly from CBC archives and "Newsworld" managers and journalists were directly acquainted with a good deal of it - including current sociological theory on news production. Rather surprisingly, the article by Deborah Clarke (a rather scathing critique of "second-hand news" production in Canada; see bibliography) was a particular favourite of "Newsworld" staffers and hence may have at least partially shaped their understanding of their own activities.

(FN/1/12/89, p.3). Also reflexively monitored, though with a good deal more sceptical reserve, was my own work for the Canadian Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Finance concerning public affairs coverage and the history of cable news as a media institution in North America (Hogarth and Gilsdorf, 1991).

My point is that the oft-cited insulation of practical discourse from theory in cultural production is only partial and problematic. In other words, news sociology, like news itself, constantly and irredeemably becomes part of what it is "about" and thus relinquishes any substantive claims to objectivity. News sociology, like news itself, cannot disengage itself from its object world.

11) Consider, for example, the increasingly centralized flows of information within and between regions in this country (see Brian Porter's [1984] study of the "metropol-hinterland" relations between central and regional news services in Canada).

Chapter 2

All-News Television Service in North America: Institutional Foundations

1. All-News Television Service in the United States: 1980-1991
2. All-News Television Service in Canada: Licensing; Promises of Performance
3. Conclusion

Chapter 2

All-News Television Service in North America:

Institutional Foundations

In Canada, cable news work is controlled news work. It is legislatively defined by its conditions of license with the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) and administrative arrangements with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. It is regulated and supervised by various levels of management within the Newsworld organization. And it is monitored and regulated by cable newswriters themselves. In this chapter, I want to examine the legislative and administrative levels of control. In other words, I want to consider how cable news has developed as a media institution: as a broadcasting service with regularized patterns of resources and constraints and historically established procedures for covering social events, political and otherwise.

This chapter is divided into three parts. The first section examines the development of cable news as an institutionalized practice in North America. The second section examines the regulatory and administrative arrangements for a cable news service in Canada. The third focuses on promises of performance which have been made for

cable news as a public service since 1989. What I am examining here are founding discourses which in my view are just that - foundational. Not distant backdrops of cable news production but *conditions of possibility*: the rules and resources which essentially govern what can and cannot be said on the news channel. Cable news, I will argue, has been institutionally positioned as a "network of record" in both Canada and the United States, a positioning which, as we shall see, has had rather precise consequences for the way newswriters are able to accomplish their work, day in and day out, in the local interaction contexts of Canadian cable newsrooms.

This is a broad institutional analysis then, focusing on arrangements rather far flung in both time and space. But the discussion that follows is intended, above all, to do specific work: to institutionally situate news work at the "The Week Starts Here" and the "CBC Morning News", the subjects of my case studies in the chapters that follow. In this way, I want to begin to draw a link between agency and structure in cable news production in Canada.

1. All-News Television Service in the United States, 1980-1991

All-news broadcasting is relatively new to North America. The first full-time news and information service sponsored by advertisers was established by a New York radio station, WINS, in the 1960's and flagship stations for the major broadcasting networks, such as WCBS in New York, have followed the format with some degree of financial success since that time (though the Canadian CKO radio network went bankrupt with the all-news format in 1989 after 13 years of service). The Independent Television News Association (ITNA), a cooperative of non-affiliated local American broadcasters, made some efforts to produce a 24 hour television news schedule in the 1970's; but it was Atlanta businessman Ted Turner's "Cable News Network" which established the idea of an all-news cable television service on a commercial basis in 1980. According to its first president, Reese Schonfeld, CNN was founded on the idea that network television news had stolen the "birthright of journalism". In Schonfeld's view, cable news would be an antidote to network news, an "electronic newspaper" against the "news entertainment medium" being offered by the American television networks (Whittemore, 1990, p.28)

CNN's major innovation as a cable news programmer was its extensive use of live footage, mostly of press

conferences and other pre-scheduled news events. For the Cable News Network, live coverage served to fill the 24 hour news line-up (a major problem for the network in its first years of service); it offered the network its largest audiences (who have tuned in to CNN's "breaking stories" in steadily increasing numbers since 1980); and, importantly, it fit in with the program philosophy CNN programmers had developed in the early 1980s of providing a "network of record" to their viewers (New York Times, March 20, 1988, p.C14).

CNN programmers essentially defined the "network of record" as complete, immediate and unmediated news: the recording of social events live and in their entirety with little or no journalistic comment. Comprehensive coverage was indeed seen to be the mainstay of CNN's schedule in its early years. The Turner network began what has since become an established production practice at cable news services such as the U.S. congressional channel C-Span, the Court Channel and Canada's own Newsworld service: assigning production crews of three members or more to trials, press conferences and congressional hearings and "letting the cameras roll" as one official put it (ibid.). Such coverage "could fill CNN's daytime schedule for days and even weeks on end", only interrupted by commercial breaks and regular newswheels on the hour (evening schedules were generally reserved for current affairs programming, a common

scheduling practice at the Canadian Newsworld service as well). Network officials insisted that programming of this sort was carried to allow viewers to see the routine workings of American government "in full": unedited and close at hand. As a public service, then, CNN was designed to provide "total" coverage of political and social events, including, as CNN Political Director Tom Hannon put it, the "uninteresting bits". "The exciting thing about CNN" explained Hannon is that "you get to see news events as they actually happen. CNN lets the viewer see what only politicians and a few journalists used to see" (interview with Tom Hannon, October 8, 1990, p.4).(1)

The network of record was also intended to be unmediated in terms of time. That is, cable's public affairs programming was seen to be not just complete but "immediate": news wherever it happens and as it happens free of the time lags and temporal distortions in which events are reported in supertime network news shows. ABC, CBS, and NBC all considered providing 24 hour news services and extended live special event coverage on their regular services in the early 1980s, but were prevented from doing so by contracts with affiliates, bound by their own contracts with advertisers who wanted local programming carried without interruptions. CNN, however, sold

regular and, as far as possible, routine feature of its program schedule. Live coverage of prescheduled events, such as congressional hearings or the daily pentagon briefings of the Gulf War, and even unscheduled events, such as national disaster stories covered by local stations with whom CNN had agreed to exchange news, were usually easily handled by the news network and cheaper to run than CNN-produced news items. As Washington producer Karen Dassauer noted, much of the live coverage "was pretty much run as is. The point is not to work on it too much. Our viewers want the whole story" (interview with Karen Dassauer, October 10, 1990, p.2).

American cable news programmers thus made a virtue of what they themselves admitted had become a basic "programming necessity" at the Turner service (New York Times, March 5, 1982, p.C3). Live news programming, they claimed, was more than just schedule-filler. It carried with it a certain power conventional supper-time news shows could never match. According to former CNN president Reese Schonfeld,

There's something about a breaking news item, the immediacy, the drama. It grips viewers like a supertime wrap-up never can. It just carries people along with it. That's what "like being there" really means (ibid. [emphasis added]).

Temporal immediacy was thus seen to be a source of cable news power: a means by which the service not only

involved viewers, but as Schonfeld saw it, recruited them as subjects of what was after all (as Schonfeld implicitly concedes by his use of metaphor) an inevitably remote - and mediated - news narrative.

Finally, and paradoxically, CNN claimed further authority for the network of record on the basis of the almost invisible position it accorded its journalists. Whereas regular networks news tended to base the authority of their text on the omniscient position of the news anchor (Kozloff, 1987) and the well-informed reporter (White, 1987) CNN seemed to have rested its own authority claims on the apparently unadulterated veracity of "raw" news footage. Like many of his former CNN colleagues, Reese Schonfeld generally equated journalistic mediation of any kind with "showbiz newscasting". In Schonfeld's view cable news was "news for serious people who want to judge the pictures for themselves" (New York Times, March 5, 1982, p. C3). Again, Schonfeld may have been making the best of a simple production constraint here; it would have been difficult after all for the network to boast of an expert reporting staff when it was generally hiring young, inexperienced, and non-union labour at uncompetitive wages, a practice which continues to this day at CNN (Whittemore, 1990; Maines, 1984). But network officials insisted that unmediated - some said badly mediated - news fit in with CNN's whole "philosophy of objectivity", a philosophy which, as CNN

owner Ted Turner explains it, called for more "pictures and words of people and less pre-packaged editorializing" (New York Times, June 7, 1984, p. A17). Turner, the quintessential interventionist station owner in his early career, who often scanned CNN broadcasts for what he saw to be partisan language and "journalistic editorializing", explained that "comments [in newscasts] should come from people making events happen". The cable news philosophy, he said, essentially calls for "newscasters to get out of the way of the news" (ibid.).

In the United States, then, cable news was defined by programmers as a medium through which social events could be chronicled in their entirety with little or no journalistic (or organizational) mediation. The force of such a claim in the mid 1980s has been noted by former CNN newscaster Daniel Schorr.

By the time CNN started up [in the early 1980s] network news had lost all credibility. It had plainly become an entertainment medium. And right at this time, along comes CNN which limits ads, limits showbiz items, limits anchor salaries and pushes pure serious news coverage. It sends its cameras out to all the dinky political doings that the network thinks the public can't take anymore, it covers them live from start to finish. That's what network news was supposed to be all about. I think CNN helped restore the public's trust in television as a news medium (New York Times, March 7, 1989, p. C17).

Cable news programmes, in virtually every aspect of their use and deployment of broadcast technology -

explicitly set out to resolve what Schorr called a "crisis of authority" in television news and thereby provide a reliable record of public life. What cable news as an institution seemed to offer its audience in the 1980s was a new order of authoritative newscasting: *complete, immediate and unmediated* access to social events. Such claims have been repeated in a variety of forms in the government regulations and corporate policies governing Canadian cable news which I examine below.

2. All-News Television Service in Canada: Licensing, Promises of Performance

Comparing the development of all-news service in Canada and the United States is somewhat problematic. We should note at the outset that Canadian cable news programmers essentially see themselves in an altogether different business than their American counterparts. Their task, they say, is not simply to make money out of news (though it is partly that) but to provide a reflection of Canadian society as set out in their conditions of license with the Canadian Radio-Television Telecommunications Commission (CRTC). In the remainder of this chapter, I focus on these differences and on the overall institutional development of CBC Newsworld in Canada: as a media organization with regularized patterns of resources and constraints, with a more or less established

set of procedures for covering Canadian events, political or otherwise.

The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation reports that it first drew up plans for a specialty news channel in 1985, because of the availability of CNN on Canadian cable channels (CBC: Before the CRTC, 1987, p.2). The idea for a CBC news channel received some support in the 1986 Caplan Sauvageau Report on Broadcasting (Report of the Task Force on Broadcasting, 1986, pp. 301-304) and in April, 1987 the CBC submitted a formal proposal for a "parallel but differentiated" all-news television service which would offer material from the CBC's local, regional and national news shows and a limited amount of original current affairs programming on a 24-hour basis. Bids for private all-news channels were received from the Rogers Cable Company affiliate, the "Public Affairs Channel" (which subsequently withdrew its proposal) and from the Allarcom corporation, an Edmonton-based private broadcaster. In November, 1987 the Commission awarded the CBC a three year license to broadcast television news 24 hours a day to over 6 million viewers in Canada. (3)

The CBC license was controversial from the start, however. A number of interested groups, mostly affiliated with private broadcasting and regional interests, claimed the decision might exacerbate the "institutional biases"

already affecting the Canadian broadcasting system (Toronto Star, January 29, 1988, p. A17). It was essentially this concern which underlay the federal government's extraordinary intervention to set aside the Newsworld license, pending a review of the CRTC decision by cabinet. That decision was made partly in response to a petition from Allarcom Inc. supported by the Conservative party's western caucus which claimed that the CBC's move into cable news would reinforce a Central Canadian, "public bias" in the Canadian broadcasting system (ibid.).

The CBC's response was essentially threefold. First the corporation pledged to ensure that news and current affairs programming would be regionally representative. Newsworld, according to its initial broadcast license, would "reflect each part of Canada to itself and to other regions" (CRTC license decision 87-904, p. 245) and "draw upon the incredible wealth of material [within the Canadian broadcasting system] previously not given opportunity to be seen outside place of origin" (ibid., p. 247). Following its license deferral the corporation further pledged that at least 70% of its programming operations would be based outside of Toronto, mostly at regional headquarters in Halifax and Calgary. Newsworld was to be a regional service as against what the corporation referred to as a "perceived Central Canadian broadcast monopoly" (CBC: Comments, 1988, p.8). It was absolutely crucial to the credibility of the

service, recalled one Newsworld programmer, "that our operations be dispersed, and be seen to be dispersed" (FN/07/09/91, p.3).

As such, networking arrangements would work along the following lines. News reports would be prepared by CBC's local affiliates, logged on a computer file shared by Newsworld and the parent corporation and transmitted to Newsworld bureaux in Halifax, Toronto, Winnipeg and Calgary where they would be rebroadcast to a national audience on the news channel. Current affairs programming would be made available to the news channel on a similar basis. Via this network, Newsworld would "almost instantly" receive news and current affairs programming from each of Canada's regions, including northern Canada which was supplied with a satellite up-link as a condition of the CBC's cable news license (CRTC: Decision 97-904, November 30, 1987, p. 17).

What Newsworld was meant to do with that material remained somewhat unclear. Newsworld producers would have the job of presenting the regional reports as a "continuous stream" of programming to a national audience (CBC: Proposal for an All-Canadian News Channel, 1987, pp.30-31). But they would make little or no changes to individual stories as such: that is, producers would package the local material on the assumption that it had already been vetted at some level by the parent network. "We assume it conforms [to the

fairness and balance standards set out in the corporation's code of Journalistic Policy]", explained Newsworld president Joan Donaldson, "so, as much as possible, we show it 'as is' to a national audience" (interview with Joan Donaldson, October 18, 1990). In this way, said Donaldson, the "integrity" of regional programming would be maintained (ibid.). (4)

Secondly, the corporation pledged to include a greater variety of news sources in its schedule efforts and thereby provide a "fairer representation of Canada". Again, the corporation recognized the need to respond to the perception that conventional news formats provided a systematically narrow view of Canadian life. CBC officials claimed the news channel would address "silences in Canadian broadcasting" and open itself to "new voices" in society. Newsworld would be a forum for "distinct and different voices from all parts of the country" (Decision CRTC , 87-904, p. 228) with the service representing social and multicultural groups in a manner "that realistically reflects their participation in Canadian society" (ibid., p. 252). These were explicit promises of performance tabled at the CRTC licensing hearings in July, 1987 (see, for example, CRTC Specialty Programming Public Hearings, Volume 8, July 29, 1987, p. 3066), in the CBC's proposal for a specialty news service (see, for example, CBC: A Proposal for an All-Canadian News Channel, 1987, p.21), and in subsequent petitions to the

CRTC (see, for example, CBC: Comments on the CRTC Licensing of a Canadian News Channel, January, 1988, p. 17). They were reaffirmed in a number of official public statements.

Newsworld director Joan Donaldson, for instance, came to speak of a 24-hour "river of information", providing a "greater variety of perspectives on issues of importance to Canadians (Toronto Star, October 18, 1989). More news would mean more diverse news, news which drew upon a variety of perspectives not fully represented within the regular Canadian broadcasting system.(5)

Again there remained some question as to how such a commitment would be fulfilled in practice. As one service official recalled the service had "three options" in this regard (FN/07/19/87, p.5): Newsworld could "encourage viewer input"; it could "guarantee public access"; or it could "maintain the status quo". The latter courses were apparently rejected almost immediately. The corporation recognized that a 24 hour news channel "must open itself to new voices not fully represented in the Canadian broadcasting system" (ibid.). Options such as public access programming, however, which involved the partial or total surrender of programming authority to outside publics, would not be considered (ibid.).

That left viewer input. The CBC outlined a number of strategies which, it claimed, would allow audience members:

to express their concerns over the air within the confines of a corporately administered broadcast schedule. Cited with apparent approval in a number of statements before the CRTC were CNN's so-called "viewer response" technologies (CRTC: Specialty Programming Hearings, vol. 8, July 29, 1987, pp. 17-20). In the late 1980s the American network had begun to experiment with a number of audience participation strategies such as news polls which surveyed viewers about issues in the news, and the QUBE television systems in which viewers, or "news consumers" as they were called, rated stories they had seen and chose between upcoming items. The system was used by CNN on a trial basis in Columbus, Ohio.

Canadian viewer input strategies were, typically, founded on more modest technology but more ambitious rhetoric. As envisaged by the CBC, Newsworld would "stay in touch" with its viewers through a variety of phone-in formats and "public forums" which invited viewers, or "citizens" as they were called in the Canadian documents, to participate in the public debates and "help shape their communities" (CBC: Implementation Plan, 1989, pp. 2-3). The epitome of cable news programming, in this view, was the open line talk show format, in which broadcasters would, "as much as possible, allow audiences to talk to each other without broadcasters or their rules and regulations getting in the way" (ibid.).

Cable news thus promised not just a two-way flow of communication between audiences and broadcasters but sort of communication without organizational mediation. Cable news would, according to its corporate handlers, convey information from region to region, from citizen to citizen, as "directly and neutrally" as was possible on national television (ibid., p. 3). As Donaldson noted, ideally we just "open the lines to whoever wants to talk" (Globe and Mail, February 26, 1988, p. C3)..

Finally, cable programmers in both Canada and the United States made a further, quite distinct, claim for the authority of all-news service. Canadian programmers claimed that Newsworld's importance as a news service was based not so much on the amount, diversity or even the so-called "public utility" of its news coverage, as on its performance as a network of record. In other words what cable news promised first and foremost, beyond providing more news different news or or even interactive news was authoritative newscasting: complete, immediate and unmediated access to social events. In this respect the policy discourses governing cable news in Canada and the United States were quite similar.

Complete access - or at least extended versions of stories already being carried in some form on the regular CBC network - was a central claim made by Canadian all-news

officials both before and after the service went on the air in July of 1989. Newsworld programmers, like their American counterparts, generally equated live (usually lengthy) coverage of scheduled political events with public service, a service which they pointed out they, and only they, could provide on a regular continuing basis. With regular television networks in North America increasingly "questioning the news value of 'duty' political stories" (such as party conventions in the United States and election leader tours in Canada) and increasingly "relying on edited 'soundbites' in the coverage they did provide", cable news in Canada was founded on the belief that the public deserves to see "all stories concerned with the routine functions of government complete and unedited" with little or no journalistic mediation (interview with Trina McQueen, October 18, 1990, p.1).

Accordingly, the CRTC and CBC made a number of separate and joint efforts to ensure that a "complete" public affairs record be routinely carried on the news channel. These efforts included: a working proposal, outlined in 1990, to provide full coverage of major party platforms and policy statements during federal elections (Hogarth and Gilsdorf, 1991); a 1988 pledge to limit "information programming", such as sports and entertainment features, above and beyond the format restrictions laid down in the CRTC news channel licensing decision (CBC: Comments,

1988, p. 17); restrictions on a number of types of "commercial programming", limiting total advertising time, for instance, to no more than 8 minutes per hour, leaving Newsworld programmers considerable discretion in the placing of ads in the event of breaking stories (CRTC: Decision 89-599, August 25, 1989). In both licensing and corporate policy statements then, Newsworld was positioned quite specifically as a 24 hour "pure news and information" service which would provide a "reliable and constant reflection of Canadian life" (CBC: Comments, 1988, p. 7).

(6)

Newsworld has also been defined, legislatively and corporately, as an *instant* news service. The importance of live programming has been emphasized in the CBC's original license proposal which cites "instant and continuous" coverage as the centerpiece of Newsworld's daytime schedule (CBC: Proposal for all-Canadian news service, 1987, p. 14); in the major competing license bid from Edmonton's Allarcom corporation (which pledged to provide a "mostly live news and informations service"; Allarcom: Petition to the Governor in Council, December 21, 1987, p. 2); and in the CRTC response to that proposal which defines Newsworld as a "single time release project" which brings instant coverage of public events to all Canadians simultaneously, "combining live coverage of events such as political conventions and royal tours with newscasts, discussion, analysis,

documentaries and interviews" (CRTC: Decision 87-904, November 30, 1987, p. 228).

Newsworld officials have stated that the "main point" of a 24 hour news service is to provide "continuing news service: to get it first and to get it clean" FN/07/09/01, p. 1). The network of record's claim to produce an authoritative, epistemologically reliable broadcast would seem to depend, in principle at least, on its instantaneity: on a temporal immediacy which conceals the social mediation of the text - mediation which the network of record steadfastly denies.(7)

Finally, Newsworld seeks to provide news without professional journalistic mediation: As a news institution, Newsworld has been established to ensure that reports will be carried in full, in good time, and without undue corporate or professional handling. Beginning in 1987 the CRTC and the CBC introduced a number of measures to ensure that cable news work would adhere, and be seen to adhere, to established federal guidelines concerning fairness and impartiality in broadcasting. The CBC's Board of Directors, for instance, accompanied their 1987 proposal for an all-news service with an announcement concerning the establishment of a new Journalism Review Council and a new set of ombudsman procedures to monitor journalistic practices at the channel and on the regular network (CRTC:

Specialty Programming Public Hearings, volume 8, July 29, 1987, p.2221). In 1988, the CBC volunteered to revise and strengthen its code of Journalistic policy, "already the most demanding of its kind in Canada" and pledged that the new rules would be enforced rigorously (CBC: Comments, 1988, p. 17). The CRTC approved these measures and pledged to monitor and assess the work of cable journalists by these standards, this as a condition of license renewal (CRTC: Decision 89-831, November 8, 1988). (8)

As a media institution, then, Newsworld has been the site of a number of arrangements, political, economic, technological and more properly *disciplinary*, designed to ensure that 24 hour news be, and be seen to be, an instant and total record of public events free of the temporal, technological, organizational and professional biases of regular over-the-air news. It is primarily in this sense that, cable news work in Canada, like its counterpart in the United States, has been institutionally defined as an authoritative text.

3. Conclusion

Canadian broadcasters and legislators have advanced a number of claims that all-news television represents public life in a way regular news services cannot or will not do. In the Canadian attempts to establish an "open" and

"authoritative" news service, in its strict regimes governing advertising content, partisan balance, format quotas, as well as editing procedures and various technological regimens of use at the news channel, cable news has been institutionally positioned to provide a reliable record of Canadian public life, free of what are seen to be the commercial, political and professional distortions of regular public affairs television. At the same time the medium is expected to improve the level of public discourse in this country. It is expected to become, as CRTC chairman Keith Spicer puts it, a "vital part of Canadian life" (Globe and Mail, August 18, 1992, p. A9). It is in this broader sense then that cable news has developed as an authoritative news institution in Canada: as what Joan Donaldson calls the the "last bastion of pure public information on Canadian television" (interview with Joan Donaldson, October 18, 1988, p.6). From an institutional point of view, then, cable news can be defined as follows: as an established social practice which uses 24 hour television news technology to both "reflect" and substantively "improve" Canadian public life.

That definition raises two questions which I want to address with respect to the agency-structure problematic of this dissertation. First, there is what might be called the "autonomy" issue. That is, what scope of action do the rules, regulations and established practices of cable news

in Canada allow cable news workers in their daily activities? And in what sense is cable news work an "institutionally constrained" practice? These, of course, are the issues which have dominated sociological news studies for over 40 years and which continue to be predominant in current debates over the "relative autonomy" of cultural practice.

A second issue I want to address has to do with "recursivity". Here the question is: how and in what sense are cable news workers not merely relatively autonomous but recursively implicated in the structural conditions of their work? How do cable news workers, for instance, draw upon, reproduce and sometimes alter the rules and resources of organized cable news work? How in short do they operate as agents who can make a difference - a real structural difference - in cable news production? How do they set out to both "reflect" and substantively "improve" Canadian public life? The second question is to my mind, more interesting than the first. It is the focus of most of the remainder of the dissertation.

Footnotes

1) CNN officials cited their "gavel to gavel" coverage of the Democratic and Republican party conventions, for instance, as the most "important kind of stories we do in the long run". CNN's decision to provide such coverage against the regular networks scaled-down reports was, programmers say, a "turning point" in the organization's development as a public affairs broadcaster (New York Times, August 19, 1984, p. B1);.

In 1984 the Atlanta network spent over \$6 million of its total \$12 million campaign budget on convention coverage. "Gavel to gavel" coverage was also CNN's "major spending item" in the 1988 campaign; New York Times, April 24, 1987, p. C30).

Gaining access to the record makers, particularly the US president and key American policy-makers has been a complementary goal for the network, and the determination with which it has pursued that prize (launching, for instance, a four year law suit to break up the White House-Network cartels governing access to the special presidential events) gives some indication of the extent to which regularly scheduled political events - party conventions, presidential tours, press conferences covered in their

entirety - have become the staple fare of the network's public affairs schedule during and between elections.

2) That approach to news coverage has provoked considerable criticism from those (including some CNN staffers) who maintain that CNN has come to rely far too heavily on press releases and staged events to fill its line-up. "Too much duty coverage of official Washington" says *Newsweek* magazine in its 10th anniversary assessment of the network. "CNN has certainly not reinvented the formula of political news" (*Newsweek*, June 11, 1990, p.48). CNN's original Investigative Unit director Ted Kavanau has similarly criticized CNN's political bureau in Washington for "years of putting out standard stuff, not real news." (Whittemore, 1990, p.299; Kavanau's plans to "turn Washington upside down" were cut short when his special investigative unit was disbanded shortly before the last US presidential election). CNN has recently established new investigative units to cover political affairs and we were told they would play a "prominent" (though as yet imprecise) role in the next campaign. Still, Turner's promise to provide "electronic sunshine" on the political process by making politicians accountable for their actions seems to be treated with a considerable degree of scepticism by many American journalists and party strategists (Hogarth and Gilsdorf, 1991).

It also seems that CNN has not fully used the extra broadcast time at its disposal to air alternative points of view on political issues. A 1982 content study of the network has found some evidence that CNN "relies on a wider variety of sources and presents a better balanced mix of viewpoints" than its competitors (relying for instance on more "non-partisan experts" and less government sources in its political and economic stories; Maines, P., 1984). That study, however, seems to have included current affairs programming in its sample (where outside experts are normally heavily represented in debate formats such as CNN's "Crossfire) and excluded live coverage where the views of public officials are generally more heavily represented (often without journalistic comment). Moreover, this report and further research work by Womack (1989) suggests that CNN does not provide wider access in proportion to the extra newstime it has at its disposal.

Similarly, CNN's attempts to provide airtime for minor parties or social movements have been notable but somewhat sporadic. In the 1980 political campaign, the network caused somewhat of a sensation by including independent candidate John Anderson in a presidential debate, against the wishes of the sponsoring League of Women Voters and the other Republican and Democratic candidates (Anderson's statements were edited into the tape at CNN's Washington bureau). Stu

"blazed a new trail in journalism" with its coverage (Whitt more, 1990, p. 180) and John J. O'Connor of the New York Times viewed the CNN broadcast as an "intriguing glimpse into a possible future when all third party candidates...will have access to a national forum", access which is "impossible on limited over the air network television" (New York Times, October 29, 1980, p. 29). The network has not repeated the experiment in subsequent campaigns, however, and apparently has no immediate plans to do so. CNN officials we spoke with stressed their organization was not a "public access" channel and that the network had no responsibility to make special efforts for third party candidates during the campaign. According to one official, CNN's policy on this matter is essentially that of the other networks: that is it will provide special access for third party candidates "if and only if they have clear public support".

3) The CBC's application for a separate French language service was denied, though a new Radio Canada proposal for a French language service is being prepared for the CRTC as this dissertation is being written.

4) More closely monitored - and perhaps more problematic for the service - will be the maintenance of a regional (and partisan balance) between stories received from the parent network. A structure to monitor balance as such has

apparently not yet been established, though during the 1990 Manitoba and Ontario elections Newsworld developed a logging and entry system to keep track of how parties and interests were being represented in the regional program packages; this system may well remain in place in future elections. Other than these basic measures regulating the flow of political campaign material, however, CBC officials insist that corporate "filters" on the regional material will be kept to a minimum. Newsworld, says Donaldson, will allow the regions to "speak directly about issues which concern them to a national audience" - through the CBC affiliate system (ibid.). Moreover, Newsworld will apparently use its own current affairs programming - specifically the interview, analysis and debate formats produced out of Halifax, Winnipeg, Calgary, Toronto and Ottawa - to reflect regional concerns and issues with "as little distortion as possible" (ibid.).

5) These claims are, to be sure, somewhat problematic since, as a "second window" on the regular network, the news channel relies on news programming in which constraints of time and conventional journalistic notions of balance are in full force. These constraints, which have traditionally excluded minority parties and interests from being fully represented on the regular channels of the Canadian broadcasting system, continue to govern much of Newsworld's programming - at source.

These constraints may be somewhat relaxed in Newsworld's original programming schedule (Hogarth and Gilsdorf, 1991). But Newsworld officials say they will emphasize repeat news headlines (mostly provided by the parent network) when important stories break, the sort of "news wheel" and headline formats on which all-news services have traditionally relied, along with live coverage, to fill their broadcast days. In other words, the amount of extra broadcast time available to minority interests and parties on the news channel may be rather less than corporate statements have indicated. Moreover, and this is a point which should be stressed, access provided to minority social movements will almost certainly not be in proportion to the amount of extra broadcast time available to Newsworld producers. In other words, if Newsworld does "open the airwaves" to alternative news and views, it may not open them much, and even then only within its limited original program schedule.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the Newsworld organization does not recognize any "special obligations" to provide public access under its current charter. That is, even assuming Newsworld producers did have full 24 hour days with which to reflect the "full balance" of Canadian viewpoints on any given issue they accept no special responsibility to do so, above and beyond the CBC's normal

operating procedures in this area. For instance, Trina McQueen has stated that Newsworld will "act like any other broadcaster" to ensure that its coverage is fair and balanced (interview with Trina McQueen, October 18, 1990, p. 1); that is, its coverage will be governed by the CBC's 1988's regulations concerning party political broadcasts and in particular by the corporation's code of Journalistic Policy (which, among other things, calls for CBC reporters to represent a balance of opinion on social issues, taking into account the "weight of opinion" behind a point of view).

6) Newsworld has pledged to provide full coverage of party platforms, speeches and policy statements in the next federal election and between campaigns as events warrant - and they will probably make good on that promise. The all-news service provided over 450 hours of live event coverage in its first year of service (including over 20 hours of live coverage of the first ministers' conference on the Meech Lake Accord in June, 1990; Montreal Gazette, July 2, 1990, p. B3) and apparently exceeded that amount in its second season (mostly because of its ongoing coverage of the Oka Crisis and the Gulf War). Because of current networking arrangements with the CBC and because of the apparently high ratings at least some of that programming enjoys, service officials report they will continue to emphasize extended or "complete" news coverage in years to come.

7) Canadian broadcasters seem to view the network of record as a working ideal rather than a standard which could be immediately met in practice. Unlike their American counterparts, for instance, Newsworld programmers generally represent unscheduled stories iconically with phone in reports and still photos. The service's coverage of the Oka crisis and the Gulf War, consisted mostly of reporter voice overs and map backdrops. For Newsworld staffers such coverage is essential - "we can't hide the story" as one staffer puts it - but remains problematic in that it continuously calls attention to conditions of production. As one reporter remarked about Newsworld's Gulf War coverage, "there was no suspension of disbelief with us. With CNN you were there but with Newsworld you were with us in the studio hoping the phone lines would hold out and that our budget wouldn't be cut" (11/07/09/91, p.4).

From a critical sociological point of view, live 24 hour news coverage in Canada can be seen, in part, as an ideological project which allows viewers to recognize themselves as subjects of a national news discourse, and to "speak it" spontaneously. Donaldson, for instance, remembers watching the coronation of Elizabeth II with her grandmother, which she believed epitomized what the cable news viewing experience should be:

She [her grandmother] waved to the queen, she talked to her as if she believed she were right there. She believed there were people in the box. I've always loved the idea of liveness, of it all happening in that little box (Globe and Mail, February 26, 1988, p. C3)

8) These guidelines have been criticized by some cable journalists who maintain the service should be governed by a distinct code of journalistic practice concerning fairness and balance. According to one, present guidelines have discouraged distinct news and current affairs formats from emerging on the news channel and have prevented journalists from being "different and creative" on the job (FN/12/10/90, p. 1). Newsworld officials, however, stress that journalists "must not use the 24 hour format as a sounding board" and must be "neutral and impartial as regular network journalists, only more so" (FN/07/10/91, p. 3).

Chapter 3

Internal Social Control at CBC Newsworld

1. Organizational Control at CBC Newsworld: the Relationship with the CBC
2. Internal Control: Supervision of All-News Television Production
3. Internal Control: Documentation of All-News Television Production
4. Conclusion

Chapter 3

Internal Social Control at CBC Newsworld

Cable news work in Canada is constrained news work.

Journalists at "The Week Starts Here" and the "CBC Morning News", like organized journalists everywhere, produce a news package with available technologies and according to established regimens of use. As members of a broadcasting organization funded entirely by advertising and subscriber fees they contend with limited (and often declining) budgets.(1) As Canadian news producers they draw on a limited range of foreign and domestic news sources.(2) As news processors they negotiate most of these production constraints within the time-space zonings of the broadcast organization.(3) And, importantly, as cable programmers they work to meet deadlines and to process enough stories to fill a 24 hour schedule; in other words, they have too much time and not enough of it. In Canada, cable news workers are thus financially, technologically, temporally and spatially limited in what they can say and do on the air and behind the scenes in their jobs.

These are the types of constraints with which organizational approaches are generally concerned; news work, it is pointed out, is socially controlled to meet a number of "organizational needs". But cable news work is

also institutionally controlled. That is the nature of the work is defined and limited not just by local, shortish-term organizational prerogatives - by the need to produce shows with this year's technology or within this year's budget, for instance - but by deeply sedimented institutional conditions of possibility: for instance, by the need to produce programming which effectively "represents", and "improves" the quality of Canadian public life within the guidelines of established discourses on broadcasting.

In this chapter, I want to examine the means by which these various organizational and institutional "needs" are brought to bear on the activities of news workers within the time-space zones of the organization; to see, that is, how control operates on the job. I begin with a study of the nature and extent of managerial autonomy at the all-news service given its present administrative relationship with the CBC. I then examine the operation of specific social control systems at the organization including: "supervisory" or direct control systems which essentially involve the face to face monitoring of news workers by management; and "documentary" or mediated control systems in which news work is administered and regulated through specialized record-keeping procedures. I conclude with some more general remarks concerning internal social control: the means by which institutionalized rules and resources come to mediate production activities in specific organizational settings. The purpose of this discussion is to provide the beginning

of an outline of the relationship between agency and structure in a specific social context: cable news production in Canada.

1. Organizational Control at CBC Newsworld: the Relationship with the CBC

Canada's news channel was established in 1987 as a "parallel but differentiated" service of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (see chapter 2). In other words, Newsworld was largely designed to carry original current affairs programming and extended coverage of news stories already being carried on the regional and national services of the CBC, subject to corporate regulations governing fairness and balance, journalistic conduct and public access in broadcasting. CBC's news channel is thus bound by the same rules concerning quality control as the regular network. In this sense, Newsworld has little programming autonomy. There are no formal rules peculiar to the cable news medium in Canada concerning what constitutes legitimate and illegitimate, good and bad, news reporting.

At the same time, the cable news service has a fair deal of latitude as to how it puts these rules into practice. It is essentially the responsibility of the Newsworld organization itself to apply CBC standards to all-news broadcasting. As CBC's initial blueprint for an all-news service puts it, Newsworld production teams are to be

"largely independent", "responsible for production decisions in their own pieces of the programming schedule" (CBC: Proposal for an All-Canadian News Channel, 1987, p.30). In practice this means that Newsworld producers head a team of anchors, writers, technicians, script assistants and program directors, all of whom are responsible for decisions concerning the selection, editing, and scheduling of programming for a defined period of the broadcast week. (CRTC: Specialty Programming Public Hearings, July 29, 1989, p. 2221). A record of these production decisions, in the form of budgets, production schedules and scripts, is submitted to Newsworld executive producers based in Halifax, Ottawa, Winnipeg and Calgary, then to the Director of Newsworld service in Toronto, and from there to CBC's Director of Television News and Current Affairs who "lets the executive producers or [news channel] director know if there are any problems". (interview with Trina McQueen, October 18, 1990, p. 2). (4)

In these respects, the service enjoys a fair amount of autonomy with respect to the day-to-day management of all-news production. One reason for this, frequently cited by journalists and administrative officials alike at the news service, is that cable news production remains largely uncoordinated with regular news production in time and space. Because of the geographically dispersed nature of the work - mostly based outside Toronto - and the odd hours at

which it is produced - peak production time being from 2 a.m. to 6 a.m., Halifax time, CBC officials are not able to intervene in most all-news production decisions as they happen. Instead Newsworld broadcasts are monitored for their adherence or non-adherence to corporate performance standards, and even then, CBC officials insist, only casually and after the fact (FN/04/10/90, p. 2). Newsworld officials mostly confirm this organizational scenario (FN/07/09/91, p.3). (5) (6)

Newsworld thus finds itself in the curious position of being a news organization whose equipment, staff, and standards of production are mostly not its own, but an organization which, at the same time, utilizes these resources and realizes these standards mostly as it sees fit. In practice, this means that cable news workers draw on a number of rules and resources - technological regimens of use, staffing arrangements, codes of journalistic practice - which have become institutions in regular over the air news production in Canada (see chapter 2). Institutional mediation as such, however, is largely managed on a day-to-day basis by all-news authorities themselves within the production settings of the organization. In these circumstances, and within these limits, cable news work has come to be largely controlled - monitored and regulated - by the cable news organization itself.

2. Internal Control: Supervision of All-News Television Production

In daily production settings, cable news work is essentially controlled through two types of procedure: through direct supervision which involves the face-to-face monitoring of cable newswriters by Newsworld administrative authorities; and through "documentary" or "mediated" control in which news work is administered and regulated through specialized record-keeping procedures. These are the means by which organizational and institutional "needs" are brought to bear on the activities of news workers within the time-space zones of the organization. Here I begin with an examination of procedures for direct supervision at CBC Newsworld.

There are numerous arrangements for supervision in most news organizations and the Ottawa bureau of CBC Newsworld has established a fairly conventional range of locales in which the regular observation of news work can be carried out. The Ottawa bureau is essentially designed as a series of "open spaces" - central news bureaux, specialized writing centers and video editing booths - all of which allows production to be surveilled by authorized personnel. Wire-processing operations are placed under particularly "concentrated" surveillance in these conditions. News processing at the Ottawa bureau generally takes place from Tuesday to Friday, during which time virtually the entire

newswriting and copy-editing staff is gathered at regular hours (10 a.m. to 6 p.m.) at one supervised work site to prepare background reports and finished scripts for the Sunday morning broadcast of "The Week Starts Here".

This central news bureau is essentially an open space of wire terminals and aisles which allow production supervisors to scan incoming stories and supervise the editing of program material, from rough drafts to finished copy. Newswriters - many of them young, some of them journalism school interns - are expected to write a quota of stories which are suitable for broadcast delivery; and in this work situation, according to one supervisor, they should be further ready and able to "explain what they are doing" to senior staff (FN/07/11/89/p.2). One writer I spoke with called this "assembly line" production, not just because of the routine nature of the work but because of the rough organizational handling stories often receive during the day - handling which, in sociological terms, typically alienates news "texts" from news "authors". The copy editor makes this point in more practical terms. "You're always losing control of your stories", he explains. "It's only a matter of time before some asshole overhauls it to make sure there are two points of view or some other reason; that's just bureau work" (FN/12/11/89/p.3)

Supervision and intervention are also fairly standard practice when these stories come to be edited. News and current affairs stories, texts and video footage, are assembled for final broadcast on Saturday mornings by several production assistants and a production supervisor who divides his time between cutting booths. Most edits are thus dictated by the supervisor and edited stories are reviewed in their entirety by two supervisors - a producer and a director - with assistants in attendance so that changes may be made on the spot. All stories for the "Week Starts Here" - virtually without exception - are bureaucratically vetted as such before broadcast, mostly to ensure that stories are "fair and balanced" and "up to date" features of the 24 hour news and current affairs service.(7)

At "The Week Starts Here", taping of in-studio linkages between stories takes place in the latter half of the week and is itself supervised by at least six producers: a sound engineer who monitors for acoustic quality, a script assistant who ensures fidelity to prepared scripts, a director who scans the studio monitors to manage cuts between camera shots and a producer who oversees all of these activities and occasionally revises scripts as taping proceeds. Broadcasters adhere to formal programming formats (most of them devised jointly between management and staff) which divide each broadcast of "The Week Starts Here" into subject sections of standardized length. Each segment takes

from three minutes to half an hour of a three hour broadcast and is double-timed by a producer and script assistant. The broadcast is thus closely temporally regulated from start to finish with pacing errors corrected and scripts shortened or lengthened as the taping proceeds. Most producers allow no more than 15 seconds leeway for each section because apparently no more than that amount of time can be added or subtracted from the rest of the show without holding up the production schedule. Supervised as such, the bulk of "The Week Starts Here" can be taped in two 3-hour sessions on Thursday and Friday mornings.

Supervision is still more pervasive at the "CBC Morning News", facilitated as at the "Week Starts Here" by architectural and scheduling patterns within the newsroom. The main Newsworld office in Halifax consists of three editing suites, a control room and an open newsroom in which all work - that of writers, editors, technicians, directors, line-up producers, senior producers and on-camera hosts - is on continual public display. Writing, editing, and directing are placed under constant and often concentrated surveillance in these circumstances.

Production begins Sunday at 11 a.m. with a producers' meeting and continues until Friday at 1 p.m following the last broadcast of the week. In between these times the newsroom is staffed by, at the very least, six personnel (2

senior producers, 3 writers and a script assistant) working in 8 hour shifts, 24 hours a day. At peak hours during early morning broadcasts up to twenty personnel (including host senior producers and writers and production assistants) gather in the newroom at one time, working side by side. with no empty desks, no free workspaces and, according to one staff member "almost no privacy whatsoever". Thus news work at the CBC Morning News is almost always accomplished within an open and visible space.

Scripts for the program undergo a variety of forms of inspection before broadcast. Preparation of the morning news cast usually begins in earnest at 2 a.m when two writers, a night producer and a features producer begin to "chase" stories being carried on the regular CBC network and look for new items on the wires (Associated Press, Reuters, United Press International, Agence France Presse and Canadian Press) and on BBC's daily morning newscast (received by satellite). Writing and editing proceeds until 4 a.m when a morning producer arrives to read through the scripts and place them provisionally within a line-up. At 5:30 a.m., the program package is presented to a show producer who reviews the work of the writers (making sure that stories are "clear, balanced and up to date") and the line-up editors (making sure that the show as a whole "moves, makes sense and has the right 'global look'"). Senior producers and line-up producers very often watch monitors

and instruct writers as drafts are edited. "There's no room for mistakes" says one line-up producer. "If you want the script done right and on time - and we all do - you have to put some pressure on people. We all need it" (FN/12/10/91, p.4).

Supervision is most intense at peak production hours - 5:30 a.m. to 12 p.m., roughly the hours of the newscast itself. At 5:30, newscasters gather off camera to read through scripts and review interview material in the presence of show producers. "We run through the line-up several times" says one on-camera host, "until we're all comfortable with the show" (ibid., p. 7). That process continues intermittently throughout the morning as hosts consult with show producers outside the anchor booth during and between newscasts. At 9:00 a.m. a senior news producer arrives to review the line-up and individual stories, often from first to final drafts. Senior producers rarely supervise the production process per se but arrange for all line-ups, story versions and available CBC and wire stories to go through their computer terminals, thereby allowing them to check on how line-up producers and show producers have shortened, lengthened, rewritten, revised and placed stories within the newscast. Vetting as such can be "very thorough" or a "mere formality" (ibid., p.4).

From 5:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. scripts are assembled with available video footage (most of it from the parent CBC network). At this stage newswriters bring approved story drafts from the newsroom to video editors and direct cuts in footage to match transitions in the script. Editing suites are on separate floors and can only be reached by a rather circuitous route; but editing schedules and the movements of personnel through these spaces are listed in the central newsroom and in this way senior producers are essentially able to supervise the process at will. Managers can and do oversee work they consider to be important - particularly work on story transitions - "bumpers", "stings" and "closing visuals" which are seen to lend the newscast a "structure" and a "live" feel (FN/11/10/90, p.3; see also chapter 4). In these circumstances, editing is placed under concentrated surveillance. In the course of a single editing session, usually at least 3 or 4 people will pass through the work area to see how the story is taking shape.

News texts - scripted video footage which has been vetted in the newsroom and the editing suites - are then sent to the control room where they are finally monitored and regulated by at least 6 on-duty personnel: by a director who directs camera shots in the anchor room (via a robotic camera), by a switcher who punches in graphic changes; by a resource producer who checks satellite lines and arranges feeds with other television news bureaus; by a script

assistant who times the show, programs segments, and segments within segments such as interviews which might be used for other stories or features; and by a control producer who reviews scripts and phones instructions to on-camera hosts as the newscast progresses.

The control room essentially provides mediated supervision of all aspects of all-news production. During interview segments, for instance, control producers provide background reports and questions to on-camera hosts and brief guests as to the structure of an interview. Control producers often ask both parties to stage a dry run of the interview and will rehearse the segment "until everyone feels right about it" (ibid.). At the same time, completed interviews and newscasts are timed and retimed for broadcast. Generally, control producers try to make sure that segments are kept to within 7 seconds of their allotted time while staying true to formats and question plans. Compromises can be made, particularly with respect to "heavy" items which serve to fill airtime and can be added or subtracted from the newscast as it proceeds. "Our worst fear is to go undertime" says producer. "Subtraction's a lot easier than addition after airtime" (ibid., p.2). Scripting, however, is precise and non-negotiable, at least from the control producer's point of view. As one explains, "its very important that the programming reach a certain standard especially since we're just starting out and everyone wants

to set a standard... Sometimes you get into the mentality that [the interviewers] shouldn't deviate even one word from the gameplan" (ibid.).

Producers at the "CBC Morning News" describe these various phases of work surveillance production as "lines of defence": monitoring procedures by which work is "brought up to standard" on a routine basis. The quality of the broadcast is seen to depend on its being closely and constantly supervised by successive levels of management in all phases of production at all times of the day. No producer and no production context is immune from control as such. As one manager puts it "everyone needs an editor. We all need someone looking over our shoulder" (FN/07/10/91, p.2).

3. Internal Control: Documentation of All News Television Production

Besides being directly overseen by managerial authorities, each stage of production is quite thoroughly documented by news workers themselves. These procedures essentially facilitate what might be called a more "mediated" type of bureaucratic control, the exercise of which tends to be more extended in time and space than the direct control procedures described above. With mediated control systems in place, records of production activities can be

intermittently monitored by administrative personnel and, in theory at least, drawn upon to allow "guided interventions" in the production cycle.

At "The Week Starts Here", for instance, both staff and management who wish to institute changes in programming format often bring records of past shows - and production errors - to make their case at the Monday production meeting (FN/11/08/89, p.1; FN/11/22/89, pp.2-3; see also below). Scripts, production sheets, audio-visual data, and audience "response" (i.e. letters to the station) all serve as records of past performance - and resources for future corporate interventions. In this sense, documentation allows for various aspects of news work to be regulated beyond the temporal-spatial confines of the supervised production contexts, beyond the situations of labour-management "copresence" described above.

In fact, documentation is a more prevalent feature of everyday life at "The Week Starts Here" than the managerial "panopticons" described above. Throughout the week, scripts are logged (from first to final drafts, each colour coded), tapes stored, visual and acoustic features of broadcasts recorded, even the pacing, delivery and pauses between program sections registered as a matter of routine record. Program proposals, budget drafts, "audience consultations", broadcast reception reports and broadcast tapes all

establish cumulative files for specialized administrative publics. And in these files, the routine activities of producer-journalists can be charted over time, yielding data which, in theory at least, can be drawn upon to regulate future performance.

In practice, these records are rarely the sole basis for disciplinary action at the newsroom. "We get a rough sense of how people are working out just by working with them", explains one Ottawa producer:

We get a day-to-day impression of how people are doing and that's mostly what we rely on. Its usually pretty clear to everyone if its not working out. Usually, we just check the scripts if its a formal case - like if someone accuses us of imbalance or impropriety, or if there's a dispute here over who's screwing up on the job. But it's all down on paper if we need it (FN/11/10/89).

Documentation is still more pervasive at the "CBC Morning News". All scripts for the show are logged on the CBC's "info-system" computer disks - this including news stories from the CBC national and regional news desks with authors, datelines, source networks and times of transmission duly recorded. Scripts prepared at the "CBC Morning News" are generally logged according to draft numbers with authors, contributing editors, information sources, and revisions generally marked in the text.

Documentation as such is essentially designed to allow administrative interventions in various stages of text

production. Senior producers, for instance, use this information to monitor nighttime writing and editing when they arrive later in the morning. "It gives me a good idea what's gone on here before I arrived", one producer explains. "It lets me sleep in a bit" (FN/10/10/91, p.1). Control producers who each receive one of 6 copies of the final production script note that script records allow them to "know who did what when and how it can be changed if need be" (FN/11/10/91, p.2). Moreover, producers can draw upon information in earlier script drafts to revise final texts before broadcast (FN/10/10/91, p.2).

Broadcast tapes are logged with similar practical detail. Scripts and video footage put together in editing suites, for instance, are logged by both editors and newswriters for total running time, voice over times, camera shot times and interview times in successive edited versions. Again this is a record, management and staff can draw upon to review and, if need be, revise a text. When time is short, for instance, these records rather than tapes themselves are consulted by staff and senior management to ensure that broadcasts have conformed to established corporate standards of production. Senior producers, for instance, often check script edits to see what interview footage has been left out in violation of fairness and balance standards (FN/07/10/91, p.4). Journalists often may monitor themselves on this basis, but more often consult the

script edits for material for other texts (such as interviews and file footage, for instance). Tapes and tape segments are often double-timed by control producers and script assistants for roughly the same reasons: to keep the newscast on schedule, to ensure that it is "balanced" with respect to partisan issues and to allow other journalists and producers to use segments of the line-up for future productions (ibid.).

Making a record of the text and reviewing it can be as exhaustive and repetitive - and indeed as a "stage of production" it is virtually inseparable from the making of the text itself. Recording and production go hand in hand at virtually every stage. Scripts may easily be read, revised and recorded by 15 personnel in the course of the production day; they are routinely reprinted in groups of six for inspection by virtually the entire newsroom. Broadcast tapes - the final record of scripts of edited video footage - are watched, timed and logged by at least 10 staff members in the newsroom, editing suites and control room before they go on the air (FN/05/10/91, pp.2-3).

The recording process does not stop there. Broadcasts are monitored and assessed for reception quality in cooperation with Telesat Canada (FN/07/107/91, p.1). Resource producers routinely document the technical quality of satellite feeds. They also receive reception "report

cards" from cable company subscribers across the country via CBC offices in Toronto. The financial accounting of all this production work takes place throughout the broadcast day, in conformity with the "incremental cost accounting" systems now in place at the news channel, (FN/11/10/91, p.1).

Newsworld uses the "incremental cost accounting" system to calculate extra goods and services received from the CBC and to demonstrate to the CRTC and the office of the Canadian Auditor-General that the news channel is not being subsidized by the public broadcasting system. Documenting the production process as such is actually a condition of license at the news channel.

Finally, the record may be drawn upon by senior producers to facilitate format interventions. On September 12, 1991, for instance, the executive producer at the "CBC Morning News" used a script record to "confirm [his] impression" that the program had come to "rely too heavily" on interviews in the between-newscast section of the program. "Its rare we have a full-fledged post-mortem on the program format", he noted:

Usually it [the format] just sort of evolves according to the needs of the day. But lately, I've really had the feeling - in fact I think we've all had the feeling - that we've been using too many talking-heads and particularly too many journalists as talking-heads. It's not a huge deal, nothing we can't deal with but we do need some changes. I wanted to make the case at the [September 12] production meeting, so I brought

yesterday's script as a case in point and we all looked it over. We were all pretty much agreed this was a problem with the program (FN/12/09/91, p.3).

According to the producer, interviews at the "CBC Morning News" had originally been designed to "provide background for the stories in the news". As such, they were to be "conducted with the day's newsmakers" and serve as "supplementary items"; items which "don't overwhelm the news line-up", which are "integrated with the line-up and live breaking stories" ("the main part of our mandate").

A breakdown of the 7 to 8 a.m. peak viewing line-up, however, indicated that interviews were not being used in this fashion. The September 11 "backgrounders" (items featured between newscasts) included a 4 minute interview with an employee of the Department of National Defense about the strike by the Public Service Alliance of Canada ("a good item", according to the executive producer, with a "guy at the center of the day's big story"); a 5 minute panel discussion with Alain Gagnon of McGill University and Jack Granatstein of the University of Toronto concerning Ontario and Quebec's position in Canada's constitutional talks ("a bad item": "experts going on about issues which concern experts"); a 4 minute interview with a CBC Regina journalist concerning the proposed Alameida Dam project (another "bad item": "any interview with a journalist is a 'second best'"); and a 4 minute interview with Yuri Glasov of

Dalhousie University concerning the week's developments in foreign affairs (an "okay item": "another in-studio expert, but Yuri's entertaining").

The executive producer had been absent from the newsroom for several days but a glance at the September 11 script "confirmed [his] impression" that virtually the entire "Morning News" schedule with the exception of the newscast and the regular pre-taped sports and weather items, was now being devoted to interviews. At the September 12 production meeting, the producers agreed that this had become a problem and that, henceforth, no more than two interviews should be run each half hour, which should be "conducted with newsmakers in the news whenever possible". The producers also agreed that "live news coverage should be given more emphasis in the show" (ibid.). The executive producer pledged to "keep tabs" on the new format pending another post-mortem in a month's time.

With records such as the script in place concerning the selection, editing, packaging, reception of and spending on all-news broadcasts, an ongoing program record is yielded which, in theory at least, can be used by various authorized publics to regulate future newsroom performance. Producers can monitor production records and ascertain which scripts have been selected, how, when and by whom they have been edited and then synchronized with video footage. Control

room producers can consult a tape - a broadcast record or a written record of that record - to facilitate scripting and timing of on-air programming. Corporate officials and journalists can, if need be, use scripts and files on scripts (which are kept for at least a year) to demonstrate that they have abided by established codes of journalistic practice. And outside publics such as regulatory authorities and union officials can use budget statements to monitor how money is being spent at the service according to what purposes. Record-keeping thus facilitates a number of corporate interventions in cable news work. And in these circumstances, supervision - the face to face monitoring of news work by management - becomes, to a certain extent, a redundant feature in the work process.

Newsworld officials claim to have established a broadcasting service which is "fully accountable in all of its activities" (FN/11/12/89, p.2): that is a service which keeps complete up-to-date records of its activities for inspection by both corporate and outside political agencies. But they admit there is too much of that record to be either kept on file, or to otherwise facilitate effective corporate interventions. Cable news work is, as one Newsworld producer puts it, "totally overbureaucratized" (ibid.). Much of the work record is "useless and cumbersome" for management and just "so much paperwork". Most cable journalists agree. One major complaint from staff at Newsworld concerns all the

paperwork documentary procedures entail. Journalists at the Ottawa and Halifax bureaus spend up to one third of their days reporting on themselves (FN/10/10/89, p.2; FN/14/10/91, p.4).

4. Conclusion

Surveillance is plainly designed to regulate cable news work according to a number of institutional "needs". News work is supervised to ensure that it conforms to codes of journalistic practice, to institutionalized financial and technical arrangements and formatting procedures, many of which are outlined in the all-news service's conditions of license. In this sense, control procedures are a bridge between production practices and their institutional conditions. They are the means by which institutionalized rules and resources are brought to bear on the daily activities of all-news journalists: the means by which cable news work is more or less structured. In the chapter that follows, however, I want to focus more specifically on how institutionalized rules and resources come to emerge from all-news production practices themselves. In other words, I want to examine how and in what sense, news workers are not just either "controlled" or "relatively autonomous",

but recursively implicated within the structural conditions of their work. I want to examine cable news work as a form of cultural agency in accordance with the problematic laid out at the beginning of this dissertation.

Endnotes

1) Newsworld's budgets are generally less than 10% those of the American "Cable News Network" (CNN). Newsworld began broadcasting with a budget of CDN\$ 19.3 million in 1989 (Globe and Mail, December 8, 1988, p. C1). By 1991, that amount had increased to almost CDN\$ 26 million. Operating monies are to be drawn from subscriber fees and advertising revenues. The news channel submits its budgets annually to the Auditor General's office to ensure its operations are not being subsidized by the regular CBC network.

2) Newsworld subscribes to the Associated Press (AP), Agence France Presse (AFP), Reuters, and Canadian Press/Broadcast News wire services and has also concluded a number of program and documentary exchange agreements with foreign broadcasting organizations in the United States, Great Britain, Japan, France and Belgium.

3) Newsworld has hired a basic staff of 20 new journalists to produce cable news in Canada - not a sufficient number to allow for full-scale investigative reporting. Jerry Macdonald, Executive Secretary of the Canadian Wire Services Guild thus predicts that Canadian cable news workers will be forced to "stay behind their desks and edit stories [to come up with a 24 hour news package]; they won't be out on the

street as reporters" ("Montreal Gazette", December 2, 1987, p. B1).

4) "CBC Morning News" teams, for instance, generally produce programming in 8 hour daily shifts throughout the broadcast day, with larger teams in operation during "production-intensive" time periods (6 a.m- 1 p.m. Atlantic time). Each producer is responsible for programming decisions during these time periods.

5) The one regular means of consultation between Newsworld and the parent network concerning day-to-day programming comes during a daily 10:45 a.m conference call in which Newsworld executive producers from Halifax, Winnipeg and Calgary give senior CBC news producers an overview of their upcoming news line-ups and interview schedules. "Sometimes we receive feedback on what we've done with [the CBC] stories", says one producer at the CBC Morning News, but its mostly just relayed to Sandy [the show's executive producer] and its pretty general stuff; nothing you could run a newscast on" (interview, 11/09/91, p. 2). As far as the production, packaging and scheduling of all-news material is concerned, says one Newsworld official, "they [the CBC] mostly just leave us alone".

6) Budget allocations operate on similar principles. The CBC helps the news channel secure cable contracts and commercial

sponsorship and sets overall budget targets for programming. Long and short-term program expenditures are largely planned by Newsworld's own budgetary committees, however, and only submitted for final approval to the CBC.

7) Documentary material from known suppliers - such as the French Belgian television services - may be included in "The Week Starts Here" sight unseen. Last minute news stories are reviewed by at least one supervisor before they go on the air (FN/1211/89, p.3).

8) Absolute documentary control over cable news production is, of course, never achieved. Documentation is particularly limited in the degree to which it facilitates the control over production in time. That is, while documentation extends spatial control by allowing managers to consult a record rather than being present during all phases of production, it still usually requires them to consult that record immediately given the pace of the work week. This is particularly the case in cable news as opposed to current affairs production. The pace of production at the "CBC Morning News", for instance, does not permit a regular or routine review of the program record. Full-fledged post-

mortems are rare. As one news producer explains:

We're just too pressed and if they do take place they're pretty casual and impressionistic, like 'what did you think of the show today'? If they're more formal, its probably a crisis situation, like we're getting ready to fire a guy. And if that happens we don't need a record. We know what to do (FN/07/10/91, p.4).

Chapter 4
Professional Control

1. Autonomy in the Newsroom
2. Practical Knowledge in the Newsroom
 - Production Week at the "The Week Starts Here"
 - Informal Talk
 - Routines and Practical Knowledge
3. Newswriters' Understanding of the Institutional Dimensions of Their Work
4. Conclusion

Chapter 4

Professional Control

Newsroom surveillance is plainly designed to achieve bureaucratic control. Production is routinely displayed for supervisory personnel, output is documented and stored for extended surveillance and news work is to some extent at least, reflexively monitored; that is surveillance reports are routinely drawn upon for the regulation of future performance. That said, there is reason to doubt that cable news work can be exhaustively controlled as such. In this chapter, I want to examine how cable news work is, along with all of these bureaucratic measures, managed by the professional knowledges and practices of news workers themselves.

The chapter is organized as follows. The first section focuses on professional autonomy in the workplace: on the various opportunities journalists have to withdraw their work from public display. Section 2 examines various forms of practical knowledge which are used to make journalism - even routine bureaucratic journalism - "happen" on a daily basis. Section 3 reframes the question of how much journalists know - and how much this knowledge matters - by examining their understandings of news work as an institution. All of this work is designed to assess the

importance of knowledge and skill in cable news work: to examine whether and to what degree news work still matters in organized news production.

1. Autonomy in the Newsroom

News workers at "The Week Starts Here" could be said to "exercise control" in a number of ways. First of all, in a basic sense, these journalists produce and reproduce organizational routines with some autonomy. Not all news work is surveilled or subject to bureaucratic control and Newsworld typically allows its journalists considerable flexibility to produce the news according to quite personalized procedures. Ottawa producers, for instance, make regular, often officially sanctioned arrangements to withdraw their work from the "public settings" described in the previous chapter. Particularly in the earlier part of the production week when the program line-up is still being drawn up, "The Week Starts Here" journalists will often arrive at work early, leave late and bring texts home, thereby removing news work from conventional display situations. None of these informal routines is noted in the "staff board" which charts the movements of personnel, indicating which journalist are available for regular and irregular assignments. Supervisors are very often unaware of staff movements or activities during these hours

(FN/11/12/89, p.1). Hidden work space is an acknowledged feature of production at "The Week Starts Here".

Cable journalists often use specialized terminology and production banter to similar effect: that is production talk often renders proceedings "opaque" to formalized supervisory techniques (FN/12/11/89, p.2). One production supervisor I spoke with said he generally avoided attending pre-program production meetings between writers and technical staff (to ensure the coordination of scripts) because, as he puts it, "they don't even speak English [at those meetings], its like a different world in there and I just get sick of asking what they're talking about all the time" (ibid., p.3).

Finally, journalists can and often do "appropriate" the basic production technologies and information bases of the workplace - such as specialized wire terminals, foreign language news sources and data bases - to effectively remove their work from the supervision of others. At the "CBC Morning News", for example, the night editor is the only staff member with effective access to the satellite foreign programming service, a service which receives much of its news reports from Europe between 2 a.m. and 4 a.m. Halifax Time and which the editor regards with some justification as his "fiefdom" (FN/09/10/91, p.2). In essence, then, night work would seem to have become a temporal "backspace" for the editor (Goffman, E., 1959, pp.

106-141), because, at the "CBC Morning News" offices organized monitoring procedures are largely suspended at such hours.

In Goffman's terms, the night editor and his colleagues have effectively "colonized" the time and space zones of the workplace. That is they have manipulated their schedules to remove their work from the public zones of the organization. The importance of temporal and spatial settings is frequently noted in the sociology of "workplace interaction". But private work zones at Newsworld's Halifax and Ottawa bureau are not "backspaces" as Goffman uses the term. That is, they are not hidden places where activities which would otherwise be disapproved of can be carried on. Cable news workers generally, though perhaps not exclusively, use "back regions" for the autonomous accomplishment of officially sanctioned "front rituals" and work routines. Neither the managers nor the employees I spoke with at "Newsworld" see these arrangements for autonomy to involve a breakdown in organizational control (FN 10/27/89, p.3). In fact, some degree of autonomy was seen to be conducive to the achievement of organizational standards (ibid.). These arrangements were seen to give news workers the necessary flexibility to produce the news 24 hours a day - to achieve the predictable in the face of what

the American sociologist Gaye Tuchman has called the "glut of occurrences" in news production (see also Tuchman, G., 1978). (1)

2. Practical Knowledge in the Newsroom

Until now I have addressed the issue of practical knowledge in news production only implicitly - with respect to the strategic use journalists make of "front" and "backspaces", for instance. But cable journalists are not simply "organizational agents" insofar as they manage to side-step organizational routines and bureaucratic control procedures. I believe, with Tuchman, that news workers in fact exercise a more routine but substantive type of control by using their practical knowledge to make institutionalized news routines "happen" (ibid.). In the discussion that follows I want to use production at the Ottawa-based news and current affairs program "The Week Starts Here" as a case study of the knowledges and skills used to "accomplish" Newsworld programming on a routine basis.

Production Week at the "Week Starts Here"

Production week at the "The Week Starts Here" officially begins Monday afternoon with a production meeting of senior producers but the beginning of the week is considered to be

"generally very slow for news" by the staff (FN/10/11/89, p. 3). Monitoring of the wire begins mid-week in accordance with what are seen to be the temporal rhythms of news events. The show's senior producers believe that news "generally hits on Wednesday when everyone [journalists and policy-makers] is getting into gear. On that day newswriters receive a log of major CBC newscasts - such as the "The National", "Midday", CBC radio's "The World at Six" and regional news files on the CBC's Info system. Tuesday news items are for the purposes of the "Week Starts Here" developing news items. By mid-week, the staff have anticipated a number of stories but "there's no commitment". Subjects for panel discussions (taped on Friday afternoon) are not usually chosen until Wednesday or Thursday while news and current affairs stories are rarely prepared in any final form before mid week. Preparing the material any earlier is considered to be "second guessing" the news - and, effectively, a waste of time. Rough drafts on top stories are thus drawn up as "open texts" which can be revised up to airtime.

News clips from CBC broadcasts are usually sent to dubbing rooms on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday afternoons and most of Saturday is spent preparing them, and the graphic transitions between them, for broadcast. This is a rather exacting process because of the peculiar technical standards for all-news broadcasting in Canada. Editors try

and ensure that news maker clips are acoustically clear and delivered in "plain English" because, they say, citing CBC audience profiles, many of their viewers are senior citizens and first generation Canadians (CBC: Audience Profile, weeks 29-41, 1990, p.4). Editors prefer clips in which speakers clearly articulate their statements ("ideally at a pace of no more than 200 words a minute" says one producer) and use a fairly elementary vocabulary to do so. Producers also monitor news clips for acoustic quality, editing out excessive bass levels in source sound tracks. Regional newscasts are particularly stringently monitored on this basis.

Clips are also monitored for balance. Editors and producers may require "complementary clips", that is clearly stated opposing points of view from an accredited news source, to "fill out" each item. If not such a point of view is often paraphrased in the narrative. Statements without reaction footage are seen to "leave the viewer hanging". Sunday morning news digests should thus bring together relatively "clean" stories: concerning events and their initial impacts, statements and counterstatements, stories which have, for the time being, "played themselves out". Producers at "The Week Starts Here" work to provide what they see to be a relatively "complete" news record. Breaking or continuing stories, which generally come without a recorded statement and an accredited response, are the

"worst fear" of the "Week Starts Here" news and current affairs writers. "We say we're here to cover breaking news" says one producer

But most of us don't like it. Most of us grew up in regular broadcasting and we'd prefer to go on the air with a finished product, with a complete item balanced and clear story. That's hard to manage with a breaking story. The elements just aren't there (FN/07/10/89, p.3). (2)

Live broadcasts, often presented as the *raison d'être* of 24 hour news service in licensing documents and corporate self-promotions, are seen by many Canadian all-news broadcasters to undermine the authority of all-news service by exposing its inability to provide complete, immediate and unmediated coverage of world events. (3)

The clip is thus strictly regulated according to the particular needs of the production discourse. Tapes are carefully assembled to reinforce programming themes, to lend authority to narrative texts and to balance stories and line-ups. Assembling broadcast clips is considered one of the most exacting procedures of cable news work. Slurs, pauses, and all extraneous points not related to those the speaker wants the text as a "final record" to make are routinely deleted from the tape. Splicing - competently done will allow the editor to "take the s's right off [a speaker's] words (ibid.).

Tapes are also assembled as a "continuous stream": as a complete, up-to-date news and current affairs record which seems to unfold "naturally" without undue professional or organizational mediation. "We spend a lot of time making sure that "cuts" and "bumpers" and "stings" [transitions between items in the text] don't jerk viewers around or distract them", explains one producer (FN/12/11/89, p.3). Staffers at the "Week Starts Here" often spend up to 25 minutes editing a single graphic transition and up to 3 hours for a 12 minute interview, incorporating cutaway shots with an "isocam" (single camera set-up), lifting response shots from other interviews or other points in the same interview, and making sure the shots match with respect to lighting, the positioning of the guest, etc. (ibid.). In other words the narrative work described above, exacting though it is, is designed to be essentially invisible within the text. At the "Week Starts Here", journalists work to make the news text appear unmediated.

By late Saturday afternoon, the "Week Starts Here" producers are ready to take this work to the production meeting and at this stage the team is ready to assemble a whole program text. Most stories have been written, edited and timed with accompanying clips. Interviews have been taped and edited. Graphic transitions have been processed.

Musical breaks have been chosen as have documentary pieces made available by the "Intermag" international documentary pool which offers Newsworld and other subscribers news and current affairs material from Europe, the United States and Australia. Regular panel discussions concerning international affairs and parliamentary politics have been taped for broadcast. Together these elements will constitute the show.

The selection of stories for a line-up is generally seen to be almost inevitable and is rarely a subject of dispute. The production meeting essentially settles the question of how these stories should be positioned within a narrative. Stories, at this stage, are judged explicitly as discursive contributions rather than as discrete informational items for a viewing audience. In other words, news stories are measured largely according to their reference to other stories in the broadcast, and to past stories on "The Week Starts Here" line-up - despite the fact that the program's audience is assumed to be an irregular and often transient mass of viewers. Producers spend much of their time in the production meeting considering whether stories are complete or can be easily edited, whether they fit into the flow of the newscast, and whether they relate to past stories or previous items in the line-up. Stories are thus processed and positioned within a continuous stream

of programming. Producers say editing as such is the "most difficult and the most important part of the job"

(FN/07/10/89, p.1).

Producers during the October 31 production meeting, for instance, spend a great deal of time wrestling with the positioning of a story about ANC official Walter Sissulu and his impending release from a South African prison. The team newswriter has spent much of the week naming and renaming the computer file on Sissulu as "hostage" or "hope"; producers are thus concerned with what stage the story is at in the narrative and how it should be positioned with respect to other stories. Eventually the "hope" story is run back to back with a "hopeless" hostage situation in Lebanon (Sissulu was, in fact, released shortly after the broadcast was run).

"The Week Starts Here" producers are acutely aware of the line-up's narrative flow. At the production meeting stage, stories are assembled as a "continuous stream", arranged and rearranged within a line-up, to achieve a coherence and narrative force within the text. This is at least partly a response to what are seen to be the commercial and technological conditions of all-news broadcasting. Since all-news television programming is organized in time rather than space like a newspaper or journal for instance, producers make the point that

audiences must be carried along by a line-up, by the sequenced flow of items in the narrative. "Once we lose them, we've lost them, probably for the rest of the day", explains one producer. "So we try to make sure that we can sort of gently pull them into the show" (FN/16/10/89, p.2). Audiences should not be allowed to stray within this temporal format. "A story line is essential here" says one producer. "It's even more important in a 24 hour news show than it is on regular television. Newsworld is a news wheel [a series of newscasts repeated every half hour or hour], but its a wheel that goes round and round" (ibid). Accordingly, producers at the "Week Starts Here" production meeting essentially work to produce a thematically unified show: a "continuous stream" of news and current affairs programming. (4)

The week of October 31, 1989 is quite typical. The show opens with a story on demonstrations and civil disorder in the Soviet Union ("end of an era" story) and closes with a story on regional protest movements in Canada ("beginning of a new one"). A story on the Canadian federal budget fits well as a second item showing that "life goes on" in the face of these transitions (as one newswriter observes "there will always be a budget). The next report on the shooting of a Winnipeg policeman fits in as an "ongoing story" on the rising crime rate in Canada. The newswriter has learned that the murder suspect is a native Canadian but decides to leave

this information out of the broadcast as it is a "possibly misleading detail" and "not pertinent to the main point about changes taking place in Canadian society". A piece on a Cape Breton storm ends the first segment of the show on "up beat with a bit of local colour" (the editor also finds a howling wind clip for atmosphere).

October 31 is considered to be a busy news week so much of the production meeting is devoted to paring down the line-up to nine news items. A story on a possible postal strike ("another perennial item) is considered to be a developing item which could be included in a future show. Another about "golden age" groups in the North West Territories is considered as a complementary piece to the Cape Breton story, demonstrating the show's continuing commitment to coverage of "remote areas of Canada". But the senior producer decides there is not enough time for the segment. A piece on the first Soviet rock band to visit Canada is included to provide a "musical passage" to the second hour of the show - the international documentary section.

Even at this late stage, selection and presentation routines may be modified in principle. In the Fall of 1989 the routine negotiation of time constraints had become problematic enough for the staff to require discursive revision. The problem for the producers of the November 5

edition of the "Week Starts Here" is how to achieve a "balanced" Canadian perspective in the first section of the show. A team exchange concerning stories to be included in a "news in brief" section at the end of the show helps illustrate. One producer wants to tie together a story on a Manitoba nurse's strike and another item about developments in the "tainted fish" scandal in a 45 second wrap-up at the end of the show:

AP: Can we take care of "nurses" and "tuna" in the wrap-up? How about it?

TM: The strike's not settled yet. I mean they'll probably reach a settlement this week so we could do it in the next show. There ought to be enough time.

AP: I mean we could do it in 30 seconds. "Once there was a strike, now its almost over - no reactions, nothing. Then on to the fish.

TM: We could give it a try. It will leave the wrap-up free for next week. It seems a bit all over the map, Manitoba nurses and New Brunswick fish. But we could give it a try. It will give us more free time.

But clearly these stories are considered unacceptable in the long term. According to the newswriter, the staff is "tempted to squeeze more and more items into the show; its our training". The producer must essentially negotiate between conflicting organizational standards of brevity - which, because of commercialized "news wheel" formats still apply in many sections of the 24 hour news line-up - and balance. As the writer adds, "it's hard to know what to do in these situations. If you leave the story out you're not

fairly representing these people. And if you include them you're not fairly representing them either". At the next production meeting the program format is brought up for review. The production staff and executive producer agree the wrap-up should be reduced to two "in depth" items, usually about a minute to a minute and 15 seconds in length.

Typifications of wire items and stories carried by the parent network are also somewhat "negotiable" at this stage. For example, a November, 1989 Canadian Press item about a provincial judge's injunction against news coverage of some aspects of the Mount Cashel orphanage inquiry is considered to be "self-serving" by the "Week Starts Here" team. This is "obviously not a a deliberate attempt [by the judge] to stifle the media. Judges aren't that stupid", says one producer. There is a team consensus that this is not a "freedom of the press" story and the headline is changed to read "Mount Cashel: the wound that will not heal" with the court injunction cited in passing as an indication of just "how heated the controversy over sexual abuse has become in this country". The bulk of the report deals with testimonials from victims of abuse and parishioners concerning the Catholic Church in Newfoundland. But in the end, a CBC news clip concerning the judge's defense of the injunction is included because there is little news footage available for that section of the show.

Informal Talk

For an outsider, perhaps the most striking feature of the production week is the nearly inscrutable banter which accompanies, and effectively constitutes it. "Banter" is the stream of informal program-oriented talk concerning the meaning and significance of events covered in the line-up. As such, production banter, and in particular the cynical or irreverent talk concerning newsmakers, organizational hierarchies, and audiences is very often dismissed by sociologists as a sort of neurotic assembly line chatter: as an expression of journalists' dissatisfaction with the mundane and essentially fixed conditions of their working lives, for instance (Stempel, 1962; and Sigal, 1973). Banter is the means by which journalists let off steam: "rationalize", "cope with" or "withdraw from" environments over which they have little control. Talk as such would seem to have little production utility.

Yet at "The Week Starts Here", production talk is largely directed at getting on with the job. Even at its most casual and seemingly irreverent, for instance, production talk often serves to place and makes sense of new items as stories within a program narrative. Take, for example, a September, 1991 discussion at the "CBC Morning News" concerning a strike by the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC). Producers and journalists argue during coffee

breaks, between news items, and on their way home over whether this is "just another strike", whether the PSAC strike signals the "death of organized labour", the "death of the conservative party" or more generally the "breakdown of authority and politics as usual in this country" (FN/09/09/91, pp.3-5). Seen as "in a sense all three" according to one producer, the story is accordingly run as a lead news item and news clips are sought which will forcefully articulate these themes. As one producer tells a newswriter "find me [some footage] of the government under pressure, Mulroney saying this can't go on, that sort of stuff".

Production talk is, in this sense, an expression of knowledge, often inarticulate, concerning how to get on with the job. News judgements expressed and endlessly repeated in casual production discourse facilitate routine day-to-day interventions by journalists in program production. They are a means by which cable journalism becomes a "guided doing". Informal story assessments, for instance, help define for producers at "The CBC Morning News" how to position a PSAC story: back to back with a Toronto strike, because as one producer explains, they're not just two of the biggest strikes ever, but like [the show producer] said, they show a real breakdown of authority in this country" (FN/07/10/91, p.5). Thus, production talk, and casual ongoing story assessments in particular, help define for newswriters:

which newsclips should be chosen for which story, how they should be positioned within the item ; and how the story itself should be placed and positioned with other stories as part of a "continuous stream of news".

Story assessments as such may not be very sober, very formal or very articulate at least in a discursive sense. Stories might be formally assessed as such in production meetings or in program post-mortems. But in the course of production, sense-making is expressed in a more offhand way. The meaning of stories is very often clarified through humorous asides, for instance, asides which essentially articulate and reinforce frames through ironic juxtaposition. Take, for example, a "CBC Morning News" producer's comments on a story about the investigation of a prominent Nova Scotia politician on charges of corruption. As the producer remarks when preparing the story:

Its always been my dream to see that guy [the politician under investigation] walking out of the assembly with cuffs on his hands. Just like a crack bust, like one of those Detroit kids with a windbreaker over his head. That's exactly the kind of story I'll do on him some day (FN/07/10/91, p.4).

Newsroom humour like this involves not just "cynicism without weight" - towards news sources or one's employer, for instance (though it may also involve that). It also serves to define narrative frames through contrast and counterpoint. Casual asides such as these help define not just what the story cannot be, but what the story ought to

and "must" be in practice. By citing a clearly inappropriate frame, the producer helps define by contrast, on a continuing and informal basis, how the story should be appropriately handled. As the producer notes "we'll have to settle for him leaving the assembly with his suit on this time. We'll have to cover him with all the trimmings [i.e. with a record of his denial of all charges and his accusations of improper procedure against the crown prosecutor]" (ibid.). One newswriter explains that the "[the show producer] gets a real kick out of these stories. He's got a really fine sense of the ridiculous. Maybe it's only funny if you work here" (ibid., p.5).

In the same vein, it is perhaps significant that production talk in the newsroom is generally concerned with examples of bad news stories and incompetent news workers: senior journalists who don't know how to check sources, corporate officials who know nothing about satellite links, producers who miss opportunities to "go live" with a story (most of whom, thankfully, seem to work in distant locations such as the CBC head office in Toronto). Examples such as these are rife at both the "Week Starts Here" and the "CBC Morning News" and, again, they seem to be more than just superfluous office gossip. They are, in fact, real expressions of practical knowledge: informal talk which uses

an understanding of the news discourse to carry meaning and guide production activities in the face of a stream of events.(5)

Routines and Practical Knowledge

The practical knowledges employed by the cable journalists throughout the production week are several and varied. They include (at the most basic level): a familiarity with the technological and commercial conditions of cable news broadcasting, the time links and potential acoustic qualities of relay transmissions (particularly evident in the positioning of newsclips and story items within the "continuing stream", for instance); a range of hypotheses concerning the socio-linguistic competencies of the target audience (invoked in the the monitoring of "soundbite" speech for appropriate "pace and clarity"); judgments concerning the social position and legitimacy of news makers (concerning the legitimate authority of the PSAC union and the Conservative government in the public service strike, for instance); and judgments concerning the legitimacy and proper workings of these various social institutions within a Canadian "pluralist" framework.

This is a very preliminary list; but all of these skills, I think, might be seen as virtual "core competencies" of cable journalism. In other words, making

news without regard for these basic production contexts would constitute not just incompetence but almost pathologically unprofessional behaviour at "The Week Starts Here". Take, as an example, a production meeting discussion which I attended in November, 1989 concerning "Newsworld's" coverage of Polish labour leader Lech Walesa's upcoming visit to Canada:

- LL: So we have to do Walesa on Sunday.
 So how do we do that?
- KL: Not easy. He'll be at some mass at the Polish Hall in Hamilton. We could get a camera crew up there from Toronto but there's no word on how long it will last. It's just going to fuck up the timing for the whole show. Maybe we should...
- KL: Polish masses generally last an hour and a half.
- LL: Oh yeah? How sure are you?
- KL: Absolutely. I've got Polish friends.
- SW: Its still going to be a damned nuisance.
- LL: Uh huh. But he's bound to give a general statement on the state of the union back home and where they go from here. It will fit in perfectly with the "Death/Future of communism" piece [at the beginning of the November 12 show]. I don't see how we can avoid it (FN/11/05/89, p.1).

The news judgments being made here would seem to draw upon a whole range of practical knowledges. They certainly involve more than the mere enactment of a generic stock of "linguistic competencies" - the syntactical mastery of sentences and linguistic forms which some authors have identified as the basic skills of journalism (Porter, B., 1985). These journalists instead seem to draw upon (and thereby reconstitute) a much broader, fairly exacting body

of professional insights into the basic social contexts in which those linguistic forms are properly employed. In the November production meeting, the "Week Starts Here" producers show at least some signs then of being "knowledgeable agents": partially competent authors who make sense of the fragments of a text - the decorum of the religious occasion at hand, the meaning and political significance of the upcoming Wolesa statement, its discursive position within an ongoing Newsworld text on world affairs. Moreover, these journalists appear to use their understanding as such to intervene in the production cycle.

A production meeting discussion concerning the Meech Lake constitutional accord is, I think, a further case in point. Meech Lake is a problematical story for news workers in that they cannot take for granted their audience's knowledge or interest in the ongoing negotiations; yet as national broadcasters they feel an obligation to provide continuing coverage of the political and legal progress of the constitution talks (FN/11/27/89, p.6). Newsworld journalists wrestle with these problems - discursively during the production meeting, practically throughout the week - of "how much politics an audience can take" (FN/11/27/89, p.5), whether the public needs to know all the details of the accord and the federal-provincial disputes or whether a "rough understanding of the main players and the

overall negotiation process" will suffice (ibid.), whether according to another producer, the Meech Lake story is "just hard fact or national drama" (FN/12/07/89, p.3). Discussion at a November 5 production meeting runs along these lines:

SW: Do we do Meech Lake again this week?

This will make the third straight week.

KL: Yeah, we're entering a crisis stage in the negotiations now. [Ontario premier David] Peterson's appealing for national unity and I'm hearing [Manitoba premier Garry] Filmon and [Newfoundland premier Clyde] Wells are going to back right out of the deal. We should be anticipating that.

SW: Yes, but can we take another story on it. I mean its the third straight week. How far are we responsible for this?

KL: Yeah, okay. But we should still do it for context. (FN/10/31/89, p.3).

Again, in this case the bureaucratic manoeuverings which lend the Meech Lake story its "primary definition" are monitored not just linguistically, but in a more broadly contextual sense - with reference to a range of institutionalized production values, political "rules of the game", constitutional phase structures and the like. The negotiation of these contexts is perhaps not often held up for full-fledged discursive review; but producers certainly do more than just tinker with a fixed textual infrastructure in this case. The Meech Lake "interaction" seems instead to be geared towards the production of an ongoing agreement concerning the terms of judgment for the news discourse; a working discursive agreement which may itself become a "condition of possibility" for further cultural practice. In

a very real sense, then, cable news work can be viewed as a type of discursively mediated "cultural agency": as a practice which is firmly institutionally grounded and at the same time, inherently subject to change in principle. With all the routinization involved I think there remains this essential spontaneity - this element of contingency and skill - in the cable news production process.

3. News Workers' Understanding of the Institutional Dimensions of Their Work

Many of the points I have made up to now, constructivism would readily concede. Constructivist approaches, after all, do view journalism as a more or less knowledgeable activity. In news interaction studies by Goffman, Silverstone and Tuchman and in the cultural studies work of Hall and Connell, for example, there is a ready acknowledgement that journalists know a great deal about the immediate contexts and conditions of their workplace - the technological, financial, and organizational-procedural arrangements for organized news work, for instance - and, furthermore, draw upon this knowledge to produce the news on a routine basis. News work is, at least in this local sense, a "guided doing".

At the same time, virtually all constructivist theory insists that journalists know very little about journalism as an institution. Constructivist studies of a number of

newsrooms over a number of years have concluded, almost without exception, that journalists understand themselves in a way which largely fails to account for the long-term structural conditions and consequences of their work. The thrust of this argument should probably not be disputed. Journalistic knowledge is largely practical: it is knowledge concerned with how to go on in the "here and now" contexts of the workplace. Journalists' discursive knowledge - their ability to articulate an understanding of the broader social conditions and consequences of their work, for instance - is, in many respects, limited.

Constructivist approaches may have stretched that point, however. Both interactionism and the cultural studies tradition have tended to make an unduly rigid, though usually implicit, distinction between the pretheoretic on-the-job understandings of news workers and the theoretic above-and-beyond-the-job understandings of news sociologists (see, for example, Fishman, 1980, pp. 134-155; and Connell, 1980). I have already tacitly suggested that that distinction does not always hold: practical knowledge almost inevitably involves a partial penetration of the institutional conditions of cable news work. This is a sort of practical insight which cannot always be expressed in interviews but which is quite vividly expressed in production talk and production practice. In the remainder of this section, I want to examine some other areas in which

journalists seem to have gained insight into the institutional conditions of their work, areas of insight upon which they routinely draw to do their jobs. These include the following:

a) Recognition of a construction process in news work

Cable journalists often seem to draw on an essentially corporate frame when pressed to define their work: that is they tend to explain their jobs to outsiders as "network of record" work: work which is somehow free of discursive mediation by, and discursive repercussions for, its "object": the news. As one journalist explained to me at the beginning of my field research:

Newsworld is basically just reliable news. It broadcasts events as directly as possible to viewers as they happen. No more, no less. I really don't see why news production here would be of interest to anybody (FN/09/09/89, p.3).

Journalists in other media seem to have explained their work to sociologists in similarly quasi-positivistic terms (see, for example, Sigal, 1977 on newspaper reporters understandings of their work; and Elliot's [1972] work on British television journalists). In fact, participant observation studies of newsrooms based on formal interviews almost invariably suggest that journalists a) uncritically accept corporate definitions of their work as a socially disengaged practice; and/or b) are imbued with a

professional ideology of objectivity which essentially functions to support such a definition.

However, production talk, as we have seen, often belies the sort of formal "hegemonic" self-definitions given to interviewers. Take for example, the way a producer explains a story in a formal interview setting, and then to his colleagues in the course of the production week. In the interview, the story concerning a transit strike in Toronto in September, 1991, is presented as an example of what "Newsworld does best, breaking news as it happens, with no commercials, no editing, just the footage as we get it" (FN/09/10/91, p.2). Here, cable news work is essentially defined in a corporate sense, as an authoritative, complete, immediate and unmediated representation of world events. This is essentially the definition of cable news contained in licensing documents and corporate statements (see chapter 2).

Now consider how the same producer makes sense of the story with his colleagues in the midst of production. These statements are made on separate occasions over a number of days but seem to express a far more partial or negotiated faith in the representative authority of the cable news discourse than expressed above.

[Producer assigning story to writer]: We're covering the [transit strike] story because it's in Toronto. Transit strikes don't usually fit in the national

section. I think its basically that there's a lot of cameras on the ground there with nothing to do.... (FN/09/09/91, p.2).

And when the story comes to be edited:

[Producer to writer] Give me some balance in the "streeters". At least find me someone who doesn't take sides, who just wants to get to work or go downtown. I think that's all we need (ibid.).

And when the tape is vetted for broadcast:

[Producer to writer and editor] Okay, okay enough facts! What is this, a fucking travellogue? Check the files [of incoming network stories]. Set me a scene, for Christ's sake. Show some chaos. I want to open the show with this and the piece on [the] PSAC strike (ibid.).

At all these stages of production then the producer seems to be aware not just that construction work is important in news production but that the construction process is in many respects more important in the framing of the story than the "independent reality" itself. The story is at least tacitly recognized to be a situated text framed by available technologies (by the "cameras on the ground") and conventional codes of practice (by the "need for balance"). Moreover, as the producer sees it, the purpose of the news text itself is not so much to represent the strike per se, but to represent "chaos", to "set a a scene", to describe the stakes of the story and then position it as part of a continuous stream with other like-minded items (another chaos piece concerning the ongoing PSAC strike). Does the producer nonetheless cling to a belief in a "real" Toronto

story which such procedures necessarily distort? He may, but for him it seems to be a moot point.

[Producer to researcher] We could argue all day whether we've got it [the story] straight. I may say this is the real point and you may say that's the real point. We've got to choose one and do the story (ibid.) (6).

b) Recognition of News as a Secondary Definition

Even this weaker version of objectivity - roughly conceived as a "strategic ritual" of the production process - has to be negotiated during the production week. Many journalists at the "CBC Morning News", for instance, do not show an unmitigated faith in the ability of journalistic balancing procedures to yield the essential truth of a story - as a model of ideological penetration might suggest they would. Many in fact see the balance formats, enshrined in official codes of practice, roughly like sociologists do: as a means of deferring truth claims (Hackett, 84). As one journalist notes, "balance is all about [helping us] to avoid taking a stand. That's what newscasting is all about" (FN/07/07/01, p.3).

Nor do journalists always regard certified statements which enter the balance as "brute data": unproblematically valid knowledge claims upon which stories can and must be built (Fishman, 1980). This is most obviously the case in

investigative news outfits such as "The Week Starts Here"'s "Access Unlimited" segment, which screens tips, weighs conflicting bureaucratic statements, and essentially establishes "hierarchies of evidence" in an attempt to uncover scandals in the Ottawa civil service each week (see Ettema, J. and Glasser, T., 1985 on the screening of bureaucratic accounts by investigative journalists). Screening and assessing source information is also a feature of bureau work. Take, for example, a "CBC Morning News" writer's reaction to the findings of a provincial committee investigating causes of race riots in Halifax in the summer of 1990.

What's news about it? They didn't really say anything. I mean they said there's racism in Halifax but everyone knows that. They're announcing their findings, I guess that's news, but the fact is their findings are probably not going to have much of an impact on this issue. I mean nobody's listening to a lot of government hearings these days.

Eventually, at the insistence of the show producer, the show carries "duty coverage" of the story but the news writer still has misgivings.

I mean the only reason I can think of for running this story is that the hearings confirm what everyone knows, that racism is a problem here [in Halifax]. But I think an investigative piece in that neighbourhood would have been much more valuable. I don't think covering another provincial inquiry was the way to get at this story. Anyone who's half smart knows what an inquiry is going to say and how much impact its going to have.

Statements such as these, certainly do not indicate, in and of themselves, that cable news service is "oppositional" as American sociologists have defined the word (Lipset, 1984). All news service routinely relies, and has been institutionally positioned to rely upon, government agencies for information (see chapter 2 which suggests that the network has been mandated to record, as faithfully as possible, bureaucratic facts as part of an ongoing public record). Why then would the newswriter entertain doubts about this commission, about its jurisdiction in this case and the newsworthiness of its findings? The newswriter, himself, notes that "the commission and the government are completely divided and ineffective on this issue" (ibid.). It may be the case then that the newswriter's scepticism and his initial decision not to give the commission "publicity" is not so much a reflection of his own opposition to an official "bureaucratic consensus", as of a partial but seemingly serious "official dissensus" concerning the provincial commission's jurisdiction and bureaucratic effectiveness in this matter. This is the way critical theorists have usually explained so-called oppositional news stories concerning Vietnam, Watergate and the like which seem to have emerged because of official uncertainty about policies in these areas (Gitlin, 1980; Hallin, 1984).

Finally, one could argue that by determining that the commission findings are "not saying anything", that they

"are not news", the newswriter is merely holding the commissioners to "bureaucratic account", assessing their statements according to bureaucratic definitions of newsworthiness (Fishman, 1980). After all, what seems to be problematic for the newswriter is that the commissioners are not saying anything which effectively advances the investigation and "wraps up the case" in a bureaucratically satisfactory way. Thus, the by now familiar conclusion of critical constructivist media theorists: that even by criticizing bureaucratic officials news workers end up enforcing, and reinforcing, established bureaucratic power formations.

The fact remains, however, that cable journalists are not entirely unwitting "agents" of any given bureaucratic order, nor are they mechanically reliable as such. As we have seen, bureaucratic statements are, at least at times, problematic for the staff of the "CBC Morning News", certainly more problematic than constructivist accounts would have us believe. Remember that for researchers such as Tuchman and Fishman, bureaucratic accounts are, by virtue of their socially sanctioned and performative qualities, credible - in fact, credible, period. At the "CBC Morning News", however, journalists' faith in bureaucratic accounts as the empirical foundation of a network of record is, to some extent at least, negotiated; that is journalists recognize that they must assess not just the accuracy but

the veracity of the bureaucratic statements for the public record. They must, that is, assess the *quality* of bureaucratic facts (op. cit., Ettema and Glasser, 1985). In this respect then, cable journalists show a certain partial and negotiated understanding of what critical sociologists consider to be the institutional conditions of their work. Moreover, they draw upon that understanding to reproduce and intervene in structured patterns of cable news production.

Such a view suggests that cable journalism is not, strictly speaking, a compulsively ideological practice. Cable journalists are often trained to draw uncritically on bureaucratic accounts, thereby (unwittingly) idealizing, reifying and reproducing a a bureaucratically ordered world. But they may resist that training, or more typically, accept it on a *provisional working* basis. In short, constructivist model of newsroom hegemony - of a sort of ideologically penetrated newsroom in which practical journalistic knowledge is bounded, firmly and finally, by unacknowledged conditions and unintended consequences of action - leaves much to be desired, at least as a last word on journalistic practice.

4. Conclusion

In this chapter, I have focused on the relative autonomy of news workers in their activities and in their understanding of their activities. I have tried to show how news workers, sometimes in production settings of their own choosing, employ a rather broad set of practical understandings of both the immediate and long-term institutional conditions of their work, this to make routines "happen". In the chapter that follows I want to focus more on the question of agency in cultural production per se: on the ability of journalists to use these understandings to make a real structural difference in their work. More precisely, I want to examine a) whether and to what degree journalists actually reproduce and perhaps alter the rules of discourse which govern their work thereby b) bringing about a mutual implication of agency and structure in cultural production. These questions are, in my view, absolutely central to the research problematic of this dissertation.

Endnotes

1) Whatever their architectural intent, open newsrooms often hinder surveillance in practice. Newswriters and senior producers at the "CBC Morning News", for instance, frequently pointed out that effective supervision was almost impossible in the crowded, noisy and rushed conditions of the central newsroom. Time was too short, and movement and communication too congested, to allow for the effective monitoring of other people's work, and this had led to an increased reliance on documentary forms of supervision (see chapter 3). In this sense, the managerial panopticon had broken down in practice.

Moreover, production surveillance rarely operated in a simple top-down fashion. That is journalists monitored managers just as managers monitored journalists, and they used that intelligence to guide their own activities. As one newswriter told me "you learn how to eavesdrop in this job. You [can] hear someone right across the room. Its the only way to know what's going on around you" (FN/0710/91, p.3). In fact, the one colleague this journalist had never managed to listen in on was the show's executive producer who was known for speaking in hushed tones.

2) Staff members at the "Week Starts Here" were constantly on call for stories that might break after the regular Friday and Thursday morning taping sessions. News wires were constantly monitored until the program went on the air on Sunday morning. For example, a story written on a Friday about a weekend visit by Phillipine President Corry Aquino to Canada in October, 1989 was put on "alert" because of widespread expectations that the visit would be cancelled or curtailed due to a political crisis in Manila. In any event, the Aquino visit proceeded as planned. In the course of my fieldwork no story, including those involving weekend "forecasts" written into the text, ever had to be seriously revised before the Sunday broadcast.

3) The "CBC Morning News" staff expressed similar misgivings concerning live coverage which, at present often arrives as a phone-in report. Such coverage is seen to draw attention to the (indadequate) technological mediation of the network of record text. See chapter 2.

4) Producers at the "CBC Morning News" have in fact worked to reduce the number of interview segments in the newscasting as it is often seen to be "off-topic and unrelated to the main news line-up". Some journalists believe the show "wanders" and "loses audiences" during its interview segments (FN/09/09/91, p.2).

5) In Chomsky's view, journalists use cynicism to cope with the essential powerlessness of their lives. Cynicism operates as an ongoing ideological self-justification of their role as paraphrasers of state and corporate press releases (Chomsky, 1992).

6) Which they did, the producer's way (FN/09/09/91, p.4).

Chapter 5

News Work as Cultural Agency

1. Journalistic Views of Effective News Work

Case 1: The Toronto Transit Strike Story

Case 2: Constitutional Coverage, 1989-1991

Case 3: The Chatham Flood Story

2. Sociological Reframing: Constructivist Views of Effective News Work

3. News Work as Cultural Agency

4. Conclusion

Chapter 5

News Work as Cultural Agency

Until now I have argued, along broadly ethnomethodological lines, that cable journalism is not simply the product of constraints, bureaucratic or otherwise but a positive "accomplishment". But the hard question remains, I think, a positive accomplishment of what? In other words, what is it that cable journalists actually do?

The short answer may be that cable journalism is a form of code, frame or discourse-governed creativity. This is essentially the approach adopted by most constructivist studies of news production (see, for example, Hall, Stuart, 1980, p. 130). With words and images journalists reproduce institutionalized forms of social discourse. But in this chapter I want to suggest that such a view does not fully account for what might be called the "generative" moments in the production of culture in cable news. What is lacking in most constructivist accounts of news work is a really convincing account of "cultural activity", activity in which the connections between words and their referents arises and is sustained. That sort of activity is the focus of this chapter.

This discussion is structured as follows. The first section is a study of cable news workers' own notions of being able to "make a difference" in the cultural production process. Here I focus on my respondent's views of what constitutes successful (and unsuccessful) cable news work. I include three case studies of cable news coverage, focusing on how Newsworld journalists themselves assessed the stories they produced (see Appendix A concerning the positioning of these stories within the line-up). The next section examines sociological theories of news work in light of these accounts. Section 3 outlines an alternative model of news work as cultural agency in which stories such as those cited by my journalist respondents might be seen to produce and reproduce the discursive structures in which news production is grounded: to "constitute", in this case, an ideology of nationhood: a sectional definition of a general interest (Gouldner, Alvin, 1976). This is a broad-ranging discussion but it is intended to help resolve the main problematic of this dissertation: it is intended, that is, to develop an adequate model of agency and structure in cultural production using news work at CBC Newsworld as a case study.

1. Journalistic Views of Effective News Work
Case 1: The Toronto Transit Strike

I begin this discussion with an examination of what makes a cable news story "good" and "bad" according to cable news

workers themselves. Keep in mind at the outset that the definitions employed by news workers in this regard are working definitions, often as not discursively imprecise in their outline. As one Halifax reporter noted, "any reporter knows it when he [sic] sees it. But there's no set formula" (FN/14/09/91, p.1). Nonetheless, some common measures of story quality do emerge, both in production banter (the focus of my first two case studies) and in after-the-fact interviews (the focus of my third case). Here I want to argue that journalists' assessments of their work give us some idea of how they have come to see themselves as agents of culture in contemporary production contexts.

One particular story which stood out for the "CBC Morning News" producers I spoke with concerned a metro Toronto transit strike which was covered rather extensively during the course of my fieldwork in the Fall of 1991. The strike began on September 12 and continued for 5 days with reporters from the CBC Toronto television station CBLT providing up to 3 hours live coverage a day. The "Morning News" team had arranged to broadcast some of that coverage, including the station's morning rush hour reports which would be inserted into the morning line-up as "live breaking news". I followed that coverage from start to finish questioning producers as to what they expected from the story.

On September 12, 1991, the "Morning News" producers seemed to have high hopes for the transit strike story. "Its a real breakthrough", said one senior news producer, after negotiating a satellite link-up with the Toronto station CBLT and officials from Telesat Canada in Allantown, Ontario.

Its the first time we've set up this much live footage in Canada. I mean there was Meech Lake but that was mostly "The National"'s [CBC television's nightly newscast's] ballgame. And [the] Oka [story] was mostly done with phone-ins and prepared scripts. This one is going to be live footage and we've had to set it up ourselves. That means breaking in on [CBLT's] live reports, making sure they provide us with the right shots and voice-overs at the right time; then settling things with Telesat; briefing the [Halifax] hosts so that they ask [the Toronto] reporters the right questions; briefing the control room so that they give the right graphics and cues; keeping the writers posted so that they pick up on new points in the Toronto coverage for the news digests [shortened newscasts run on the half hour throughout the morning], that sort of thing. Its pretty complicated.

Arrangements had also been made to coordinate coverage with CBLT newsteams in the field: including 3 helicopter news crews, a number of camera crews on the ground at the Gardiner, Don Valley expressways and two stand-up journalists reporting from various locations around the city. Newsworld anchors in Halifax would conduct three minute question and answer sessions with the stand-up reporters every hour on the hour, and pick up the live CBLT reports intermittently throughout the morning.

"It was a great deal for us" explained a Halifax newswriter assigned to the story. The arrangement with CBLT would allow Halifax to provide "comprehensive breaking news coverage" of the strike with "virtually all the 'nuts and bolts' work being done in Toronto. They provide the tape and we don't lift a finger" (ibid.). The challenge for producers at the "CBC Morning News" would essentially be to edit the Toronto material into a "continuous stream" of news. In other words, Newsworld producers would attempt to "incorporate [the Toronto footage] into a line of items in a way that it would actually add to the line-up" (FN/12/09/91, p.2).

The incorporation of continuing live coverage into the regular line-up on such a large scale - employing so much technology, in so many locations, on such a long-term basis - would be a "first" at Newsworld and producers believed that with proper editing the format could be a success:

Its going to be great footage. I mean its going to show the biggest city in the country grinding to a halt right in front of our eyes with location footage on the ground, in the air, just all over the place, with the cues being called from Halifax. We'll run it back to back with the PSAC strike. It'll be sort of like taking a pulse on the state of the nation minute by minute (ibid.).

By September 13, the second day of the strike, however, everything was going wrong with the story. Satellite transmissions were interrupted beginning at 6 a.m. on the first morning of broadcast and when the picture was finally

restored, the Halifax producers didn't like what they were seeing. As a line-up editor explained to a newswriter on the story:

We need some pictures of stalled traffic. I mean it's a transit strike for Christ's sake, and they're not giving us anything. She [the CBLT reporter] is there. She says there's chaos, so there must be chaos. I'm suspicious...but I guess I've got to trust her (FN/13/09/91, p.2).

From the producer's point of view, the pictures just kept getting worse. "Dead calm, that's the problem" explained the newswriter. "Wall to wall, live coverage of a nice fucking day in Toronto". The line-up editor called Toronto again.

We at least need some picket lines and that's a minimum. I mean show us something happening. At least show us some people moving. The only thing I see moving is cars and that is definitely not what I should be seeing (ibid.).

At this point, a senior Halifax producer who had worked as a journalist in Toronto suggested that a reporter be moved to a street car depot at Queen and Connaught streets to work in a backdrop of either stalled street cars or marching picketers - preferably both. The CBLT staff thought that was a good idea. By mid-morning Halifax was receiving clear satellite shots from the new location.

But the results, from the producers' point of view, were still "pretty bad". Halifax received some "good shots" of commuters walking and biking to work but these were all

labelled as live footage - which meant they would probably not be incorporated into later newscasts. The pictures from the street car depot footage were "even worse". The Toronto team managed to find a background of picketers blocking street cars for one of their reports, but they closed the feed with a pan-out shot to a near-by motorway. The Halifax reporters were aghast.

They've sent us an art movie, that's what it is. They're sending us an art movie from Queen Street. It's like they've tried to work every element [of the story] into the one feed. It's like one of those Hitchcock sweep shots I used to study in film school. And not only that, when they pan out to the highway, the fucking traffic is moving again! (ibid.)

By late morning of the fourth day of the strike, the Halifax producers had found the live reports problematic enough to have had them removed from the entire schedule. The line-up editor and show producer voted to change tacks and cover the strike with a panel discussion including the chairman of the Toronto Transit Commission, an official from the transit union, and CBC labour reporter Allan Garr. After some discussion, the senior producer agreed but he was clearly disappointed with this strategy.

A panel. any panel is second best in a case like this. I mean, its obviously not nearly as dramatic as live footage. And second, and I say this from lots of experience, it runs the risk of being boring and right off-topic (FN/10/09/91, p.1).

In fact, the September 16 Toronto panel confirmed some of the producer's "worst fears". Within the first minute of discussion the union official had called the TTC chairman a "pig" (though he later claimed he had been referring to transit managers in general), the chairman had dismissed the union official as a "labour terrorist", and both had almost entirely disputed each other's versions of the job security and wage offers on the table. According to the line-up editor, the whole discussion was "typical of politics in this country":

Its a discussion going nowhere. They interrupt each other most of the time and call each other names in between. They're almost always completely off-topic half the time and they're completely unbelievable. There's nothing dramatic about it. Its a discussion going nowhere. Not only that, they won't even let Garr [the CBC labour reporter] speak. People don't want to see that. Its like a stalled story (ibid.).

The next day, day 5 of the strike, the morning discussion had been reduced to a panel of one: Allan Garr, who, it was hoped, would give a clear and credible update on the strike, its background and its potential significance for labour relations and politics in Canada. The senior producer was happy with the result; but some of his colleagues were not. The executive producer, for instance, felt the program should reduce the number of interviews being run in the news line-up. Interviews, particularly interviews with journalists, and most particularly interviews with journalists from the CBC, would "run the

risk of editorializing". Couldn't the live reports be resumed? For the senior producer there were "no viable coverage strategies left" (ibid.). Journalists, he observed, "lack credibility on an issue like this. And of course politicians are a lot worse". As another reporter remarked, the transit strike story was becoming a "hard story to tell" (ibid.).

By September 17, the story seemed to have run its course. The transit commission reached a settlement with its workers, the strike was called off and the Halifax team provided one last wrap-up report from Toronto taken from the national CBC network's "Midday" news. After that the "Morning News" team moved on to other stories.

"Looking back on it" says the senior producer, "the whole problem was with the footage":

It [the footage] should have been great. With all the equipment we had on the ground we should have been getting great footage all the time, but instead we kept getting this stuff that just screamed out "we're underbudget! We're understaffed! Our live feeds don't work, technically we're all fucked up! Newsworld doesn't have its act together. So switch to CNN. It was humiliating.

A newswriter agreed:

We just needed that one picture showing some of the the chaos and people trying to cope with it. That's all we were looking for but we never got it. They totally misunderstood that in Toronto. They were sending us morning traffic reports. We just needed

that one picture to put it all in perspective, to make sense of the issue for our viewers. But we never got it (FN/18/09/91, p.1).

At first glance these statements would seem to express an ideal of cable news work roughly in accord with the service's official mandate as outlined in a variety of corporate and legislative documents since 1987 (see chapter 2). That is, cable news workers seem to have required of the Toronto story authoritative news coverage: a more or less instant and total record of the event free of the technical, temporal, organizational and professional biases of regular over-the-air newscasting. The transit strike coverage was clearly less than complete, immediate and unmediated in this sense, marred as it was by breaks in coverage and transmission (resulting in a "less than full story"), temporal distortions (the over-reliance on "out-of-date" footage) and excessive journalistic mediation (the "arty" camera angles). These were all elements which, in sociological terms, drew attention to the constructed nature of the text, thereby detracting from its epistemological authority. As the Halifax senior producer puts it, the text "screams out Newsworld doesn't have its act together. Switch to CNN".

News judgments were somewhat more complicated than that, however. The Halifax team, after all, sought not just complete, fast and neutral reporting. Not just veracity,

facticity and transparency, not just epistemological authority in the strict sense of the term, but something more. That "one great picture", the picture that would "put it all into perspective", that would "make sense of the strike" and the "larger reality" the strike was seen to represent: "the chaos and people trying to cope with it". The team apparently sought not just to reflect the events of the strike then, but to "get at" and articulate a national reality the story was meant to be "about". It is this second more abstract, epistemologically less certain level of self-evaluation which I want to explore more fully in the cases below, along with the notion of cultural agency it implies.

Case 2: Constitutional Coverage, 1989-1991

A second story which journalists frequently cited as an example of exemplary cable news work is Newsworld's extended coverage of Canada's ongoing constitutional negotiations. Constitutional coverage has become almost a perennial story in the Canadian news media ever since the country's constitution was repatriated in 1981 (Nikiforuk, 1990). At the time of my field research in 1989, negotiations between federal and provincial authorities were coming to a head over the proposed Meech Lake constitutional agreement and there were several rounds of first premiers' conferences in the Fall of that year. By 1991, when I began my second round of research at the "CBC Morning News" in Halifax, the Meech

Lake Accord had failed to be ratified and a new round of negotiations were being conducted by the federal and provincial governments (with the exception of the Quebec government which had withdrawn from the talks).

Newsworld started covering the negotiations in its first year of service in 1989, picking up stories which had been taped and edited for the regular CBC newscast "The National" (some items produced for the CBC current affairs programs "The Journal" and "The Fifth Estate" were also included) and broadcasting "live and in full" CBC news footage of the various proceedings which was then fit "as neatly as possible into the regular program schedule" (interview with Trina McQueen, October 18, 1990, p. 2). The ongoing constitutional coverage, thus, offered none of the "technological excitement" of the Toronto transit strike story; networking arrangements were, in the words of one Ottawa producer, "pretty routine. We just carried it "as is" as best we could" (FN/10/11/89, p. 1). At the same time, most news channel staffers in both Halifax and Ottawa felt the constitutional coverage was a "pretty good item" for the network and at least a "partially successful" as a story (FN/10/11/89, p.3; FN/12/09/91, p.4). "It gives us a chance to show we can do it", explained one Halifax producer, "that CBC has this excess production capacity that can be used for very little money and to good effect (FN/12/09/91, p.3). "Most of this [footage] would be in the system anyway",

noted an Ottawa staffer of Newsworld's live coverage of a 1989 news conference on the constitution given by former Ontario premier David Peterson. "It's not even a question of keeping the cameras rolling. They're rolling anyway and the tape is just edited down for "The National" or whatever. We're showing what's always been there. But now people get to see it as it happens without breaks and they appreciate that (FN/09/09/89, p.3).

Other journalists insisted the coverage has been more than just a networking showcase for the CBC. "In a way the coverage is routine", noted a Halifax staffer of Newsworld's live broadcast of the Atlantic premier meetings in the Fall of 1991. "But there's an unpredictability about it":

We cover the process, all the negotiations step by step. We just go with it, we let the process play itself out. We don't just do it because its easy. There's lots of times we have no idea what's going to happen, no more idea than the viewers, and our job is to sit down and make sense of it for them. That's what live television is all about. It's much more exciting and much more educational even than edited tape. We let viewers in on the process, its all there for them to see, even the control room. I guess that's Newsworld's entertainment value, its gloss, but its really educational too in a way (FN/12/09/01, p.3).

A senior producer at the Halifax show agreed.

What makes the constitution a good story is that Canadians can watch it without edits, cuts and all the things that go with that. It really is like being there... We talk to the premiers as they negotiate. It allows you the viewer to look at the

story from all perspectives, without filter , letting you make up your mind for yourself. You see it unfold as it happens. You see the whole political process, all the players at work - the media bidding for access, the politicians, the press pools, the cameras, the whole media circus and the self-important politicians. That's the excitement. Its government and politics in action (ibid., pp. 3-4).

Note that, as in the Toronto story, the terms of judgment have slipped away from the predominant corporate and legislative definition of cable news as an "authoritative" reflection of independently constituted events. That is, the constitutional coverage is considered at least "partially successful" not just because it provides a complete, immediate and unmediated picture of a major political event, and certainly not just because it thereby resolves the so-called epistemological "crisis" faced by journalists who might wish to be mere "reporters" of hard political realities, as some sociological analysis has suggested (see, for example, Elliot, 1972). In fact, constitutional coverage was rarely "epistemologically transparent" in the sense that term has been used by Connell and other researchers (Connell, 1981) and this was part of its appeal for both the journalists who covered it and (the journalists believed) the audiences who followed it. What helped make the coverage "exciting" and not merely "competent" was the fact that it constantly *did* draw attention to itself as a constructed event, as an event in which the media played an active part, as negotiators ("bidding for access"), as interpreters (as witnesses

"making sense of the event") and as symbolic constructors (pictured in the cutaways to "press pools, cameras and control rooms" and in the various images of technology-in-action). Self-referential imagery abounded in the constitutional coverage and it was this element of construction-as-spectacle which, as the Halifax staffer put it, leant the story its "entertainment value, its gloss."

In fact, journalists expressed more doubts about what they called "the story itself" than about their coverage of it. This view was repeatedly expressed to me in both 1989 and 1991. With all the cameras in place, with all the "media circus and self-important politicians" on which to dwell, there was a sense that the real story was happening elsewhere. "The real story" according to one Halifax newswriter, was

the loss of public confidence in this country and the drift of leadership. We were covering that story by focusing on the constitution and the conference halls, but that's not what the story was about. It was about an identity crisis, about Canadians trying to define what it is to be Canadian. We didn't get at that at all (ibid., p. 6).

Another staffer agreed that conventional coverage strategies had failed to "get at" the real national story.

We were showing the political process, the behind-the-scenes bargaining like we never did before...Politics was never been so open in this country and I think that's a good thing. We can pat ourselves on the back that we opened the process up to people. But the problem for us was that politics

wasn't really where the action was anymore. It had very little to do with everyday life in this country. People had stopped listening and I don't think we helped them get clear about their real problems at all (FN/13/09/91, p. 4).

"I don't think we have clarified the issues involved for Canadians", noted one Ottawa staffer in 1989. "You have to ask what all this is telling people, and what has to do with them".

What are being expressed here are doubts not just about coverage strategies but about the meaningfulness and integrity of the event itself, somewhat akin to the current debates in the US media concerning the newsworthiness of political conventions. The debate over the civic utility of "wall to wall" coverage of staged political events such as conventions, press conferences, political speeches and leader tours continues at Newsworld, with CBC officials insisting that such reporting is a basic feature of the all-news mandate (Hogarth and Gilsdorf, 1992). It is worth reiterating, however, a point made in last chapter: that there is not one unified and coherent "professional ideology" by which journalists are led to mechanically accept the newsworthiness of events as "primarily defined" elsewhere. Nor, and this is key, are the evaluative schemes being used to judge the Constitution story "hegemonic" in any conventional or useful sense of the term. That is, the constitution story is being judged not so much for its sheer facticity value, the type of professional news discourse by

which, in many critical sociological accounts, journalists are seen to chronically - and unwittingly - reproduce more or less established social formations. It is rather appreciated insofar as it helps "clarify" and "define" - in sociological terms "constitute" - what it is meant to be "about": Canadian public discourse. The Consitution story "fails" insofar as it is unable to help Canadians "define what it is to be Canadian", to "clarify the issues involved", to "help Canadians get clear about where they are going". These are are hardly strong objectivist terms. These are hardly, that is, the types of professional standards one would expect to be employed by self-styled disengaged chroncilers of an independently constituted "record". Here we see again the sort of partial penetration of the social-discursive conditons of news production - of the constitutive as opposed to reflective dimensions of news work - which most sociological accounts of journalism miss altogether. As we shall see in our next case it is precisely this constitutive dimension which, for journalists at "the Week Starts Here", distinguishes "great" news work from the merely "competent".

Case 3: The Chatham Flood Story

When asked about if they could think of an outstanding cable news item on their program, staffers at "The Week Starts Here" cited a rather different type of story than those

cited above. The "Week Starts Here" item concerned the flooding of a local river in Chatham, Ontario, a story which was received from "The National" and carried extensively on local CBC newscasts in Southern Ontario and Central Canada. This was a perennial news item on the cable network in the Fall of 1989, which I myself viewed several times in that season, and which was cited by both staff and management as the kind of journalism the service can and should offer its Canadian audience (FN/11/21/89, p.4; FN/12/11/89, p.3).

Most of the producers remembered the piece for one image: townspeople wading through waters that were "chest deep". That, according to one staff member was a "great news image" because it "drove home the humanity of that event, the feeling of loss, the sense of community" (FN/12/11/89, p.4). The flood story was the "kind of piece you've seen a million times" according to one staff member. "You know, the raging torrent, the damaged homes, the victims, the clean-up. But this time it just sort of seemed to come together". Another staffer agreed.

It was basically one of those "look what happens when we all pull together" stories. We actually hadn't had one for a while. Everybody's a bit shy about pulling the "national unity" strings and, frankly, I just thought stories like that were dead in the water. But after [the flood story] we saw a whole spate of them. That probably had something to do with the Meech Lake talks but I think a lot of it had to do with imitation. Every producer and every reporter who saw it here just went "hey, what about that National piece?" and "maybe we should look for a follow-up". Now it seems like you can't get away from stories like that (ibid.).

Another reporter remembers the flood story like this.

I saw the original "National" piece which was run on the Wednesday before our broadcast and I knew we had to go with it, preferably as a closing item. It just seemed to capture so well what that town was going through and what the country was going through. I mean the pacing just seemed to follow the story, you just seemed to be going through the whole thing with these people. And without being heavy handed or anything it all seemed very relevant with Meech Lake going on. It fit very nicely into the line-up (FN/10/11/89, p. 1).

A newswriter liked the story "because it spoke for itself".

I guess if you ask me what was so good about that piece, it was the pictures. I mean it had all these themes that were already kicking around, like the "national crisis" thing. But there wasn't a hint of an editorial in it. As I remember, there was practically no commentary. It just showed you how devastating a thing like that can be, people crying, wading through the mud with nothing left and then picking up the pieces. It really made you share the feeling of loss, that sense of community. Those were very good pictures (FN/12/11/89, p.2).

3. Sociological Reframing: Constructivist Views of Effective News Work

Now from a sociological point of view, there are a number of ways in which images such as these might be considered key elements in the story. They might simply be taken as designative signs which essentially add information about the level of a floodwash. In this sense, "good" news work would simply pass on information about a given object world in more or less linear fashion. Alternatively, and more

plausibly I think, the image might be seen as an element of discourse which, from a constructivist point of view, functions as a stock typification or "secondary definition" of a "sense of Canadian community". In the constructivist sense, however, producers are seen to draw upon essentially given discursive formations to frame or encode the story. News work, in this view, involves the "framing" or "encoding" of what seems, to all intents and purposes, to be an independently constituted structure of meaning.

For the "Week Starts Here" producers the image plainly does more than that. It is, in a sense, a formulation of a conception of Canada, of the terms in which people experience the nation. This involves, according to the "Week Starts Here" producer "conveying a sense of what makes this country unique and what it's all about. That's something all of us have to grapple with every day" (FN/12/11/89, p.3). From the producers' point of view then, the image - of a Canadian community coping with adversity - does not just "frame" or "secondarily define" an independently constituted meaning - i.e. a Canadian identity. The flood story and the pictures it contains "generates" a practical understanding of Canada. Thus, beyond merely taking up an already established (hegemonic or otherwise) meaning of "community" or "nation" - which, in Ian Connell's terms, is "structured elsewhere in dominance" (Connell, Ian, 1981), the story somehow brings this meaning to a fuller consciousness. The

story and the image of the town it presents, then, might be seen to formulate and express a set of standards by which Canadians might experience the nation and "public" life (even if they do not generally gain a precise formulaic definition of that experience). By force of imagery, the story invites viewers to share the town's ordeal, and its "sense of community"; it attempts to inscribe them, in sociological terms, as ideological subjects: as citizens in an ongoing social narrative. And in this sense, the flood story can be seen to actively constitute an ideological understanding of Canada: to generate a sectional definition of a general national interest.

As a type of "ideological agency", a means whereby an ideology of nationhood is carried in cultural practice, cable production remains institutionally mediated - indeed quite exhaustively so. At a most basic level, Canadian broadcasters have a rather clear historical mandate not just to transmit or share information with a given audience but to bring that audience into a public existence, to address and thereby bring into being the audience as a public body (see also Maurice Charland's [1986] discussion concerning "technological nationalism"). Since the Aird Commission, Canadian broadcasting services have been specifically charged with the creation of a formal public space; public broadcasters in particular have been directed to call forth a "national dialogue" of sorts, an image with which they

have been almost totally obsessed since plans for a national Canadian broadcasting service were first drawn up in 1929.

As what one corporate document calls a "threshold communications technology for the 1990's" (CBC Newsworld "Information Sheet: All-News Cable", 1989, p.1), cable news is left with an historic but somewhat paradoxical mandate: a mandate which insists, on the one hand, that the new technology be disengaged from Canadian society - that it provide an authoritative "mirror of a national experience" (ibid.); and, on the other, that it effectively mediate that national experience by "contributing to a Canadian national identity" (ibid.). Thus in Canada, cable news production has been discursively positioned to "technologically mediate" Canadian society, to reflect and bring into being the "public life" it is "about". This, I think, is a productive way of viewing cable news work's ideological position in a Canadian context. (1)

What then does the story do in such circumstances? The flood imagery, and particularly the climactic scene of the wading through the waters, does provide a measure of the flood wash. And, in a sense, I think it "frames" and "encodes" an ideologically convenient representation of an event. But more fundamentally, the story might be seen to generate and reaffirm a sense of community among its

viewers; and, even if in a most minute and banal way, enter the language and practice of national discourse.

4. Conclusion

In this chapter I have viewed cable news work as a constitutive activity: as an activity which both reflects and empowers a community of discourse. In news workers' own views, their work reflects a national identity and brings that identity to a new level of understanding through the forceful deployment of language and imagery. From this perspective, journalists do not merely deploy or "persuasively combine" pre-fab discursive formations in their work: they do not simply "typify" or "secondarily define" a given definition of national identity, for instance. Rather, they work to bring this identity to a fuller definition in discourse.

This view, then, would suggest that agency and structure in cable news production are related in a recursive sense. That is a discourse of nationalism, which for more than half a century has decisively mediated the practice of broadcast journalism in Canada (Charland, M., 1986) is itself, to some extent, grounded and sustained in cultural practice. It is in this sense, first and foremost,

that news work continues to matter in news production: as a practice which makes a real ongoing structural difference to the social conditions in which it is produced. It is in this recursive sense that one can say cable news matters as a "social production".

Endnotes

1) There is a fair amount of evidence to support such a reading: namely an institutionalized mandate which in a series of Canadian Broadcasting Acts, CRTC documents and CBC "Promises of Performance" quite explicitly defines news work in general and cable news work in particular as a constitutive practice which both reflects and promotes a national identity in Canada. There is also the stated understanding cable news workers have of their own work as a cultural practice which ideally represents and improves public life, bringing the world it is "about" to a fuller definition through discourse.

There is, of course, no proof that cable news work does that. Just because journalists, corporate officials and government regulators believe that cultural work is, in some sense, constitutive of community does not make it so. Indeed, one could perhaps only verify such a thesis by studying how cable news stories are actually received by a situated audience. A full-blooded case study of constitutive language, along these lines would probably require a more or less rigorous study of *production and reception* in the communication process.

There are, however, a number of good reasons for not adopting such an approach, at least in this dissertation. First of all, it is perhaps unworkable: As worthy as a "grounded" study of the social uses of cable news might be, it is almost certainly a study in its own right. More importantly, however, existing theories of reception may be fundamentally incompatible with this research problematic. Reception theory, for all its insights, has been largely unable to account for productive creativity, the creativity which I believe is implicated in the production of cultural texts and artefacts.

The work of Willis (1989) and Fiske (1987) is instructive in this regard. Both make explicit claims that it is the audience, and largely the audience alone, which determines the meaning and force of a communicative text. That claim, exemplified in a focus away from the preferred meanings constructed by authors to the textual "gaps" exploited by receivers, would seem to defer attention away from the production side of communications altogether and from the question of agency in cultural practice in particular.

I concur with a number of recent critiques of that position (Condit, 1987; and Frith, 1989) which argue that texts may close themselves to resistant readings by excluding non-hegemonic points of view, thereby forcing

receivers to do "double work" (i.e. deconstructing a dominant code and reconstructing their own to make sense of a story). I would add that a closed reading may be achieved not just through exclusion but through a successful "demolition" of potential alternative readings. A case in point might be the "mainstream" North American media's coverage of the Gulf War crisis in which alternative readings [the "no blood for oil" perspective, for example] were not so much excluded as [selectively] aired and decisively refuted in the mainstream media. My point is that reception theory of the sort formulated by Fiske and his colleagues does not acknowledge the possibility of an audience, even a critical audience, being won over by the aesthetic force of a text - and indirectly by the communicative skill of a producer. As a result it is not entirely compatible with the problematic raised in this thesis.

A more practicable and coherent approach to the research problematic of this dissertation might be to forgo entirely the search for conclusive evidence of the constitutive dimension of language - grounded in some form of audience research - in favour of a *preferred reading* of the production side of the communications process. This, in fact, has been my strategy in this chapter. I have argued that a constitutive theory of language gives a fuller and more plausible view of the communicative skills I observed

at "The Week Starts Here" and the "CBC Morning News" than do conventional notions of organized, formulaic journalism or even constructivist notions of discourse-governed creativity. Thus while I can offer no proof that this is in fact the case - that news work does in fact constitute a Canadian community - I think my approach does have the virtue of being modest, workable and coherent while at the same time lending itself to at least some degree of critical appraisal according to criteria of evidence employed in the social sciences.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

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Cable news work in Canada is constrained news work. Journalists at Newsworld, like organized journalists everywhere in Canada, regularly produce a news package within the limits of standardized program formats, available technologies and broadcast deadlines. As private broadcasters (producing the CBC's first PAY TV venture), they contend with profit-minded suppliers and cable distributors, changing popular tastes and limited budgets. As news processors they negotiate most of these constraints from the confines of an office - from a fixed organizational site. And, importantly, as Canadian broadcasters their programming must conform to conditions of license set by the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission.

Most of the sociological research concerning Canadian (and non-Canadian) news production has focused on such constraints. Functionalist studies have generally concluded that news work becomes increasingly unimportant as it becomes increasingly organized - programmed according to bureaucratic routines, and processed (often from foreign news sources) into what Deborah Clarke calls "second-hand" news (Clarke, D., 1981). Constructivist approaches have focused more on the "epistemological" ("frame", "code" or

"discursive") constraints on creativity in news making (see, for example, Knight, 1983; and Ericson, 1987, 1989). I believe constraints figure prominently in any type of organized news work. But in this dissertation, I have argued that neither a functional model of "organizational needs" nor a theory of "code", "frame", or "discourse-governed creativity" offers a credible or substantive theory of news work as it is practiced in Canada today. What is missing in news sociology is an account of the knowledge and skill necessary to produce news routinely within an organizational environment. My research has thus focused on how Canadian cable journalists negotiate production constraints, and as generative agents, produce a popular (and potentially profitable) type of Canadian culture.

In this thesis, I have laid out that case as follows. First of all, I have argued that current sociological accounts are wholly inadequate as explanations of journalistic practice. In other words, the familiar functionalist and constructivist litanies of organizational and epistemological constraints, formidable as they may be, hardly explain the process of production at the "CBC Morning News" and "The Week Starts Here". News sociology has offered several models of news production which are of little help here. Classical gatekeeping models, for instance, have viewed journalism as a sort of deliberate practice of selection achieved within a largely incidental

(organizational) environment. Functionalist models, in response, have essentially conceived of journalistic practice as a passive response to functional (organizational and social) "needs". Studying journalistic practice on either basis is a rather futile exercise. After all, if news work is objective, which each model suggests that in principle it *could be*, then news essentially "reflects" reality. If, on the other hand, news work is "biased", or "distorts" reality, which each model suggests it usually does, it essentially does so insofar as it reflects particular cultural attitudes and values. In either case news work is a "reflective" dependent variable. And if this is so, one might ask, why study it at all?

Constructivist models of news work developed by Hall (1973; 1978; 1979; 1979a; 1980) and Tuchman (1972; 1973; 1978; 1983) offer a very different, and I think more productive, view of news and the production process. These approaches try to make sense of media work as a relatively autonomous, and thus relatively important, activity: specifically as a positive cultural accomplishment mediated by variously conceived discursive frameworks. In its insistence that *both* institutionalized structures and professional practices play a substantive role in the social construction of reality, this work has avoided the more obvious dichotomies between agents and structures so endemic

to traditional news sociology and must, I think, serve as a critical base for further thinking in the field.

I want to conclude, however, by taking final stock of what recent constructivist approaches have had to say about the central phenomena of news production - practice, institutions and texts. I will try to outline where interactionist and cultural studies approaches have run into some difficulties in each of these areas and, with reference to my case study, argue that a theory of news as structured agency might resolve at least some of these difficulties. In my conclusion, I want to consider the importance of this work for communication research and for the more general study of the production of culture.

Let me begin with a critical but appreciative appraisal of symbolic interactionism and the work of Gaye Tuchman. The interactionist case for news as a reflexive practice is quite straightforward and Tuchman's work on "news as frame" remains perhaps its most developed statement to date. In Tuchman's *Making News*, routines of newswork are seen to be grounded in knowledgeable practice, produced and reproduced in indexically monitored situations of production. Newsworkers competently invoke their knowledge of the past to "typify" the present and, thus, produce the news on a routine basis. News work is, in its turn, "structured" - as I understand Tuchman's useage of the term - insofar as it

becomes sedimented in the temporal and spatial arrangements of the news organization.

Making News' concerns are rather local and specific. That is, Tuchman's work is essentially a series of field studies of the interactive orders of journalism and the more immediate time-space frames in which journalists accomplish their work. The limits of this approach have been well documented but I want to begin by noting what I see to be the strengths of Tuchman's "parochialism". The most convincing elements of Tuchman's work, it seems to me, are found in her rather extensive discussions concerning "situated" social control. Tuchman insists, quite rightly, that routinization and social control are effected within specific regionalized settings and time zones of the workplace. This is a valuable approach, I think, and is essentially a framework for the study of newsroom interaction I have adopted in this dissertation. Social control in the newsrooms of CBC "Newsworld", as we saw in chapter 3 of this paper, is somewhat uneven in reach, and temporal and regional zonings are quite integral to this unevenness. In the newsrooms in which I did my fieldwork, direct supervised control - the kind of direct surveillance on which organizational models tend to dwell - has in many respects been superceded by documentary procedures - many of them undertaken by journalists themselves. Newsroom supervision - that is the surveillance of newswork within

situations of labour-management copresence - has become a rather circumscribed occurrence at both news and news and current affairs production centers at CBC Newsworld.(1) At the same time, documentation - carried as it is beyond the time-space zones in which journalists and supervisors face each other - ensure that the production process is managed quite extensively - in the literal sense of the word, in terms of spatial and temporal reach. At Newsworld, bureaucratic control remains unrelaxed in so-called "autonomous", unsupervised work zones.

At its most basic level, social control at Newsworld involves the ability of administrative networks to manage daily working arrangements within the temporal and spatial boundaries of the organization. That sort of control may or may not be coincidental with the legitimation of dominant value structures and an ideological penetration of the newsroom - the phenomena of control with which both organizational and constructivist approaches have, in their own separate ways, been most concerned. In my Newsworld study, I found that social control depends less on ideological hegemony than on the *working acceptance* of institutional arrangements by journalists on a *routine* basis. I thus believe that Tuchman is right to insist that newsroom control is contextualized and less than total.

In other respects this interactionist concern with the immediate time-space zonings of news work is less successful. The reflexivity of news work, from an interactionist perspective, essentially involves the grounding of specific organizational procedures in practice and, in turn, the sedimentation of news work in the temporal and spatial arrangements of the organization. That is about as far as reflexive cycles go. In fact, Tuchman's interactionist work has about it a rather tentative quality: on the one hand, it stands as a sustained critique of endogenous models of organizational change; organizations, she insists, are not closed cybernetic, self-regulatory complexes. On the other hand, Tuchman offers almost no account, even in her later work, of how organizational sedimentations are themselves mediated by temporally and spatially dispersed institutional frameworks. Wider power relations, if they are mentioned at all (for example in Tuchman, 1978, pp. 156-181), are chronically undertheorized - theorized, that is, as distant backdrops to localized production cycles.

I think the problem becomes clear when we examine more closely Tuchman's conception of "reflexivity", the dimension of news work which beyond just reflecting society helps to constitute it as a "shared phenomenon". Here Tuchman's discussions typically focus on how news induces a "natural attitude", confirming and reinforcing the generic "stocks of

knowledge" of everyday life. Tuchman, however, never really manages to account for news work in reflexive interaction with specific institutionalized social orders. Her historical discussion in Making News which draws on work by Schudson and Dahlgren to show how the news media "gave life" to corporate capitalism, is abstract and brief. Far more specific and convincing, I think, are her thoughts concerning the "imposition of structure" on the women's movement, and its constitution as a public phenomenon in the 1960s and 1970s. All in all, however, I think it fair to say that Tuchman has not convincingly integrated the institutional and interactive orders of news production. Wider power relations - wider than that is than reporters' own strategic purposes and the office room relations of production - are given rather sketchy treatment even in Tuchman's more recent works, works which she evidently means to remedy this defect (see, for example, Tuchman [1983]). In short, Tuchman's interactionist approach, with all its insight, fails to offer a credible account of news work as a structured social practice which, in turn, is recursively implicated in the production of culture.(2)

In this dissertation I outlined the reflexive relationship between cable news work and its institutional conditions as follows. In chapters 2 and 3, I suggested that cable news work draws upon, and is made possible, by a set of institutionalized discourses concerning authoritative

news coverage. Cable news in Canada has been institutionally positioned as a "network of record": as a news and current affairs service which comprehensively "reflects" a Canadian reality. At the same time, as I argued in chapter 4, newsroom practices "instanciate" this textual authority: they make the network of record happen on a daily basis; and they bring the Canadian social formation they are meant to represent to a fuller definition through discourse. From an institutional point of view then, cable news work is a social practice which uses 24 hour television technology to adequately "reflect" and substantively "improve" Canadian public life. Thus, cable news is decisively *mediated* by an established set of institutional discourses concerning national identity, which in turn emerge from cable news as a daily production practice. I think it is fair to say that the interactionist model of news production offers little insight into this sort of recursive relationship, largely because in the work of Tuchman and others, it lacks a specific, plausible model of structure and institutionalization as such.

My concerns with Hall's now somewhat dated, but in news sociology still influential, "encoding" model are, of course, somewhat differently oriented. The fundamental problem here, I think, lies with the model's rather uninteresting theory of discourse-governed creativity. Just how language activity reflexively contributes to the

institutional conditions of its production is, I think, far from clear in Hall's early work on encoding, still less clear in the cultural studies approaches to news which have followed it (see, for example, Connell, 1981; Ericson, Baranek and Chan, 1987; 1989; and Gitlin, 1980). Discursive rules of language may be knowledgably and skillfully employed in the encoding model but they are never really practically sustained there. The problem as I see it is this: the encoding model, at least the version of it which appears in contemporary cultural studies research on news, lacks a culturally generative model of practice. This is not altogether surprising since the model's primary concern has always been with the structural conditions which mediate language acts - the structured interrelations between cultural production, distribution, consumption and reproduction which, from an encoding view, cannot be bracketed out of communicative analysis. Language activity figures as a sort of signification process in this context - a process in which given codes are combined with more or less communicative skill.

As I have argued in chapter 5, however, there is a further dimension of language activity, even ideological language activity, which the encoding model misses altogether. There is a sense, that is, in which the language employed by news producers does more than just "frame" or "encode" an independently constituted meaning - for example

a Canadian identity. News production can also be seen to generate a practical understanding of its object, its community of discourse. In other words Canadian news stories do not simply take up a (hegemonic or otherwise) meaning of national identity - which, in Ian Connell's terms, is itself structured elsewhere in dominance. It also brings this meaning to a fuller consciousness. That is, these stories may formulate and express standards for the audience to experience public life (even if the audience does not thereby gain a precise formulaic definition of that experience), thereby constituting the audience as a "public". Cable news stories - or at least the more powerful ones - call forth a public space. My point is that cultural studies approaches to news production have failed to offer a really convincing account of cultural activity, the activity in which the connection between practice and its institutional conditions arises and is sustained. I think drawing this connection - reflexively implicating cultural practice in the community of discourse of which it is a part - is a proper concern of news sociology and any study of the production of culture.

The theory of news as structured agency I advocate here thus approaches news work in a rather different way than the models outlined above. Drawing on models of social structuration outlined by Giddens (1979; 1984; 1987), Bhaskar (1977; 1982), and others, the theory suggests that

news work helps "constitute" its own structural conditions, in the sense that the rules and resources upon which news workers draw to produce the news - the discursive sets which govern what can and cannot be said in newcasting - operate as both the *structural media* and *structural outcome* of the daily activities of working journalists. As regards the case of Canadian cable news, the theory suggests that journalistic practice at CBC Newsworld draws upon and is made possible by a set of institutionalized discourses concerning authoritative news coverage - a Canadian network of record (outlined in chapter 2). At the same time, these practices *instanciate* this institutional structure by making the network of record "happen" on a daily basis (the subject of chapters 3 and 4 of this thesis), and by working to bring the Canadian social formation the network of record is "about" to a fuller definition through discourse (the subject of chapter 5). It is in this sense that cable news work operates as a form of *structurated agency*: *structurated* in that it is decisively mediated by a set of institutional discourses; *agent-like* in that these discourses themselves can be seen to emerge from the daily practices of cable news workers.

Viewing news work along these lines allows us to think ourselves beyond the sociological dichotomy of agent/structure, beyond the great traditional divide between news workers and the organizational/cultural environments in

which they work. In other words, it forgoes the traditional sociological choices of either "social control" or "relative autonomy" as grand theories of cultural production, suggesting instead that news work is simultaneously a *structured* and a *structuring* process. Viewing news work as cultural agency suggests that news work matters very much in news production, but strictly in this recursive sense. News workers operate as culturally grounded agents of culture.

Why is such a view important? First, I believe it to be important as theory, especially as a theory of cultural practice. Current sociological approaches offer no convincing account whatsoever of *communicative skill* and its role in the news production process. They give us little if any insight, for instance, into the way audiences come to recognize themselves as subjects of discourse because of the skill with which they are addressed; into the way, with respect to my case study, all-news television service operates as a *compelling* discourse of national identity. In short, I believe the conception of news work I have outlined here provides a far more plausible and full-blooded account of competence and skill in the newsroom than production theories currently on offer in news sociology: functionalist mechanical routine, on the one hand, and constructivist "relatively autonomous" signification, on the other.

As Stuart Hall has noted, however, any theory is no more than a detour on the way to better practice. I believe that the theory of news work advocated here may also serve as a first step towards critical intervention in the news production process. After all, to insist that news workers are cultural agents is to insist that news could be otherwise. I by no means wish to romanticize cable journalism as a production process here: news work at Newsworld, as chapter 3 of this paper suggests, is painstakingly managed and an overwhelmingly routinized endeavor: it is not an activity in which the creativity of producer is given anything even approaching free play. For all that, as I argued in chapters 4 and 5, cable journalists remain cultural producers: producers who, day in and day out, make routines happen, producing a continuous stream of format stories all with more or less power and "punch". In other words, not only do cable journalists make a difference in their work; I believe they should be held at least partly responsible for the work they produce. In this sense then, the model may help us think ourselves beyond the pessimism which has gripped virtually every branch of news sociology for over half a century. It may help us think of journalism as a practice which can change what it is "about" - and which can itself be changed.

This is, of course, a largely generic argument. I have made no attempt to take account of when, where, and under

what circumstances, news work might be likely to make a cultural difference - when it might have an oppositional impact, for instance. The burden of my argument has merely been to demonstrate the transformational capabilities of journalism *in principle*. The matter of how to realize these capabilities in practice I leave to other researchers - and, of course, to journalists themselves.

The thesis, thus, simply provides a theoretical base for thinking about change in the production of news - no more no less. It begins by questioning a guiding principle of news sociology: that news work is an essentially uninteresting topic in the field. And from there, it goes on to challenge what I see to be the ambient defeatism of critical sociological research: specifically the belief that journalism is a largely immutable practice - a practice whose essential structure remains largely immune to critical transformation by sociologists and journalists alike. To reiterate, sociological models offer no systematic conception of culture grounded - strictly speaking - in cultural practice, and no hope therefore of practice making a difference in the production of culture. The conception of news work I have outlined here is intended as a first step towards resolving this problematic in the academic field - and perhaps towards changing the practice of journalism itself.

Endnotes

1) Though not entirely circumscribed; direct surveillance and public display remain important features of cable journalism in Canada today. As Bruce MacKay, the CBC's director of planning and production for arts and entertainment television, recently noted of his corporation's new CDN\$380 million dollar Broadcast Centre in Toronto (where Newsworld Toronto will move its operations in March, 1994), "getting people into one place is even more important for the CBC than the new technology. This marks a cultural transformation for this place when you'll be able to see everybody else around you" (*Globe and Mail*, August 29, 1992, p. C2). Christopher Harris of Toronto's *Globe and Mail* newspaper adds that "the public will also be able to get a better sense of what the CBC does; the Broadcast Centre has numerous viewing galleries for sightseers to witness newscasts or watch performances (*ibid*; emphasis added). Production display, thus, remains an integral part of cable news behind the camera (see chapter 3 concerning managerial surveillance) and on the air (see chapters 2, 4 and 5 concerning Newsworld's "open newsroom" formats).

2) All these points and others have been made by critics inside and outside the cultural studies tradition who argue that, that by singlemindedly focusing on organizational levels of mediation - on time-space arrangements,

professional interactions and the like - Tuchman fails to examine the prior mediation of that social world by language (Buckett, 1984).

But, in my view the problem goes deeper than that. It is not just that the parameters of a "structure" which govern cultural practice are drawn too narrowly in Tuchman's work. It is that these parameters really don't govern practice at all. Structure - as a set of rules and resources which mediate practice - is a largely absent concept in Tuchman's work to date. Tuchman tends to view discursive formations - "frames" as she calls them - as the negotiated *outcomes* of journalistic practice. Nowhere does she treat these formations as what Bruck calls "power formats" (Bruck, 1984): as discursive formations which decisively mediate, and make possible, the practices in which they are grounded. In short, the recursive relationship between practice and its structural conditions is never drawn in Tuchman's work. Dualism - with a pronounced emphasis on agency over structure - remains a fundamental feature of Tuchman's work to date.

Appendix A

The Toronto transit strike story dominated the line up of the "CBC Morning News" during the entire broadcast week of September 11, 1991. The story was the lead news item throughout the morning of September 11, for instance, with live on-the-scene reports of about 1 minute to 1 minute 45 seconds heading each newscast from 6 a.m to noon Halifax time. These items were then followed by regular news reports, also repeated throughout the morning, concerning a strike by PSAC, the Public Service Alliance of Canada (a one minute 21 seconds report), environmental protests over the proposed Alameida Dam project in Saskatchewan (a 58 second item), political events in the former Soviet Union and Romania (about 30 seconds each), and statements by premier of Ontario Bob Rae concerning upcoming constitutional talks (a 20 second report). Apart from the breaking news coverage from Toronto, the September 11 line-up was considered a "typical newscast" by the "Morning News" Senior Producer who noted that the show rarely ran more than 8 news items, most of them less than a minute and a half in length (FN/11/09/91, p.2).

The rest of the morning line-up on September 11 was also "fairly typical", again barring the breaking news coverage from Toronto (ibid.). Newscasts on the hour and the half hour were followed by sports and weather reports (2

minutes, 10 seconds and 40 seconds in length respectively), and by a series of "backgrounder" items repeated between newscasts. Aside from the live coverage and panel discussions concerning the Toronto strike, the September 11 show featured a series of interviews with an employee of the Department of National Defense concerning the PSAC strike (a 4 minute item), with Alain Gagnon of McGill University and Jack Granatstein of the University of Toronto concerning Ontario and Quebec's positions in Canada's constitutional talks (a 5 minute panel discussion), with a CBC Regina journalist concerning environmental protests against the proposed Alameida Dam project (a 4 minute interview) and with Dalhousie University Slavic Studies professor Yuri Glasov concerning political events in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe (3 minutes in length). The program also featured 3 minute "health" and "science" reports concerning treatments for migraine headaches and problems besetting nuclear power plants in Britain; these were repeated alternately each hour of the newscast. All of these "background" items coupled with commercial breaks, chat between hosts and the "news, weather and sports wheels" repeated on the hour and half hour essentially made up the "Morning News" show of September 11, 1991.

The Chatham flood story was positioned somewhat differently within the "Week Starts Here" line-up. The program which in 1989 ran from 9 a.m. to noon EST on Sundays

was essentially made up of 3 minute newscasts repeated on the hour, followed by a series of documentaries and current affairs segments. Featured in the first hour of November 7, 1989 when the Chatham flood story was run, was a 12 minute current affairs segment entitled "The Week in Politics" featuring reports on former premier of Ontario David Peterson's statements concerning the Meech Lake constitutional talks and Speaker of the House John Fraser's enforcement of parliamentary decorum in the Canadian House of Commons. The Chatham flood story was included in an 8 minute segment which followed called "The Week: Cross Canada" (run back to back with a 3 minute piece concerning the growing market for West Coast native art). Following that report came a 5 minute segment entitled "Media Watch" (which on November 7 was mostly devoted to the "Toronto Star" newspaper's coverage of Toronto City Council), a 7 minute segment entitled "The Week in Entertainment" (featuring reports on North American rap music and Soviet film), a repeat of an 8 minute story from the CBC broadcast "The Journal" (concerning sleeping disorders) and a 2 minute commentary piece featuring Marjorie Nichols of the "Ottawa Citizen" newspaper concerning prospects for national unity. The second hour of the show was taken up by the regular newscast coupled with a 45 minute BBC documentary on soccer violence. The first hour's line-up was essentially repeated in the last hour of the show with "The Week: Cross Canada" replaced by "Access Unlimited" a current affairs segment

hosted by CP journalist Kirk Lapointe concerning alleged abuses of diplomatic immunity by foreign embassies.

This line-up was very typical of those I observed at "The Week Starts Here" over a 3 month period. The program tended to adhere to a fairly rigid line-up throughout the Fall of 1989 (though "Access Unlimited" was periodically replaced by "The Week: Cross Canada" in the third hour until it was finally dropped from the schedule in 1990). In 1991, the repetition of current affairs segments was substantially reduced when "The Week Starts Here" was reduced to a 2 hour show (see chapter 4).

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