Freelance Journalists and Interns in the Neoliberal Nexus: Responses to Precarity and Reconfigurations of the Journalistic Ethos

by

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Abstract

This dissertation explores the connection between neoliberalism and journalism. It thus contributes to our understanding of 'neoliberalized media regimes', as recently examined by Sean Phelan, Nick Couldry and other critical scholars. More specifically, I use theories of neoliberalism to conceptualize how atypically employed journalists navigate a media landscape said to be 'in crisis'. The subjective experiences of such journalists were explored in qualitative interviews conducted with 25 freelancers and interns in Canada and Germany. Their narrations of contingent journalistic labour capture the financial, ethical, and professional conundrums flowing from the global devaluation of news labour.

I argue that these narratives of journalistic labour can be situated in a nexus of neoliberalism on three levels. The first level maps the role of journalists as workers in a neoliberal labour regime, which illuminates how notions of flexibility associated with freelancing resonate with neoliberal logics. The second level maps the role of journalists as citizens, with neoliberalism as a version of government policy-making shaping journalistic labour, that is uneven and nationally specific. The third level maps governmentality in the narratives of freelance and intern labour, understood as subject-constitution and self-governance in neoliberalism. It maps journalists' professional subjectivity as it oscillates between an "entrepreneurial self" aligning with neoliberal logics and an "ethical self" resisting these.

The dissertation illuminates the tenacity as well as the hybridization of journalistic professional identity in a changing labour market. Journalism today is often a part-time job that requires subsidizing work in public relations and similar domains. On the one hand, their journalistic ethos entices journalists to deflect neoliberal logics by upholding a public service dedication, even as it is privatized and corporatized. On the other hand, the journalistic ethos, based on individualized notions of autonomy and independence rather than structural support or cooperative modes of production, both mediates and entrenches working conditions in journalism. Thus, the dissertation complicates political economy accounts that see freelance journalists mostly as exploited workers and neoliberalism as continuing a project of class domination.

Keywords: Journalism; freelancers; interns; neoliberalism; professional identity; working conditions

For my daughter Madita who was born after I started and my mother Renate who passed away before I could finish

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1. Introduction

This dissertation examines the intersection of neoliberal tendencies with the working conditions and professional identities of casually employed journalists. The qualitative, exploratory study is based on in-depth interviews I conducted with freelance journalists and interns in Canada and Germany. These aspiring and more experienced journalists simultaneously negotiate multiple conflicting commitments: journalistic work or training that comes in the form of freelancing, internships, and postsecondary education; the labour of self-marketing, networking, and surveying the journalistic job market; and finally, the mental labour of rationalizing underemployment, the need for non-journalistic jobs, or the decision to leave journalism for a different career.

The overall goal is to make understandable the current devaluation of news labour as part of neoliberalization. For the purposes of the dissertation, neoliberalism is defined as an ideology that depoliticizes but is deeply political. While pretending to forego normative judgement, it endorses as core values individualization and self-interest, uncertainty and risk. This entails a drive to organize all social activity by means of competition and measure success or legitimacy across social, economic, and political realms primarily through economic evaluation. As such, neoliberalism informs policy-making, the economy, and the construction of subjectivities. Neoliberal values facilitate the concentration of wealth and deepen social inequalities but are also used as sense-making strategies in everyday life.

I argue that the undermining of journalism is part of neoliberalism's undermining of political-normative practices in general, as noted above. This core dynamic of neoliberalization manifests in the personal experiences of non-permanent journalists on the ground. For example, they are 'nudged' to accept more and more corporate or non-journalistic work rather than producing and selling traditional journalism to media organizations. While the journalists' preference is doing journalism (work broadly serving the public interest), non-journalistic assignments (work for narrow corporate goals) offer

better working conditions. The pay is often higher and more predictable, and non-journalistic clients tend to be more appreciative of journalists' skills and their ethos than media organizations.

This dissertation is the result of a long-term scholarly fascination with the tension between structure and agency in social analysis, as well as with the role the media (are supposed to) play for democracy. At the same time, the particular interest in journalism as a social force, genre of communication, and professional field started with my personal professional experience. For a period of time in the past, I would have considered myself much more likely to be implicated as a research participant – as an intern or freelance journalist – rather than an author, in a book-length exploration of journalistic labour under neoliberal conditions such as this.

1.1. Position and professional experience of the researcher

Between 1998 and 2006, I worked as a freelance reporter and news editor in Germany. This was not on a full-time basis. I was a graduate student pursuing studies in Germany and Canada and divided my time between academic and journalistic work. On weekdays, I attended academic seminars and lectures and on weekends I took on shifts as a news editor and reader at a radio station or covered events as a reporter for a daily newspaper. Before and while I was a master's student, I also completed eight internships with local, regional and national media organizations throughout Germany. I interned with newspapers, radio stations, public broadcasters, and for the news outlet Spiegel Online. All of my internships were paid; I either received stipends over a few hundred Euros per month or was paid for the radio pieces or newspaper articles I produced or both. However, this income was not enough to cover living expense in cities such as Cologne, Berlin, or Hamburg. I relied on financial support from my parents during my internships.

I aspired to a career as a journalist after graduating with a master's degree from the University of Bamberg. My assumption was that doing internships and freelancing part-time would increase my chances of scoring an apprenticeship with a reputable media organization or being accepted into journalism school. However, this proved difficult. By the time I finally got accepted into the second round of a competitive, multi-

step assessment process for an apprenticeship at a public broadcaster, I had decided to continue my graduate education rather than pursue a career in journalism.

Not only was it challenging for colleagues as well as myself to find stable, full-time work in journalism in the mid-2000s, the kind of reporting many of us valued – in-depth examination of social, political, and cultural issues – was on the decline. Formats and programs carrying such journalism were cancelled and the permissible length of soundbites and full stories became shorter and shorter. First, this personal experience of the transformation of the news industry left me wondering what larger social, economic, or political forces shaped the experiences of reporters on the ground. Why exactly was there a 'crisis of journalism'? This would eventually lead me to investigate neoliberalism in the context of this dissertation.

In 2006, I only knew that whatever was driving this crisis and whatever it consisted of exactly, it had to do with the conditions under which journalists worked and the effects these conditions had on their financial and emotional well-being. I was surprised to find, once I started my PhD studies in Communication, that the working conditions underpinning news production were rarely considered when it came to assessing the state of the media. This aspect seemed somehow lost between critical political economy approaches examining ownership or the role of capital in shaping journalism (and in turn, democracy) (McChesney & Nichols, 2010) and analyses of media content. In more traditional-functionalist research, working conditions were mostly invisible, too, with the main interest being in journalists' changing professional self-images, role conceptions, and news-making routines, with an overriding interest in their performance as watchdogs for democracy rather than their position as workers (see Hanitzsch, 2011; Willnat & Weaver, 2014).

Thus, this dissertation is the result of my search for a different answer to the 'crisis of journalism'. My stance as the researcher and writer of this dissertation is not one of detachment and impartiality but one of involvement and passion. I deeply care about the state of journalism and the working conditions of journalists - as a former journalist but equally as a scholar, educator, and citizen. While this dissertation was driven by an aspiration to conduct rigorous research and careful analysis, it also embraces the fact that scholarly projects are always personal, in one aspect or another.

Crucially, this dissertation is built on the voices of aspiring as well as more experienced journalists I interviewed, some of whom work under trying conditions. Despite these circumstances and despite their busy schedules, the journalists donated their time and energy to make this research project possible. That alone is much reason to be grateful. But even more importantly, the journalists participating in my study enabled a former journalist – myself – who left journalism partially due to difficult working conditions, to start an academic career exploring precarity in journalism. This puts me in a position of privilege and advantage that cannot be denied.

I hope the account this dissertation gives of the daily struggles and deeper professional conflicts involved in doing freelance journalism or working as an intern today will be considered useful by my research participants in one way or another. The journalists I talked to in Canada and Germany appreciated the opportunity for self-reflection and evaluation created by the research interviews, something they do not usually have time for. It is my hope that they might be interested in learning about the views of colleagues at home and abroad or the proposition that a larger social, political, and economic dynamic, namely neoliberalism, is at play in their work experiences.

1.2. Research design and method

The two national contexts for the research, Canada and Germany, were chosen in part because of convenience: these are the two countries whose frameworks for journalism I know best and in which I have lived, studied, and worked as a journalist myself. Secondly, there exist many comparisons between Germany and the United States and even more between Canada and the United States. But there is currently no academic study in media or journalism research that investigates Canada and Germany at the same time, as a dedicated cross-country comparison. Thus, the current study fills a gap. To include perspectives of both aspiring journalists and those with years of work experience in journalism, I decided to focus on interns and freelancers as two groups within the larger category of casual journalistic workers. The study thus offers perspectives of journalists starting their career as well as in mid- and late-career situations.

Since my primary interest was in the individual lived or "worked" experience of journalists, I chose to use in-depth interviews as my research method. Such interviews are an excellent means to explore the subjective accounts of actors (Deacon, Pickering & Golding, 2007). Journalists in Canada and Germany received notifications of the study via newsletters of their professional associations, unions, and educational institutions and subsequently contacted the researcher on their own initiative. Thus, it can be assumed that those who participated in the study had a high level of motivation to do so. Also, participants did not have to strictly be "full-time journalists". For interns, this criterion would not have made sense since their time doing journalistic work is limited to several weeks or months within a media organization. All of the participating interns were students (or had been until recently) in academic programs that either required them to complete internships or they themselves decided to use lecture-free time to do so. All had completed two or more internships of at least four weeks each – most lasted longer – or were in the process of doing so. Although internships are often not considered "employment" in a legal sense (but instead, a form of training), I regard interns as journalistic workers since those interviewed all performed traditional journalistic activities for media organizations. Most of my intern participants also had some or regular work as freelance journalists, either before, during, or after their internships. As for the more experienced group of journalists in my sample, the freelancers selected for participation, all worked for multiple employers and without an employment contract or the benefits that permanent employees enjoy.

Not all participants are members of a journalism association or union but all are at least eligible for such membership, and self-identified as spending most of their time doing journalism. This, of course, does not guarantee that most of their income is necessarily generated by doing journalism since other publishing or teaching activities often pay more. I did not include people who clearly spent a very minor portion of their monthly work time doing journalism. To protect my respondents from possible repercussions by employers or implications from their research participation that could hurt their professional future, I use pseudonyms for their real names. All German research participants have been assigned pseudonyms starting with "G" and all Canadian participants a pseudonym starting with "C". This is designed to enable the reader to draw comparisons between the German and Canadian experiences of news work in my sample. To further protect participants from repercussions, I do not directly

connect my research participants' statements to particular employers in Canada and Germany.

Overall, I conducted 25 in-depth interviews with freelance journalists and interns in Germany and Canada. My participants included 10 interns and 15 freelancers. Although participation in the study was based on self-selection, the gender composition is fairly balanced, with slightly more women than men in the overall sample. Of the intern group, 6 journalists were female and 4 male. Of the freelance group, 8 journalists were female and 7 male. Geographic location of the participants (for the cross-country comparison) as well as their different career stages (aspiring as well as experienced journalists) were the primary interest to this study, and the small sample size thus restricts analysis of sub-characteristics of participants, such as gender, race, ethnicity, or age, although reported career stage acts as a proxy for the latter. Another reason why I did not ask about and record such characteristics was my intent to keep the research interviews as similar to natural conversations as possible to increase my participants' comfort level and trust when sharing stories of their working lives, including financial struggles, or other experiences.

These face-to-face interviews lasted between 60 and 120 minutes. They were conducted between September 2011 and June 2014, in Toronto, Vancouver, Munich, Frankfurt, Cologne and various other cities in Germany. The interviews often resembled open-ended conversations. The primary intent was to listen to and learn from the narrations of working life by interns and freelance journalists, on their own terms and using their own terms. To capture the subjective experiences of various aspects of contingent journalistic labour, I let my participants take their discourse in any direction they found necessary. Nevertheless, I ensured that four areas were covered during the interviews.

The first area explored the working conditions under which freelance journalists and interns labour. This included initial information on each participant regarding types of media worked for and types of employment relationships held currently and in the past. It also included questions about compensation for journalistic work and the nature of contracts, including copyright arrangements, received from media organizations for internships or individual assignments. I also asked participants about jobs or assignments outside journalism. Which non-media organizations do they work for, if any,

and what is the relationship of these non-journalistic jobs to their journalistic work (in terms of clients served, income, and topics covered)? What unpaid and less visible types of labour related to freelancing, such as invoicing, accounting, networking, and branding, or advertising one's services, play a role in the lives of journalists? Finally, I invited my research participants to share their biggest challenges regarding working conditions and possible solutions.

The second set of interview questions explored work-life balance among interns and freelancers. I asked about strategies to negotiate boundaries between journalistic work and family life, especially when working from home. I also inquired how personal relationships are impacted by or enablers of internships or freelance journalism. A final question asked research participants to describe how they deal practically and emotionally with unpredictable work flow, phases of too much work or too little work, and lack of motivation or frustration arising from journalistic work.

The third set of interview questions asked participants to describe risks, including their social security situation, related to doing internships or freelance journalism. It also explored experiences with unions and professional associations. How do the research participants manage social security and other risks, as workers without access to the protections accorded to permanent employees? What services do unions provide and are these helpful?

The fourth area of interview questions is dedicated to possibilities for individual and collective resistance to working conditions of casual journalistic workers. I asked participants about personal experiences with such resistance and views on what hinders or helps solidarity among non-permanent journalistic workers not traditionally organized by trade unions. These rather broad research questions were designed to map a field largely unexplored when I started my field research. The interviews were transcribed in full manually and examined using qualitative content analysis. Several dominant themes emerged, as discussed in chapters 5 and 6, which present the results from the analysis.

1.3. Evolution of research questions and focus

When I designed and conducted my field research, between fall 2011 and summer 2014, there existed no research at all and then very little research into the working conditions of journalists. I wanted to explore these as I was convinced that, at least partially, the crisis of journalism was responsible for the worsening of working conditions or working conditions were responsible for the crisis of journalism or likely both at the same time.

Thus I started out by wanting to primarily explore working conditions, not professional identities of journalists – while conceptually neither subscribing fully to Marxist political economic approaches nor to approaches found in journalism studies which mainly framed journalistic work as professionalism, not as labour. As such, I conducted my research interviews in Germany and Canada without a ready-made theoretical framework in mind.

During my field research, I ended up receiving, from my research participants, a complex account of the resilience of journalistic professionalism and individual ethics in the light of declining working conditions and rising need to accept non-journalistic work. When asked about their working conditions, including the increasing prevalence of non-journalistic work, a strong defence of journalistic integrity emerged, with some of the more marginal narratives also embracing a self-employed business identity in response – which I had not expected. Also, there emerged a clear indication that freelance journalists are willing to make family, personal, and consumption sacrifices to do journalism.

The most fascinating aspect when reviewing and transcribing the interviews was the discourse justifying non-journalistic work, the affective attachment to doing journalism, and – simultaneously and paradoxically – the striking lack of interest in or reluctance to resist deteriorating working conditions, as in actual or imagined collective labour resistance such as strikes. These complex and seemingly ambivalent findings, which I could not immediately make sense of, expanded my interest in working conditions to include questions of subjectivity, professional identity, and types of agency in contemporary journalism.

The search for a theorical framework that could potentially account for the complex narrations of journalistic labour only emerged over time, in dialogue with books and articles about neoliberalism which I read alongside my dissertation research, not originally with the purpose of informing my dissertation. I only slowly pieced together theories of neoliberalism and governmentality approaches as a framework to interpret the experiences of my research participants on three levels: First, I needed to capture journalists' experiences as workers affected by contemporary labour regimes and, second, as citizens affected by government policies. Third, I needed to account for the professional values and rationalities which might militate against or align with such regimes and policies. In other words, neoliberalism as a conceptual lens helped me articulate the interplay of structure and agency in the struggles I had found in my field research over defining the terms, conditions, and meaning of contemporary journalistic labour.

1.4. Chapter overview

The second chapter of the dissertation sets the scene for an exploration of precarious journalistic labour. It reminds readers of the normative role that journalism is expected to play for democracy and journalists' professional self-images reflecting such expectations – which results in sharp distinctions between journalistic work and public relations. The chapter also considers the crisis of the traditional mass media industries as context to make working conditions in journalism understandable. Lastly, it offers a review of existing research on journalistic labour, especially freelance and intern labour, acknowledging labour as a historic blind spot in communication studies. Several smaller, qualitative studies have recently started to explore the work experiences of atypically employed journalistic workers, foregrounding a paradox of simultaneous enjoyment and exploitation, autonomy and precarity as one main finding (Das, 2007; Ryan, 2009; De Cock & De Smaele, 2016; Mathisen, 2017, Edstrom & Ladendorf, 2012). I situate my work in the context of this research, building on studies that show interest in theorizing the subjectivities of contingent journalistic workers as well as capitalist dynamics shaping working conditions (Compton & Benedetti, 2010; Cohen, 2016).

Next, in chapter 3, I outline the theoretical framework for this dissertation. In an effort to theorize both structure and agency in journalistic labour, this chapter broadly

combines Marxian and Foucauldian perspectives on neoliberalism. After a brief look into the history of neoliberalism, I define the version of neoliberalism that many societies currently find themselves in, including the role of media and communication in this political-economic formation. Second, I describe neoliberalism's foundational characteristics, how these are interconnected, and the implications they have for ideology, policy-making, and practice. I also explain how exactly contemporary neoliberalism is understood to 'function' or 'operate' for the purpose of this dissertation, relying on assemblage approaches, among others. Next, zooming in from the broader concern with neoliberalization, I single out three domains of special interest to the dissertation: the nature of labour regimes under neoliberalism, neoliberal subjectivities, and the connection between neoliberalism and the media sphere.

Chapter 4 introduces the reader to the two national contexts that form the backdrop of this study. First, I sketch two versions of neoliberalization, namely Germany's departure from the social market economy and Canada's sweeping 'reforms' to the welfare state. Then I lay out the institutions and policies that shape journalistic work in each country, paying attention to similarities and differences. For example, moral rights of authors to their works can legally be relinquished by authors (to media organizations) in Canada but not in Germany. While Canada has a scheme for parental leave for self-employed workers and Germany does not, the latter offers statutory health insurance for freelance artists and journalists and thus offers enhanced social security. A brief overview of unions and professional associations and their mandates in both countries follows. Lastly, employment statistics and general trends regarding journalists in Canada and Germany are provided.

This is followed by an analysis of the empirical research conducted for this dissertation in chapters 5 and 6. The goal was to organize and connect the different themes that emerged during the semi-structured, often very open-ended conversations with freelancers and interns in Germany and Canada. The themes articulate different aspects in the narrations of precarity and hybrid professional identities. For instance, the research participants narrate how rules and institutions, such as copyright regimes, intersect with their everyday work experiences as journalists, Next, the interns and freelancers frame their working conditions, such as access to equipment, pay levels, travel funding, struggles over work space at home, and how their employment status

makes social security an issue of private risk management. Stories of declining working conditions are particularly prominent. These, in turn, trigger stories that foreground agency amid precarity, articulating lifestyle benefits of freelance journalism, other non-monetary rewards, secondary jobs – such as in PR or teaching – held to subsidize journalism, or entrepreneurial, self-disciplining subjectivities. Finally, not only is a desire to work with others tangible in the interviews but some participants share experiences with alternatives to competitive modes of organizing and financing journalistic labour, such as cooperation in independent journalists' offices.

I bring these findings together with theories of neoliberalism and governmentality in chapter 7. Journalists' "location" in the nexus of neoliberalism can be illuminated from four different perspectives: as a reflection of different historical phases of neoliberalism, of their role as workers, as citizens, and as subjects in neoliberalism. For each role, it is outlined how different factors, such government policies in Canada and Germany, ideologies of freelancing and non-standard labour, as well as values defining journalistic professionalism, and ethical considerations resonate with or frustrate neoliberal logics.

Chapter 8 discusses in detail the insights the dissertation provides to different fields of knowledge, for example, to research on working conditions and professional self-images in journalism studies, to political economy research of journalistic labour, and the emerging field of studies in neoliberalism, especially those taking into account that it is a "mediated formation". I conclude by outlining the limitations of the study, the need to improve working conditions of journalists to sustain democracy, and the dissertation's contribution to the ongoing renewal of the field of journalism studies.

1.5. Contributions

The dissertation contributes insights on journalists as an occupational group to the growing domain within labour studies that examines atypical and precarious work in post-Fordist societies. This research is exploring, for example, the domains of cultural work, health care, migrant labour, customer service work, fire services, among others (Vosko, 2005; Armstrong & Laxer, 2005; Braedley, 2010; Banks, Gill, & Taylor, 2012; Fudge, 2011; Brophy, 2017) .

Furthermore, a detailed account of the larger political-economic context shaping journalistic work is absent in most journalism studies research on journalistic labour. A nuanced account of agency of journalistic workers as professionals is de-emphasized in critical political economy work on the subject. This project attempts to balance, through the conceptual lens of neoliberalization, an account of structure with one of agency in contemporary journalistic labour. This is achieved by combining Marxist and poststructuralist perspectives on neoliberalism, accepting the power of discourse, ideas, identities on the one hand and of material and economic context on the other.

The conceptual tool introduced to operationalize such an analysis situates narratives of journalistic labour in a nexus of neoliberalism, on three levels. The first level maps the relationship of journalists with employers, clients, and unions. It is based on their role as workers in the neoliberal labour regime of post-Fordism, which illuminates how notions of flexibility associated with freelancing resonate with neoliberal logics. The second level maps the relationship of journalists with the state, in their role as citizens. Neoliberalism appears here as a version of government policy-making (or lack thereof) shaping journalistic labour, that is uneven and nationally specific in Germany and Canada. The third level maps the presence of governmentality in the narratives of freelance and intern labour, understood as subject constitution and self-governance in neoliberalism. It maps journalists' professional subjectivity as it oscillates between an "entrepreneurial self" aligning with neoliberal logics and an "ethical self" resisting these.

As a result of this analysis, the dissertation demonstrates the fruitfulness of the so-called assembly approach to exploring neoliberalism. This entails focusing on how neoliberal logics are always co-articulated with other logics, rather than conceptualizing neoliberalism as a monolithic entity impacting social processes such as journalistic production.

Additionally, the research confirms findings from an emerging sub-field in journalism studies that explores contingent journalistic labour, identifying it as an ambivalent experience between precarity and autonomy. The journalistic ethos turns out to be a resource that both mediates and entrenches working conditions shaped by neoliberal logics. As such, the dissertation adds nuance to political economic accounts that see freelance journalists mostly as exploited workers and neoliberalism as continuing a project of class domination. On the other hand, it also reinforces the

necessity in journalism studies to modify its dominant focus on professionalism in journalism at the expense of viewing it as labour, as this risks not recognizing the limitations working conditions can place on professional identities. As another contribution to journalism studies, the dissertation adds to the growing area of qualitative studies that examine the professional identities of contemporary journalists in a changing labour market, tracing how these are fracturing, hybridizing or proving resilient as journalists are laid off, change careers, or switch employment statuses (Sherwood & O'Donnell, 2017; Ladendorf, 2012; Witschge & Nygren, 2009).

More generally, the dissertation contributes to the renewal of the field of journalism studies that has been ongoing since the early 2000s, moving away from conceiving of journalism as a stable and universal liberal democratic object of study. It does so by endorsing a view of journalism as grounded in social, cultural and political-economic contexts, by grappling with ideals of normative expectations versus everyday realities, by using comparative analysis, and by insisting on news as something produced by human beings relationally connected to others, in and beyond their journalistic work (Carlson, Robinson, Lewis & Berkowitz, 2018; Deuze & Witschge, 2018). By embracing the "situated nature of all journalism", this study affirms the usefulness of qualitative methods which are increasingly popular in journalism research, trading the "luster of universality for the richness of analysis" (Carlson, Robinson, Lewis & Berkowitz, 2018, p. 13).

Finally, the dissertation wants to alert not just journalism researchers but citizens in general to the idea, simple as it may seem, that the well-being of journalists as workers has an impact on the well-being of democratic societies they serve. If a growing number of journalists not only experience professional precarity (ongoing professional identity work), ethical precarity (navigating conflicting roles), and financial as well as social precarity – then the broader question arises whether they can still be expected to play a normative role in sustaining democracies. Such expectations are foundational to public assumptions about journalism and to the field of journalism studies, whether in critical or more traditional accounts of journalists' normative role in society (see Gasher et al., 2016, Hackett & Zhao, 1998, for examples of the former, the work of Hanitzsch, 2011, for the latter).

2. Context and characteristics of contingent journalistic labour

This chapter situates the investigation of contingent journalistic labour undertaken by this dissertation in three scholarly discourses. First, it summarizes the discourse on the role of journalism in democracy and the basic components assumed to make up professional identities in journalism. Second, it offers findings from the literature exploring the crisis of the media industries and the related crisis of journalistic employment. Thirdly, I provide a review of the emerging literature on precarious labour in journalism. I use this review to contextualize my own research with freelance journalists and interns in Germany and Canada.

2.1. The role of journalism in democracy and the journalistic ethos

There exists an extensive literature exploring the many shortcomings of mainstream media journalism. This includes the objectivity[1] regime and its generation of often inaccurate but dominant representations of the world as well as news values that promote elite perspectives, social exclusion, or more generally the social and political status quo (Allan, 2011; Hackett & Zhao, 1998). Countless articles and books explore the hyper-commercialization of news content due to market pressures (see, for example, Plasser, 2005) and the detrimental effects this might have on publics.

[1] Objectivity as a norm guiding journalistic practice is rooted in a particular historical context. It emerges with the rise of liberal democracies and modern capitalism, including growing mass markets for print publications, and the development of a public sphere (Lee, 1976; Hardt & Brennen, 1995). Endorsing objectivity as a hallmark of journalistic professionalism legitimized journalists' normative role in emerging liberal democracies while simultaneously serving the business goals of early media capitalists. Objectivity is foundational to the public service function citizens and scholars still ascribe to journalism today (see McQuail, 2013; Ward, 2015; Hackett & Zhao 1998).

Nevertheless, many scholars subscribing to such criticisms also continue to endorse journalism as a public good and have high expectations in this regard. For example, McChesney and Nichols describe journalism as an institution that is a counterbalance to corporate and political power without which democracy would collapse (2010). A number of Canadian journalism scholars agree that journalism is a significant, "civically relevant" institution that "helps to sustain democratic life" (Crowther et al., 2016, p.4). We need journalism to "help us understand and negotiate the complexity of what it means to be a citizen in the 21st century" (p.7). Claims from more functionalist and quantitative research traditions are often even broader, assuming that journalism is fundamental to the constitution of modern societies, as it "is the practice of indexing the present as it turns into history" (Hanitzsch, 2011, p.491).

While not a formally regulated profession in most jurisdictions, dedicated laws such as constitutionally guaranteed press freedom and source protection echo the perspectives mentioned above in the scholarly literature, namely the normative role of journalism for democracy, ideally providing citizens with information and opinions that help them govern themselves. Research on journalists' perceptions of their role in society shows that these perceptions are reflective of both constitutional guarantees and public as well as scholarly expectations framing their job as a public service or service to democracy (Hanitzsch, 2011). This is regardless of variations that exist between advocacy-oriented, entertainment-oriented, or more information-oriented approaches internationally of such service. Hanitzsch divides into four broad versions the professional identities of journalists, namely "populist disseminators", "opportunist facilitators", "critical change agents" and "detached watchdogs". This mirrors the monitorial, facilitative, radical and collaborative roles journalists can play in supporting democracy, as identified by Christians (2009). Overall, such research hints at an expectation that journalists' main reference point is or should be serving a large public, be it by monitoring power, pushing for social change, collaborating with political actors, or through other means. Deuze's (2005) widely used definition of journalistic professionalism adds to this public service orientation notions of objectivity, autonomy, and timeliness as basic values that orient journalistic practice.

Compared to journalism as a profession, public relations has only over the past decades become a steadily growing occupation with ever-increasing levels of

professionalization, including ethics codes, and even more recently a field of academic study in its own right. It is a field keen on improving the image held of it by the public, by journalists and journalism scholars (see for example, Yang & Taylor, 2013). For example, the public relations society of America's ethics code echoes similarities with journalism when it states that PR professionals serve the "public interest" (Public relations Society of America, n.d.) and contribute to "informed public debate". However, first and foremost, the values of advocacy, honesty, independence, and fairness mentioned in the code are all explicitly invoked *not* to describe a relationship with the larger public – but instead a direct obligation of public relations professionals "to those we represent" and their "interests" (which means those employing or commissioning work to public relations professionals). The code, while proposing a version of public service orientation, clearly outlines that this type of communication work requires professionals' loyalty above all to the client or employer. "Independence", for example, is interpreted as providing "objective counsel to those we represent".

Based on the distinctions in professional missions outlined here, journalists as well as journalism scholars tend to be disdainful of public relations as profession and form of communication. For example, Ladendorf (2012) sums up the traditional animosity between the fields of journalism and public relations: "In dominant journalism discourse, the trustworthiness or ethos of a journalist is seen as compromised if s/he does information work, PR or – even worse – work in advertising." (2012, p. 83). Other research demonstrates that journalists perceive PR professionals as marketing ambassadors for companies or causes whereas PR professionals perceive journalists as primarily interested in reporting scandals (Niskala & Hurme, 2014).

However, work in public relations and other corporate communication work are growth areas, compared to declining or stagnating employment in journalism. These former sectors have already absorbed significant numbers of journalists laid off in the past years (O'Donnell, Zion & Sherwood, 2016). This is not the only reason why the hard distinction between journalistic work on the one hand and public relations on the other should be reconsidered by journalists and journalism scholars. For example, just like public relations or other corporate communications, journalism is most commonly produced in a corporate environment where the profit-motive and shareholder value rule supreme, either in stand-alone media firms or companies merged into conglomerates.

Even public service broadcasters and government-subsidized press systems are increasingly subject to measures of economic success. Also, at least in its dominant institutional version, journalism is often characterized by hyper-commercialization, including sensationalism, advertorials, native advertising, or the uncritical use of press releases. Simultaneously, there is an increasing appreciation that ethically-minded public relations or communications strategies designed for non-profit organizations can contribute to progressive social or environmental change (Gurleyen & Hackett, 2016).

Consequently, while I accept the stark opposition between journalistic work and "corporate work" (in public relations, etc.) constructed by my research participants as a strategy to make sense of their changing work experiences – I do not myself endorse this opposition as a scholar. This does not preclude recognizing that, despite the blurring of many of boundaries and ever-increasing commercialization in the realm of journalism today:

> ... journalism (...) – that is, the primary sourcing, producing, and sharing of information about public affairs by independent professionals (…) – is fundamentally different from other kinds of communication genres (…). (Carlson, Robinson, Lewis & Berkowitz, 2018, p. 9).

For example, regardless of increasing pressures and unfavorable working conditions in news rooms, journalists world-wide in two recent large-scale representative studies claim that they continue to be given high degrees of professional autonomy by employers, concerning the selection and construction of stories (Willnat, Weaver, & Choi, 2013; Worlds of Journalism Study data sheets, n. d.). This definition of autonomy as "control over journalistic content" and theoretical openness of journalism to all kinds of current stories from all kinds of perspectives remains a defining feature of professional identity among journalists (Deuze, 2005).

Even if much journalism and many journalists do not adhere or are not able to adhere to the watchdog role in particular, a public service orientation remains one of the core tenets of journalistic professionalism (Deuze, 2005; Willnat, Weaver & Choi, 2012). This is not just a matter of ethics but a business goal: news organizations are in the business of selling journalistic content that is interesting to a general audience and journalists are paid for creating such content. Despite all the tensions and qualifications emerging as a result, the limitations placed on journalists and their ability to tell stories

are different from those guiding communications work for a smaller, targeted audience of consumers or clients, such as news letters or public relations material, for corporations. Abandoning a baseline level of independent and objective investigation of issues consistently and blatantly – and thus journalistic professionalism – would not only be normatively problematic but also hurt the business case for journalism as socially relevant communication meant for a broad audience (Ward, 2005).

2.2. Crisis of the traditional mass media industries

The term crisis of journalism applies to a multitude of individual crises that the traditional mass media industries have been facing since the 1990s. This includes the rise of digital technologies and the attending disruption of traditional business models in the media industries such as the decline in classifieds and the migration of much advertising revenues from traditional to online media outlets. For example, online media have seen an increase in advertising revenue from 10 to 37 per cent in Canada between 2006 and 2015 while newspapers and television have seen a decline by several percentage points (Public policy forum, 2017, p.19). Another challenge has been the changing consumption habits of mostly younger audiences, especially the increasing importance of social networks in news consumption, and a sharp decline in newspaper readership, circulation, and revenue in many countries around the world (Levy & Nielson, 2013; Public Policy Forum, 2017). The crisis in the traditional media industries includes a crisis of credibility shown for many jurisdictions, which indicates that audiences turn away from legacy media organizations at least in part because these organizations are perceived to have turned away from their civic functions (Crowther et al., 2016; Alexander et al., 2016, p.77)

Zelizer (2015) warns us that changes in journalism manifest differently in different locations. However, the crisis narrative is informed mainly by Anglo-American perceptions, particularly in the United States (Nichols & McChesney, 2010). Similarly, journalism's current crisis is not its first and likely not its last, as Zelizer (2015) points out. She invites a glance into media and journalism history where, with the introduction of each new medium to the media ecology, invocations of the end of journalism abounded. As Zelizer notes, claims regarding the crisis of journalism often simply assume that it exists rather than providing data to support this claim.

The impact of the above developments varies by country, type of media, and publicly funded versus privately funded systems. For instance, television viewing is growing when one considers mobile and personalized consumption (Winseck & Jin, 2011, p. 35). Internationally. For example, in Canada, the public broadcaster CBC has fared relatively well in terms of revenue, including an increase in revenue – mostly through an increase in government funding – of over 14 per cent in 2017 compared to 2016. At the same time, private stations have seen their profits drop by about 15 per cent between 2011 and 2015 (p. 24-25).

Most clearly, the crisis trends outlined above apply to the print sector, including many legacy media outlets, and thus print journalism internationally – which has suffered most among all media industries, in terms of declining audiences, revenues, closings of news outlets, and significant staff layoffs (Winseck & Jin, 2011; Compton & Benedetti, 2010). Even more specifically, it is newspaper journalism in the United States that has been and is facing an acute crisis (McChesney & Pickard, 2011), with hundreds of newspapers going out of print and many thousands of journalists losing their jobs. Gasher et. al (2016) point out that the crisis of newspaper journalism has implications for non-print journalism and the industry more broadly, considering its historical role in employing large numbers of journalists and in acting as primary producer of original and investigative reporting that other media look to for facts and inspiration (Raboy & Sauvageau, 2016).

Crowther et al (2016) see individual news organizations and governments in their function as regulators at fault when it comes to explaining the crisis of journalism. They claim that “failure is a more apt way to describe what is happening in journalism than unfortunate coincidence” (Crowther et. al., 2016, p.5). Other authors connect crisis developments in the media industries to a set of broader and complex developments.

Winseck & Jin (2011) explore in their work an aspect of critical importance in discussions of media industry crises, namely media concentration and media ownership regulation. Advancing the “shift from national industrial capitalism to global information capitalism” (Winseck & Jin, 2011, p. xv) as a necessary context, the authors offer a nuanced portrayal of media industry developments internationally over the past decades. Their discussion is based on analyzing worldwide revenues of the 10 largest media industries, including television, newspapers, internet access and advertising, books,

video games, magazines, music, film, newspapers. Taken together, this “network news industry” has nearly doubled in size between 1998 and 2010 (p.11), with every segment growing except for newspapers and magazines. Therefore, the authors state that neither traditional nor new media are in a state of sustained crisis, generally speaking, but the media industries are in a “heightened state of flux” (Winseck & Jin, 2011, p. xv). However, rising levels of media concentration are indeed concerning, especially the wave of mergers and acquisitions in the media industries starting in the mid-1990s and only ending around 2007. For example, the number of big media corporations controlling the majority of US media dropped from 50 to 5 by 2004 (p. 20).

In neoliberal capitalism, journalism is treated by policy-makers and companies like any other industry in a competitive marketplace. As a result, journalists today work more than ever in a sphere where market logic, not the public interest, rules supreme (Spyridou & Vegllis, 2016). Over the past 30 years, news organizations have become integrated into transnational capital, often as a part of big conglomerates active in many other business areas (often financial services) and mainly concerned with not losing the support of stockholders (Compton & Benedetti, 2010; McChesney & Nichols, 2010). As Winseck & Jin (2011) point out, listed companies, not just by the laws of capitalism but by actual law in many jurisdictions, must maximise shareholder profits (p.21). The network media industries internationally not only accounted for a disproportionate amount of mergers and acquisitions in the late 1990s and early 2000s, given their weight in the overall economy. They also received the lion’s share during some years of all venture capital investment available, necessitating competition “not just with one another but with all other firms for capital” (p. 31). At the same time, big media conglomerates are perceived by investors as a portfolio of assets. As a result, each division within, for example, Time Warner or Bertelsmann, must compete with one another for funding, pitting television against print, etc. In such a financialized environment, the evolution of a more flexible labour force of journalists, quickly assembled and disposed, is seen as responding to the ebb and flow of profit accumulation in these conglomerates. Or, rather more accurately in recent years, this labour force is conditioned by escalating *expectations* of profit rather than mere profitability, as media organizations are led by CEOs with variable compensation and boards of directors populated by bank and hedge fund representatives (Almiron, 2010).

An environment focused on financial rather than actual products, debt financing as well as heightened profit expectations in financialized capitalism, make understandable paradoxes that media industries and journalists find themselves in: namely, for example, that newspaper circulation grows in many places and many newspapers remain highly profitable, including in Canada and the US, but that companies file for bankruptcy and lay off journalists regardless of this, only to render themselves even more competitive (p. 42). Winseck (2017) reports, the number of journalists – only full-time journalists are considered - in Canada has stayed roughly the same since 1984 whereas as the size of the Canadian media economy in terms of revenue quadrupled. Findings such as this make it harder to speak of a crisis of journalism as mostly connected to media companies or media regulators rather than the nature of a thoroughly financialized economy (Winseck & Jin, 2011).

Scholars such as Winseck & Jin (2011), Zelizer (2015), and Alexander, Breese and Luengo (2016) caution us against exaggerated notions of crises in journalism and crisis narratives. Also, they ask us to pay attention by whom and in whose interest crisis notions are advanced, so not to prematurely decry the demise of business models a crisis of democracy. For example, Winseck & Jin (2011) explain that the music and recording sector is complaining loudly about its situation, trying to influence policy-makers to tighten copyright regimes in its interest, while consistently reporting solid and often increasing revenues. Also, the above-mentioned authors note that crisis narratives are often advanced by journalists themselves. However, rather than an indication that journalism as an institution will indeed disappear, the authors see this as a sign that the traditional norms and values of journalism – while under increased economic pressure and facing technological change – are reasserted and resilient during times of uncertainty (Alexander et al., 2016).

2.2.1. The crisis of journalism as a crisis of employment[2]

As demonstrated, journalists themselves are a group voicing most prominently the crisis of journalism is no coincidence, as thousands of journalists internationally have

[2] Parts of this section were first published in: Gollmitzer, M. (forthcoming 2018). Employment Conditions in Journalism. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Communication*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

been personally affected by the changes in the traditional media industries over the past 25 years. The transformation in the media industries outlined above, including media concentration, financialization and increased profit-orientation, rising company debt levels, and permissive (de)regulation, has led to many lay-offs and remaining staff journalists face larger workloads and constantly evolving skill requirements (Reinardy, 2017).

Once more, as far as layoffs of journalists in the media industries are concerned, this trend is best documented for the United States. Full-time editorial employment in US newsrooms across different types of media has fallen to 83 000 since 1992. This is a drop of 32 per cent, making this workforce smaller in size than it was in 1972 (Weaver & Willnat, 2014). The number of journalists in the US newspaper industry specifically, including part-time and full-time employees, has fallen by 38 per cent between 2005 and 2015 (Williams, 2016). Although the number of journalists at digital-only media outlets more than tripled during the same time, the number of journalists in these two media sectors combined has declined by one fourth, from just under 70 000 journalists to just under 52 000 (Williams, 2016). After years of growth in digital media employment, the number of employees in this domain seems to plateau while the number of newspaper newsroom employees continues to drop.

Employment statistics for journalists in other countries are not nearly as consistent across sources. For example, according to the national statistics office in the United Kingdom, the number of those identifying as journalists there has increased exponentially from 64 000 to 84 ,000 in the year 2016 alone, mainly due to a rise in self-employed journalists (Cox, 2016). A number pointing in a similar direction is provided by Spilsbury (2016) who indicates that the number of journalists working as freelancers in the UK rose from 15 000 to 25 000 between 2000 and 2015. Another study of journalists' working conditions in the UK seems to indicate optimism as well. Between 2012 and 2014, newspaper employment in the UK fell from 56 to 44 per cent while online employment rose from 26 to 52 per cent, with online journalists being less well paid. This implies that job losses in the print sector have been offset at least partially by increased employment in the online sector (Thurmann et al., 2016).

However, self-employed and online journalists are not a genuine replacement, in most cases, of permanent staff positions in traditional media outlets, as both online and

freelance journalists usually earn less and have less secure jobs. The clear trend toward an increasing number of journalists working as freelancers does not just mean that journalistic work is increasingly de-institutionalized; freelance work – in journalism and elsewhere - is much more likely to be performed part-time rather than full-time (DJV, 2014; Spilsbury, 2016). This, in turn, often correlates with lower incomes.

The salaries for journalists in Canada and the US have mostly not kept pace with inflation over the past 20 years (Skelton, 2013; Willnat & Weaver, 2014). In comparison, salaries of public relations workers have increased significantly, now making the gap per year in pay between journalists and public relations specialists close to $20 000 in the US (Williams, 2014). Furthermore, with permanent employment declining in journalism and rising in PR, there are now between 4 and 5 PR professionals for each journalist in Canada and the US (Baluja, 2014; Williams, 2014).

In a report by the European Federation of Journalists, from the perspective of journalism unions and professional associations from 31 countries across Europe, journalistic labour is in crisis. The overall 42 labour organizations surveyed represent journalists over 300 000 journalists. They come to the conclusion that journalism is a 'profession in decline' (Brédart & Holderness, 2016, p. 24), struggling with decreasing incomes, deteriorating working conditions, and the emergence of more irregular and insecure employment as reasons for this assessment. For example, in France, more than a third of journalists intend to leave their jobs although 80 per cent are still passionate about their profession. Half of all freelance journalists who are members of the National Union of Journalists in the UK say they experience financial hardship (p. 25). While over 80 per cent of workers entering the journalistic profession in the United Kingdom have completed at least one internship, only 8 per cent received remuneration as interns (Brédart & Holderness, 2016, p.28). Most of the 42 journalism unions and professional associations consider job cuts their main concern. This is followed by challenges encountered when negotiating collective agreements with media organizations that employ journalists (Bittner, 2014). The rise in precarious employment is also a major concern. As the unions indicate, journalists in non-standard employment situations are admitted to most journalism unions and professional associations in Europe but their share of the overall membership varies sharply, as not all unions admit

journalism students, part-time freelancers or journalists also working in PR (Bédart & Holderness, 2016; De Cock & De Smaele, 2016).

There are indications that online journalists and freelancers often have to go without collective representation in negotiations with employers: 70 per cent of collective agreements for journalists across Europe are in print and broadcasting, just under one third cover the newspaper sector, and a mere 16 per cent of collective agreements cover journalists in online media. Only 15 collective agreements across 31 European countries have been concluded for freelancers (Bittner, 2014).

Overall, while it is much less clear that we can speak of a general and sustained crisis of journalism in terms of revenue across the media industries (rather than just the print sector), it seems clear that we are facing a crisis of working conditions and stable employment in journalism. As one consequence of news organizations embracing labour force flexibility to control costs, more and more work is outsourced to interns and, most importantly, freelance journalists (Örnebring & Conill, 2016). Such workers typically earn less than permanently employed journalists and under often unpredictable, precarious conditions. The latter are at the centre of interest in this dissertation.

2.3. Existing research on precarious labour in journalism

2.3.1. Historical perspective[3]

Journalism emerged as a distinct occupational activity in the 17th century when it became a ”supplementary, part-time occupation of otherwise professionally committed individuals such as printers, postmen, or tradesmen” (Splichal, 2015, p. 857). In the context of industrialization and the rise of modern capitalism, journalism became institutionalized not only as a profession – organized around the ideal of objectivity, with unions, professional associations and training schemes emerging (Splichal, 2015) – but also evolved as a type of labour (Örnebring, 2010, 2013). After a long phase of non-

[3] Parts of this section were first published in: Gollmitzer, M. (forthcoming 2018). Employment Conditions in Journalism. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Communication*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

standardized and self-directed work, journalists were now employed by and thus financially dependent on press publishers who controlled the journalistic labour process and offered a salary in return for labour power. This signals a separation between conception and execution in journalistic work, between owning or publishing on the one hand and news production on the other. Whereas news-making had often been done by one person operating as a newsgatherer, printer, and publisher at the same time, industrialized press publishers relied on a division and specialization of labour. This was necessary to produce media products on a greater scale and with regular periodicity, as expected by a growing audience of media consumers. Evolving occupations included publishers, editors and writers higher up in the hierarchy in terms of pay and status, and the reporter (newsgatherer) and casually employed penny-a-liner lower in status (Örnebring, 2010).

But the industrialization of journalistic labour in early capitalism did not occur evenly or simultaneously, with, for example, Germany, France, Sweden and Estonia lagging behind Britain and the United States (Örnebring, 2013; Chalaby, 1996). Many reporters did not work in news rooms but directly where news often emerged, such as court houses and parliaments. Moreover, journalism was still rarely an exclusive occupation in the 19th century and often not sustainable as a sole source of income. Journalists employed with newspapers often contributed to other papers and had non-journalistic side-jobs. Teachers and civil servants supplemented their incomes by doing journalism (Örnebring, 2013). Furthermore, many journalists chose to work outside the standard employment relationship during the 19th and 20th centuries to retain control of their labour process and terms of commodification of their journalistic products (Cohen, 2016).

From the perspective of journalism history, the current casualization of journalistic labour is nothing new or unusual; rather, it is a return to journalism's roots. What many journalists experienced during the postwar decades of the 20th century – namely, social and income security emerging from life-long, permanent, full-time work as employees of legacy media organizations – may be a historical exception whose slow demise we are now witnessing (Cohen, 2016; Örnebring, 2010).

2.3.2. Current conditions[4]

This dissertation hopes to add insights to two areas that have been neglected in the literature about journalism and journalists. First, while occasionally explored in the context of comprehensive accounts nationally or internationally of journalism as a profession, working conditions of journalists have rarely taken centre-stage in works published by scholars from the journalism studies community ((Weaver, Willnat, & Choi, 2013; Wilnat & Weaver, 2014; Weischenberg et al., 2006, Steindl et al, 2017). Second, the preference of journalism scholars for studying "privileged full-time news reporters over casualized, multi-skilled, and free-lance journalists" (Hanitzsch & Wahl-Jorgensen 2009, p. 12) can be observed in many studies. This preference continues to dominate research on news production, professional self-images, and many other areas in journalism studies. By instead examining freelancers and interns, the study focuses on members of a large and growing group of media workers who are not only under-researched but ever more instrumental to the process of news production, as media corporations around the world have laid off and continue to lay off permanent staff members (Pew Research Centre, 2016).

In the media, communication, and cultural industries, the trend towards atypical employment – including hopes related to flexibility as well as concerns about rising precarity - has been particularly pronounced (Gerds, Warren, & Dobbie, 2006; Bédart & Holderness, 2016). These industries are therefore often considered a seismograph for transformations in labour patterns in the overall economy (Sennett, 2006; Meyen & Springer, 2009). As a result, in communication studies there exists a wide-ranging, constantly growing and often critical scholarly literature that traces these developments and their impact on working conditions.

This is true for the field exploring aspects of cultural and creative work (for example, Jakobsen & Shade, 2015; also Banks, Gill, Taylor, 2012). Some scholars categorize journalists as cultural workers, broadly defined as producing goods whose value is primarily symbolic (Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2011). High job satisfaction despite social and income insecurity is indeed typical for both groups, especially among non-

[4] Parts of this section were first published in: Gollmitzer, M. (2014). Precariously Employed Watchdogs? *Journalism Practice*, *8*(6), 1-16.

standard workers (Ryan, 2009; Edstrom & Ladendorf, 2012). However, cultural workers' enjoyment (derived from creative inspiration and production) is often self-directed whereas journalists widely acknowledge some version of an externally-directed public service ethos as a source of motivation and pride (Hanitzsch, 2011). Therefore, while similarities exist, the journalistic profession is understood in this dissertation as playing a particular role for and in society and thus requiring its own separate analyses. In the creative work literature, the uniqueness of journalism as a cultural field and profession is not generally recognized.

Another research stream exploring labour within media and communication studies is in digital labour studies (Dyer-Whiteford & de Peuter, 2009) from analyses of video or online game production to call centre labour (Brophy, 2017) to theorizing value in online environments (Fuchs & Mosco, 2016). With such contributions, Mosco's proposition (2011) that labour is a blind spot in communication studies is not generally true anymore.

Nevertheless, there has been relatively little interest in questions of labour from the journalism studies community. This is an older sub-field in media and communication studies, long informed by functionalist and positivist perspectives, which has only fairly recently started to recognize cultural studies and critical political economy as approaches to studying journalism (Zelizer, 2004). As a result, much of the field continues to conceptualize journalists primarily as watchdogs for democracy and not as workers, with some exceptions as discussed below. As Nicole Cohen trenchantly observes, 'labour remains sidelined in journalism studies' (2018, p. 1).

One consequence of such inattentiveness to questions of labour and changing working conditions is research designs exclude certain types of journalists from academic studies. Many journalism researchers (Weischenberg, Malik, and Scholl, 2006; Steindl, Lauerer, and Hanizsch, 2017; Hummel, Kirchhoff, and Prandner, 2012) continue to use rigid selection criteria: in order to be included in studies on journalism in Austria and Germany, participants had to earn at least half of their income from journalistic work or spend half of their work time on journalistic activity (20 hours per week). This has larger consequences for our knowledge about journalists and journalism, as it almost exclusively relies on the voices of journalists in permanent employment who benefit from the related income and social security.

According to Weischenberg et al., those not working in journalism full-time or primarily do not belong in the professional category “journalist” because they cannot offer comprehensive insights into the “reality of journalism” (2006, p. 31). It is also implied that journalists who derive significant income from non-journalistic activities might be lacking autonomy from external influences. In short, only those who can make a living by doing journalistic work are considered journalists. This dissertation argues that this is an outdated position: The reality of contemporary journalism is that more and more journalists are in non-standard employment relationships, as indicated in chapter 2. Many self-employed journalists do journalism only part-time because they find it either financially unsustainable or simply not desirable to limit themselves to journalistic projects. This is why some scholars, especially those doing critical research, have explicitly chosen not to use the primary occupation criterion in their research on freelance journalists (Meyen & Springer, 2009; Cohen, 2016).

Moreover, several large-scale and longitudinal examinations of journalists’ self-perceptions and working conditions did include freelancers (not interns) in the overall sample but provide little analysis of the unique characteristics and views of atypically employed journalists (Weischenberg, Loeffelholz, & Scholl, 1993; Weischenberg, Malik, & Scholl, 2006).

There seems to be no significant change to this in research on the production of journalistic content in the digital environment. For example, a recent review of literature on online news production does not mention any insights concerning the changing working conditions of journalists (Mitchelstein & Boczkowski, 2009). In contrast, developments such as technological change as well as user-generated content are explored in detail. Also, the widely used study *Participatory journalism: Guarding open gates at online newspapers* of Singer et al. (2011) is based on interviews mostly with editors and editors-in-chief of national newspapers, a group of journalists who are typically permanent employees (although the authors do not discuss the employment situation of their interviewees).

The study of Singer et al. (2011) is interested primarily in strategies to manage audience participation in online media and thus obviously needs input from upper-level decision-makers. However, freelance journalism could have still been mentioned or acknowledged, especially since freelancers are more prevalent in online journalism than

in other media (Deuze & Fortunati, 2011). In two volumes presenting results from ethnographic research conducted in online newsrooms (Paterson & Domingo, 2008; Domingo & Paterson, 2011) the assumption seems to be that journalists generally work within (media) organizations. While this research offers useful insights into major sites of contemporary journalistic work, it misses the "rise in extra-organizational labor, tied to the broader post-Fordist transformations of the labor force" (Powers, 2011).

By staying within the newsroom, important actors in the process of media content production, such as freelancers, may remain invisible because their activities take place in their home or elsewhere. Only one chapter in the second volume problematizes the confinement of ethnographic activity to the newsroom. Anderson (2011) claims that we live in an age of "distributed journalism" in which the "walls of the newsroom are shifting" (p. 151). Although Anderson thereby points primarily to the critical role played by technologies, bloggers, and new media start-ups in a wider "news ecology", he also notes that "the question where journalists work is a difficult one" (ibd.), with much journalism taking place "outside formal organizations" (ibd.). A recent investigation of foreign correspondents in Austria, Switzerland, and Germany that confirms the growing divergence between staff journalists and freelancers offers a rare comparison between journalists in different employment situations. In contrast to their permanently employed colleagues who work under stable conditions and earn a decent income, freelance journalists – whose number is growing among foreign correspondents – have lower incomes while working full-time, experience deteriorating conditions and are more worried about job cuts (Brüggemann, Keel, Hanitzsch et al., 2017).

Mark Deuze (2007) has been at the forefront of researchers to have explicitly acknowledged the casualization of labour in journalism. He argues that a "shifting towards a model of individualized and contingent contracts" has led to a "deterioration of working conditions for journalists" (p. 147) and made news work more "uncertain, stressful, and market-driven" (p. 142). As a result, "journalists tend to spend more time at their desks than in the past" (p. 160), which offers one explanation for the decrease in investigative reporting. His argument, however, remains at a rather general level and he mostly pays attention to the effects of changing "professional cultures and the appropriation of technologies on the nature of work in journalism" (p. 142). Pursuing a similar line of argument, Singer (2011) mentions that "news outlets have folded; others

have drastically scaled back operations … Many news people have found themselves without a full-time job, becoming journeyman journalists who work for short periods on particular projects—or leaving the profession altogether". However, this development is, again, acknowledged among others transforming contemporary journalism – such as technological convergence or user participation – and is not investigated further.

Deuze & Fortunati (2011), in a more substantial and detailed manner, note a shift toward "post-industrial and precarious organization of labour in journalism" (p. 118) that entails the push for a "flexible, multi-skilled, movable" (ibid.) worker, stripping journalism of its craft characteristics and making it a "simple form of labour" almost anyone can perform. The researchers state that "contingency defines the lived experience of many, if not most, media professionals today" (p. 111). As reasons they offer the casualization of labour and the drawing of resources "away from journalists to their audiences" (p.112), casting citizen reporters as competitors, particularly for atypically employed journalists.

Elsewhere, Deuze (2009) observes that the informal online networks of especially younger journalists could turn into a "trans-local social movement of precarious workers" who do not come together anymore under the auspices of governments, employers, or unions but rely on each other. As Deuze notes, this could be a movement against a notion of labour, advanced by the *Culture of New Capitalism* (Sennett, 2006) which puts individual—as opposed to organizational—responsibility at the centre of workplace restructuring. Using an even more decidedly critical perspective, Lee-Wright (2011) examines how journalistic work as a whole is "recrafted" (p. 21) in the digital age. With reference to Sennett's book *The Craftsman* (2008), he describes the impact of turbulences in the news industries over the past years on the "dignity, sense of value and purpose" of journalists. For example, Lee-Wright mentions how, due to the casualization of journalistic labour, mentoring processes between experienced and junior journalists have largely disappeared.

He also observes how the "precarity of employment" (22) has led to so-called "hot-desking" in some organizations where some journalists do not have a permanent workstation anymore but work at whatever desk is free. In contrast to this—but as another result of budget constraints—permanently employed journalists barely leave their desk anymore to do research and reporting outside their organization. The casualization of journalistic labour has also impacted, as Lee-Wright observes,

relationships with sources, since there is less opportunity to build trust over time. Moreover, freelancers are "not covered by the indemnity insurance" (p. 26) which means that legal support is uncertain or non-existent should they be sued for their journalistic work. This, in turn, might result in more and more journalists becoming "risk-averse" (ibid.). Lee-Wright concludes that "journalism has lost the economic power of well-paid job security, the bargaining power of collective solidarity, the cultural power of having a socially valued and purposive job" (p. 39).

He agrees with Deuze (2009) that there might be potential among atypically employed journalists to "come together" to address the deficiencies of their current situation. Lee-Wright is hopeful that, in this new reality, "individual journalists will evolve their own codes of conduct and judgement criteria … inevitably less allied to the corporate goal" (p. 36). Hinting at possible ways of resisting working conditions, he notes that precariously employed journalists "reconsider the value of corporate conformity and unswerving loyalty" (p. 25). As an indication of this, he mentions a strike by non-unionized UK freelance writers and photographers against a German publisher. The publisher had tried to impose a contract forcing the freelancers to give up all rights to their work in perpetuity and accept legal liability for it – which was then declared illegal, at least according to German law, by a German court. Another example mentioned, of freelance journalists taking action against unfavorable working conditions, is a network of freelance correspondents based in Berlin that bans clients who underpay journalists in the network (p. 27).

Cohen (2012, 2016) shows a similar interest in developments that illustrate that freelance journalists take issue with their current situation, mentioning, among other examples, successful class action lawsuits of freelance journalists against publishers due to copyright violations. Cohen works with insights from her case study of over 200 freelance writers and conceptualizes atypical work in journalism from a political economy perspective: "The role of capitalism in shaping cultural work and the resulting power relations are obscured in many accounts" (2012, p. 143).

Cohen mentions that freelancers are often given autonomy by their employers to develop their ideas at the creation stage and thus perceive themselves as freer than permanently employed workers. However, using Marxist analysis, we are able to classify freelancing as "exploited labour", considering two types of unpaid work that are

performed in the process of content production and dissemination. First, the time spent on the research and organizational work that goes into an article, for example, is not paid for since media organizations and publishers only buy the finished product. In contrast, public relations assignments are not only better paid overall but usually paid per hour – and thus account for preparatory and research work that has gone into a finished product. Second, increasingly aggressive copyright regimes prevent workers from making money from multiple uses of their submitted work while multi-platform corporations benefit from it. Thus, Cohen concludes, "the benefits of autonomy are often undermined by precarity" (2012, p. 148) in freelance work. This examination helps us get into the detail required when wanting to understand the differences between regular and contingent work in journalism.

Importantly, Cohen also acknowledges that most of her research participants take on more and more commercial, non-journalistic writing, in order to ensure a sustainable income, and are not generally "pure" journalists anymore. This is why Cohen more often uses the generic term "freelance writers" rather than "journalists" when she refers to her research participants. These take on non-journalistic work mainly for financial reasons. Other research is starting to acknowledge this trend to part-time journalism in a profession under siege. Froehlich, Koch, and Obermaier (2013) study journalists with secondary employment in public relations, describing role conflicts, changing self-images and the gap between the reality of everyday work and normative expectations towards journalists to not engage in this type of side job. Most journalists researched state that they take on jobs in PR for financial reasons. Newspaper journalists in Israel increasingly take on secondary jobs as journalism lecturers to supplement their declining incomes (Lahav, 2008).

The number of studies based primarily on empirical data collected specifically about and from freelance or otherwise casually employed journalists is limited. To my knowledge, Cohen's (2016) above-mentioned study is one of only two studies internationally at book-length. The other is Meyen and Springer's examination of freelancers in Germany, published in 2009 (in German, so not accessible to a wide audience). Based on a survey of over 1000 journalists and semi-structured interviews with 84 journalists, it reports fairly high degrees of job satisfaction due to perceived work autonomy – higher than among permanently employed journalists. However, perceptions

of freedom are ambiguous. Many journalists state that flexibility makes freelancing attractive but, at the same, prevents a good work-life balance. Some describe the freedom to manage one's time as myth that, in reality, means working all the time out of fear of missing out on assignments. Being driven by client wishes and preferences limits autonomy, for example, as some have been threatened by employers with losing assignments in case expectations are not fulfilled (Meyen and Springer, 2009). Financial insecurity and low income are perceived as downsides of freelance labour (Meyen and Springer, 2009). These findings are broadly similar to those of several smaller empirical investigations of the perceptions of freelance journalists.

Das (2007) is concerned mostly with notions of professionalism among her research participants in Sydney, Australia. Despite a common public service ethos among freelancers, she finds, the autonomy implied in such an ethos is limited in practice by the specific demands of news managers as well as other, non-journalistic clients - which the journalists need to satisfy in order to secure their income. Ryan's (2009) study on television news workers in the US explores how these "*per diem"* workers interpret their situation. While acknowledging the lack of predictability, financial insecurity, and the related pressure to be available to take shifts, these atypically employed journalists reported a high degree of job satisfaction. They also proudly indicated a strong public service ethos that the majority estimated to be much lower among their permanently employed colleagues. However, Ryan is aware of the "performative" character of the journalists' statements and she notes the general reluctance to consider limitations to journalistic integrity arising from their uncertain employment status.

Research on freelancers in Sweden is more broadly interested in freelance journalists as a component of the "flexible workforce". Similar to the other studies, however, Edstrom and Ladendorf (2012) found that the discourse of freedom and autonomy – causing high job satisfaction levels – played a dominant role in how journalists described their occupation. The research participants recognized, however, that the freedom they perceived was in part a myth, constructed by themselves to make them feel good about their job. Although not dependent on one single employer, they still felt the need to adjust their work to their clients' wishes and displayed what Edstrom and Ladendorf identify as "self-governing competence" (p. 712). For example, "they felt the

need to accept assignments, even though they had enough work" (p. 718), due to the unpredictable nature of their "order situation". On the other hand, the freelancers valued their employment situation as one allowing for more adaptable lifestyles, including longer vacations and the ability to respond to family needs, including child care (Edstrom and Ladendorf, 2012). Some female journalists had built their freelancing careers around their family's needs.

As in other accounts of freelancing, job satisfaction of Flemish freelance journalists depends on having been pushed or pulled into non-standard employment, with those choosing self-employment voluntarily being more satisfied (De Cock & De Smaele, 2016). Primary motivation to become a freelance journalist among Flemish freelancers is increased freedom and independence. Successful freelancers turned out to be those who have a broad social network, a partner with a fixed income to rely on, and able to enlist professional help with accounting and budgeting. Many freelance journalists are not able to receive membership and support from journalists' organizations as their reliance on public relations or copywriting as an additional source of income disqualifies them from the title 'professional journalist'. This excludes the more entrepreneurial minded journalists from such institutional support (De Cock & De Smaele, 2016). Overall, many aspects of freelancing, such as the flexibility in working hours and assignments, were found to be both an advantage and a disadvantage for journalistic workers.

Judging from existing studies of freelance journalism, the working lives of these journalists contain elements of both autonomy and precarity. Thus, typologies can be created by conceptualizing some as being closer to one pole or the other. Mathisen (2017) groups the Norwegian freelance journalists in her study into two categories, entrepreneurs and idealists. The former are either pure journalists or those engaging in communications work more broadly who frame their work in terms of business, market research and customers. They were mostly satisfied with their incomes. This was in contrast to the 'idealists' who are more precarious and tend to sacrifice financial reward for the kind of journalism they found important. This includes 'money jobs' that are necessary to subsidize journalistic projects which tend to pay less (Mathisen, 2017). To capture the increasing complexity of employment situations and the changing structure of journalistic labour, other scholars have proposed similar typologies. For example,

Davidson and Meyers (2016) distinguish between ‘bureaucrats’ who are full-time employees attached to one media organization for most of their working lives and ‘professionals’ who feel stronger allegiance to their occupation than their employing organization. However, both career types tend to have a stable job with generous benefits in a big media organization. Furthermore, apart from the ‘non-employed’ variant unable to live off journalism, there is an ‘entrepreneurial’ variant and a ‘unwillingly entrepreneurial’ variant which are becoming more and more common in journalism. Journalists categorized as ‘entrepreneurial’ use the occupational capital accumulated in journalism to acquire jobs outside of journalism. ‘Unwillingly entrepreneurial’ journalists are mostly struggling full-time freelance journalists who would rather have a permanent job (Davidson & Meyers, 2016; see also Meyen & Springer, 2009 for a similar typology).

As far as internship workers are concerned, none of the above-mentioned publications does more than mention interns in passing. However, there is growing attention in popular discourse as well as a nascent scholarly discourse within communication studies regarding unpaid or low-paid internships. For a long while, Ross Perlin's (2011) examination of the explosive growth in internship positions and programs, especially in the United States, was the only substantive account of this growing segment of the labour force. Work as an intern, he illustrates, is often not legally classified as “employment” and thus fails to offer even minimal protections and security, in spite of corporations often using interns to replace full-time workers. Perlin's account of students and other young workers is more of an investigative report than an academic study, however, as he himself recognizes (p. 225). Also, it does not focus specifically on interns in the media industries, although the experiences of workers at companies such as Disney or Wiley & Son are discussed, among many other corporations and economic sectors.

In terms of academic interest, it was once more critical scholars in communication studies who provided an initial account of internship experiences and dynamics. Cohen, Brophy, and de Peuter have edited the first substantial scholarly account of internships in the cultural and communication sectors (see special issue of Triple C, 2015, *Interrogating internships: unpaid work, creative industries, and higher education*). Among many other industries, journalism internships are discussed in this special issue.

As this research indicates, the involvement of unions representing journalists and negotiating the working conditions of interns in collective agreements with media organizations have sometimes but not always improved pay and internship quality (Salamon, 2015). Such unions sometimes have concerns that paying interns at entry-level pay rates would reduce job stability for existing employees. This is the case, for example, for the Canadian Media Guild which represents workers at the Canadian public broadcaster CBC and negotiates terms and conditions of internships with the broadcaster (Murphy, 2015). There are clear indications that this is happening already, as media organizations try to cut costs by having unpaid or low-paid interns perform the work of fully-fledged working professionals (Eddie, 2014). Although many interns perceive the practical experience during internships as valuable, there is a dearth of data on the ultimate usefulness and effectiveness of internships, especially in terms of predicting future success in finding full-time work in journalism (Murphy, 2015).

Other research shows that postsecondary institutions, including journalism schools, are often complicit in the lack of payment aspiring young journalists receive from employers, while making internship placements a requirement for graduation (Eddie, 2014). This also makes journalism as a profession less accessible to a broad range of demographics as well-off young people are more likely to be able to 'afford' working without pay for weeks or months at a time (Eddie, 2015). At the same time, interns often do not receive the work orientation, formal training, or mentorship expected and learning during the internship takes place in a haphazard manner (Salamon, 2015). Overall, there is almost no research on journalistic internships by journalism scholars and where it does exist it focuses on benefits of internships for journalism students rather than drawbacks (Eddie, 2014).

As this literature review has demonstrated, a growing number of studies from the journalism studies field show some interest in questions of labour. Some make reference to changing work environments and the increasing precarity of journalists. However, these are mostly small-scale examinations that do not interpret specific empirical research findings by substantially widening their focus beyond the media field, media organizations, or individual journalists. The engagement with broader cultural trends as well as political-economic formations – such as consumer culture, post-Fordist work, or, even broader, contemporary capitalism or neoliberalism – opens up a complex and rich

territory for examining contemporary journalism. It also avoids what Couldry has called 'media-centrism': a tendency in some media and communication scholarship to explain media and journalism phenomena from *within* the media sphere – rather than in reference to broader social, economic or political conditions.

Cohen's (2012, 2016) and Salamon's (2015) work mentioned above does this in an exemplary manner that is instructive for this dissertation. Such work connects the experiences and struggles of freelance journalists or interns in the news industry to contemporary regimes of labour and labour representation. At the same time, apart form taking seriously the material conditions under which journalists work, this dissertation pays attention to mental-ideological influences on journalistic labour, reinserting questions of journalistic professionalism and ethics into the study of journalism. Consequently, I view individual or collective forms of labour resistance (representing journalists' identity as workers) as only one of many possible expressions of agency among contemporary journalists in contingent employment. I argue that examining ethical reasoning and negotiations of professional identity (representing journalists' identity as professionals) is just as important.

3. Theoretical framework: Neoliberalism and governmentality

3.1. Introduction

In this chapter, I outline the theoretical framework that informs the interpretation of the empirical research conducted for this dissertation. More specifically, I use theories of neoliberalism and governmentality perspectives to make sense of my research participants' narrations of journalistic labour. In this dissertation, I privilege neither Marxist nor Foucauldian approaches to conceptualizing neoliberalism as a mode and type of social governance but try to combine both. This is, first, to move beyond superficial notions of neoliberalism that see it simply as free market ideology and obscure its more important aspects. Second, I want to theorize both structure and agency in neoliberalism.

Marxist approaches foreground the role of class interests in neoliberalism, as shaping political-economic formations and the continued dominance of capital in it, while not neglecting the role of struggle and resistance in this picture (Hardt & Negri, 2000). Foucauldian framings of neoliberalism emphasize 'technologies of governance' which facilitate the internalization of neoliberal subjectivities, leading people to regulate and police their own conduct in a variety of social arenas (Cahill, 2011, p.1; Miller, 2010). However, regulation here does not spell domination but is at the heart of the production of social relations, with the outcome of the interplay between structure and agency never pre-determined.

As hinted above, the dissertation makes understandable various aspects of contemporary journalistic labour by using neoliberalization as a conceptual lens. I attempt to offer an analysis that attends to "agents' own self-interpretations of their practices" while paying attention to the conditions of possibility of those interpretations (Phelan, 2016, p. 7). This means that my research participants' descriptions of their working life are considered expressions of human agency, conditioned to a greater or

lesser extent – but never determined – by the economic, material conditions they find themselves in. This perspective on researching the connection between journalism and neoliberalism is designed to "counter monolithic notions of neoliberalism as top-down ideology" (p.4).

The chapter will proceed as follows: First, I will review briefly the historical emergence of neoliberalism and define the version of neoliberalism that many societies currently find themselves in, including the role of media and communication in this political-economic formation. Second, I will describe neoliberalism's foundational characteristics, how these are interconnected, and the implications these have for ideology, policy-making, and practice. Crucially, I also explain how exactly contemporary neoliberalism is understood to 'function' or 'operate' for the purposes of this dissertation. Next, zooming in from the broader concern with neoliberalization, I single out three domains of special interest to this study, namely the nature of labour regimes under neoliberalism (post-Fordist, immaterial labour regimes), neoliberal subjectivities, and the connection between neoliberalism and the media sphere.

3.2. Definition of neoliberalism

For the purposes of this dissertation, I defined neoliberalism as a process in the Introduction; thus, it can be more accurately described as neoliberalization. Borrowing the concept of "logics" from Phelan and his reliance on Glynos's & Howarth's (2007) explication of it, I use the term "logic" to refer to social, political and other practices guided by a set of rules particular to the respective practice. Rather than relying on the more specific, original definition of the term as discursive practices, I take advantage of this term to signal that neoliberalism is not conceptualized as an all-powerful "deterministic force" (Phelan, 2014, p.57) but neither as some weak, amorphous tendency without an ideological identity of its own. Relying on Phelan's (2014), Davies' (2014) and Cahill's (2011) work, I define a neoliberal logic as follows:

It de-emphasizes political-normative values and practices while promoting economic evaluation across all areas of social and political life (including the economy, work, policy-making, and the construction of subjectivities. Thus, it is an ideology that pretends to be anti-ideological and it depoliticizes while being deeply political: guided by

purely economic measures of success and legitimacy, neoliberal logic introduces or intensifies across the spheres of commodification, competition (versus cooperation), individualization and self-interest (versus collectivist orientations). Third, uncertainty and short-term thinking arising from this for the individual worker are to be embraced as well as contained, through strategies such as risk-management. Neoliberal values – such as competition and individualization – facilitate concentrations of wealth and power with small groups and deepen social inequalities but are also used as sense-making strategies in everyday life.

Although neoliberal logic aims to neoliberalize social, political, and other realms, this process is never complete, nor certain to succeed, and relies on interaction with other, existing logics to move forward. This becomes apparent, for example, when one looks at the historical emergence of neoliberalism which is advanced by a combination of concerted efforts of neoliberal intellectuals and particular economic and political situations that were historically contingent.

3.3. Historical emergence of neoliberalism

Neoliberalism emerged in the 1930s and 1940s as a set of ideas regarding the organization of society that were marginalized at the time. Theorists such as Friedrich von Hayek, Milton Friedman, Ludwig von Mises, Karl Popper, George Stigler and other prominent economists, historians and philosophers were founding members of the Mont Pèlerin Society, which still exists today. Mirowski & Plehwe (2009) have called the society a 'neoliberal thought collective'. This think tank and discussion group was initiated in 1947 and is named after a resort in the Swiss Alps at which the members met to discuss the role of classical liberalism in promoting free societies. What brought this exclusive scholarly community together, under the guidance of Friedrich von Hayek, was their conviction that collectivist modes of governance, inspired by a strong, interventionist state, would lead to oppressive regimes curtailing human freedom (Phelan, 2014; Harvey, 2005). As such, they were opposed to both the Keynesian welfare state as the dominant political doctrine in postwar Western nations as well as the socialist regimes of the emerging Eastern bloc. In its Statement of Aims, the scholars define the Society's goals as preserving and promoting 'private property and competitive markets'. These two institutions and the 'diffused power' and 'initiative' embodied in

them, rather than a centralized state and state planning, were guarantors of a free society, according to Hayek and other Society members (Mont Pèlerin Society, n. d.). An active state unwilling to leave markets alone, in this vision of society, would always lead to a promotion of 'special interests', disadvantaging some providers over others.

The proponents of a 'new liberalism' that championed the 'free market' were aware that their views constituted a minority position in the post-war environment. Therefore, Friedrich von Hayek and Milton Friedman, among others, skillfully performed the 'ideological labour' (Phelan, 2014, p. 46) of promoting neoliberal ideas between 1947 and the 1970s. Hayek famously voiced his conviction that, first of all, neoliberals had to win the 'war of ideas'. As Phelan (2014, p. 44) puts it, 'political success necessitated infiltrating and politicizing social and cultural terrains beyond the world of formal politics.' Recognizing the unique power of the media sphere in publicizing and amplifying new ideas that then influence other social domains, members of the Mont Pèlerin Society published newspaper articles in the Wall Street Journal, academic and popular books, and regularly appeared on television to seek exposure to a broad audience.

Even more importantly, they used an Anglo-American think tank infrastructure to disseminate their ideals of personal and market freedom (Phelan, 2014; Harvey, 2005) and build institutional homes for their doctrine, from where it could be disseminated to publics and to policy-makers in Europe, Australia, and North America. For example, Mont Pèlerin attendee Anthony Fisher established the Institute of Economic Affairs and worked for the Fraser Institute in Canada. Other think tanks such as the Cato Institute and the American Enterprise Institute worked in alignment with the Mont Pèlerin Society. These intense and well-funded efforts in communicating and legitimizing free market ideals helped reintroduce the idea of 'conservative intellectuals' in the Anglo-American public sphere – one that had seemed like a contradiction in terms right after the Second World War (Phelan, 2014).

The first practical adoption as a policy approach occurred in post-war West-Germany at the hands of Mont Pèlerin Society member and chancellor Ludwig Erhard who reformed monetary policy radically according to neoliberal principles. However, internationally, neoliberalism 'remained on the margins of both policy and academic influence until the troubled years of the 1970s.' (Harvey, 2005, p. 22). By the time the oil crisis evolved in the 1970s, advocates of neoliberalism had increased their academic

purchase, through Nobel Prizes in economics awarded to Milton Friedman and Friedrich von Hayek. As a response to the lasting economic crisis plaguing both countries, the neoliberal doctrine of individual responsibility and free markets was adopted by the governments of Margaret Thatcher in the United Kingdom and Ronald Reagan in the United States in the 1980s. Neoliberal ideas, partially promoted by political advisors to both governments who had connections to the think tanks mentioned above, inspired fiscal and social policies in the UK, the US, and elsewhere, that were a radical departure from the existing commitments of the welfare state, other forms of social solidarity such as trade unionism, and Keynesian economics (Harvey, 2005).

The adoption and institutionalization during the 1980s and 1990s of neoliberal policy-making globally is often conceived of as a particular phase of neoliberalization. Phelan (2014) calls it a period of 'antagonistic neoliberalism' in which neoliberal policies confronted the long-standing social democratic consensus which had generally overruled programmatic differences that existed between political parties of the left and right. Ironically but maybe not accidentally, many of the most far-reaching and consequential neoliberal reforms were pursued and implemented by leftist or center-left parties and politicians such as Tony Blair's labour party in Britain and Bill Clinton's democratic party in the US. This second phase of neoliberalism was preceded by neoliberalism as mostly a set of politically marginal ideas promoted through a think tank structure over some decades, described above. The 'antagonistic' neoliberalism implemented widely as policy in the 1980s and 1990s was followed by what commentators call 'third way' neoliberalism or 'post-ideological' neoliberalism (Phelan, 2014). This is the phase of neoliberalism in which many contemporary societies find themselves.

After a phase of transition during which the stark differences between Keynesianism and neoliberalism were still visible and neoliberal policies contested, post-ideological neoliberalism is the new political and governance consensus, just like Keynesianism during its time. It has become taken for granted by both policy-makers and many citizens, especially those who have not experienced the period of post-war social democratic governance and therefore lack the personal experience of a different system. Neoliberalism was visibly and vigorously contested during the 1990s and then again in the 21st century from the political left, by large anti-globalization protests and

attending disruptions of international political summits, and then by the Occupy movement which was active with protest camps against rising economic inequality and the greed of the 99 per cent around the world. In the past few years, the Brexit vote, Donald Trump's presidency, and elections in Europe put not just right-wing but openly xenophobic parties into parliaments and their candidates into political offices.

Nevertheless, neoliberal policy-making seems to have emerged largely unscathed from the global financial crisis of 2008 onwards. Contrary to what many commentators have asserted, large-scale efforts of governments internationally to bail out banks on the backs of taxpayers – in direct contradiction to the mainstream endorsement of free markets and non-interventionist governments – do not indicate that a phase of post-neoliberalism has arrived (Cahill, 2011; Davies, 2014). Why this is so will be addressed in the sections below that explore the most important characteristics as well as the functioning of neoliberalism and neoliberalization in more detail. At the same time, the latter sections also point to a possibility for genuine alternatives to neoliberalism when outlining that neoliberalization relies on cooperation with existing forces and logics to move forward.

3.4. Characteristics of neoliberalism

To start this discussion of the characteristics of neoliberalism, I offer a definition by David Harvey, a scholar whose work is often cited by media and communication scholars with an interest in neoliberalism. Harvey (2005) describes the neoliberal doctrine as:

> A theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterised by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade. The role of the state is to create and preserve an institutional framework appropriate to such practices. The state has to guarantee, for example, the quality and integrity of money. It must also set up those military, defence, police and legal structures and functions required to secure private property rights and to guarantee, by force if need be, the proper functioning of markets. Furthermore, if markets do not exist (in areas such as land, water, education, health care, social security, or environmental pollution) then they must be created, by state action if necessary. But beyond these tasks the state should not venture. State intervention in markets (once created) must be kept to a bare minimum because (…) the state cannot possibly second-guess market signals

> (prices) and because powerful interest groups will inevitably distort and bias state interventions (…) for their own benefit. (p. 2).

There are different schools of thought within the neoliberal doctrine as summarized here by Harvey, each foregrounding or intensifying particular aspects, as commonly acknowledged in the scholarly literature (Davies, 2014; Phelan, 2014; Mirowski & Plehwe, 2009). German ordo-liberalism emphasized strong social security protections as part of the system of a 'social market economy'. Austrian-inflected Hayekian neoliberalism foregrounded the rule of law as an indispensable force to limit state power and ensure the competitiveness of markets, including the prevention of monopolies. Finally, the neo-classical economics of the Chicago School represented by Milton Friedman spells an intensified version of neoliberalism. This version eventually became the dominant school of thought and influence on policy-making in the United States and widely internationally. In this version, law and judicial authority – as well as politics – do not have an a priori normative role to play in societies but are subjected to measures of economic efficiency, just like any other market. In other words, the law and politics become subservient to economics and economic principles of measurement (Davies, 2014).

Davies describes this significant shift in the nature of neoliberalism that many other accounts of neoliberalism do not offer. This change can be described, as just mentioned, as transition from early neoliberal doctrine in the German and Hayekian school of thought to Chicago neo-classical economics. It can also be described as the change from one historical phase of neoliberalism, namely neoliberalism as a policy framework 'antagonistic' to and replacing the welfare state, to another historical phase, namely that of 'third way' or supposedly 'post-ideological' neoliberalism, as outlined in the beginning of this chapter. Thus, when we now explore neoliberalism's slow transformation from one that saw a primary, if limited, role for free market dynamics combined with a largely passive state, to one that breaks down barriers between market and non-market spheres, enabled by an active state, then this concerns both neoliberal ideology and policy practice.

In early neoliberal theory, markets were considered an institution that would secure liberty as a normative value, replacing 'egalitarian and idealist concepts of the common good that (…) could lead to tyranny (Davies, 2014, p. 1). The price system as

an impersonal, anonymous and fair force was tasked with coordinating social activity among rationally acting, self-interested individuals, free from political coercion. This was the philosophical rationale for furthering free markets. The economic rationale for markets assumes that resource allocation takes place through prices 'which act as information signals about the preferences of individual agents.' (Cahill, 2011, p. 2). As a result, the primacy of markets is justified both morally and in terms of efficiency.

The initial normative-moral concern with liberty and with the reformation of society as a whole among early neoliberals started to fade and narrow as the 'neoliberal intellectual movement became increasingly dominated by economists and business interests' (Davies, 2014, p. 45). Slowly, authority for organizing social activity shifted from markets themselves to economic techniques and measurements claiming to model markets dynamics, derived from neo-classical economics.

As a consequence, neoliberalization does not proceed, as commonly understood, by extending the reach of markets per se. Instead, it proceeds by judging separate social, economic, and political spheres using economic measurements and techniques. According to Davies, this means we are moving from a monopoly situation in which market logics rule the economy, to one of dominance: separate spheres, be they organized as markets or not, are treated 'as if' they were markets, imposing a single economic logic.

As a result, for example, the state does not necessarily "cede power to markets, but comes to justify its decisions, policies and rules in terms that are commensurable with the logic of markets" (Davies, 2014, p. 6). Other institutions such as unions, guilds, families, artists, democratic procedures, law, professions are attacked because they appeal to various notions of justice or the common good (p. 22) incommensurate with economic logic. Their legitimacy is at stake if they do not open themselves up to markets, economic evaluation and individual choice.

Competition is the most important principle guiding market functioning. Not only did competitive principles spread to all spheres of social life, the nature of competition itself also permutated as an expression of intensified neoliberalism In the above-mentioned transformation of neoliberalism, competition, changed from a 'game' whose rules were overseen by an external authority that was not itself guided by a market logic

to a situation without such a 'judge'. When looking to ensure the proper functioning of competitive logics, the emphasis shifted from evaluating the degree of formal equality of participants at the outset of the competition – which was important to early neoliberals – to the degree of inequality discernible in the outcome. Inequality rather than equality became, paradoxically, an indicator for the quality of neoliberal competition. Victory against one's opponents, not fairness of procedure or any particular set of rules, became the most important concern. What Davies (2014) calls the 'rise of strategy' among individual entrepreneurs, corporations, and governments is a desire to circumvent the rules in the name of defeating competitors.

Consequently, in the broadest terms, contemporary neoliberal regimes of the 'third way' de-emphasize political-normative values and promote economic measurement in all areas of social, political and economic life. In other words, political judgement is replaced by economic evaluation, inspired by business strategy; economic technique replaces normative critique. Under pretense of an anti-ideological stance, state support is withdrawn from realms such as education, health, infrastructure and media institutions – realms that had traditionally been assumed to play a normative role for society and therefore deserved protection from market forces (Davies, 2014). This results in three developments. First, a logic of competition is introduced in the above realms and intensified in many others. Second, what were responsibilities of the state and of enterprises under Fordism are transferred to individuals and families. And thirdly, as a consequence of these developments a hallmark of neoliberalism emerges, namely uncertainty.

Uncertainty becomes a principle of governance for the state and for enterprises with risk-taking and risk management assuming value in and of themselves, accelerating developments such as financialization. The structural avoidance of long-term planning and commitments does not only mean that political and corporate powers cannot be held to account; the dramatic rise in contingent and casual employment relationships needs to be situated in this context. Precarity of life at large, not just precarious labour, is contained in the larger neoliberal principle of uncertainty. Governmentality studies based on Foucault's work are showing how citizens and workers are reacting to these changes in their everyday lives (Braedley & Luxton, 2010). For example, individuals engage in increased self-discipline and self-promotion both at work and in social contexts,

deploying entrepreneurial and competitive strategies whose use is validated under neoliberalism. While citizens are working harder to make up for reduced state and employer supports, levels of stress-related diseases, social isolation, and mental illnesses have risen significantly (Davies, 2014).

Contemporary critiques of neoliberalism often attack it as an ideology of free markets and unregulated capitalism. Such critiques buy into neoliberalism's initial self-presentation as free market ideology in the interest of protecting liberalism as promoted by early neoliberals such as Friedrich von Hayek (Cahill, 2011). Such a perspective fails to recognize the historical as well as the present role of the state, which has been and continues to be very different from the limited role that neoliberal doctrine stipulates: the expansion of the state's size and scope, and the use of coercive powers in pursuing neoliberalism (Cahill, 2011, p. 5). In the most recent example, the state moved from facilitating to single-handedly upholding neoliberalism during the global financial crisis in 2008 (Davies, 2014). One important characteristic of neoliberalism is therefore the difference between the purity of neoliberal doctrine and the messier practice of policy-making and regulation.

In relation to this, Cahill explores in more detail the following question: Why has neoliberalism survived the global financial crisis which started in 2008 when the crisis was obviously caused by factors and behaviours owed to financialized neoliberal capitalism? Cahill points to the fact that contemporary neoliberalism – in contrast to the antagonistic and contested neoliberalism of the 1980s and 1990s – is consolidated and deeply socially embedded. This takes three main forms, according to Cahill. First, political parties on the left as well as on the right embrace the neoliberal doctrine as the dominant framework for social and economic policies, with only nominal differences in party policy programmes (Cahill, 2011). Apart from such ideological and discursive embedding, and secondly, there is the role of the state in institutionally embedding neoliberalism – through re-regulation in favour of corporations rather than deregulation of markets, the marketization of social services and subsidizing of private service providers, and labour market reforms which privilege employers. Thirdly, and related to the latter, neoliberalism is socially embedded through class relations. Founded upon a political defeat of genuinely social democratic forms of governance, neoliberalism has proceeded to weaken organised labour and advance the interests of capital 'at the level

of the firm as well as the level of state-policy making' (Cahill, 2011, p. 10). As a result of these three forms of social embedding, neoliberalism's trajectory has been 'towards a diminution of democracy' (p.10.):

> The institutional facilitation of expanded commodification, combined with a strengthening of managerial prerogatives in the sphere of production, have narrowed the range of activities subject to democratic accountability. Instead, the power to determine the conditions of one's existence has shifted to the sphere of consumption, which in turn is buttressed by neoliberal ideology's claim that markets are democratic as they enable for the diverse preferences of consumers to be registered and reconciled.' (Cahill, 2011, p. 10).

This quote makes understandable why the label 'post-ideological' for the contemporary form of neoliberalism is a misnomer. 'Third way' neoliberalism is characterized by an official reconciliation between state and market in the name of a new 'realism' or 'pragmatism' that is supposed to address political, social, and economic problems. Paradoxically, the 1990s and early 2000s have even seen increasing denouncements by governments, politicians, and public as well as academic commentators of pure free market policies, extreme capitalism, and blanket deregulation (Phelan, 2014) – while adhering broadly to a neoliberal policy framework. As Cahill's description above demonstrates, while – or maybe rather because – it is both more firmly entrenched and less recognizable than 'antagonistic' neoliberalism, contemporary neoliberalism might be more 'effective and potent as an ideological formation than the confrontational neoliberalism of the 1980s' (Phelan, 2014, p. 53). By officially accommodating critics of a blanket deregulation across the economy and notions of greed in contemporary capitalism, this 'third way' neoliberalism seems to have become largely immune to fundamental critiques and to the promise of alternative political horizons:

> One way in which capitalism reproduces itself is by maintaining its own internal varieties of anti-capitalism, thereby ensuring that the justification for capitalist activity is never reducible to its purely economic or monetary rationales (Davies, 2014, p. 135)

However, as emphasized in the introductory section to this chapter, this very fact also contains an opening for developing alternatives to neoliberalism, rather than supporting it. Persistent variety in terms of logics, organizations, goals, and ownership in neoliberalism, as Davies (2014) points out, is also always chance to develop or sustain realms not commensurable with neoliberal logics.

3.5. Conceptualizing the functioning of neoliberalization

As described above, neoliberalism started as a project on the fringes of dominant political and economic discourse and practice. It emerged as a radical set of ideas, a critique questioning the Keynesianism orthodoxy shared by Western societies after the Second World War. Thus, decades before its entrenchment as dominant ideology, approach to policy, and influence on practice, neoliberalism effectively emerged as a rebellion against a powerful and long-lasting political-economic common sense (Harvey, 2005). It took many years and an immense effort by think tanks and influential academics to gain purchase among politicians, publics, and governments and slowly replace the Keynesian common sense with its own. At the same time, as just discussed above, the latest version of neoliberalism has incorporated in its discourse some of the criticisms of extreme capitalism, and effected some, mostly cosmetic, adjustments in governance while keeping in place or advancing core tenets of neoliberalism in policy frameworks.

Thus, the earliest as well as latest incarnation of neoliberalism indicates an intimate relationship between dominance and antagonism, hegemony and rebellion, centre and periphery, critique and incorporation of critique. This spells a foundational understanding of neoliberalism not only as complex and nuanced phenomenon but as ambiguous and composed of contradictory elements. This view is increasingly widespread in the still young but steadily growing body of works exploring neoliberalism in the social sciences and humanities (Springer, Birch, MacLeavy, 2016). Such a foundational perspective is what multiple theorizations of neoliberalism have in common. It is tangible in the concept of 'heterogeneity' used by Sean Phelan. This term is based on Laclau's understanding of discourse constituted through an 'outside' against which it defines itself, with 'heterogeneity' capturing that which is neither part of the discourse nor its necessary antagonism (Phelan, 2014).

The ambivalent and contingent nature of neoliberalism is also expressed in scholarly works that emphasize the gap between pure neoliberal doctrine and the complicated practice of policy-making that reflects not just neoliberal values but older ideas and segmented social structures and practices that partially resonate with but are not equal to neoliberal values. In the "assemblage approach" to neoliberalism, acknowledgement of the contingent nature of neoliberalism might be most obvious and

is taken to a more radical level, in that neoliberalism is not ever a set of certain characteristics or ideas that exist independently and coherently by themselves. Rather, it is assembled (or disassembled!) 'on the spot', in unpredictable ways, by loosely combining elements of various social, political, and economic practices and ideas that act temporarily as 'neoliberal' (Higgins & Larner, 2017).

Consequently, once more, in this dissertation, neoliberalism is not assumed to be static. It is not assumed to be a monolithic entity that imposes its logic on societies, institutions, or subjectivities. Rather, I am adopting a view that is sensitive to processes of mutation, co-optation, and adaption in the making – and challenging – of neoliberalism.

3.6. Neoliberal subjectivities and neoliberal labour regimes

3.6.1. Neoliberal subjectivities: The entrepreneurial self and the ethical self

Michel Foucault's concept of governmentality will be used in this dissertation to conceptualize neoliberal subjectivities. I will interpret the statements and narratives shared by my research participants during the research interviews with this framework in mind. Although the term 'governmentality' was first used by Roland Barthes, it is today mostly associated with Foucault's conceptualization of the mode of governance in postmodern times. As Toby Miller (2010, p. 25) says about the development of state governance, 'the critical shift (…) was away from an accumulation of power by the sovereign, and towards the dispersal of power into the population.' Postmodern states address the problem of managing large bodies of individuals by trying to influence 'the conduct of conduct': Individuals are

> …guided '*through* their freedom', in other words, to prompt them to govern themselves, to give them positive incentives to act in a certain way and understand themselves as free subjects. Governing means creating lines of force that make certain forms of behaviour more probable than others. (Bröckling, Krasmann, Lemke, 2011, p. 13)

This means that rather than using direct, coercive powers, as was the case during long periods in history, the state and other institutions now use different actions

and practices that ‘aim in a complex way at steering individuals and collectives’ (Bröckling, Krasmann, Lemke, 2011, p. 1). Governmentality marks a transition, not just from modern to postmodern times but also a shift in Foucault’s thinking about how power works.

The concept of governmentality signals the ‘double character of this process as a practice of subjugation and a form of self-constitution’ (ibid.) or, in other words, the co-evolution of statehood and subjectivity. A critical aspect of governmentality theory is that the commonly assumed opposition between the two concepts is dissolved in Foucault’s conceptualization of power, which essentially erases also any convenient or simple way to differentiate between power and domination.

Especially starting with his lectures on *The birth of biopolitics* at the Collège de France in 1979, Foucault’s theorization of subjectivity visibly moved from an earlier conception, as a process shaped more directly by external forces, to a process according more agency to the individual (Lorenzini, 2018). The outcome of governmentality, of self-governance, is always uncertain, if not arbitrary. Consequentially, studies of governmentality, rather than assuming a certain outcome of the constant oscillation between structure and agency in the playing out of power, make ‘visible the conflicting forces, the breaches and modes of resistance provoking governmental efforts’ (ibid.). Foucault’s shift towards a more complex and nuanced notion of subject constitution was significantly inspired by a neoliberal concept of the subject: what was the then brand-new theory of human capital, introduced by Chicago school economist Gary Becker and colleagues. For the first time, an economic theory offered a concept of workers not as objects, but subjects endowed with considerable will and decision-making power.

Based on this and fascinated by it, Foucault developed his concept of the “entrepreneur of the self”. This entails the idea of maximising the return on capital one possesses – such as skills, genetics, cultural background, etc. – in a global marketplace (Lorenzini, 2018). This kind of self-governance and self-management, however, is not naturally occurring but encouraged by neoliberal regimes transferring responsibility from institutions to human beings. While there is no single neoliberal governmentality in neoliberalism, many such studies show

> how the role-model of the enterprising self is connected with the theory of human capital in an elementary way, and how this role-model is diffused and becomes hegemonic within present-day regimes of subjectification (Bröckling, Krasman, Lemke, 2011, p. 12).

The persistence and prevalence of the "entrepreneurial self" today suggests this subject position is not simply 'false' or 'exploitative' but has become a normative ritual in its own right, through which actors make sense of and criticize the world around them (Davies, 2014, p.10). The notion of radical freedom and decision-making power of the individual is genuinely appreciated by many. As the flipside of such freedom, therefore, it is not surprising that researchers of 'everyday neoliberalism' often find people accepting individual responsibility – as "entrepreneurial selves" – for structural problems and unable to imagine political or social alternatives to neoliberalism, despite suffering from its consequences (Braedley & Luxton, 2010). Davies (2014, p. 4) explains that the "disenchantment of politics by economics" which defines neoliberalism, "involves a validation of the individual and a deconstruction of the language of the "common good" or the "public" so that imagining a collectivity or collective action becomes a challenge all of its own."

Nevertheless, the "entrepreneurial self", in its ability to exercise a radical notion of freedom of choice by allocating energies, choosing activities, and investing resources – already contains a tendency that can be part of its own demise as a purely instrumental means to an end (Dilts, 2011). Foucault took this neoliberal notion of subjectivity seriously and thought its logic through to the end, taking human capital theory much further than economists such as Gary Becker had ever intended. Towards the end of his life, in *The care of the self*, Foucault turned to ethics and the possibilities for an ethical subjectivity. Just like before, in Foucault's concept of power, techniques of rule go and in hand with 'technologies of the self' that individuals employ to perform work on themselves. But the focus moves to the self-conscious, self-reflexive use of those technologies, rather than purely entrepreneurial actions designed to generate return on investment. These technologies, as he elaborates,

> permit 'individuals to effect by their own means or with the help of others a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection or immortality' (Foucault, 1988, p. 18).

Foucault is trying to avoid creating a commonsensical Western idea of ethics in a "normative, prescriptive sense" (Smith, 2015, p. 143) as that would return us to a juridical concept of ethics that can think the good only in relation to the law, governmental agencies, or the state. Foucault's concept of ethics is a one that is not juridical and thus one where the morality of individuals is not judged by, reflected in or otherwise connected to the law (Smith, 2015). To emphasize this indepence, Foucault's conception of the ethical subject is one where "the self is both that which does the caring, and the object of that same care' (p. 141).

At the same time, his conception of ethics moves away from the modern conception of the sovereign subject, namely the Cartesian cogito ergo sum. Thus, as in much poststructuralist or postmodern thought, the subject is thought to be relational, self-reflexive, and vulnerable rather than self-contained and in control of its own formation (Smith, 2015). Foucault's concept of ethics, to put it simply, refers "to the *reflexivity of the self*, that part of the self which 'folds' back on itself." (Smith, 2015, p. 144; emphasis in original). There is no essence or particular content of a person or identity according to Foucault, just the ability of the ethical self to have a conscious relationship with oneself.

Practices of self-reflexivity used by an individual are not arbitrary but proposed and imposed by culture, society, social groups, etc., with neither of those two forces holding necessarily or permanently an upper hand in the process (Dilts, 2011). Domination of the self by external forces can never be complete – not because of some point of "absolute freedom hidden deep within us that cannot be completely subjected to power" (p. 145) but because the self is able to act upon and re-form itself, due to its ability for self-reflection. Thus, subjectivities in neoliberalism might be "enterprising" but they can recognize, through their ability for self-reflection, the environment or regime that conditions them, "thinking self-consciously about the production of that regime of truth" (Dilts, 2011, p. 145). This is not only the key to envisioning an ethical self but also to actions that are alternatives to those an entrepreneurial self would take. Self-interest turns into self-development, aware of the particular environment in which it is embedded.

Using Foucault's concepts of "enterprising self" and "ethical self" to think through the relationship between neoliberal logics and the types of subjectivities produced, there is potential for far-reaching homologies between those logics and neoliberalism.

However, as just described, there is also potential for the development of subjectivities that do not or only partially resonate with neoliberal logics – thus, possibly undermining neoliberalism, by refusing a logic of investment and embracing self-development as an an end in itself.

3.6.2. Neoliberal labour regimes

Constantly encouraged and invited to become active and responsible, the 'enterprising self' maps onto the 'entrepreneurial worker' as the preferred worker subjectivity in Post-Fordist labour regimes. Post-Fordism is understood to be a regime of accumulation and labour that emerges in conjunction with neoliberalism as a regime of regulation (Jessop, 2018). Post-Fordist regimes signal a transition from state planning and the manufacturing of physical goods as the primary economic activity in post-war labour history described as Fordist. Such manufacturing was carried out by individual workers who did not generally cooperate but worked in an isolated manner on specific, well-defined tasks that were repetitive. Workers performed their job on their employer's premises according to a schedule beyond their control and embedded in a clear corporate hierarchy. The standard employment relationship became common during this period, often leading to life-long careers with one single employer (Vosko, 2005).

Fordism also offered to the (predominantly) male worker a social wage that extended benefits to family members. This encouraged women to stay at home and work as unpaid caregivers, thereby contributing to social reproduction. Strong labour unions protected worker's rights and interests in many post-war societies (Sutter, 2011). At the same time, the Fordist regime excluded women from the workplace and made them dependent on the male breadwinner. Yet it is often overlooked that the standard employment relationship was not the dominant post-war model of work in many countries of the global South. Furthermore, many racial minorities, racialized or gendered professions in the global North continued to be excluded from the privilege of relative stability that the standard employment relationship afforded to white, middle-class men and their families (Vosko, 2005; Fraser, 2016).

In Post-Fordism, social protections for those in the standard employment relationship did not disappear suddenly, completely or simultaneously in different jurisdictions. Apart from "roll-back" policies dismantling the welfare state and discrediting

forms of social solidarity, neoliberalism also consists of “roll-out” policies. These are new modes of governance that criminalize marginal social groups, push welfare-to-work programs, and significantly weaken the power of labour unions (Peck & Tickell, 2002). The combined force of both types of regulation exacerbates the sense among citizens that responsibility for income, social security, and well-being increasingly rested within individual workers and their families. The casualization of labour with a rise in self-employment, part-time work, and short-term contracts can be understood in a context where the state and corporations – even if unevenly or only gradually – became increasingly reluctant to make longer-term commitments to employees (Vosko, 2005). These new work arrangements are advertised under the banner of flexibilization: workers can enjoy freedoms such as changing employers and clients as they see fit, working remotely and from home, during hours of their choosing and free from corporate hierarchies. The increase in uncertainty and precarity across growing groups of workers is re-framed by capital and policy-makers as having a liberating tendency (Fraser, 2016).

Moreover, the economy in Post-Fordism shifted from a manufacturing-oriented regime to one focused on the production of immaterial goods and services, such as education, cultural goods, media and associated intellectual property rights (Hardt & Negri, 2000; Valencia, 2017). At the same time, industrial production persists. Not only does its share of most national economies still trump the share of immaterial goods and services – including increased resource extraction and processing of e-waste - but material production has been shifted to countries of the global South (Kiely, 1998), taking advantage of laxer environmental and labour regulations. Nevertheless, immaterial labour has become hegemonic in thinking about contemporary labour in general. Employers expect different skills and mindsets from workers today than during Fordism. Both in immaterial labour such as advertising or design, and in customer service work, an employee’s subjectivity, authentic self, and emotional labour now become prized opportunities for corporate value creation (Böhm & Land, 2012). Skill in social interaction and communication (Brophy, 2017) with clients as well as colleagues can make or break careers, quite apart from the formal education or certification received in any given discipline.

Ironically, while the employee in the post-war factory often worked in isolation but had lasting informal relationships with colleagues due to a ‘job for life’, the official

validation of cooperation and teamwork in post-Fordist work contexts remains superficial because everyone on the team is on a limited contract and social bonds cannot deepen (Sennett, 2006). One of the reasons why informal links between workers have eroded is that these constitute a threat to employers as they are fluid and unpredictable by nature (Sennett, 2006). The neoliberal ideal of uncertainty is not valued in a context where it has the potential to disrupt dominant ways of organizing work or ways of accumulating profit. Another paradox is the official embracing of non-hierarchical and informal work environments by corporations in Post-Fordism, when, at the same time increasing formalization and control. This comes in the form of credentialism, human resources departments managing employees, and regulatory measures that police conduct. Many workplaces in Post-Fordism, such as call centers, still feel like factories to those who work there, with management standardizing human interactions and communication (Brophy, 2017). Despite such illuminating advances in theoretical development, it is important not to overstate the differences between Fordism and Post-Fordism, recognizing that the relative stability of Fordism, rather than the precarity of Post-Fordism, is the exception in the history of capitalism (Neilson & Rossiter, 2008).

3.7. Neoliberal cultural and media regimes

Although the works of scholars discussed so far regarding neoliberalism did not specifically focus on culture, this dissertation conceptualizes neoliberalism as something that does not dominate but permeates everyday life, and cultural as well as media environments. Detailed attention to neoliberalism is relatively new among media and communication scholars and mostly comes from researchers working in the critical tradition. I mention examples of works here that explicitly refer to ‘neoliberalism’ in order to frame aspects of the contemporary social order. McGuigan (2009; 2016), for example, describes in detail how counter-cultural movements and gestures of rebellion have been incorporated into Hollywood and mainstream advertising. Miller (2010) points out how the media have promoted neoliberalism through the way in which ‘the economy’ is reported on, namely as an animate object with needs and desires. Both McGuigan (2016) and Miller (2010) remark how the concept of creativity and creative cities has been adopted in policy and academic discourses, glossing over exploitative dynamics and, if sometimes unwittingly, promoting the neoliberalization of urban spaces.

Couldry's concern with neoliberalism relates primarily to its detrimental effect on "voice" (2010). This concept refers to the ability of citizens – as media consumers, audiences or participants in the media sphere – to not only shape their own accounts of events and their own narratives, but also be heard by a wider public. He explores the reality tv genre as modelling for watching publics enterprising, self-interested individuals focusing on winning a competition of some sort, without any vision of collectivity or compassion, mirroring contemporary work and other environments.

Phelan, in his theoretical exploration of the relationship between media, politics and neoliberalism (2014), demonstrates with various empirical analyses of mainstream media discourse that neoliberal and media logics are intimately connected. For example, journalists' notion of objectivity can result in promoting, through media discourse, an anti-political stance of social life that is typical of neoliberalism. Another example is resonances between traditional framings of press freedom as freedom from interference and neoliberal definitions of freedom and autonomy, promoted by media discourse (Phelan, 2014). Moving away from media content to the career trajectories of journalists, authority accumulated as professional journalist – especially when such authority is rooted in pushing for accountability and transparency of institutions and actors – can be mobilized to facilitate a career change from journalism to think tank or other advocacy work. In such a new role, journalistic capital can be mobilized o criticize a supposed lack of accountability – and thus damage the credibility – of public services, such as public education, to promote privatization of these services as part of a neoliberal logic (Salter & Phelan, 2017).

The goal of this dissertation is to continue this emerging tradition of analyses of neoliberalism in media and communication scholarship but to supplement our existing attention to media discourse and media audiences with a focus on professional media producers. I ask how the working conditions and professional identities of freelance journalists and interns might be shaped by or be perceived in neoliberal terms. Thus, here, journalists are not examined as producers of media discourse for media audiences. Rather, they are conceptualized as workers in a capitalist economy where neoliberal logics play out and as neoliberal subjects who are potentially limited but never determined in their imagination of life and work outside neoliberal values.

Phelan notes the difference between traditional political economy scholarship and his own approach. The former view capitalism at large or media enterprises as a force outside of journalism and hostile towards it. For example, 'capitalists' are framed as impacting the labour process in journalism negatively. In his own approach, He instead emphasizes 'homologies' between neoliberal logics and journalism logics; he looks for similar – if not equal - articulations of values and practices in both realms. Phelan writes: "Instead of imagining journalists […] reproduce neoliberalism because they are neoliberals, it might be more productive to explore how journalists […] reproduce neoliberalism by being journalists – by articulating a mode of neoliberal identification that is both specific to the journalistic field, generalized in a media posture that assumes authority over social fields […] , but, at the same time, not reducible to the concept of neoliberalism." (p. 5).

Five neoliberal logics are listed that characterize neoliberal media production, content, and consumption, echoing the more general hallmarks of neoliberalism at large. This includes a media discourse of market determinism, the self-commodification strategies of participants in the media sphere such as branding of individual journalists, and a logic of individualization and personalization with affective tendencies in news reporting, for example, during elections. The latter is connected to two additional logics that Phelan lists, namely media discourse and media genres that are presented as competitions, and lastly, the interpretation of political and other public behaviour as self-interested versus collectively-minded, underpinned by rational choice assumptions (p. 62).

Phelan calls for a nuanced understanding of neoliberalism. He invites media and communication scholars to abandon the use of neoliberalism as a catch-all label for everything that is wrong with late capitalism. However, he also cautions us against the opposite, which is considering the concept a thing of the past that has made room for a supposed age of post-neoliberalism (2014, p.20). Phelan hopes that a more complicated notion of neoliberalism can become a more fruitful and powerful tool for analyzing as well as critiquing contemporary societies. In his book, the emphasis is on developing a better understanding of neoliberalism and its different versions and connotations; there is less emphasis on critiquing it. "[…] I am primarily interested in identifying the potential sites of a cultural politics *within* [emphasis in original] the sedimented logics of neoliberal media

regimes." (p.7). My research into the narration of working conditions among casually employed young journalists is reflective of such a 'neoliberal media regime' and I see it as a contribution to exploring such a regime further.

If journalists are already immersed in neoliberal logics in their work of news reporting and produce a media discourse that often favours deregulation, supports bank bailouts and financial markets, as reported by Miller (2010) and Phelan (2014), then they might frame their working conditions and struggles with finding – and sometimes, indeed, financing – journalistic employment also in neoliberal terms. Chapters 5 and 6, in which the empirical part of this study is presented, will allow further insight into the question if this is the case and to what extent.

In sum, in tune with recent scholarly approaches that increasingly recognize that neoliberalism is variegated not only in its geographical versions and empirical expressions but also in the ways it is assembled, Phelan (2014) conceptualizes neoliberalism as a logic that is co-articulated or resonates with other social logics, such as journalism.

4. National contexts for news work: Canada and Germany

To explore phenomena within media and communication studies in comparative perspective has multiple advantages over studies focusing on one group, organization, process, or geographic region (Thomass, 2007, p.32). Comparisons between two (or more) countries, as undertaken in this dissertation, are suited not simply to illustrate differences and similarities between two regions; they also accentuate the contingency of national developments. This, in turn, enables discussions about alternatives – not simply ideas but already implemented, in-progress rules or processes – and possibly reform. Furthermore, such research also relates to the question of whether dynamics in media and communication are indeed converging and acquiring an increasingly global quality – or whether they are still mostly shaped by national contexts (Jakubowicz, 2010).

At its core, the focus of this dissertation is the connection between journalism and neoliberalism, rather than a detailed comparison of two media or political-economy systems, namely Canada and Germany. Nevertheless, this dissertation entails a cross-country comparison that explores how the perceptions of casually employed journalists in two different national contexts (micro level) intersect with nationally specific traditions and organisations shaping journalists' work experience as well as legal rules and policies (meso level and macro level). I start by briefly outlining how neoliberalization has proceeded in Canada and Germany. Next, I situate the two countries internationally, as proposed by media systems research, followed by a juxtaposition of current media concentration levels. After describing the legal frameworks that guide news work in Canada and Germany, I provide an overview of the mandates of unions and professional associations that offer membership to freelance journalists or interns in Germany and Canada. Finally, I explore available labour statistics and general trends in journalistic labour in both countries

4.1. Neoliberalization in Germany

German chancellor Ludwig Erhard, among the first to hold this office after the end of the Second World War, was a member of the Mont Pélerin Society and adhered to neoliberal ideas of a largely uninhibited market economy. He shaped monetary policy according to neoliberal principles. However, a different policy regime ultimately became dominant in Germany after the war, owed to a long-time distrust among Germans towards largely unregulated markets. This was the so-called 'social market economy', with the goal of reconciling social values with a competitive market.

The state has a strong role to play in this 'ordoliberal' version of post-war capitalism; it is actively promoting each of the two components of the social market economy and seeking to balance the two. This entailed a broad commitment of both employers and trade unions as largely equal partners to provide social security to the workforce while strengthening the economy. For decades in post-war Germany, the German 'ordoliberal' approach went hand in hand with a thriving economy, low unemployment rates, and increasing real incomes, surpassing most other European nations.

In the context of the international oil crisis and rising unemployment in the 1970s and 1980s, a slow introduction of select neoliberal policy measures started. However, it is important to note that 'a Thatcherite revolution never occurred in Germany' (Menz, 2005, p.133). This means the introduction of neoliberalism in Germany, although in conjunction with and certainly in part inspired by the Thatcher era in the United Kingdom, proceeded more slowly, less radically in turn and was less visible than in countries such as the United Kingdom, United States, or New Zealand, often considered the heartland of neoliberal capitalism. While large-scale institutional change did not occur in Germany, owing to the ordoliberal post-war success and general reluctance among Germans to embrace sweeping change, existing institutions did absorb a neoliberal policy agenda, together with politicians, parties, the media and other stakeholders influencing policy. Accordingly such, despite institutional persistence, policy output became increasingly more neoliberal over time (Menz, 2005), especially during the 1990s.

Chancellor Gerhard Schröder, as the leader of the governing coalition of social democrats and Greens in Germany, most clearly represents a neoliberal turn in policy-

making, starting with the announcement of the so-called Agenda 2010. This bundle of policies, introduced in 2003, aimed at 'reforming' the welfare state, fighting growing unemployment and promoting economic growth as well as strengthening Germany's position in the world market. In the following years, unpopular cuts were made to pension and unemployment benefits as well as increased cost-sharing for some medical treatments and medications were introduced (Butterwegge, Lösch & Ptak, 2008). The formerly powerful German trade unions were in shock that, of all political players, their long-time ally, the social democratic party, was at the forefront of these 'reforms' and unwilling to give union positions a fair hearing. Corporate taxes and income taxes on the wealthy were repeatedly reduced while the poor, jobless, and sick saw a successive withdrawal of supports and resources formerly provided by the government (Butterwegge, Lösch & Ptak, 2008).

The governments of Angela Merkel between 2005 and until today have overall continued the neoliberal course of policy-making. Nevertheless, under Merkel, measures to address precarity such as the minimum wage in Germany in 2015 were introduced, in order to protect workers from 'dumping salaries' paid by certain industries and employers.

Although the unemployment rate was at an historic low in Germany in 2017, this seemingly positive statistic does not say anything about the quality of jobs available (Butterwegge, 2007). One quarter of Germans work in low-income, insecure and temporary jobs. This puts them and their families into the category of 'working poor' who work full-time and often work several jobs while still struggling to cover living expenses. Thirteen million Germans are defined as poor (Deutschlandfunk, 2017). Between 2003 and 2017, child poverty in Germany has doubled. The minimum wage is 8,84 Euros per hour but forces most employees working full-time at this hourly rate to top up their salary with social assistance. Poverty risk is just under 16 per cent in Germany and has risen to this value from about 11 per cent during the 1990s.

Thus, since the early 2000s, and up to today, Germany's development is seen as away from its original version of ordoliberal post-war capitalism and interpreted as converging slowly with the Anglo-American version of neoliberalism (Ptak, 2009; Menz 2005), rather than showing resilience against this more intensified version of neoliberalism. Neoliberalization in Germany should also be seen in the more general

context of economic liberalization promoted by the institutions and regulations of the European Union (Menz, 2005). Germany has been one of the key drivers of these EU-wide developments and has, together with other larger European countries, imposed deregulation, privatization, and market logic extension in smaller nations that are part of the EU. At the same time, while promoting liberalization abroad – and lately, enforcing detrimental austerity measures in poorer countries on the EU periphery such as Greece, German politicians have, first and foremost, protected German national interest and Germany's population, at least to some extent, from sweeping effects of globalization (Young, 2018).

4.2. Neoliberalization in Canada

In the 1990s, the Canadian federal government reduced its contributions to federal social programmes, such as unemployment insurance, while also expanding policy choices for the provinces in social policy making. Neoliberalization in Canada was helped by such devolution of policy responsibilities from the Canadian federal government to the provinces. Some provinces, such as British Columbia in Western Canada, took the opportunity to restructure previously broadly social democratic governance regimes and install 'sweeping set(s) of labour and social policy measures' in the early 2000s. Some commentators argue that this has led to policy regimes resembling US American regimes more and more (McBride & McNutt, 2007).

Provinces such as Ontario and British Columbia looked for inspiration to the US whose 'work in exchange for benefit' models and time limits on receipt of benefits had reduced the number of welfare recipients by more than 60 per cent by 2001 (McBride & McNutt, 2007). Overall, the Canadian state started to act increasingly like a 'competition state' (Stanford, 2014).

From the mid-1980s, with the beginning of the Conservative government under Brian Mulroney. Rather than through radical change, the government eroded social programmes by 'stealth': by making fewer Canadian eligible, introducing ceilings on benefits, and turning universal programmes into targeted ones. Also, the government abolished a prohibition of workfare programmes in the provinces and abandoned its commitment to full employment. In British Columbia, the premier Gordon Campbell, after

the 2001 election, proceeded to cut taxes for individuals and businesses, target welfare entitlements, and made attracting foreign investors, including venture capitalists, a priority. Access to income assistance was made more difficult and connected to attendance of training sessions and proving active work search, reducing those receiving this assistance in BC by 25 per cent alone between 2002 and 2003. Payments today are way below the poverty line.

Keeping with the example of British Columbia, the neoliberal policy changes in the early 2000s include a 50 per cent increase in health plan premiums and higher public auto insurance. Health care services such as eye exams and physiotherapy were no longer offered under the public health plan and the universal prescription drug programme was terminated. Before and after school childcare programmes were ended and free legal representation in court were no longer available for social assistance appeals. Housing costs and a lack of social housing have increased homelessness dramatically, with many homeless working full-time (McBride & McNutt, 2007).

As far as labour regulation is concerned, back-to-work legislation was only one example of a reform in this domain under the heading of large-scale 'flexibilization'. The BC government enacted measures to end strikes or impose job cuts and wage decreases in the public sector, especially in the health sector which it also deregulated to increase the presence of private sector providers and workers. The BC Labour Relations Code was revised and made it more difficult for unions to organize and protect employees. For non-unionized employees, the government shifted the burden of proof in labour complaints to the employee, underlining the more general shift of power from employees to employers, from labour to capital. In terms of the international context, Canada's political-economic formation starting with the 21st century was one dominated by the "the economy's reliance on resource extraction and export" (Stanford, 2014, n. d.)., enabled by the free trade agreement with the United States signed in 1989 and accelerated by Stephen Harper's promotion of a "largely foreign owned petroleum industry in Canada" (ibid.). This points to the environmentally destructive effect that neoliberalization can have, in this case in Canada, as its sole focus is on economic valuation. Overall, it can be concluded that, at least for some provinces in Canada, the Canadian welfare model converges with US type neoliberal policy-making that seems more intensely neoliberal than Germany's model.

4.3. Media systems: Germany and Canada in the international context

In the broad-brush mapping of Western media systems undertaken by Hallin and Mancini (2004), Canada is a country falling under the 'liberal' category. It is conceptualized as a liberal democracy similar to the United States, with a low level of state intervention, a weak welfare state and an economic system described as mostly 'free market'. Canada is grouped into the 'North Atlantic or liberal model', together with the United States, Britain and Ireland. It is characterized by a history of early democratization, in contrast to Germany, for example. Hallin and Mancini describe the government structure of Canada as majoritarian and oriented towards individual representation rather than representation organized through social groups with competing interests.

Canada, together with other countries in the liberal category, has a media system that is formally autonomous from political institutions, market-driven and characterized by minimal state intervention. Further, these countries are characterized by medium newspaper circulation and an early development of the mass-circulated commercial press. Journalistic work is driven by norms of neutrality and objectivity, offering information-oriented (versus opinion-oriented) news reporting. In line with this, internal pluralism – varying political views and a diversity of perspectives offered within one and the same publication or broadcaster – is dominant. Canada, Ireland and Britain have strong public service broadcasters that are state-funded whereas the United States, the fourth country in this model, does not have such a tradition.

Germany is grouped into the 'North/Central Europe or Democratic Corporatist Model'. Other countries and regions that work according to this model are Scandinavia, Austria, Belgium, Finland and the Netherlands. For these media systems, high newspaper circulation and early development of mass-circulation press – though not necessarily commercial – is typical. Historically, there was a strong party press in these media systems with a shift towards neutral reporting later on. As a possible consequence, external pluralism – national newspapers consistently offer a certain political perspective that contrasts with those of other publications – is commonly found in these media systems. Also, we find strong support for public service broadcasting in the North/Central European model.

Hallin and Mancini assume Germany and Canada to be similar in that both countries are characterized by a strong development of legal-rational authority. This means that formal rules for procedures exist and an administrative apparatus independent from political and economic interests (versus clientelism which is common in the Mediterranean countries). The latter group of countries are assumed to have a polarized political landscape with anti-party factions and low consensus. In contrast to that, Germany and Canada resemble each other regarding patterns of conflict in political and social life in that political life is characterized by lower ideological differences, political views closer to the centre and the willingness to come to a consensus.

A recent study (Brüggemann et al., 2014) is the first to operationalize and empirically test Hallin's and Mancini's (2004) mostly conceptual work on media systems. Several revisions of the original model are proposed as a result. For example, Brüggemann et al. suggest that one of the original categories used to describe media systems, namely 'role of the state', be broken down into 'public broadcasting', 'ownership regulation', and 'press subsidies' to capture the complexity and particularity of each instrument of state involvement in the media.

Furthermore, and on a related note, the scholars suggest that the countries grouped by Hallin and Mancini under the 'liberal', 'democratic corporatist' and 'polarized pluralist' categories be divided up differently so that similarities and differences in their media systems can be more accurately accounted for (using, among other things, the newly introduced sub-types of state intervention).

Revisions include adding a fourth model of media systems for a more fine-grained understanding of country characteristics, with models now named 'Northern', 'Central', 'Western' and 'Southern'. The biggest change is taking place in Hallin's and Mancini's 'democratic corporatist' category which sees its countries sub-divided into a 'Northern' (Scandinavian countries), 'Central' (Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Great Britain), and 'Western' (United States, Ireland, Netherlands, Belgium, Portugal) cluster. The 'Southern' (Mediterranean countries) cluster – formerly 'polarized pluralist' – remains largely unchanged from Hallin's and Mancini's assumptions (Brüggemann et al., 2014).

I am interested in how these recent research findings speak to similarities and differences between the German and the Canadian media systems. Germany and Canada – part of the original 'democratic corporatist' model and the 'liberal model' respectively – were already assumed to be more similar to each other than to the 'polarized pluralist' countries in Southern Europe (such as Greece, Italy, and Spain) which display higher political parallelism and weaker professionalization among journalists. Germany's original position in Hallin and Mancini (2004) is found to be fairly accurate. Due to a lack of available data, Canada is the one country not tested in the 2014 study. However, one way to interpret Brüggemann et al.'s findings is to suggest that the media systems of Canada and Germany might resemble each other more than previously assumed.

Great Britain was found to be less 'liberal' – especially with regard to robust, state-supported public service broadcasting – than assumed by Hallin and Mancini, separated from the United States for this reason, and moved to the 'Central' European category, together with Germany, Austria, and Switzerland. Overall, these four countries are grouped together because they are characterized by strong public service broadcasting, strict ownership regulations, and low press subsidies (in contrast, for example, to the 'Northern' media systems). Looking at the reasoning for this grouping, we can assume that Canada may have also fallen into the 'Central' category if data were available to measure it empirically. Similar to Great Britain, Canada has a strong public service broadcaster, the CBC, which historically is modelled on the BBC.

Although state support in Canada may not be considered as stable as in Great Britain or Germany, for example, the public broadcaster has a vital and enduring role to play in Canada and makes it a media system that is very different from the United States with its overwhelming orientation towards a free market model. On the other hand, what may make Canada dissimilar from Germany, Austria and Switzerland are the grants and subsidies that the state supplies for Canadian magazines (not newspapers). State intervention in the form of press subsidies is common in Scandinavian countries but not in Germany or Austria, as both the original and revised versions of media systems categories indicate.

Also, the increasingly lax media ownership regulation in Canada may cast some doubt on the likelihood that Canada would indeed end up in the 'Central' category if data

had been available to test it. Without speculating further about this, we can, however, conclude that the Canadian and German media systems likely resemble each other more than Hallin and Mancini (2004) assumed. It is doubtful that Canada is a prime example of a 'liberal' country, at least where that is meant to imply a media system similar to the United States; rather it seems a media system that is a mix of European and US-inspired characteristics.

4.4. Media concentration in Canada

Canada's media market is characterized by strong vertical integration, at levels that are almost four times higher than vertical integration in the media sector in the United States. For example, most television services (except for the CBC and Netflix) are owned by telecom companies. The big four vertically-integrated companies Bell, Rogers, Shaw, and Quebecor accounted for more than half of the overall media economy in Canada, which is worth about $80 billion (Winseck, 2017).

While concentration was intensifying in many markets until 2014, it is now falling in some other areas, such as specialty, cable, and pay TV, and internet access. Supported by a growing citizen movement and dedicated advocacy groups that worry about media concentration, the Canadian regulator CRTC has alleviated the trend to media concentration in the past years with rulings regarding mobile TV, mobile wireless services, and protecting the principle of net neutrality in Canada. However, it also allowed some mergers that, for example, allowed the biggest media company in Canada, Bell, to merge with media company Astral in 2012 which resulted in it controlling over 22 per cent of Canada's French language television market and increasing its English market share to just under 36 per cent.

Canada is still home to one of the most concentrated media landscapes in the world (Media and internet concentration in Canada, 2017). The top five media companies in Canada – Bell, Shaw, Rogers, Telus, and Quebecor – control over 71 per cent of the national media economy in Canada (with Bell Canada accounting for 27 per cent alone). This is based on market share which, in this case, is based on revenue. The five biggest television services took over 81 per cent of the television market share (down from 87 per cent in 2014).

4.5. Media concentration in Germany

German regulation of media concentration works according to the principle of audience share rather than ownership. There is no limit on the number of media a corporation can own. Regulation is based on the assumption that having a certain audience share means that one organization exerts undue power in the formation of public opinion (Agency for communication networks and services of the Republic of Slovenia, 2016). The emphasis in media regulation is on the television sector in which any given company is limited to controlling 30 per cent of audience share in any given geographic market in Germany. At the same time, if a dominant television service provider is active in another media market, such as print, it cannot control more than 25 per cent of the audience share of that other market. This is designed to limit cross-media ownership. Apart from this, there are no rules in the domains of radio, internet, or print to limit media concentration.

Although Germany has the most diverse print media market in Europe, in terms of diversity of titles, only 5 publishing companies hold a market share of over 42 per cent in 2016. This means that the publishing market is highly concentrated. As far as television is concerned, four broadcasting groups, including two national public broadcasters and the privately held media firms RTL and ProSiebenSat1 together hold about 90 per cent of the total television audience share in Germany in 2015. While the audience share is, as mentioned above, limited to 30 per cent per player, this has led to an oligopolistic structure in television – still the dominant reference medium for Germans, although internet use is growing – where few players divide up the market amongst themselves, careful not to overstep the 30 per cent limit. There is a dedicated organization to monitor media concentration in Germany, the KEK.

However, this body was unable to prevent an acquisition of one of the dominant television providers, ProSiebenSat 1, by the biggest publisher in Germany, Axel Springer, although it clearly represented an increase in media concentration and power over public opinion. Overall, the eight biggest media firms controlled 62 per cent of the market share in 2013. Researchers conclude that the greatest risk to media pluralism in Germany stems from the concentration in media ownership (Centre for media pluralism and media freedom, 2016).

4.6. Rules guiding news work in Canada and Germany

Journalists in Germany and Canada both work with strong constitutional protections of press freedom and freedom of information. Additionally, in 2017, the Canadian government aligned the country with many jurisdictions internationally, including Germany, by introducing the protection of sources. Journalists are enabled to protect their sources better, as police now need the consent of a superior court judge in order to force journalists to hand over information provided by sources (Taylor, Rogers, and Gilliland, 2017).

Similar to how Canada has designed many of its media, cultural and other policies in reaction to the United States (either aligning itself with or trying to differentiate itself from the southern neighbour), Germany's media policies are shaped by policy-making in the EU. As such, the two countries are, by virtue of their geographical location and their political or economic dependence on a 'larger' partner, are heavily influenced by an external actor. This external actor is in both cases one that pushes for trade liberalization and deregulation, putting pressure on them to follow suit.

Funding for public service broadcasting in Canada is moderate, with around $100 million per year. After experiencing funding cuts of over $100 million dollars a year and thousands of workers laid off between 2012 and 2015, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's government annual funding has increased by $150 million (Bradshaw, 2017). The German public service broadcasting system is among the best-funded in the world, with annual government funding of about 8 billion Euros, collected through a levy of 17.50 Euros per household per month.

Magazines have traditionally been an important, if not the most important, source of work for freelance journalists in Canada (Cohen, 2016). Traditionally, freelance journalists in Germany have worked both for print media and public broadcasters, with the latter paying freelancers generous fees over several decades. Public broadcasters are still the best--paying journalistic clients for freelancers (Deutscher Journalisten Verband, 2014), although many such broadcasters have significantly reduced the numbers of freelancers they work with. In both Canada and Germany, freelancers work less and less for daily newspapers as the fees they pay are among the lowest.

In Canada, since the class action law suits known as Robertson 1 and Robertson 2 in Canada, resulting in a publisher paying millions of dollars in copyright violations, there is a tendency among media organizations to request from freelancers a blanket assignment of their copyrights as authors, in perpetuity and across all platforms and media owned by the organization. Journalists in Canada cannot assign their moral rights to the works they created, however, they can waive these rights. This is not possible in Germany where moral rights of an original author cannot be disposed of in any way and must always be acknowledged.

In Germany, there exists an internationally unique social insurance scheme for artists and journalists working as freelancers. The political initiative that led to the so-called Artists' Social Fund (Künstlersozialkasse) was started in the 1970s by a social-democratic government in Germany, responding to demands from writers and artists to alleviate precarity of self-employed workers in the cultural sector. A law eventually turned this initiative into reality in 1983, emphasizing the important and unique role that artists and journalists play for society. This was before the widespread rise of neoliberalism as a policy template. Since then, membership in the artists social fund has risen steadily and continues to rise as more and more cultural workers work as freelancers. Between 1997 and 2017, membership has almost doubled from just over 95 000 to almost 187 000 freelance cultural workers (Künstlersozialkasse, n.d). Despite regular and long-lasting attacks on the KSK by industries that use journalists' and artists' services but want to avoid paying the artists' levy, and despite recurring funding crises, the KSK still exists.

In Germany, a legally binding fee structure for print freelance journalists was introduced for the first time in 2010, as a result of negotiations between press publishers and journalism unions that had been ongoing for years. The introduction of this fee schedule is owed to the recognition that competition law – usually limiting the extent to which trade unions can represent the interests of the self-employed in a given sector – should not prevent negotiation of official fee structures which employers must adhere to where there is a power imbalance between competing entrepreneurs (the individual freelance journalists versus media corporations). Most importantly, the introduction of official rules for remunerating freelance journalists as well as rules guiding the exploitation of their works is justified by the German government – similar to the

existence of the KSK – with the importance of artists and journalists to society, addressing their often-marginalized economic position compared to cultural and media workers in employment relationships. The agreement between newspaper publishers and journalism unions stipulates minimum fees to be paid per line to freelance journalists as well as rules regarding copyright arrangements.

The latter state that the publishers cannot simply claim all rights related to a news article by a freelancer but only purchase the right to a one-time (initial or second-use) publication, by paying freelancers according to the above-mentioned fee structure. Publishers, according to the rules, must inform the freelancer of and compensate him or her for every re-utilization of their work in the publisher's own or other newspapers. However, freelance journalists do not receive a separate fee for the simultaneous publication of a print article in the online version of a newspaper (repeated or future publication of the article online or in print must be compensated), in other publications belonging to the same publisher or in the context of ongoing content-sharing agreements with other publications or editorial offices. Due to a new federal law introduced in 2017 allowing unions and associations – rather than individual freelancers who are often reluctant to start lawsuits – to enforce payment of freelancers according to the official fee structure in court, the association of newspaper publishers in Germany resigned from the 2010 agreement with journalism unions. Many publishing houses had not paid freelance journalists fees they were legally entitled to between 2010 and 2017 which was silently accepted by many freelancers worried about damaging their reputation in the industry.

4.7. Unions and professional associations in Canada and Germany

In this section, I describe the mandates and membership criteria of professional associations and unions in Canada and Germany that represent the interests of freelance journalists and interns.

The freelance chapter of the union Canadian Media Guild, founded in 2014, offers membership to freelancers in the media and creative industries, such as journalists, IT professionals, camera operators, customer service representatives, and adminstrative staff. Its 'media card', introduced in 2016, is only accessible to 'qualified

journalists' who make 'at least part of their living from freelance media work', without specifying further how journalistic work is defined in comparison with non-journalistic work. Applications for the card, which need to include references from editors and journalistic work samples, are assessed on an invidiual basis by the branch president and a senior freelance journalist (Canadian Media Guild, 2016). It is not clear how many members the freelance chapter has at this point. The Canadian Media Guild overall has about 6000 members. It is the largest union for media workers in Canada, engaging in collective bargaining for journalists at the CBC and many other media organizations in Canada.

The Canadian Freelance Union (which is part of the larger Unifor union) was founded in 2008. It offers membership to self-employed workers in the communications and media industries, such as graphic designers, journalists, writers, editors, public relations professionals, web developers, and illustrators. It provides a national press card or the press card of the International Federation of Journalists to those members who 'work in public media as journalists, photographers, illustrators, writers and editors' (CFU, 2016). This status is verified through letters from editors the journalists work for and through recent work samples. There is no further specifcation other than the requirement that the journalistic work is supposed to come from 'credible news sources' and must be paid. The union has about 350 members (unifor, n.d.).

The CFU and freelance chapter of the CMG do not provide legal protection, such as representation insie or ouside of court. However, they offer contract advice as well as grievance support in resolving disputes about pay between freelancers and their clients. Freelancers who are members have access to liability and errors and omissions insurance plans as well as a health plan. Both unions provide opportunties for training, networking, and enage in public advocacy for freelance workers. Due to competition laws, neither organization is able to collectively bargain for freelances.

The Canadian Assocation of Journalists is the only professional association in Canada offering exclusive membership to journalists. It is also the only union that offers membership to journalism students in postsecondary education or working on a regular basis in student media. The assocation accepts as members working journalists who earn most of their money from or spend most of their time doing journalism. It also accepts managers of media enterprises and journalism teachers in postsecondary

programs. Apart from a health plan and travel insurance, the association provides reduced rates for equipement such as computers and cameras and engages in advocacy. The CAJ provides a membership card that is, however, explictly not an offical press card for accreditation purposes. This is in contrast to the press cards provided by the freelance chapter in the Canadian Media Guild and the Canadian Freelance Union.

The Netzwerk Recherche (founded in 2001, and loosely translated as Network for Promoting Investigative Journalism) in Germany is an association that promotes investigative and high-quality journalism through training and knowledge creation around this topic. It is not primarily focused on working conditions in journalism. Those who work in journalism as their primary job and those teaching journalism in postsecondary education are eligible to become full members with voting rights. Those who work partially or primarily in public relations or do other non-journalistic work cannot become full but only assoicated members (Netzwerk Recherche, 2016). The latter has led to controversial public discussions, as it becomes increasingly difficult, especially for freelance journalists, to make a living solely from journalism.

The Freischreiber, a professional association in Germany founded in 2008, is exclusively dedicated to supporting freelance journalists whose main occupation is journalism. When applying to become a member, journalists have to prove the latter by submitting work samples, a proof of their membership in the artists' social fund (which, in turn, is taken as proof of their primary occupation as a freelance journalist) or invoices that prove that they are paid for journalistic work. While members are not disallowed from doing public relations apart from journalism, they are required to adhere to a code of conduct when negotiating their work in both realms. This includes stricly separating journalism from public relations and explictly making clients aware of any conflicts of interest or dependencies arising from mixing the two realms professionally. Also, members cannot sell as journalism to a media organization any content that was prepared for a public relations purpose and paid by the client as such (Freischreiber, n. d.). Apart from advocacy and training, the association offers legal advice but not legal representation. Members receive advice on contracts, tax questions, social security planning, retirement planning, and questions about the artists' social fund.

The German Federation of Journalists (Deutscher Journalistenverband, DJV) was founded in 1949 and has about 37 000 members. It is a union and professional

association at the same time and it admits as members and offers press cards to those whose primary job is to create journalistic content. This can be as freelancer, permanently employed journalist, employee in public relations, or as press officer, cutter, camera man or woman or full-time student in journalism or related areas at a postsecondary institution (Deutscher Journalisten Verband, 2014). Journalistic work is defined by the DJV as work that results in publicizing content that is in the public interest, in media whose content serves the formation of public opinion. It is work that does not serve non-journalistic purposes. Creating, for example, an event calendar, publications exclusively carrying advertisements, corporate magazine for clients or employees, public relations brochures or similar products does not count as “journalistic work”. People primarily performing such work cannot be defined as journalists and would be refused membership in the union, including access to its press card (DJV, n. d.). With around 37, 000 members, it is the largest organization for journalists in Germany. More than half of all members are freelance journalists (Heumer, 2017).

The German journalism union (Deutsche Journalisten Union, DJU), founded in 1948, is today part of the large service work union Verdi and has around 22 000 members. More than two thirds of its members are freelance journalists. It has membership criteria slightly more rigid than the German Federation of Journalists, namely primary occupation in journalism (rather than journalistic work that can also be conducted by PR profesionals, for example). It limits access to its press card to those freelance or employed journalists who make most of their income from working as a journalist.

Both unions provide similar services, including legal protection and legal representation in case journalists are sued for their work. Apart from offering training and doing advocacy and lobbying work, both unions engage in collective bargaining and negotiate collective agreements with media organizations for employed journalists.

Importantly, German copyright law insists on a right to fair and equitable compensation for freelance artists and journalists and allows journalism unions to negotiate mandatory fee structures and copyright rules for freelancers with media organizations and their representing umbrella organizations. Such an agreement stipulating minimum payments per line for articles as well as first-time and re-use copyright rules existed between 2010 and 2017. The news publishers then withdrew

from the agreement with the unions, as a new law enabled more effective enforcement of the fee structure and re-use compensation. However, just as in Canada, unions that represent freelancers in Germany cannot engage in fully-fledged collective bargaining – which would include not just pay but issues such health and safety at work, work hours, traning and work place participation – with employers as competition law forbids this.

While at least some researchers in journalism studies are beginning to accept a more fluid definition of who is a journalist, there are recent institutional efforts in many places to police professional boundaries and police the primary occupation criterion. For example, in 2018, the German government and the big journalism unions DJV and DJU decided to create a government-endorsed press card which can only be given out to those who primarily work in and live off doing journalism (and through organizations that have existed for a minimum of 5 years and have at least 1000 members). This does not prevent some newer, smaller journalism organizations from giving out their own press cards to part-time journalists – against which this current initiative of the big unions and the government is primarily directed – as the German constitution disallows government control of the press. But such cards will not be government-endorsed which could now limit their usefulness in doing investigative journalism or gaining access to exclusive events or police blocks. Some commentators in Germany have raised concerns regarding this development. They consider it as possibly violating the constitutionally guaranteed press freedom which includes journalism as a profession unregulated by government and at least theoretically open to all citizens.

4.8. Employment statistics and general trends in journalism[5]

When asked about perceived influences on news work, most journalists in Canada and Germany name 'journalism ethics' as the top influence, immediately followed (Canada) or followed soon after (Germany) by 'time limits', pointing to a tension between wanting to act ethically in reporting and being limited by time constraints at the

[5] Parts of section 4.8 and sub-sections 4.8.1 and 4.8.2 were first published in: Gollmitzer, M. (forthcoming 2018). Employment Conditions in Journalism. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Communication*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

same time (Worlds of Journalism Study, 2016). Journalists in both countries reflect the changes of journalism in the digital age, stating that the importance in journalistic labour of technical skills, use of search engines, interaction with audiences all have increased over the past five years. Not surprisingly, the journalists also find that average working hours have increased. Both German and Canadian journalists, at close to equal levels, find that the influence of social media and user-generated content as well as profit-making on journalistic work has become stronger.

Thus, when comparing the country reports for Germany and Canada from the representative Worlds of Journalism Study (2016), offering a portrait of journalists' views and work situations, perceptions point in a similar direction, reflecting changes in the news industries internationally. Even when using restrictive criteria to define who counts as a journalist and can therefore participate in he study – anyone earning 50 per cent or more from paid news work – the study indicates that almost 30 per cent of a representative sample of journalists in Canada held 'other paid work' in addition to doing journalism. In Germany, this number is just over 17 per cent. This confirms the previously mentioned trend to part-time journalism internationally which is stronger in Canada than Germany.

4.8.1. Canada

Employment statistics about journalists as an occupational group are inconsistent for many countries, as national statistics agencies tend to only collect data about the primary occupation that citizens hold, as either self-employed workers or employees. According to the national statistics agency, Statistics Canada, the primary occupation is the job in which most hours were worked within a certain time-frame. On the other hand, the numbers measured or estimated by unions and professional associations for journalists are often higher, as their occupational membership criteria are wider. In Canada, numbers from different sources are inconsistent.

For example, according to a report commissioned by the Canadian government, one third of all journalism jobs are estimated to have been lost between 2011 and 2017 (Public Policy Forum, 2017). The Canadian Media Guild, a trade union representing journalists at the national public broadcaster CBC and other media, estimates that 10 000 jobs were lost in print and broadcasting within Canada between 2008 and 2013

(Canadian Media Guild, n. d.). Many more thousands of jobs have been lost since then in Canada (Cohen, 2016). In contrast, the official national statistics agency in Canada – which only collects data on people's main occupation – states that the overall number of citizens identifying their occupation as 'journalist' (this includes self-employed journalists) is steady. It remained around 13 000 between 1991 and 2011 (Skelton, 2013).

The salaries for journalists in Canada and the US have mostly not kept up with inflation over the past 20 years (Skelton, 2013; Willnat & Weaver, 2014). Moreover, most freelance journalists in Canada have low salaries, with around 45 percent having an income below $20,000 and 18 per cent having an income between $20 000 and $30 0000 (Cohen, 2016). This is well below the national average income and forces freelancers to take on more and more commercial, non-journalistic writing to subsidize their journalism and achieve a sustainable overall income (Cohen, 2016).

A survey among 300 Canadian freelance and staff journalists (Cohen, Comor, Comption et al., 2014) indicates that, with the rise of digital technologies, the work load of journalists has increased due to engaging with social media, online video, and multimedia work in general. At the same time, journalists take on tasks of colleagues that were laid off. Digital journalists report being paid less than traditional journalists, with union members earning better incomes (Cohen, Comor, Compton et al., 2014). However, the income situation of journalists is dire overall, with 55 per cent having experienced a significant reduction in their real incomes, with many finding pay inadequate to meet living expenses. Over 70 per cent would like to have a full-time permanent position and only 20 per cent see contract work or freelancing as their professional ideal, indicating that much freelancing in the digital age is not voluntary.

4.8.2. Germany

An important journalism union in Germany states that, while growing rapidly without a doubt, the number of freelance journalists cannot reliably be determined any more, as fewer and fewer are able to live off journalism as their main source of income – which causes them to fall out of official labour and research statistics (DJV, 2018).

The number of men and women currently active as journalists in Germany lies somewhere between 48 000 (including 12 000 freelancers, Weischenberg, Malik and

Scholl 2006) and over 70 000 (including about 350 00 freelancers (Deutscher Journalisten Verband, 2018). While journalism researcher Weischenberg and colleagues only count professional journalists in full-time employment or working in their primary job for news media organizations, the German Association of Journalists (DJV) counts people whose primary job is to create journalistic content either as journalists, employees in public relations, press officers, cutters, or journalism students. Both Weischenberg et al. (2006). and the DJV conclude that it is becoming harder for freelancers in Germany to make a decent living from working in the news industry which is why many have started combining journalism with other types of work.

Steindl, Lauerer & Hanizsch (2017) confirm that the number of full-time freelance journalists earning most of their income from journalism continues to fall in Germany, now to about 9 600 (from 12 000 in 2004). This indicates a trend towards 'deprofessionalization' and 'precarization' in journalistic labour, according to the researchers. The number of freelance journalists in Germany not being able to live off journalism alone is growing significantly and constantly. Almost all freelance journalists in Germany work by themselves, rather than in a shared office or with employees they employ. As such, practically no freelancers in Germany count as small entrepreneurs, as defined, for example, by the European Union framework (Deutscher Journalisten-Verband, 2014).

One quarter of German freelance journalists work part-time which means less than 20 hours per week. As a consequence, German freelance journalists' biggest concern is pay for their work. The average income of a freelancer in Germany is less than half of the salary of a permanently employed journalist (just over 2000 Euros versus 5000 Euros). Real incomes have decreased by 8 per cent since 2008 (Deutscher Journalisten-Verband, 2014).

Apart from being low, freelance journalists' income often fluctuates, and is lowered further by copyright regimes disallowing secondary exploitation of their work. Those who work for public broadcasters, corporate publishing and or in public relations receive the highest pay (Deutscher Journalisten-Verband, 2014). Fewer and fewer freelancers work for print media such as daily newspapers – where only 10 per cent were paid according to the official fee schedule which existed until 2017 – and more and more in public relations. Over one third of all journalists are now active in this realm but

the majority only for 20 per cent of their overall work time. Additional work outside of journalism, such as in PR, is usually sought for financial reasons (Meyen & Springer, 2009).

As far as interns in the news industry are concerned, unions and politicians in Germany have been at the forefront internationally in publicly discussing the increasing number of internship positions. Reliable quantitative data on internships in Germany is hard to come by. A union-initiated study confirms the growth and precarious nature of internship positions while noting that employers seem to increasingly use interns to replace regular employees (Schmidt & Hecht, 2011). A government-initiated report, on the contrary, concludes that only in a few economic sectors such as the media and cultural industries are internships increasingly prevalent and interns often unpaid (Briedis & Minks 2007). The two big unions for journalists have launched a common initiative to push for fairer working conditions for interns. But only in 2015 has the German government introduced the minimum wage for most sectors and industries in Germany and extended it to interns whose internships are not a mandatory component of postsecondary education and last at least three months.

In the next two chapters which form the empirical part of this dissertation, I interlace the national contexts for news work outlined in this chapter with my empirical research findings. I show how general trends in employment, media concentration, social and copyright policy, and mandates of unions and professional associations in Canada and Germany intersect with the work experiences of freelance journalists and interns on the ground.

5. Perceptions of journalistic labour among interns and freelance journalists

5.1. Introduction

In this chapter and in chapter 6, I present the results from the research interviews conducted with 25 freelance journalists and interns in Germany and Canada. I start by exploring perceptions of working conditions among young women and men hoping to establish a career as journalists. Next, moving from aspiring to more experienced journalists, I analyse the narratives of journalistic labour shared by the freelance journalists in my sample.

I begin chapter 5 by showing how postsecondary education institutions such as journalism schools are implicated in internship experiences. Internships are designed to enlist young people as fully-fledged workers with very little mentorship and often low or no compensation. Interns are expected to bring their own resources and equipment to enhance the quality of the internship, such as cars or photo equipment. This work mostly for exposure to increase chances of future pay is often in need of subsidies from parents and interns' own secondary jobs. Thus, internships run the risk of being a privilege for young journalists from well-off backgrounds. Most of the interns I talked to are on the brink of starting a career as a journalist, looking for full-time jobs in journalism while working in insecure part-time positions (designed, however, to absorb most of their time and energy) or freelancing.

During this time, they have already encountered challenges common among the more established journalists in my sample. That is, the young journalists have been confronted, for example, with restructuring in news organizations that diminished their insecure part-time employment even further, and they have encountered aggressive copyright regimes designed by employers to limit their ability to exploit their work. Many of the intern participants in my study were still students or had just finished their

postsecondary education. Often still partially supported by their parents, these young journalists were less concerned about union mandates for freelancers or how to access social security or health care as a self-employed worker. They saw their unstable work situation as a period of transition that would eventually lead to more stable and less precarious work in journalism in the future, with most aiming for a permanent job.

When moving to the narrations of contingent journalistic labour among journalists with several years or even decades of work experience, we can see the kinds of issues that the aspiring journalists in my sample might encounter in the next stages of their career - in case they can *not* find a permanent job in journalism. The Canadian freelance journalists in my sample have fewer institutional supports than German ones who benefit from a unique statutory social insurance scheme. Journalists in both countries struggle with the fact that having children seems to largely be a private risk for the self-employed. The freelance journalists do not only report low pay for assignments but feel very little power to negotiate increasingly restrictive copyright regimes imposed by media organizations.

While unions in Germany offer legal representation to freelance journalists who are members, in Canada, the tendency of news organizations to transfer responsibility for legal risks involved in news reporting to freelance journalists can be buffered only by freelancers buying liability as well as errors and omissions insurance from unions or professional associations. The latter are better equipped in Germany to represent the interests of freelance journalists and interns. For example, without violating competition law, German legislation allows journalism unions to negotiate binding fee structures for freelance journalists with newspaper publishers. Lastly, the narratives by established journalists show that mobilizing one's own resources to support one's work is not just an issue for interns and those starting their career. It is a defining experience in contingent journalistic labour where private relationships, private residential space and private resources get pulled into enabling work as a journalist. This means ongoing mental-emotional labour in negotiating with family members, negotiating home and work space, work time and non-work time, and monitoring budgets not just to cover living expenses but manage risks, such as accounting for social security costs.

5.2. Interns

5.2.1. Higher education and unpaid internships

In Canada and Germany, universities and colleges offering journalism programs contribute to a culture of not paying or under-paying interns for their work. These educational institutions have contracts with local or national media organizations that provide internships placements which are mandatory for their journalism students. The student-interns I interviewed were keenly aware that the arrangements between universities and media organizations about (mostly unpaid) internships are problematic. In some cases, both educational institutions and employers benefit from internship arrangements while students essentially pay two different 'bills' – instead of getting remunerated for their work.

> How do you afford to work for free and at the same time pay for all these (expenses for transportation, parking, lunch, etc. during the internship)…and for us, on top of everything, we had to pay (the university) for the credit for the course. ('Cassandra')

Another interviewee, 'Carry' had graduated from journalism school a few years ago at the time of the interview and had intermittent work as a freelancer. She wondered why universities did not simply mandate that employers have to pay their students for internships – since payment for work, even if low, is a normal expectation for work taken on *after* graduation. An intern from the Frankfurt region in Germany admitted dreading the working conditions during the internships his university required for the bachelor's in journalism program: 'With me, it is always like that. Internship. I will have to slave away because I need the credit...' ('Gunnar'). He also bore the financial consequences when the media organization he interned with neglected to provide him with a written contract: He had to pay tuition fees to his university since he had no official proof that he was interning with a newspaper in Germany. This research participant had a particularly difficult time during this internship which he completed with a local newspaper in the Frankfurt region. He refused to complete one assignment because he had ethical concerns about reporting an event. As a consequence, he was called to a talk with the editor during which he was informed that he had to cut the internship short and leave the media organization, as he had not complied with his employer's instructions:

> This went up all the way to the head of the publishing house – and he did not want to read another word from me. And then it became clear to me why I didn't have an internship contract. That would enable them to just say we don't have work for you from one day to the next.' ('Gunnar')

The young man's failure to comply with an editor's wishes eventually also jeopardized his ability to claim the university credit for the internship which was required for completing his Bachelor of in journalism. The editor only provided an official confirmation of his internship after continuous pleading. In this case, the media organization made the intern aware of its considerable power over his educational progress and future, taking revenge for what they perceived as previous misconduct. But simple negligence on the part of media organizations can also leave interns feeling undervalued and short-changed:

> In order for us to be graded and pass the course, there was a feedback form at the end (of the internship) that should have been filled out by someone who was technically my supervisor during the internship but we didn't have much of a relationship … and she ended up not actually even responding to emails from my professor to fill in the evaluation – which he was quite surprised about… . ('Carry')

Eventually, the evaluation form was filled in but '…it was a women I hadn't worked with at all … . She was in a higher up management role. … And it was very positive and she said good things about me but it was fabricated' ('Carry'). This young woman felt that the media organization did not really care about her or the internship she had completed. Equally, she felt that her university, apart from enabling her to do an internship, was not really concerned about the quality of training received: 'Unless there was some major issue I know that they would not step in, you know. Even if I said something like I feel I am not being mentored … they wouldn't have done anything.'

5.2.2. Relying on one's own or third-party resources to make the internship work

The young men and women I interviewed regularly found themselves drawing on their own or third party resources to enable them to complete tasks related to their internship. For example, some interns relied on their own phones to do work for the media companies, emphasizing that they did not mind this since there was no added cost. 'I used my own cell phone because there is only one phone in the office for everyone. It wasn't a big deal. I have a Canada-wide plan. So it wasn't any extra money'

(‘Carina’). Another intern struggled with the lack of quality photo equipment, having to use her own ‘crappy shoot kind of camera’ to cover events as a reporter (Cassandra’). Transportation was a source of frustration among my research participants, as employers in the news industry ‘actually expect (interns) to have a car’ (‘Greta’) to be able to perform job duties. One intern used his mother’s car throughout the internship to cover events and asked an editor at the media organization if there might be a kilometer allowance for interns to offset costs. ‘Gunnar’ notes, the editor ‘told me: I always use my bike. I don’t need a kilometer allowance. Why don’t you also use your bike?’. ‘Gunnar’ received several parking tickets while covering events by car and had to pay out of pocket for these fines which made his internship ‘expensive’. When ‘Cassandra’ interned at a daily newspaper in the Vancouver region, she not only used her own car to cover stories and incurred parking costs but regularly gave her permanently employed colleagues rides to events. In order to complete an internship far from home, one of my research participants took on long commuting times and the related costs.

> When I did internships outside the Greater Toronto area … I was being driven to the subway station by my parents. I would take the subway to downtown Toronto. … and then I would pay for the train for an hour to (a Toronto suburb) and then I would take a bus in so I would pay again to transfer and then I would walk. ... I asked if I could be reimbursed for transportation costs and they said no. I think I got like a lunch voucher for their cafeteria. (‘Carry’)

Many of my research participants relied on their parents to help them afford doing unpaid or low-paid internships in media organizations. The parents of a respondent studying in Bavaria had paid her rent during an internship she completed with a national newspaper in Frankfurt which only offered a small stipend. At the time of the interview, the respondent had scored another internship, this time with a big national media organization in Germany, in a correspondent’s office abroad. Since the internship would be unpaid, her parents agreed to cover the cost of flying abroad and renting a room at the location. The research participant (‘Gisela’) said she would not be able to pursue internships without financial help from her parents. Two interns in a Canadian city also readily acknowledged the generous support of their parents. They emphasized that they would not have been able to gain work experience in the media industries without this help.

> I definitely recognize that I am in a very fortunate place….I am very lucky that my parents live in Toronto where a lot of media internships are so I can live here

> without paying rent. That is a huge savings. And they also feed me. So… my expenses were pretty low. If you don't have family in the city where you are interning it makes it much more difficult. … So I haven't had that many financial challenges but it is the fact that you have to come from that background in order to…it's very…the media landscape becomes very skewed. ('Carina')

The last two statements show an emerging awareness that unpaid internships have larger social implications, beyond the difficulty for individual interns of making ends meet. From the perspective of these young women, we might be moving towards a society in which mainly the well-off are able to gain the work experience necessary to start a career as a journalist.

5.2.3. Internships and pay

During one of the research interviews, I Invited a young man to think back to one of his internship contracts and details about pay, rules around copyright, and other components. He commented sarcastically:

> … (My) internship contract was very short, the motto was: 'You are nothing, you are not really permitted to do anything and you will get nothing' but that (no payment) really didn't bother me that much …because I always had a non-journalistic job on the side' ('Gunnar')

The young man illustrates the fact that, for some young journalists the need to subsidize journalism has become just as normalized as the acceptance of the flipside – media organizations not paying or underpaying their interns. This respondent had variously worked at a retailer or at a movie theatre during his journalistic internships to make ends meet. The following intern drew attention to the emotional disposition that non-payment creates, quite apart from having to struggle financially as a result, or not.

> I knew that I would not get a lot. The problem is not so much *low* payment … but I find it makes a huge difference if there is payment or no payment at all …this is an appreciation of one's work. If you don't get anything at all, you think to yourself…well, shall I make an effort at all? You come to work with a very different engagement level if it is paid. Of course, you make an effort because you don't want people to think 'What kind of BS is *she* doing'…' ('Gisela')

This research participant intuitively felt there was something wrong with not being paid – especially when she was doing the work of a fully-fledged reporter at a German national newspaper. Another research participant offered a critical analysis of the situation at a public broadcaster in Canada, suspecting that interns save media

organizations having to hire a permanent employee. At the public broadcaster she interned with, this young woman observed spending habits that she found difficult to digest:

> …interns see that there is a lot of money and that they could be paid and that is frustrating … when you see it being paid on extravagant parties or things like that. We don't have a conversation about the value of interns. We have conversations about Christmas parties and the latest equipment and things like that, that a news room would need.. ' ('Carry')

This respondent was particularly outraged because she compared the situation to other industries that employ young people who have completed or are in the process of completing internships.

> I think it's become so normed that internships are unpaid, especially in media …I've spoken to many students in other fields, too. There would be no question of them doing an unpaid internship … in business or engineering.. … ' ('Carry')

This statement is echoed by another research participant who remarked: 'If I was a programmer and worked for one day, I would get 450 Euros or more… . And that has become all but impossible in journalism.' ('Guido'). Some of my research participants tried to look beyond the seemingly inevitable issue of not being rewarded for their work or receiving income below minimum wage. They instead foregrounded aspects perceived as offsetting or justifying the lack of pay. This intern describes her work at a special interest magazine published online:

> 'We were working from the owner's living room. It was very small and was only part-time. I believe they paid me $250 per month for 3 days a week …so it gave you time to find a part-time job that actually paid. … There was a marketing side of the business, too and they hired me at 15 per hour to do promotions for them. … So there were opportunities to make money - just not from the (journalistic) writing….' ('Carina')

This intern clearly recognized in the context of this internship that some types of work were remunerated financially but journalism was not one of these. She describes a situation in which journalism, through the design of the internship, was essentially subsidized by other activities, by receiving products for free, and by enabling encounters with high-profile personalities:

> I got to interview the executive director of (a prominent festival in Toronto) so that was a big thing. You could go wherever you wanted with your stories. And there

> was also a lot of free products. They were lovely people. … Lots of companies give them samples. So you save on clothes and cosmetics. … (‘Carina’)

Not all internships are unpaid or low-paid. By making his own arrangements, an intern achieved payment for a mandatory internship required by his university. However, to his surprise and dismay, even though he was paid for every line he wrote for this local newspaper in the Frankfurt region, he still found himself struggling to make ends meet (‘Gunnar’). After he completed this internship, a professor in his Bachelor of journalism program suggested a few prestigious national media outlets that she might be able to get him access to. But the young man declined. Apart from having a young family, he also could simply not afford to do another unpaid or low-paid internship, especially one that would require him to temporarily move away from the region around Frankfurt to a city with high living costs: ‘… I couldn’t leave my wife and child behind at the moment and it is too expensive. I can afford neither Hamburg nor Munich.’ (‘Gunnar’). He decided to focus on finishing up his Bachelor instead, forgoing opportunities which more well-off candidates might have been able to take advantage of.

In 2014, in reaction to governmental auditing that found some internship programs unlawful, several media organizations in the Canadian province of Ontario decided to cancel internship programs. Others found creative ways of ensuring they comply with labour laws in the future. One of my research participants observed:

> Since it (the problem of unpaid internships) is more in the public eye … some people (employers) are hesitant to call it internship. What I have actually seen is the same internship position and this one organization called it a volunteership and I thought it was absolutely ridiculous. It is an internship and they make it seem as if they’re recruiting volunteers and that was a human rights media organization.(‘Carry’)

This was essentially just a change in re-naming the positions offered and demonstrates that some employers are determined to maintain a practice that has become the norm, even if it is illegal.

5.2.4. Transitions: First steps into journalism as a career, as freelance or permanent employment

Thinking about the future and picturing their careers as journalists, the great majority of my research participants prefer ongoing, full-time work with one media

organization over freelancing. Among other things, this has to do with the culture of constant availability for non-permanent workers. 'Guido' stated: "At some point, (I might want) a permanent position. When I am sixty, I will not feel like talking to my boss on the phone, Friday night at 9 pm." Another research participant voiced similar inclinations: "I honestly would prefer finding a permanent job and … a more regular work schedule (so that I) could plan longer-term and (…)." ('Gunther'). Having a more predictable schedule and secure future played a dominant role among my respondents:

> (Over the last week), I have worked two days starting at 2.30 pm, then two days starting at 8 am. And then one day, I did not work at all. Then I start at 6 am. … And because you are paid by actual work and not a monthly salary, the danger is that you work too much. If you don't work, you don't receive any money. ('Georg')

Despite often being praised as entry points for future jobs, including permanent jobs, most of my respondents did not benefit from their internships when trying to find a full-time job in journalism.

> I started freelancing after graduating. Nothing came out of my actual internships. No one was really hiring. It was a tough job market. I was applying for jobs…like mostly in the middle of nowhere… . ('Cassandra')

This respondent worked part-time at a retail store as well, while trying to establish herself as a journalist. Another young woman was offered a fact-checking position at the magazine she had interned with, after graduating with a bachelor's in a humanities discipline, 'because they didn't have an intern and were busy' ('Carina'). However, she lost this position – which had been for 10 to 15 hours per month – within four weeks of starting the job because the magazine closed down: 'All my connections in the magazine world are now unemployed', as the young woman remarked. She was trying to be realistic about her job prospects in journalism:

> Ideally, I would love to work at a magazine. Don't know if that's gona happen. But we'll see. I imagine it is easier to find a job in copy writing for an advertising agency, they pay better, but I am not that interested in that. But maybe I'll be in five years when I'm desperate. 'Carina')

For the moment, however, she was taking workshops around magazine journalism, completing html training to become more 'employable', and taking advantage of a mentorship program at her university to help with the job search in journalism. '

> So far, nothing's really happened with that. But I am still working on that and also applying for entry level full time jobs. …. I am trying (freelancing) this summer. I have only sent out, like, five pitches. … (unfortunately), if there are big features, (at a Canadian magazine that she had interned with) they are written in-house. … ('Carina')

Despite putting a lot of work into pitching stories, the young woman had a clear preference for ongoing, full-time employment with one media organization, mainly to have 'some security and some sort of health insurance and pension plan'. However, 'Carina' notes that there is fierce competition for such jobs. She says: "... there must be thousands of others who are also applying to these jobs" ('Carina'). Another research participant had been looking for a full-time position in journalism for three years, without much success. Here the young woman mentions the latest job application: 'I applied for two positions at a television station for which I was overqualified. I just got an email saying that both positions were filled. … The young woman stated decisively that she did not want to complete another internship, having done five already. However, in case she did decide to accept a paid internship at this stage, 'Carry' said she would push for a change of job title so that her resumé would not list another internship position. Another research participant had been able to regularly work as a freelance reporter for a German provincial public broadcaster, during and after completing a master's program. She had performed this job for one week every month and during the summers to replace permanent staff on vacation.

> I would not say that I have a great position there. It is a precarious employment relationship. It simply is that way. I mean when one considers that I have completed a Master's, one could also make 40 000 Euros per year (as opposed to her income of 16 000). But it isn't this way. It is also an idealistic thing why one is doing this (journalism). So that is the first thing. I would not say that I 'made it' or anything like this. … At the (German public broadcaster), I was lucky. I happened to be there at the exact time where they noticed they could not create a permanent position but needed manpower. ('Gudrun')

I asked about the 16 000 Euros and the respondent stated that this was the limit, the maximum she was allowed to earn per year with this provincial broadcaster. It was not a contract but 'only a (verbal) agreement. It is a status that they assign. It is a construct they introduced. They call it this, colloquially.' The young woman and other casually employed workers at the broadcaster were asked to monitor their assignments so that they would not earn more than 16 000 Euro – as they could otherwise claim regular employee status which the broadcaster wanted to prevent. This very critically

inclined young woman explained why she used the word 'precarious' to describe her one-week per month job with the public broadcaster:

> I did my degree with people who went into a marketing thing after graduating and work 50 hours per week and are really career-oriented…and I sometimes, of course, have a day without work, and one thinks sometimes, this is a waste of energy, 'I am young and I could do something'... But I did not want to deviate from this ideal image that I would like to do this (journalism) content-wise. That was the goal for sure. And therefore, I cannot say that this (precarity) *did not* weigh me down, but…I did accept it… . ('Sandra')

This research participant, while freelancing for this and for other media organizations in Germany, had a clear preference for more permanent work. She was relieved at the time of the interview that, after several rounds of unsuccessful applications, she had just been awarded one of the coveted two-year traineeships (Volontariat) at one of the German public broadcasters. While not a guarantee for a permanent job in journalism after completion, such traineeships are seen as an ideal path to ongoing journalistic work in Germany. Another research participant, still a student at the time of the interview, was considering the benefits and drawbacks of a recently scored freelance job, for 10 days a month, with an investigative department of a German regional newspaper.

> I will never be able to learn as much again as I am learning now (from his boss). That is the first thing. And secondly, he (his boss) has said right from the beginning, once you are done with your degree, (the newspaper) has to make you a good offer. So, therefore, my own boss is telling me that I will not always have to work for 120 Euros a day. ('Guido')

Similar to other participants, the amount of pay for freelance work was not satisfactory for this journalist but he said this was offset by his learning curve.

5.2.5. Freelancing: Initial experiences with copyright, 'restructuring', and pay for journalistic work

The most established young journalist in my sample shared a story that is indicative of the restrictive copyright regimes that media organizations today enforce for interns and freelancers, for maximum exploitation of their work. This young German man, despite still being a student, managed to do freelance reporting for German media from Vancouver during the 2010 Olympics:

> I was working for (a national German broadcaster) and other media and re-sold some of my texts or posted them on my blog. Then there was stress. They cut my fee. Then I wrote them an e-mail, saying that this is not acceptable. … I was invited to a meeting at the editorial office (after he returned from Vancouver) and they explained that they don't want me to re-use texts for other media. I told him that this will limit my ability to make money. …('Guido')

Guido was able to negotiate a fee increase for himself in this instance which indicates that news organizations at least sometimes give into requests from journalistic workers. However, this does not address structural problems or replace collective efforts that more widely lead to improvement in pay. Another research participant shared a similar experience, after publishing her first freelance article ever on an American website. Like many young journalists, she was not too concerned about the 'many pages' of contract language that had been sent her way by the publication. Then she came across her own article on a website where it had been posted without her permission:

> … So you really should read it (contracts) but I didn't. … they told me once they had an email from the author saying it was okay to publish it, they went ahead and did everything. It seemed that the author accepted it. But I hadn't.' ('Carina')

A young man who had been successful in securing freelance work following his journalistic internships witnessed shifts available to freelancers were taken in-house. The result was a pay decrease which he intended to address with his editor. But the young journalist was hesitant since he had 'no experience yet' in negotiating anything with his employer.

> 'I have done these shifts so far as managing editor (on freelance basis); but there was some restructuring …; it is a job now done exclusively by permanent employees. Those journalists who used to do this on a freelance basis are now called news managers and they are now (only) *assisting* the (permanently employed) managing editor. … ('Georg')

'Cassandra' confirmed the hesitation to bring up the question of pay. She worked as a freelancer for a local newspaper in Canada:

> … when it is time to send the invoice … I'll be like 'hey, editor, fill in the blank, please. I don't know how much you are paying me for this'. Cause it's never pre-negotiated. And that's my fault, and I know that I should ask before I accept the assignment. But I have been working for them for this long that I just can't bring myself to actually have that conversation before I get into it… ('Cassandra')

Another research participant, 'Guido', made a point of asking for a certain fee for his newspaper article, taking advantage of the official fee structure that exists in Germany for freelance journalists submitting articles to print publications (although it is rarely observed by publishers). What was the result of 'Guido's' request to be paid the official amount?

> They fired me. … I wrote a text for them and told them I wanted to be paid according to official fee structure. I think it was 42 versus 17 Euros. And they called and asked if this is a pledge or a precondition for accepting my text. And I said this is a precondition …. And you are not allowed to print it otherwise. The next day, the text was in the paper. ('Guido')

After involving the legal team at his journalism union, the young man received the missing part of the fee. However, as he says, "they have not changed their practice and they still pay everyone else the lower fee" ('Guido').

5.3. Freelance journalists

5.3.1. Institutions, policies, and conventions shaping freelance journalistic labour

In this section, I will examine how freelance journalists perceive unions and professional associations as well as institutions such as statutory health insurance providers for freelancers. I also explore the copyrights, fees, and contracts provided to freelancers by media organizations they work for. Lastly, this section also discusses legal questions and tax-related issues that concern freelance journalists.

My research participants at once appreciate and fear the behaviour of government-regulated agencies that were founded in postwar Germany to improve the social security of artists and journalists who work as freelancers. As outlined in chapter 4, the Artists' Social Fund (Künstlersozialkasse, KSK), provides access to statutory health, pension, and long-term care insurance which is not available to other professions performing work on a freelance basis. The German government limits access to these special supports. It only admits those who truly work as artists or journalists and thus contribute to society at large, either in a cultural or political sense (those producing advertising or public relations material, for example, are not accepted as members and

neither are those in regular employment). Secondly, only those working as artist or journalist on a primary or full-time basis are eligible. Thirdly, artists and journalists need to have a minimum annual income of about 3.900 Euros to become or remain members of those government-regulated agencies. Incomes recorded at the agencies are based on estimates the journalists themselves provide to the agencies late each year, in order to assess their required contribution to the scheme for the coming year. The agencies regularly perform audits to confirm the incomes submitted to them. One of my research participants, 'Gabi', remarks:

> One year I was earning so little that the KSK asked me if I am still working as a journalist…I said yes. They audited me and found a divergence (between the income projected and the actual income) …in some years there was a divergence above and in some below. They (the KSK) threatened me and suspected I was dishonest…but I don't know at the beginning of the year what I will be making.'

A journalist who had recently switched from being a permanently employed journalist to becoming a freelancer describes how difficult it was to get accepted into the KSK. Although the social insurance scheme is an obligatory program for freelance artists and journalists in Germany, the KSK wanted to make sure 'Caren' was now truly working as a freelancer, ie. for multiple clients:

> I am in. But it took me a long time to get in. They first rejected me because I only had one article per client. I am not sure what happened. Because you are obligated to register with the KSK as soon as you become a freelancer but it is clear that you cannot have tons of articles within your first month of being a freelancer. Anyway, as soon as my professional website was ready, they accepted me. … I had to hand in seven additional documents …I heard that it was easier to get in before. But not anymore.'

There is a perception among freelance journalists that those institutions officially designed to protect their social security make access to their services more and more difficult. There is an atmosphere of suspicion that leads to a perceived increase in audits that signals to freelancers that they could lose their benefits. For example, shift work as news editor that is performed on a freelance basis and does not result in creative or informative product raises red flags with the KSK.

> My health insurance (the KSK) is always irritated when I am taking on shifts in editorial offices. And then they want proof that I am truly a freelancer. Every year they check once if they could or should throw me out.' ('Gitte')

Then there is the sticky issue of having to be a full-time journalist or artist to be eligible for membership in the KSK. Freelance journalists cannot earn more than about 450 Euros per month from work outside journalism. As a result, freelance journalists struggling to make enough money exclusively from doing journalism have to find ways to work with these restrictions: 'Caren', who says that about half of her assignments are in public relations, explains that she simply re-frames some of her public relations work:

> It is a question how you formulate this. The only thing the KSK gets is the invoice. That means, ultimately, that I tell my client that I will declare this to the KSK as journalistic project … and with this, one is usually on the safe side. If I am at a press event for a PR agency or for a newspaper, in principle, it doesn't make a difference. Where I would encounter a problem would be if I exclusively or almost exclusively worked for PR agencies. Then I would consider registering a small business to be on the safe side (which would forego KSK membership and open possibilities for unlimited work in PR)…..This is not a law or anything but a tolerance range. If one does not more than about 20 per cent PR and at least 80 per cent work as a journalist or author, then no one complains. Then the status as freelancer (who qualifies for KSK membership) is not endangered.

In addition, journalists must communicate this delicate issue to their corporate or non-journalistic clients: From organizations who commission work that is artistic or journalistic in nature to individual freelance artists or journalists (versus businesses or enterprises), the government mandates and collects – via the KSK, to finance this institution - a payment of the so-called 'artists' social contribution'. This is a levy on top of the fee paid for the assignment, designed to support the media and cultural industries in Germany and the frequently insecure status of its workers. This levy is set anew every year and usually between 4 or 5 per cent of the assignment fee. 'Caren' says that newspaper publisher and other media organizations are used to paying this levy:

> But if you want to do PR for companies or associations, … they don't like this very much (having to pay 5 per cent of every piece of work to the KSK). … It is good to be open about this and warn the client that they might have to pay the 5 per cent for me. It is always the question, will the KSK charge the client or not. …

If the KSK collects the levy or not depends on how it classifies the work commissioned: if the assignment is recognized as advertising or public relations – versus artistic or journalistic work - the levy does not need to be paid.

Copyright, fees, contracts – and individual reactions

The more seasoned freelance journalists among my research participants remark that having contracts for individual freelance assignments was not common until the early 2000s. Fees were negotiated verbally. 'Christopher' remembers that, initially, freelancers then had some room for varying the terms and conditions presented to them in contracts:

> ...there was a time, maybe 10 years ago we looked at some of the contracts... with the help from a few of my friends who were more versed in this, one of them was the Globe and Mail (a Canadian national newspaper) contract at that time....we studied the different clauses and it was recommended that I take out some of the clauses and I noted that on the contract and it went through.

Today, the atmosphere is different. Freelancers have little to no room to negotiate pay or copyright arrangements. Several research participants explain that one of the reasons for this shift, at least in Canada, is two class action law suits, mentioned in chapter 4. The outcome of these court cases launced by freelance journalists Heather Robertson benefitted many freelance journalists in Canda, leading to an overall payout to freelancers of over $16 million. In a settlement reached after several years in court, newspaper and other publishers agreed to pay freelancers retroactiely for unauthorized re-use and continued exploitation of their works. 'Christopher', a senior journalist, received a cheque for $20 000 from this settlement. 'Charles' says: 'It benefitted a lot of people, myself included ...because my work went back decades.' However, he explains,

> It (the class action law suits) put front and center in the mind of every publisher in Canada that there is no way that they're gona walk out naked, without contracts anymore...and many of them now are looking for a universal rights grab. They want everything because they're worried if they don't they can't use it (the journalistic work) in the way they want. I understand that...that's understandable...you wanna be able to be quick-footed in a time of quick change. However, you also have to be able to pay for it (the use of copyrighted work that their writers produce) and that is what they have not been willing to do. ('Charles')

'Cindy' conveys a feeling of powerlessness regarding contracts that publishers offer her for freelance assignments. She feels she is generally not 'in a good bargaining position' and has faced punitive measures from publishers:

> I have only held off on signing a contract when I knew that people at the Freelancers Union were already protesting a given contract. I held off and ....they

> (the publisher she was working for) adjusted the contract to make it more favourable because there was a pushback. But I kind of got in trouble for it anyway. The pay...they slowed down their system...and they kind of threatened me, if you're not going to sign, then we won't pay you for past work....I don't think they really understood what they were saying because it (would have been) illegal.

'Caren' says that she has not signed the contract by the Canadian publisher Transcontinental Media 'that takes away all your rights in perpetuity.... that is a bit much. But I have signed other contracts ... '. Although contracts for freelance journalism imposed by publishers are frustrating for 'Caren', she has adopted a resigned, pragmatic position regarding copyrights to her own work:

> I don't give a shit about it when it's corporate work. ... and journalism is not a lingering thing...you write an article and it lives for a month and then you move on... .

Another issue of consternation among freelance journalists is that media organizations increasingly demand indemnification in their contracts with freelancers, despite having liablity insurance for legal challenges arising from the material they publish. 'Charles' has been confronted with such contracts. He describes the changing relationship between freelancers and publishers that new liablity and copyright regimes create:

> The publishers are the ones employing legal teams in order to create arms-length relationships with writers...they are the ones trying to grasp the revenue streams that were traditionally under the province of the writer... .

'Charles'refused to sign a contract he was sent for two blog posts he was assigned to write, by an editor and for a publisher he had worked with previously:

> Their lawyers sent the agreement to me and I had signed several already and I looked at this one and said, I can't sign this. ... it was an all-rights contract (taking away author's copyrights in perpetuity). The other thing that I didn't like and that was interesting ...was that it said, we have the right to look over your work and to change things...but we don't have the obligation. (...) Sorry, this is not how it works. You are the one publishing it, you are responsible for putting it out there. On top of this, they demanded moral rights which meant that they had the ability to change your copy without your consent. And on top of that, they also want you to indemnify them against any possible lawsuit or against any damages... .

'Charles' was "worried about libel and what I was writing about for these guys was finance... with people who had done things that weren't particularly great". In the

past, he says, there had always been an understanding that 'a publisher had your back' in case a lawsuit arose over a news report. 'Charles' proposed to the publisher that he would obtain legal insurance and thus indemnification before completing the assignment – at a higher fee that would cover the insurance costs. 'But they did not go with it', Charles says. He points out that media ownership concentration in Canada has further diminished the abilities of freelancers to negotiate pay and rights for their work:

> With many magazines being concentrated under certain umbrellas ... if you run afoul of one publisher, then... If I told Elle Canada, for example, I'm not gonna sign your bullshit contract then it's likely that I wouldn't be working for them but also not for Vancouver magazine or Westwood magazine (which were owned by the same publisher, Transcontinental Media, at the time of the interview in 2014)... since they own all three.

Thus, as hinted in chapter 3, high degrees of media concentration shape the working conditions of freelance journalists. It reduces the number of potential clients and their ability to dissent with editors or negotiate higher pay.

Perceptions of unions and professional associations

Canadian freelancers have low expectations of unions and professional associations trying to organize freelance journalists. As 'Christopher' points out, for decades in Canada, there was only one organization for freelance journalists working mainly for print publications, and this was PWAC (Professional Writers' Association of Canada).

> ... but it's always been rather useless...it doesn't negotiate contracts, it has never helped people get more money...they just do courses and panels and you can have a health plan through them...I never joined them. I never saw it as being worthwile ...for the fees that you have to pay.

'Colin', another mature freelance journalist ,says he left PWAC because they 'achieved nothing' for him and he paid $150 a year to be a member. 'Caren' says that professional associations or unions in Canada are generally a 'shitty deal' for freelance journalists, weighing the costs against the benefits. Many of my Canadian research participants indeed hesitate to become members of unions and professional associations.

> I never looked at (the Canadian Assocation of Journalists). There is a writer's union.I ordered publications about negotiating contracts or copyright (from them)

but... I am not a member...I am thinking why not? Maybe not much head space to think about that...' (Candace)

There is a tangible uneasiness among many Canadian research participants when discussing unions and professional associations for freelance journalists. Some feel that they should be joining an organization, pointing to a divide between liking the idea in principle and taking the necessary practical steps:

> I feel guilty about that. The fact that I'm not really engaged with this hurts everyone. I believe in it ideologically. I believe in the idea of organized labour... but I'm not a member of any unions and don't pay dues at all...the most I do...I try through the Toronto freelance writers and editors e-mail list...I try to stay informed about what's happening....I hear about the activities of unions and associations through that...I would like to be a member of a union. Right now, I still don't have a sense that it is worth joining. I should probably....I am sure there are benefits that I don't even realize.' (Cindy)

'Candace' states that she would appreciate an organization that would negotiatie fees for freelance journalists and make 'it a rule that freelancers don't write for free'. However, she says that journalists might be too different from one another to be subsumed under some organizational umbrella. For example, as someone covering high culture, she has her doubts that a lifestyle journalist would have the same concerns or interests: 'We always think the other person is more privileged. I don't know if I have something in common with someone who writes for Chatelaine magazine (a lifestyle magazine in Canada).'

Some of my research participants have previous experience with unions, from a time during which they worked as permanent employees. 'Charles' was a member of the Canadian Media Guild while working for a provinical television station: 'They had some actual powers.' In contrast, 'Charles' finds the supports offered by unions and associations to freelancers much weaker.: 'I used to be a member of CFU (Canadian Freelance Union) ..it seemed very promising at first...I thought they might have some muscle, but it hasn't really panned out yet.' Now 'Charles' is considering the Writers Union of Canada which focuses more on professional auhors who have published books rather than on traditional journalists.

As for the research participants from Germany, their perceptions of and experiences with unions are more varied. All German freelance journalists I talked to

were members of at least one journalism union or professional association. But many emphasize that their membership is mostly passive.

> I am with a union … and I think this is important. And I am with the Freischreiber (recently founded professional association specifically for freelance journalists). But I am not very active in these. Also, because I think there are people who are a lot better at this. … This is not really my thing. ('Gitte')

Another journalist, 'Gerhard', remarks that he left the journalism union attached to the bigger German service union Verdi. First, he did not want to afford the membership fee anymore and, second, he disagrees with the structure of the union and the union's primary concern with permanent staff in journalism:

> … they also (represent) stage designers and lighting technicians as well…these are too different from media professionals. (And)…they don't truly represent the freelancers only the permanent employees in journalism. 'Gerhard'

'Gerhard' therefore joined the recently founded professional association for freelance journalists (Freischreiber) which is smaller and more modern, even if it does not have the bargaining power of a union: 'They react swiftly (to current developments). And they have clear political goals. They are courageous. I am not terribly active there but I like them.' 'Gabi' also appreciates the Freischreiber as a new, fresh organization addressing labour issues in the media industries. In contrast, she emphasizes

> The DJV (biggest German journalism union) has more of a 'suffering union' attitude…oh, we are so poor and the others (editors, employers) are evil…that is really getting on my nerves….they are victimizing themselves.

At same time, according to 'Gerhard', the big journalism unions have not done enough to protest the introduction of a new law in Germany, the ancillary copyright for press publishers (Leistungsschutzrecht). 'The big unions all caved in', says Gerhard. This law allows publishers to charge search engines such as Google for the display of journalistic content that has been paid for and published by a newspaper or other medium. Apart from a concern that the content will have a limited audience if not displayed on Google, there is also the unanswered question how journalists, not just publishers, can be compensated through this new law. 'Gabi', who works primarily for daily newspapers, is outraged by the latest (at the time of the interview, 2011) agreement negotiated between publishers and journalists' unions. Her outrage is mostly regarding the copyright rules that stipulate that, unless otherwise specified, freelancers

do not receive pay on top of the assignment fee if their article is published not just in print but online. Multiplatform-exploitation is thus tends to be a right of media organizations rather than freelance journalists.

> I am mad at the DJV for the new fee schedule that they negotiated for us Because we give up almost any and all rights. The fee is okay …but to give up all rights to one's work…unbelievable. It is about multiple use of one's work (by publishing houses)…for example, if I publish in a national newspaper, then the article also appears on their website and in another newspaper they own…and should they buy another publishing house, then it will published there, too (without additional compensation)…that makes me sick!

Freelancers in Germany who work for daily newspapers are generally disillusioned regarding the powers of journalists' unions, despite the official fee structure for freelance journalists that is negotiated between unions and publishers:

> … I've never had any client refer to this pay scale. It is there on paper, but (not observed in practice) … . One can sue the publisher, but one would have to know how. And one does not want to destroy one's field of work. And journalists don't write about their own issues and their unions. That is why there is no awareness. ('Gina')

According to 'Guido's' experience, compensation rules for freelancers in the print sector are indeed not enforced by the journalism unions. Therefore, he feels that unions do not make a significant difference for one's work as a freelance journalist, at least regarding fees for print assignments. Moreover, my research participants appreciate the free legal aid received from DJV in Germany as part of their membership.

> 'I had hired someone for web design for my website and ran into problems (and asked for legal help at the DJV). … . I filed an objection because I knew that the DJV would likely support me. The case never went to court. But (legal disputes) can completely ruin you. … The support from DJV is extremely valuable.' ('Gina')

'Gabi' has benefitted many times from the legal support of DJV. She describes one such instance:

> 'I have used their legal service…they are amazing. … They have a handful of lawyers who really work to enforce freelancer's rights. … They call back right away. Immediately and always. They represent me legally, without cost to me. …. One time I had a complicated case … where they even hired an external lawyer for me.'

Thus, while my Canadian research participants have to buy liability or errors and omission insurance to manage legal risks emerging from their job, German freelancers are protected through a free legal service by their unions.

Solidarity among freelancers; between freelancers and permanent employees

According to both Canadian and German freelancers, what is needed to improve working conditions is not just solidarity among freelancers but between freelancers and permanently employed journalists. 'Jennifer' observes that permanent reporters "fight for themselves but not for us (freelancers)". 'Charles' says: "The staff writers at the Vancouver Sun are not going to put down their pens and join a picket line for freelancers ...no... ." Another seasoned freelance reporter says that permanent employees at media organizations and their unions are reluctant to do something for freelancers, 'a disadvantaged group of workers'. He points out that a fundmental shift in attitudes will be s required for successful freelance organizing:

> It will only ever work if those ... locals which are permanent staff at media organizations will write a clause into their contracts that says if you contract out any work to freelancers then they must be members of CFU (Canadian Freelance Union) or CMG (Canadian Media Guild) ... the locals are not interested in doing that. Every time it comes up (as a debate within unions) it gets pushed off the table because there are other priorities...We have no closed shop. You can't have a union without a closed shop. It doesn't work. ('Colin')

'Colin' makes clear that there is frustration among freelancers about the privileged status of journalists who are permanent staff – who seem to ignore the fact that they, too, might be freelancers sooner or later, by choice or because they are let go. "We are their future. ... If they (would help us), they could protect themselves down the road. But they are too short-sighted."

In contrast, one of my research participants who worked as a flat-rate journalist – which means on a freelance basis but paid not by assignment but a fixed lump sum salary - at a national newspaper in Germany showed his solidarity with permanently employeed journalists. He joined a nation-wide strike called by journalism unions to protest contracts offered by publishers to young journalists in 2011. The contracts stipulated starting salaries for permanently employed print journalists 25 to 30 per cent lower than previously.

> I was thankful that someone took the lead in protesting a collective agreement that would have put young journalists at a huge disadvantage. Unbelievable. And I thought ...one has to do everything to support this. And I went on strike although I had just started my job here (a one year maternity leave replacement as an editor). I wanted to participate... .

The strikes across Germany were successful and the journalism unions were able to deflect the lowering of starting salaries for young journalists with permanent contracts.

'Gustav' is an active member of another big journalism union in Germany, the DJU. He works as a volunteer adviser for freelance journalists to help them navigate questions related to taxes, health insurance, and contracts. As someone active in labour questions regarding freelance journalism, he points to one instance of labour resistance in Berlin that he remembers. Freelancers working for the public broadcaster decided collectively to not hand in assignments or complete other work for the broadcaster on a particular day. 'But the editors simply used assignments that were stored in the system so…a strike (of freelancers) is easily adjusted to….'.

Another campaign, led by the professional association Freischreiber, raised more public awareness and was more effective, according to 'Gustav'. The Freischreiber selected one issue of some of the most important German news magazines and blanked out contributions by freelance journalists. This demonstrated that these important publications would shrink to half or less than half of their editorial content without freelance labour. Gustav says, 'This shows the (…) importance of freelancers to the existence of those media.' However, campaigns like this do little more than raise public awareness. When asked how working conditions for journalists could be improved, 'Gustav' points to the differences in pay among freelancers and the lack of transparency regarding who is paid what. 'Charles' states that this is an issue in Canada as well:

> We really don't know who is paid what. We really don't know who has signed contracts or not. It is difficult to create solidarity when the entire landscape is splintered. Some people are getting paid better than others... they're probably scared to announce this, too, if they are paid higher and others lower... .

This problem is addressed by some websites, such as 'the Geman website mediaphon', that allows freelancers to anonymously post the fees received for

assignments at different media organizations. However, this does not necessarily change attitudes towards payment conventions:

> (This) requires a willingness to say 'no', of course, to say: I am not working for 70 per cent less pay than my colleague, for reasons unknown to me. … This is a foundational problem: there are always young people who are happy to publish in papers such as the Sueddeutsche (a prestigious national newspaper in Germany) at all and say, of course, I will work for 90 Euros and the old established journalists shouldn't fuss over that.

Freelance journalists, young and old, are fearful of losing work opportunities in case they stand in solidarity with other freelancers, as 'Caren' points out.

> 'It is terribly difficult to organize. When the German Federation of Journalists asked freelancers to be in solidarity and organize to fight for fair fees, my colleague in (a nearby city) tried to motive freelancers to do this. But everyone said no, we still want to write for this publication in the future. …'

The problem; from 'Christopher's' perspective, is that freelance journalists are easily replaced: '(For example), if all freelancers went on strike for (the magazine) Toronto Life...there are 500 other freelancers waiting to break into the paper.. .' 'Gitte' says that is why she considers organized collective action to improve working conditions a remote possibility:

> If we went on strike, we would not receive our income. Of course, I can tell the editor that I refuse to work but then they will call someone else … and ultimately this would damage me. … To organize a collective strike among freelancers is difficult and I don't know if people would do it.

'Charles' sums up freelancers' reactions to deteriorating working conditions by describing these as 'situation-specific and reactionary'. For example, 'there will be a particularly onerous contract imposed on freelancers and then you'll see a buzz on social media'. The outrage will die down and protest usually does not go much further than that.

5.3.2. Resistance

Individualized resistance

My research participants do not habitually dispute with editors or publishers the terms and conditions under which they work. However, many of them have attempted to

resist those conditions when they perceived an opening to do so, and sometimes with a positive outcome, as 'Christopher' describes in the following episode:

> There was a story that needed to be done for (a big magazine in Toronto) and I knew the one other writer that they might have hired to do this had just started a job (at a national daily newspaper). So I was the one. I asked for 8000 dollars and the editor said: Will you take 6500 dollars....and I said yes...I thought, holy shit....you just have to negotiate...I mean you have to add value, it can't be a story that just anyone can write...'

'Christopher' makes sure to point out that this happened in the 1990s when working conditions were easier and freelance budgets more generous at media organizations. 'Candace' describes a recent negotiation which led to a fee increase for her:

> I recently wrote a piece for which I interviewed 13 people. And then you can say (to the publication), look, I worked really hard...up the fee a little. They usually have a little bit of room. I am writing things that no one else is writing about.

More often, however, 'Candace' is confronted not with the question of fee increases but with arguing for being paid versus writing for free:

> I occasionally get requests to write for free and if you really don't want to do it ... (A website for music journalism) got really talented people from around the world writing for them. And they don't pay anybody. They e-mailed me recently ... and said, our usual Toronto writer is not available ... I asked, you as an the editor, are you paid? I hope so. ... I told them they should also pay other people (freelancers).

Such a request may be successful at times but remain unheard at other media outlets. The following statement is about a website that 'Candace' contributed podcasts to.

> They started to invite people to comment .. for free. They are a big organization. So I used to be a regular in this podcast two or three times and then I said guys you have to pay every one of us. I said not just me, all of us. You know. Pay a little bit, start with something. They are a massive budget organization. They wouldn't. So I amicably severed that connection.

'Candace' summarizes her experience with negotiating pay: 'You can refuse to write for free – if you can afford it'. She points to the fact that one has to have a certain reputation and area of expertise as a freelance journalist in order to make such an argument. 'Gabi', a senior freelance journalist with extensive experience, resists working

conditions by re-selling articles already published in one national newspaper as 'first-time' publication to another national newspaper in Germany:

> One should not say this out loud but….I used to be quite unashamed offering up pieces, after 6 months, that I had sold to (another national newspaper) because the pay was so shitty. …I was mad every time I worked for them … and I addressed the issue (of low pay) with them. And obviously, others (freelancers) have done so as well because they now pay per the official fee structure (negotiated between the journalism unions and publishers). … And now I am also a bit nicer and do not constantly offer them articles published elsewhere. … Whereas before I thought, well you with your low fee, you cannot expect exclusivity.

In another instance, 'Gabi' wrote an article for a regional newspaper in Southern Germany, complained about the low pay. She was surprised to find an editor who agreed that fees paid to freelancers for first-time, exclusive articles were too low.

> I received an invoice over 36 Euros. I did not think anything of it and thought this must have been a mistake in their accounting. I just call and they'll fix it. …and I called the editor and said, there must have been a mistake. And she said, no Miss (name of interviewee), we pay 40 cents per line. … She was very friendly. And I said, okay, but then you'll also understand that I will not do this anymore….And she said, oh, I understand you and I would love to pay you ten times as much but …consider if you have a completed story, send it to me and maybe you can earn an additional 50 Euros (for secondary publication).

This invitation to submit to the newspaper work already published elsewhere is also an implicit acknowledgement of the devaluation of journalism. 'Gabi' has been fighting the same in an argument with a big German newspaper publisher:

> (…) I have not worked for them for a long while because they did not publish a story I completed for them, for about two years .. that made me angry. …That (situation clearly) requires a kill fee. I contacted the (German journalism union) and got some legal advice. And I invoiced for 250 Euros. … They did no pay.

'Gabi' says that there is no shortage of official avenues of redress but, ultimately, those are rarely taken by freelance journalists treated unjustly:

> Of course, I can make a lot of noise and publish an article in *The Journalist*. (magazine of the German journalism union) But what do I achieve by that? I don't get any more assignments. It is really difficult. … Well for now, I am providing them with a peace offering. I won't sue them via the German journalism union but instead I will offer another article to them…We'll see.

In another instance, she received an assignment from an editor at a big national newspaper in Germany and then another editor cancelled the assignment.

> I can fight and do things…. Maybe I would have succeed (in fighting the situation) but then I'd be out of the game. … But still, I am annoyed about myself that I did not even say, wait, this was assured to me by Mister Such-and-such… I was a bit fearful. I avoided the confrontation.

'Gabi' explains that she generally tries to resolve any issues regarding pay and working conditions in a private conversation with editors. She might win a court case and would not even have to pay for legal representation – which is provided by the German journalism union. As a result, however, her freelance career would likely end as media organizations would stop assigning her work.

Lastly, some freelancers have pursued another avenue for resisting current working conditions. More particularly, they contest exploitative, restrictive copyright regimes. 'Christopher' noted on a contract received from a big national newspaper that he disagreed with certain passages. He notes: 'It went through'. Another research participant, 'Gina', who has legal training decided not to sign away most of her author's rights:

> Two contracts that I had as a freelancer … I crossed out whole passages. And this sailed through. (…) one simply has to do it. So that one can look in the mirror in the morning and not feel humiliated.

Despite her critical perspective on freelance journalism, 'Gina' makes it clear that she does not expect the government to address working conditions – beyond a basic framework that 'should disallow exploitation and (badly paid) day labour:

> I would not want to charge policy-makers with the responsibility for (improving things for freelancers). As freelancer, one is an entrepreneur. There is always risk involved. One cannot ask politics to absorb these risks.

Attempting structural reform

Two seasoned journalists have personal experience with attempting to push for structural changes that would improve the working conditons of freelancers. 'Charles' tried to get policy-makers on board to ensure fair payment, referring to cultural policy in Canada that supports magazines.

> The thing that I was trying to float a while back is that all these magazines are subsidized .. by Canadian Heritage...to an extraordinary amount. And so, because they have that in place, it could also be used as a hammer against those magazines if the federal government chose to do so. If they said, you know, institute contracts that are reasonable and fair...basically, instituting a minimum wage ....but they haven't and they won't. The heritage minister dismissed it. (‚Charles')

'Christopher' supported the Canadian Writers Group (a small agency signing on high profile freelance writers in Canada) and the Canadian Media Guild in their negotiations with the Toronto Star. The goal was to convince the publisher to make contracts fairer to freelance journalists. 'Christopher' was part of a delegation who met senior editors and lawyers at the Toronto Star to present their case:

> We learned that the Toronto Star's attitude was that they ... their lawyers did absolutely did not want to change one clause in the contract because of the Robertson fear...that there could be another Robertson lawsuit if they didn't buy every single right in every way and had everything sewn up … on the Star front, they didn't move... . They did not change the contract at all.

This has left 'Christopher' disillusioned about possiblities to change working conditions of freelance journalism. He believes that the organized efforts to improve pay or strengthen the rights of freelancers would have been more successful "at an earlier time". Unions, agencies, associations are now "... fighting against a situation in which the business is wrecked. The print publications are just struggling to survive ... no one has any power any more for labour relations."

5.3.3. Working conditions of freelance journalists

Work-life balance, fluid spaces and schedules

My research participants take on full responsibility for creating a work environment in which they can complete journalistic assignments. One important theme in the research interviews is the desire for a dedicated work space, inside or outside of one's home, depending on the family situation. 'Gerhard':

> When my son was born, that is when I noticed the need to have a separate space. At that time, it had to be outside the home. I needed to go outside and leave the home. … Also, you need a dedicated phone line …. Then you hear right away, when the phone rings (that it is work).

‘Gerhard’ rented an external office in his neighbourhood that he could share with another professional. He gave it up later on when his family bought a house and he now has a dedicated office at home, as this is cheaper. For ‘Caren’, what she calls ‘real estate needs’ have been front and centre in her freelance career, and trying to reconcile the needs of her family, including two kids, and professional requirements.

> ‘When you are a freelancer, you work from home, and that requires physical space in your home! This issue has actually ruled our lives...my husband is (an artist), he has so much crap... He needs a lot of space... we could not live in a condo... I needed space and I need space to shut the door. I need privacy!’ (Caren)

This is also critical because ‘Caren’ has two younger children. She acknowledges the financial commitment required to have such a work space but says that if she gave up her office, ‘I would give up everything..’:

> ‘People outside don’t understand that this office is worth gold! You can work in your bedroom for a while...you could work at your dining room table if your husband would not (also) work from home....but he is in and out all the time. I have to shut a door behind me and focus.’ (Caren)

Ensuring adequate workspace within a big enough living space is only possible for freelancers who can afford it financially. Most freelancers I talked to struggle with this, especially after having children. ‘Charles’ says working at home with elementary-school aged son is ‘sometimes tricky’. After ‘Connor’ and his wife had a baby, they had to convert their common home office to a nursery. ‘Connor’ says he now sometimes works at the kitchen table and frequently at the public library. However, he also acknowledges that being flexible regarding his place of work enabled him to bond with the new baby:

> I was very lucky that when our son was born, I was able to work from home...and have a lot of time with him while still able to make a living. It was tricky at times but that option was very appealing. (Connor)

Those freelancers who live on their own are not limited by family members but still suffer from space constraints, imposed by their strained budgets:

> It would be nice to have a big apartment (in order to properly separate living space from work space). But my work is all over the place. I move around. Once I move away from the table, I don’t have the internet. So I am not tempted to check e-mail. ... There’s a great little nook. But then I move to the couch. And when I get sick and tired of (that spot), I go and write in bed. Some of my best stuff was written in bed.

‘Candace’ often rearranges the furniture in her apartment to ‘break the monotony’ of working at home, as she moves from place to place.

All my research participants acknowledge that it is difficult, as ‘Christopher’ and ‘Gina’ say, to ‘shut down work in the evening’, especially when living alone or without kids. There is no ‘natural end’ to the work day. ‘Gerhard’’s statement shows that he is torn between cutting off the sphere of work, and responding to it all the time, for fear of potentially missing an opportunity:

> Sometimes I am successful in not answering the work phone (after hours). And I also think that you would not really lose a potential assignment simply because …. In the evening, when I am preparing dinner – and the door (to his office) is open – and I hear the phone, then I will likely still answer it. (‘Gerhard’)

As there is no clear separation between life and work, freelance journalists invent strategies that affirm, psychologically, that they are ‘at work’. ‘Christopher’ describes such a scenario between himself and his life partner, also a freelancer, who lived together in an apartment:

> ‘We had our separate offices and we could hear each other, practically speaking in our normal voices, not even yelling. And sometimes, for fun, I would call her on the phone and I could hear the phone ring ...I’d call her like you would in an office to ask her if she wanted to go out for lunch...it reinforced the fact that ... This wasn’t home, we were at work.

Freelancers whose family grows to include one or more children often feel multiple pressures that temporarily or permanently overshadow the ‘freedoms’ previously associated with their employment status. ‘Connor’ says that he has yet to find a strategy to balance work and family life, after recently becoming a father:

> To be honest, I don’t know if I do this very well... I don’t consciously do it. I should try to be more organized that way. Right now, I am very much behind in everything...Our son started daycare in April and I thought, also after my wife goes back to work, I would have the house to myself again and catch up with all my freelancing... and then I started this job a week later...And I still had lots of freelance work hanging over...that I still haven’t finished. Right now, I feel like I am not balancing things at all... .

In order to help cover the daycare fees for his son, ‘Connor’ took on the additional job he mentoned, as writer for a non-journalistic project. To ‘Connor’, it is self-evident that it is a failure on his part that he is not able to reconcile the multiple pressures he is under:

> ...I have always prouded myself in meeting all the deadlines and now I missed all of them...terrible, so....editors get a little grouchy...So, I should try to make some rules ...(I have) too much work and ... and at the same time, you just want to hang out with your child...so....Sleep is what suffers the most. You caught me at a bad moment...I think if I had not taken this job, I would have been fine… .

'Connor' misses meeting his friends who are also freelance journalists for lunch or playing squash, a flexiblity afforded by his employment status as a freelancer. "But now my schedule is all over the map. I am trying to carve out any and all time (for work)." The intermittent availability or affordability of child care is something 'Caren' is confronted with as well. She says it is important to have at least some child care. Her work requires focus and 'kids won't let you think':

> I have a little bit of childcare now...but we're not gonna have it in the fall and just wing it. And I'll simply make appointments in the morning...our schools are very close... My son is walking my daughter home and ...when they walk in the door, I am doing an interview some days... .

Work and family time flow into one another. 'Caren' emphasizes that, in return, she saves about $1000 per month in daycare costs. What causes her more difficulty, however, is neighbours and friends assuming she is constantly able to help out because she is working from home.

> ... They call me and I say ... I can't pick up your kid from school ...sometimes it is too much ...you need to stop calling me....Sometimes I don't mind because they help me, too. I am the go to girl.

'Caren' says she is 'very community oriented in my career and my personal life. ' Whenever she can, she will help out. 'Gertrude' confirms the double-edged nature of flexible schedules in the lives of freelance journalists. She says:

> If one has children … then this (freelance journalism) is great. One is not working 8 to 5. That is an advantage. Sometimes I work the night through or three days in a row on a piece. But then there is a break of three days or so. … and let them (her children) know and then we do something nice together. … For example, last night was a night that I worked through and now I know there will be a break.'

However, the irregularity of those breaks and the intensity during crunch times has the potential to undermine the benefits mentioned: '…if one is really hooked on something, one also quickly burns out. One needs to watch out. One has to manage one's energy.' For other freelancers, such as 'Candace', the immersive nature of freelance journalism, the space constraints due to a limited budget, and unpredictable

work times make it close to impossible to have a family: ‘‘I’m incredibly lucky not to have any family obligations. Except for an aging parent that is across the ocean...Imagine having this kind of life and having a kid.”

5.3.4. Social security

Having children – a private risk

For freelancers, in and outside of journalism, social security is, to an overwhelming extent, mostly the responsibility of freelancers themselves. ‘Caren’ lists different situations that would be covered by government benefits for regular employees but need to be managed by individuals or families in case one is a freelancer.

> This is the kind job, honestly, that...if you’re sick you just take a nap and you do a little bit of work and you take another nap....you still work ... when you have a baby and you still work ... you can always make money....if I needed to give a lot of care to a loved one...I could still work...in the gaps...I know how to do that. ...You gotta be tough!

State supports for self-employed entrepreneurs are scant, although the Canadian government introduced maternity and parental leave for self-employed workers in 2011. ‘Caren’ has looked into this but calls it a ‘scam’: once a self-employed worker has claimed benefits under this optional program, he or she is then forced to continue to pay into the insurance for the rest of their professional life, just like a regular employee and regardless if they use it again or not. Although it was not financially viable for her to join this new program, ‘Caren’ found it ‘very hard as a new parent’ not to have maternity leave.

> I was resentful of my (regularly employed) neighbours who got 18 months of mat leave... and I had nothing. (...) My friends were like...we’re going to the baby and mommy class ... and I was like...I’m going home... cause I have something to proofread. I have a column to write. When my babies napped, I worked. When my neighbour’s babies napped, they were eating bonbons... .

In Germany, parental leave for freelancers does not exist. ‘Gina’, a German freelancer, conveys a sense of essential insecurity, especially among female freelancers. She says that there were times, ‘had I gotten pregnant, I would have had to have an abortion. As a freelance journalist and single mom, one would go under. Fortunately, it has never come to that. (…) this is crazy.’ ‘Cindy’ describes that there are

strategies women use in Canada when they decide to have kids as a freelance journalist and seek to reduce the associated risks:

> You take on a contract around the time that you think you maybe are going to get pregnant. And maybe you get maternity leave benefits from there. Or maybe you save up. Or maybe you get married to someone with a steady job... I would be curious if that has forced freelancers to stay in relationships...I know it has caused female freelancers to delay having children... .

In the coming sub-section I will return to the idea that social security is provided and risk is absorbed through individuals, be it through freelance journalists or their family members.

Benefits and insurances: Partners or parents absorbing risk

Some freelance journalists have intermittent access to statutory benefits through an employer when they hold a journalistc or non-journalistic job – in place of or in addition to their feelance work – that comes with extended health or dental benefits. In Germany, freelance journalists have access to basic statutory old age, long-term care, and health benefits through the Artists' Social Fund and thus receive more robust support. However, as described earlier, many freelancers buy or consider additional private insurances to increase the amounts paid for each benefit or the range of conditions covered, such as private old age provision or private occupational disability insurance.

Statutory social protection for freelance journalists and artists does not exist in Canada (it is in fact unique to the German system). In Canada, beyond hospital care and emergeny medical services, self-employed workers such as freelance journalists have to manage risks such as severe or ongoing illness, dental problems, and old age provision entirely on their own. As noted in the section on 'perceptions of unions and professional associations', the health and dental plans offered through these organizations are perceived as minimalist or too expensive.

> Currently my bills (for dental or extended health) are under what a union membership would cost for me...of course, if something happens to me...it would be different...Certainly, I don't go and see the dentist as often as I should. If I was getting massage and accu therapy and physio every month, then it would make sense. But I don't. Knock on wood. (Cindy)

Just like ‘Cindy’, most of my Canadian research participants do not have health and dental plans, for similar reaons. They simply hope that they will not become severely ill and that other situations requiring major expenses will not arise. ‘Candace’ explains:

> You don’t have life insurance, you don’t have tenant insurance ... you just go without. And then when a period comes when you can afford it, you get it. If had a health crisis, I probably would think about this more seriously.

Candace considers her fairly relaxed attitude a remnant of being young and says this will likely change as she is becoming middle-aged. She has had a glimpse of what a lack of benefits can mean: ‘I had periods as a freelancer where I could only eat on one side... because I couldn’t afford the dentist. It is terrible.’ This freelance journalist relies on benefits from part-time jobs she holds in addition to freelancing, to make ends meet: ‘The current one, after six months, you get dental. So I’l finally go and see a dentist. After 10 years.’.

‘Caren’, alongside her freelancing, used to have a teaching position at a university that provided health benefits to her and her family. However, she no longer works in this capacity and now she has an emergency fund for health expenses:

> We don’t have benefits. We do go to the dentist... it is cheaper to pay out of pocket (than buy insurance from a journalism association) ... so the only problem is if one of us gets really sick...we don’t have extended health, we’re living on the edge a little bit.... We have to be very careful...with two freelancers in the house...those people where one spouse has a regular job and earns a higher income...they are better off... .

Indeed, the freelance journalists I talked to rely on their partners or parents to reduce the risks from a lack of insurance or benefits. ‘Cindy’ relies on her parents ‘having a little money’. Should “something terrible” happen to her “I know that they would pay for my medical expenses”, she says.’ ‘Connor’ is relying on his wife’s permanent job to access benefits:

> I am lucky because my wife has a full time job with benefits...and mat leave. I was trying to encourage her to freelance...(...) .and she said, no, no, we need the benefits.

‘Colin’ frames his fairly comfortable position as a combination of factors, including stage in life and family situation:

> Well, you know, my house is paid for so I don't have the same pressures as someone just buying a house. ... My kids are grown. And we have two incomes.... I get health and dental through (his partner's job). ('Colin')

In contrast, 'Guido', a freelance journalist, who was still a student at the time of the research interview, says that he is consciously postponing questions of social security. These questions frustrate and worry him, although the German Artists' Social Fund provides health, care, and old age benefits.

> My girlfriend and I plan to marry (in a few years) and want to have children pretty soon (…). And so (the question of social security) is not that far away. But I successfully avoid thinking about this for now … I mean, things like occupational disability …. I am pushing this away for now because I don't want to deal with it right now. … I know I have to at some point.

Uneasiness and worry characterize conversations that revolve around situations in which the German and Canadian freelancers might need a social safety net to catch them. 'Gitte' defines this as the most difficult challenge in her career.

> Provision for old age … that is another question. Or, what if I get seriously ill and cannot work for a long time. Am I protected for that case? That is what stresses me out. Those are risks that one has. For example, I don't have an insurance for occupational disability. And I have agonized, over three years now, over the question if I should get the insurance or not. If it will be useful or is a waste of money. And if yes, how I will do it?

She was so concerned at some point that she contacted a financial consultant, but she realized he was paid by insurance companies and did not give independent advice. A few years ago, She had severe back pain and says that this put her close to occupational disability. In order to reveal her medical history, she wanted to find 'someone that you trust' and who would not use her story to push unnecessary insurance products on her.

Many of my research participants describe feeling anxious because of the unpredictable flow of work and constantly having to monitor one's budget. They know that their income does not only have to cover living costs but potentially the cost of illness and other unexpected events

> ...sometimes, if there's a three week period and it is dry, then I will get scared... big time! But I find that those periods are always followed by one week where there is so much work that you don't know what to do. And it evens out...I have a scheme in my head... as long as I am making 750 to 1000 dollars a week...I have

> this very rough idea of what I'm doing and I keep a list of my assignments that I am working on, budget and that....Sometimes I miss my target and then I know the next couple of weeks I have to make up for that... . (Cindy)

'Connor' describes a similar sentiment:

> There is always a nagging feeling that I have never been able to escape...that the work would end. And it never did. I was very fortunate...it was very rare that I would ever have to pitch anybody, assignments would come to me... Mostly from (...) magazines would call and ask and I felt very lucky...Still in the back of your mind, you have this feeling of ...I better take this assignment because I don't know when the next one will come. (...) it was an illusory fear but it never seemed to end...this is kind of a good problem to have.

Despite these struggles and the unpredictability attached to a job as freelance journalist, many of my research participants frame the social insecurity they live with as tolerable:

> Personally, I'm okay with that vague sense of instability in the background...it doesn't bother me in an existential way...I mean if I were more financially on top of things, maybe would worry about it more because, right now, I'm not saving money.. I don't have any debts but I'm not saving money. ('Cindy')

'Cindy' relativizes the impact of financial uncertainty, oscillating between concern and satisfaction. She generally finishes her reflections on a positive note, hinting that her situation is acceptable at the moment. This may change, should her family situation change:

> …I still would not describe my work as steady in a traditional sense. I don't think most people would be comfortable doing the kind of career that I do because you don't really know how much you'll be making week by week. You don't really have any certainty. It's hard to plan. It's hard to plan financially...you don't have a child or something like that.

Although I did not use this concept in my interview questions, 'Cindy' uses the term 'precarious' when reflecting on the uncertainties related to her job. At the same time, she constructs a definition of job security that counters this.

> I would certainly describe my work as precarious but it is precarious work that has remained kind of stable throughout my career, if that makes any sense...(...)..if one of the publications I work for ceased to exist, I wouldn't be shocked. ... I haven't put all my eggs in one basket with an employer. I feel (...) protected by that.

Other freelancers mirror such a perspective. They point out that having a staff position as a journalist does not necessarily mean that one is secure:

> One never knows in life. … I have witnessed this with one medium where austerity measures were taken and (permanently employed) people lost their jobs. People got sick because they were afraid to lose their jobs. (‘Gertrude’)

‘Gertrude’ points out that she is not “scared” to ever “run out of topics” to cover or that she will not be able to pursue the journalistic profession anymore. ‘Caren’ goes one step further and turns the argument about the precarity of freelance journalists on its head:

> I think that ultimately (...)...this is the most secure job you’ll ever have ... you can lose your job (as a regularly employed person) and then you’re unemployed. We lose gigs, all the time...losing a gig is not particularly new or weird ... you go through these phases and then you have to pull it back up again... .

In the following chapter, I describe how interns and freelance journalists react to the multiple penalties and insecurities that come with working in journalism outside the permanent employment relationship.

6. Reactions of interns and freelance journalists to changing working conditions

6.1. Introduction

In this chapter, I outline the manifold reactions, both individual and collective, to difficult or deteriorating working condition that interns and freelance journalists described in their conversations with me. Once more, reactions of aspiring journalists will be examined first, followed by the perceptions of the more experienced journalists in my sample. The interns in my sample demonstrate two strategies that young journalists use – which mirror those of more seasoned journalists - to navigate a media landscape in crisis, especially a crisis of secure employment. First, they counter the devaluation of news labour through proactive entrepreneurialism, actively creating or taking advantage of "networking" opportunities such as workshops, conferences, or after-work get-togethers. The young journalists are acutely aware of the need to self-brand and self-market their skills and availability, with some more, some less comfortable fusing their work search in journalism or daily journalistic practices with a market-based identity.

Secondly, some young journalists have decided to or are considering abandoning journalism as a career plan. Embracing more clearly corporate kinds of work, if often involuntarily, they consider a career in sectors such as advertising as it pays better and there are more permanent jobs. Embracing what they liked about journalism or media work but accepting that a career in journalism is stressful and not sustainable, alternatives pursed by young journalists included starting a graduate degree in the humanities or founding a social enterprise to do with media.

Reactions to deteriorating working conditions include similar strategies among the German and Canadian freelance journalists I interviewed. First, they make sense of their current working conditions by referring to a time, several years ago, when these were better. Second, given that making a reasonable income from journalism has become much harder for the majority of my research participants, they foreground other

"perks" involved in freelance journalistic work such as attending attractive events or having a flexible schedule, less expenses for office clothing, and working from home. Most importantly, the freelance journalists I interviewed, to a greater or lesser extent, all engage in non-journalistic work, mostly to top up the declining incomes from journalism. This includes teaching, writing or proof-reading of commissioned as well as own book projects, customized magazines for clients or employees of a particular corporation, administrative jobs, translations, reports or articles for trade associations, public relations materials such as texts for museums and other non-profit or corporate clients, advertising for foundations, corporate tweets and newsletters, image promotion, company or family histories, and many more.

Not all, but many of these jobs require journalists to use journalistic techniques in the preparation of corporate or other non-journalistic communication work. Some of these activities align better than others with my research participants' professional identity as journalists. Discussing their non-journalistic jobs brings out ethical and financial dilemmas freelance journalists face today - when trying to balance their desire to do journalism with the recognition that other jobs often offer better working conditions and pay.

6.2. Interns

6.2.1. Countering devaluation: Networking, self-marketing, and relationship building

Most of my intern research participants use entrepreneurial strategies to work towards success in a difficult job market for journalists. Young journalists put a lot of effort into managing professional relationships. They accept individual responsibility for shaping their careers, and strategically fostering relationships with editors, potential clients and employers. One respondent enthusiastically talked about 'finding potential in your network' after learning that most jobs are never officially advertised. She focused on getting 'the most out of Linkedin' during her job search after graduating from university, noting that networking skills are missing from the curricula of journalism schools. According to 'Carry', higher education institutions should teach journalism students not only how to call and interview sources but to cold-call potential employers:

> … I can tell you that my internships haven't necessarily led me to a position right now but through informational interviews I am now connected to executives and networks that you would never even think could happen. You could do that as an alternative to internships and it would be just as valuable. ('Carry')

'Carry' was convinced that her connections to media administrators and editors would be a promising path to 'get a foot in the door' and eventually get one's name 'on top of the pile' of applications in case a position opens. Similarly, another research participant specialized in developing relationships with editors as his main strategy to foster his career in journalism – which, in his case, meant slowly working his way from being a freelancer to a permanent position.

> I go for beers now and then with some editorial offices. … That is extremely important because you find out how the company is doing. Also, in principle, the editorial conference is open to freelancers but if you're not there on, say, that particular Wednesday, then you need someone to tell you, hey, there will be an open position and your name has been mentioned. Something to that effect… . ('Georg')

'Georg' created bonds with permanently employed employees which he hoped would make up for the lack of organizational knowledge one has as a non-permanent member of those organizations. The young man was trying hard to understand the internal cultures of the different news outlets that he interned with and freelanced for.

> Don't come in as a freelancer, submit your assignment, and say bye bye. It is important to show interest in the life world of editors. One cannot expect that editors try to understand freelancers if we don't try to understand them.' … the important thing is to be useful and show initiative, to have suggestions for topics, for improvements of a certain (newspaper or magazine) page, etc. …to consider oneself part of the team and not an outsider. ('Georg')

6.2.2. Countering devaluation: Work outside of journalism and choosing alternative careers

Another strategy among my research participants to adjust to the realities of the journalistic job market and the penalties associated with journalistic work, is opening themselves up to careers outside of journalism. After graduating from journalism school and completing several internships with broadcasting organizations, one research participant decided to try out a non-journalistic internship, after many months searching for a full-time job in journalism. This was an internship offered by the Canadian government which enables young Canadian adults to gain work experience in

international development work. The research participant, who spoke of working conditions in journalism in a particularly cogent and critical manner, had only good things to say about her non-journalistic internship during which she lived and worked in an African country for several weeks. There, her task was to mentor and train journalists of a local media organization. She felt invigorated because she was given 'more responsibility than I have ever had in any other internship' ('Carry'):

> They called us staff there and that's how they were treating us. … I wasn't involved in the actual reporting but I would go out with the reporters as a support and a guide. It was a really nice role. I enjoyed it. ('Carry')

After completing this international internship in the context of her extended and ongoing job search, this young woman's focus shifted to jobs in areas other than journalism:

> Since I've been back (from Africa) I've been looking forward. I haven't been stressed about it and I haven't applied as much (for full-time jobs in journalism) as I should be. And I am also considering entrepreneurship.

The young woman was using her contacts in and outside of the news industry, to find out about starting a business and accounting standards for a non-profit or social enterprise related to media. She was clear that in her future potential role as manager of a social enterprise, she would 'not be a journalist anymore.' A young man I talked to shared the enthusiasm about an internship in a different line of work. After completing internships with a daily newspaper and a public broadcaster in Germany and before starting a bachelor's in journalism, he completed a paid internship with a small photography studio that lasted for several months. This young man had pointed out deplorable working conditions during his journalistic internships, including the lack of pay and mentorship. However, he was full of praise for the photography studio, pointing out the role of trust and mentorship during the internship:

> I was there for the whole summer. And this is where I learned most for my studies (in journalism), although she was not a trained journalist but owned a photography studio. … I would say … this was a grey area between journalism and PR … we did event photography, special interest magazines or professional photos... . She always lent me her car. She lent me her equipment for private purposes. … It was a very friendly relationship. This was real team work. One was on the phone, the other got lunch, or the other way round. I really felt like I was on the same level as her.

This research participant mentioned that he received a job offer from the photographer after the internship ended. He did not accept the job because he was hoping to ultimately pursue a career in freelance journalism. Also, he did not want to forgo the opportunity to pursue the bachelor's in journalism program that he had been admitted to.

Some of the other research participants were more ambivalent about non-journalistic work. One young woman clearly expected different working conditions, including better pay, but also a different mindset for, as she called it, "corporate work" when telling me about an advertisement she had seen for an internship in corporate communications:

> I saw this ad for an internship at (the German car manufacturer). You work for a corporation, you write for the corporation and you stand behind the corporation. This is a type of work that I don't find exciting at this point.... I am sure you would get 400 Euros a month at least. That is something that makes you think…I have regular work times and I get more money (than in journalism as an intern in this position)…(but) the question is: do I want to do this? ('Gisela')

The respondent points out a "lack of freedom" that she expected from corporate work. Another research participant had already decided in favour of at least some corporate or non-journalistic work. In the research interview, she made an effort to portray this work as not necessarily contradicting a journalistic ethos.

> I also (in addition to journalism) do editorial work for the foundation (of a big German car manufacturer). This is on the border to advertising … although I never do any advertising things there but only texts or videos for them. ('Gudrun')

This young woman performed 'editorial work' and produced videos for the corporate foundation alongside completing her master's program, her journalistic internships, and freelance work in journalism. Despite preferring journalistic work over working for the foundation, this research participant highlighted that different payment conventions make non-journalistic work more financially viable and predictable than low-paid internships or freelance work in journalism. For her corporate work, 'Gudrun' was being paid per hour or based on quotes she provided to her employer for her projects.

Another young journalist, 'Gunther' had just graduated from a prestigious journalism school in Germany, finished several internships, and was looking for full-time work as a journalist. At the time of the interview, the young man had also applied for an

administrative position – as advisor to a program director – at a German public broadcaster he had interned with and was freelancing for. His statements show concern for his young family's financial future and a willingness to consider career paths outside of journalism: 'One child is between 10 and 20 000 Euros. Taking lack of employment of wife (during maternity leave) into account… one has to be able to afford this… ' ('Gunther'). The research participant was also considering completing a PhD as a potential alternative:

> Why not. If I find a job right away, then not. But if I am struggling for 2 to 3 years as a freelancer, then that is a very real possibility. Though not considering a university career because as an academic, to find a job, you need an even longer breath than as a journalist' ('Gunther')

'Cassandra''s vision of her professional future includes similar plans. The young woman made up her mind after a 'tough' year-long attempt to generate a sustainable income as a freelance journalist and applying for permanent positions in journalism without success. Her statement offers reasons for her decision to drop a career in journalism that she had so desired and completed a Bachelor of Journalism for.

> … I don't think I could ever make a living off of it. I don't think I would be happy living off of it. Just because I am not super comfortable with the whole…let's go out and pitch lots of stories kind of (thing).. And I know that in order to be a successful freelancer, you'd have to hustle and you'd have to hustle all the time. And I like doing longer projects, you know, I like to do in-depth stuff. Not these quickies. So I mean it's been good to me as in, for a little bit of extra cash on the side. But for someone to make a living, I don't know that I would really recommend it as a feasible option.' ('Cassandra')

As a result, the young woman decided to pursue graduate studies instead and, at the time of the research interview, was about to move to Toronto to start this education. The prospect of starting this new phase in her life a few months down the road changed her attitude towards journalistic assignments she continued to accept as a freelancer for media organizations in the Vancouver region.

> I don't respond to these emails (from editors) right away…. Because I really have to consider what else is going on in my life at that time. … I burn out so quickly now ……For a while, I would take all assignments because I was still considering… going to go into full-time journalism. But now that that's off my list…I'm like, is it really going to benefit me at the end of the day? This is pretty much the end of the road for me as far as journalism goes and working in the industry.' ('Cassandra')

Although the young woman was disappointed that her planned career in journalism had not worked out, she was visibly relieved that this very fact also allowed her to gain more control over her schedule and the type and amount of journalistic work she was doing.

6.3. Freelance journalists

6.3.1. Stories of decline in freelance journalism

Even where optimism characaterizes my research participants' statements, one overarching theme is a change for the worse in working conditions for freelance journalists. Some locate this change broadly in the 1990s, some before the year 2010. Stories of negative change colour all the different themes characterizing the lives of freelance journalists. This young freelance journalist, for example, has witnessed the trend to reduce permanent staff members in news rooms.

> 'I witnessed huge rounds of layoffs at all the publications that I worked at ...It's hard to say but that might not be the worst situation for freelancers who pick up the work...I've been told it's not so bad to be a freelancer because publication XY still needs copy but they can't afford to hire full-time, salaried feature writers with benefits...Right now, it's sad to say, the industry situation is benefitting freelancers if they are flexible generalists ..' (Cindy)

Experiences of older colleagues who have been freelance journalists for many years seem to contradict this optimistic interpretation. 'Christopher' who has been a freelance journalist for about 30 years, remembers the beginning of his career in the 1980s:

> 'During my last year at (journalism school) I was working for these magazines, I was paid enough to cover my costs... I did not have to get a part-time job. It paid my rent. But that has changed completely...

As a teacher of journalism classes at universities, 'Christopher' is "acutely aware" how much his experience differs from that of young journalists today.

> I teach people in their 20s and early 30s who are doing what I was doing then...there are not as many jobs and they are not as well paid. I am not saying you can't patch together a career...you can. But if you're interested in writing longer-form non-fiction...and if that is your goal...that is even harder to get today... .

One issue freelance journalists consistently encounter is the 'limited space' media outlets now seem to have for original contributions from freelancers. There are budget shortages and many pitches to editors remain unsuccessful:

> There are more rejections, there is more 'this can wait, we're not sure'... So, in the end (the difficulty with being a freelancer today) ...is partially making a living...it is also partially the fact that...it is just frustrating... when the story is not going anywhere ... then I'm not going to spend my time on it anymore... .

For 'Caren', the struggle to acquire journalistic assignments is emotionally draining but has also had tangible financial consequences:

> It was really wild for me to go over all my stories (recently) ... it is good to know what you did. I created a spreadsheet and it was weird to look at 2002 and 2003 when I was writing...like...one to two stories a month for big national magazines (...). I was looking at myself and said, o my god. I'm (currently) writing ...like... three features a year. Then I was writing ten! I was quite depressing to look at that...the word length has also changed from 2000 to 1800 or so (at particular magazines)... .

'Caren' says that this development has been 'the topic of conversation among freelancers and the number one issue...You know, how I am I going to survive.....'. 'Charles' shares these sentiments and describes how he has been trying to prevent his freelance income from dropping further and further. He does not discuss with editors the fee for an assignment anymore, as that seems pointless:

> The only way that I've been able to negotiate effectively lately is by saying...I think (topic X) needs a little more space than that. Instead of 1000 words, do you have 1200 words for it? So what you do is sell them on it by getting a little more space. But there is a limit...The last story that I ran was in (a Vancouver magazine) and it was 3500 words in 2013 but the last big one was in 2008, it was 4500 words... . ('Charles ')

'Charles' points out that the same research time is still required for an article, regardless if it is 2000 versus 4000 words long. Therefore, this means a double-loss: a lower fee and work time that cannot be put toward another project or assignment. 'Charles' had periods in his freelance journalism career where he could feed his family on about five or six features a year. He remembers 'nice big cheques coming in that sustained you for a while'. 'Caren', who has worked as a freelance journalist for about 15 years, has been considering a career change.

> I am not sure if I want to do this anymore. With (a Canadian magazine about parenting) they want a 300 word text on (teaching children) how to ride a bike Really? Is this the best use of my time? ... And then you need to look for real people (to be used as examples or sources for the assignment). I see calls on social media by freelance colleagues who are looking for someone whose kid can't tie their shoes (for a journalistic assignment)...well, okay, that's what we're doing now...'

Assignments have not just become shorter but the topics more and more superficial and service-oriented. 'And to get a feature...you know, it's like you have to murder somebody', as 'Caren' observes. Another development is that many freelancers have abandoned work for daily newspapers and now exlcusively work for magazines, mirroring the crisis in print journalism in particular, outlined in chapter 3. Connor says, he has last worked for daily newspapers several years ago because these have made massive cuts to their freelance budgets. One result of these collective transformations is that freelance journalists take on more and more non-journalistic work, despire their preference for journalism:

> I am sure you could still make a living completely just as a traditional journalist....but you work ten times harder than you did five years ago. ... And I am just frustrated....like I could go and target this magzine and break into this magazine... I could do it....but then I don't want to. I still want to but I'm tired of the frustrations. So yeah, those living entirely off journalism must have regular gigs obviously...or keep pushing, keep pushing... . ('Caren')

'Charles' says he feels the pressure to take on more and more writing that is commercial rather than journalistic in nature. He resents this but sees no other way to make up for his declining income from journalism.

> ...This is not how it should be, not after a decade in the business, not after being a five time Canadian magazine awards nominee. But no one remembers and no one really gives a damn....(...) I am sorry, I am not really in a mindset where I can be positive about the industry.

After about 25 years as a journalist, 'Charles' is now disillusioned. He says that declining incomes and 'contracts that are so disrespectful...that it starts to eat away at you.' But beyond his personal struggles, he points out consequences for society of media organizations paying journalists less and less:

> The ultimate take-away from this is that it is skewed towards poor work...you're getting poor work ... if you can't pay enough for someone to go deep into something for a month, or more, whatever it takes...then what are you're going to get out of it. You're only going to get surface treatment... .

Also, there is a trend among media organizations to take in-house work shifts and assignments previously available to freelance journalists, in order to maximise use of existing staff members who are already paid for. Or they will only work with a certain group of freelancers to streamline the assignment of freelance work. Several of my research participants have been impacted by this:

> A lot of the good magazines don't accept pitches anymore. So, for instance, Conde Nast, they have a pool of writers that they commission. They don't accept outsider pitches. And the New Yorker, for instance, you will waste your time...they will reject you. ('Candace')

'Candace' has accepted that, especially in the arts and culture realm, magazines do not pay authors anymore or only pay a minimal fee. She says about one such literary magazine that 'some of my best essays were published there. But miserable pay.' She has noticed that those magazines which do still pay authors are increasingly reluctant to pay within a reasonable time frame. 'Candace' has waited a whole year until she was paid by a publication after completing an assignment. Since she cannot afford a lawyer, her only weapon is to 'nag and nag and nag' the publication until they pay. Moreover, from her perspective, there is a clear division between topics that sell and those that do not:

> Lifestyle, design, fashion ... if that's your kind of thing ... those magazines still pay. Or real estate ... that has been insanely blooming as a job. It looks like a little infomercial in the specials ...but it's an area that still grows. Just like interior design, renovation...that interests people....And business...Canadian business magazine...They probably have the best internship program. They can afford to pay their interns. ('Candace')

'Gerhard' is an established freelancer in his fifties who has worked exclusively for print publications in Germany. He contributes to magazines on science, nature, and traveling. Book projects have played a big role in his career. He has also worked inside publishing houses, as a flat-rate journalist, with a work routine like a permanent employee:

> I am one of the older ones … I just turned fifty…which I have a strange feeling about because I had always considered myself as very young…and someone who is a lone warrior, with the big successes still to come…and now I realize, crap, I am perceived as old by others, without having had the big successes…where are they? Damn! ('Gerhard')

If he had had the journalistic experience that he has today back in the 1990s, he says, then he would have been able to 'live quite royally'. Looking back at that time, he explains:

> Some publishers paid a per diem allowance for freelancers, not just the fee for the assignment… and now, there is nothing in terms of allowances … and for the prestigious media, yes, sometimes… but often the controlling does not allow funded travel to a certain event.

'Colin', a journalist with over 20 years experience, states that he used to travel about one week a month to complete journalistic assignments at times in his career. That was still the case in 2007. 'That was the heyday', he says. Ever since and, according to some research participants, even before then, media organizations have stopped funding travel costs required for journalistic work.

> One has to offer up many things in advance (and is uncertain if costs will ever be reimbursed). … Equipment or travel costs. That is becoming (…) more difficult. Travel money is almost not covered anymore. One has to sell one's piece several times in order to make it worth (a trip to complete an assignment). ('Gina')

That is one of the reasons why 'Gina' would not want to start out as a freelancer today. She says, it is much more difficult to make a living, compared to more than 10 years ago when she began her career. 'Gertrude' confirms this development. Due to a recurring shortage of studio space to produce on-site and with the help of a professional technician her radio pieces for a broadcaster, she decided to afford a home studio and acquire a new set of skills.

> It is becoming more difficult (for freelancers) to book production times (with the public broadcaster) And therefore, at some point, I sat down and learned digital and mobile editing….That is really important. This is important for one's autonomy and it is also increasingly expected (by editors). ('Gertrude')

'Gertrude' emphasizes that this is a convenient arrangement for her, as it makes her schedule more flexible. This quote demonstrates the complex interlinking of decreasing commitments to journalists on the part of media organizations and the perception of choice and freedom associated with freelancing. 'Gertrude' first notes an increasing reluctance of the public broadcaster to provide freelancers with professional production space and technical help on-site. However, the shifting of responsibility for media production to freelancers is re-interpreted as an opportunity to become more autonomous.

Another research participant, when pondering reasons that might have led to the current state of journalism, touches on larger, systemic factors that might have played a role. He considers capitalist dynamics but shrugs his shoulders:

> Twenty years ago, we also had capitalism. And (yet), the situation in editorial offices looked different from today. Older colleagues tell stories of big travel budgets, etc.(that were still common in the 1990s).

As I argue in the theoretical chapter 4 of the dissertation, rather than considering capitalism *versus* non-capitalist logics, we might conceptualize change in journalism by talking about different *versions* or phases of neoliberalism, such as antagonistic versus post-ideological neoliberalism.

6.3.2. Stories of non-journalistic work

One strategy to alleviate or stem the devaluation of journalistic work is to take on non-journalistic assignments or jobs. In my research interviews with freelance journalists in Germany and Canada, I asked about such activities and what role these play in the working lives of freelancers, if any.

One of my participants, 'Gertrude', is a well-established freelance journalist who currently works as a pure journalist. She contributes radio pieces to a national public broadcaster in Germany and once or twice a year works for a prominent online news magazine in Germany, replacing an editor during his or her vacation time. However, she is considering other activities that would be less demanding but still in the realm of radio:

> One always has to look into other opportunities. For me, I am looking into working as a radio speaker. That would take out a lot of stress (of being a freelance reporter). And it is not as resource-intensive. There is a database online where one can be hired. ('Gertrude')

'Gina' is working mostly as a journalist and is not doing traditional public relations or advertising work for corporate clients. She has, however, written texts for government-supported agencies and churches in Germany. Similarly, 'Cindy' says that all of her income is currently from journalism:

> I am not doing corporate work or teaching or ghostwriting...It's something that I haven't ruled out but...I wrote like a little bit of promotional copy for (a big festival in Toronto) but that was back in 2009...since then it's all been journalism.

It is clear for ‘Cindy’ that this decision to dedicate her professional life exclusively to doing journalism is the reason for her tight financial situaton.

> I wouldn’t say I make a lot of money but ... (corporate work) is not something that I have pursued; it’s not something that I would want to do. If an opportunity came along that wasn’t going to take too much time away from the rest of my work and that was lucrative...maybe...but ... some journalists find that they work quickly and I am not one of those people. I find that don’t have a lot of time....a big corporate client might be nice for money but I might find myself doing less of the writing than I would want to do. (Cindy)

‘Cindy’ anticipates that she will have to make additional money if she wants to have a child or her requirements change otherwise. She is trying to stick with work that is similar to journalism or connected to topics that interest her as a journalist. Currently, she is writing a book on women’s issues:

> My plan is now ...after I publish my book to do some teaching around the topic of my book...But I still want to be primarily a writer in my career whatever form that takes...I also have this keen sense that the world of journalism is changing very quickly....I don’t know what the industry will look like. Being a freelancer for me is a way of being flexible. So if there are changing industry conditions, then I can change my focus... .The book that I’m writing involves a lot of research and interviews but there is no expiry date on this ... . (Cindy)

This means that ‘Cindy’ would move towards writing that is less deadline-driven than journalism but uses similar techniques. As my conversation with ‘Cindy’ continues, she does mention that she contributes to a marketing magazine. However, she is quick to point out that the work itself is not promotional or advertising anything.

> It is reporting on advertising news in the advertising world for marketers. But it is not copy writing. These things don’t cost a lot of mental energy but they pay well. I am spending an hour and I get 250 dollars. This underwrites the fact that I am researching and writing a book where the advance is (only a few thousand dollars).

Those research participants whose work involves a significant share of non-journalistic assignments had a keen awareness that there is a public expectation that journalistic work not be mixed with certain other activities, to maintain journalistic integrity or autonomy. They imply their preference for journalistic work and tend to de-emphasize the importance of other jobs and assignments. ‘Christopher’, a successful

freelancer with about 30 years experience, compares his own path to other freelance journalists he knows:

> '(...) unlike a lot of people I am not now working in corporate communications somewhere, I am still working in the industry and I have lived through all these massive changes that have just restructured the whole business.' (Christopher)

'Christopher' underlines an affective attachment to the journalistic profession. Towards the end of the following statement, 'Christopher' indicates that journalism for him is a passion which requires sacrifices not everyone is willing to make:

> I hated corporate work in the early years...I was a really pure journalist. I wanted to write long-form non-fiction and books. I had a freelance colleague ... who had just gotten married and they were planning a child and he had moved into corporate work. I remember talking to him at a party and he was so sad that he wasn't doing journalism (anymore). ... I have never owned a house...You only live once, why do you wanna be unhappy?

Later in his career, after leaving a full-time faculty position at a Canadian journalism school that he had held for a few years, 'Christopher' returned to being a freelance journalist. Because of "the fracturing of the industry", as he frames the crisis of journalism, he knew he had to make a "transition out of feature writing", which had been his main revenue stream as a freelancer.

Today, 'Christopher' has well-paid and ongoing teaching engagements at two Canadian universities. He continues to teach long-form journalism in this capacity. With the help of an agent, he has made ghostwriting books and memoirs, such as family histories prepared for custom publishers, an important revenue stream. Book projects are not only paid well but 'easier to do (..) than the hustle of journalistic features all the time.' For 'Christopher' book projects and feature journalism rely on many of the same skills, even if only the latter is commissioned by news organizations. In contrast, other types of assignments are clearly considered 'corportae' by 'Christopher'. He talks about these with more hesitation and emphasizing financial rewards:

> To be honest, things have come to me here and there. The advertising association of Canada once asked me to do this project ... and I remember thinking ...this will allow me to buy a new computer. If I just do this one project. So I did it and it wasn't fun. I took the money and it was fine. ... '

'Christopher' assigns a lower symbolic status to these jobs compared to books or journalistic features.:

> So here and there, I have received calls and did things, as my reputation grew. There was an adventure travel company (I worked for) ... the trips are incredibly expensive.....and they have a catalogue...I did it for three years and after the financially meltdown happened they took it in-house. They wanted little trip descriptions...they said, we want them to read like little New Yorker gems. So...it's essentially a corporate job...I was charging them 100 dollars per hour, my corporate rate... .

This implies a clear differentiation between journalistic and non-journalistic work and an awareness that more can be charged for the latter:

> I made wonderful money...it was always during the summer when things are slow...it was fun to do...put together these kind of New Yorker-ish descriptions of what the trip was like.. .

'Christopher' recounts that when the editor of the travel catalogue called him, the editor explained to him that the company had 'hired an advertising copy-writer and a corporate writer before and it never worked'. This is an argument familiar to 'Christopher' who has also contributed to a newsletter of a photo agency in Canada.

> They wanted someone to write stuff with these images...this wasn't journalism at all, it was almost like writing fiction...I was making stuff up...and I was charging them a 100 dollars an hour, my corporate rate... .

'Christopher' is a long-time, high-profile freelance journalists who says: "(The photo agency) hired me because I was an award-winning feature writer...this is usually why people call me." Thus, he is benefiting from his reputation as a journalist when doing corporate work. This is an experience shared by other freelancers I interviewed, for example, 'Charles' who writes for:

> …Air Canada magazine which is always operated more as an actual magazine than as an advertising arm of Air Canada. I enjoy writing for them and have done it many times.

As a result, 'Charles' considers this work as more 'journalistic' than corproate. When I ask 'Charles' about other non-journalistic assignments, he is de-emphasizing their importance:

> Do I do other work? No. Aside from writing for publications, the only thing I've done is a little bit of web writing....and I have done a couple of corporate reports...but very, very few. But I think it has to become more and more common. (...) I have seen my money, my wages fall year over year over the past decade.

‘Charles’ says that corporate reports pay much better than journalism. “I am not a great business journalist and have not a lot of interest in (business topics) but I’m doing it ‘cause I need to make a living.” What bothers him more than having to take on corporate assignments, however, is that journalists are outsourced by news organizations to serve corporate goals:

> ‘There is something that has been happening lately ... packaged magazines (for corporations) that are essentially put together by ....(a big national newspaper in Canada). Well I know the person who is behind it at (that newspaper). That is basically her entire job...and this sort of blurs the line between corporate writing and journalism...or in fact, it is not....it is basically corporate writing.’

The custom publication ‘Charles’ is working on was contracted by an internationally active accounting and professional services firm to the Canadian national newspaper:

> ‘So I am contracted by the Globe and Mail to do this magazine that is only comparable to normal magazine work. So they are contracting peole for corporate work for the same money that they would normally pay for them to do journalism. Which was not usually the case before.’

‘Charles’ is outraged by this development. He describes how the big corportion ordering the custom publication with the national newspaper received an e-mail from the newspaper that said: “Our journalists will meet you at such and such time...for the purposes of (this custom publication).” Charles has already visited the company in Vancouver that produces and ships the medical product the corporation wants a report on. He uses all the regular journalistic routines to write texts for this “marketing gig”, such as doing original site visits and interviews. If he had a choice, he says, he would not complete the assignent. “Do I give a shit about (the medical product)? No, I don’t give a shit. Will I write about it? Yes. I need to...because I need the money right now.”

‘Connor’ is an established journalist covering art, culture, books, and business. He says about his freelance career: ‘Since I have become a full-time freelance seven years ago....I more often than not have had a kind of a subsidizing job but always writing or editing.’ At the time of the interview, that was a full-time contract for a few months, writing content for a museum exhibition in Calgary, while trying to freelance on the side. The museum had hired the magazine company he regularly freelances for to do this job.

‘Connor’ underlines that he is taking on a mix of different jobs, which also include magazine editing and book editing, not primarily for financial reasons:

> ‘No, it is more to diversify....to be honest, I am just a curious person and I find it interesting to immerse myself in topics that I might not be entirely interested in at first...Business...I have no head for numbers...but writing about interesting figures in the business world or interesting trends has been fascinating... and writing about the business of cultural industries...book publishing has been interesting to me...I find that I can be interested in almost anything...’

While stating at the beginning of our converstation that his “subsidizing jobs” as he called them have ‘always been writing or editing’, ‘Connor’ later more clearly talks about the nature of and nuances between his non-journalistic jobs: “(...) this museum work, it is a type of corporate work...I work for a client but they’re very easygoing and it doesn’t feel corporate... .’ It is similar, Connor says, to the “subsidizing job” he had before. It was “sort of corporate work” but not for a traditional firm:

> (...) I was doing communications work for a non-profit that I was very enthusiastic about...very honorable organization. Three days a week kind of thing...but the money...because of the non-profit...the money wasn’t terrific. So I did that for a year... .

In contrast, ‘Connor’ hesitates when describing work for clients that was advertising or more traditional corporate work. He deemphasizes the relevance of these jobs:

> ‘I have done a little bit....I have written for condo developers, I have written brochure copy for them...other than that...but no, corporate work ....not that much. I have done a few things. The money was attractive but not the work. A bit tedious and .... I wasn’t super comfortable.

When asked about collisions between public relations and advertising work on the one hand and journalism on the other, ‘Connor’ shares the following episode:

> I used to be a regular contributor to (an airline in-flight magazine) which was essentially lifestyle...kind of almost advertorial kind of writing...it was a fun little job...this is around North America and you try cafes and bars...I did that for five years....and then last winter...I wrote a story (as a reporter) about the airline...it wanted to expand an airport...and that was a big controversy. It wasn’t a piece that took a position but it talked about the problems that surrounded this. And I haven’t written for the inflight magazine again.

‘Connor’ feels this is because of the report he wrote as a journalist. For ‘Connor’, potential conflicts such as this do not happen frequently. To him, occupying multiple and

potentially contradicting roles in his work, is not problematic. ‘Connor’ believes that ‘no career today is well-defined’ and emphasizes that his primary goal is “not to serve democracy”. The term journalist does not capture the breadth of his career, he says:

> Do you differentiate between journalism and other writing? ‘I don’t know if I really do....journalism itself seems like such a difficult category to really pinpoint ... so I think....for a lot of people’s minds, for the general public it is what you read in the newspaper...the things that write for (magazine) ...it is more lifestyle....I tend to call myself a writer rather than a journalist... . (‘Connor’)

To improve her financial situation, ‘Candace’ held a full-time job as a postsecondary teacher for several years. However, she found it impossible to make time for freelancing and quit the position, despite the regular salary and job security.

> I used to work at a college, in the humanities. I thought I could combine a full-time job and writing. And of course, it never worked. After 2 or 3 years I went crazy. This is never going to happen again.

Before and after her college position, ‘‘Candace’ has always held part-time positions unrelated to journalism in order to afford doing journalism.

> If you really wanna write about a topic, you do it...not getting paid. And then you do other stuff for money ... (...). So you have to have a part-time job that pays the bills, all the time. ...It is a parallel job and you do what you really love to do on the other track.

‘Candace’ lists a few of these subsidizing jobs:

> (I held) a boring office job a few days a week. Then after that it was teaching English as a second language which was really fun. And after that, another office that was a couple of days a week. ... (These jobs) pay for your traveling (related to journalistic assignments) and for your rent. ... you are not really worried about these jobs. You do not need to progress in that kind of career. ... It is tolerable to fairly pleasant.... You don’t think about it when you go home.

‘Candace’ adds that she knows freelancers who work in coffee shops and restaurants to stay afloat financially as journalists. Compared to this, ‘I’ve actually been lucky’, says ‘Candace’. In contrast to Candace, ‘Gerhard’ portrays his career as largely unsupported by non-journalistic endeavours. He only mentions his work for a big energy provider in Germany very casually, after outlining in detail his journalistic work: “So I did that as well, teaching courses on online journalism for (those in the company who do

internal communications)." As far as public relations work is concerned, 'Gerhard' signals that he is aware of potential criticism regarding journalists doing PR.

> This has always been a hot discussion, you know, real journalists don't do PR and such. But apart from that I find, it is actually not that easy to even get PR work in practice.

However, he does have some experience with this kind of work. He is trying to capture his attitude towards PR, reflecting an uneasiness that surfaces during many research interviews when discussions revolve around non-journalistic work.

> One really kind of has to bend oneself into that kind of shape. Many of these jobs are not that interesting. And in practice, I am not really confronted with that question all that often…and not because I think I am too good for this. These are really two different spheres because I am pretty much doing quality journalism…Well, I sometimes do (PR) for an advertising agency who has very high standards. If they need something sophisticated, I'll write it. But this is not really PR because it is not for clients or customers. Rather, they publish essays and such.

'Gerhard' foregrounds the similarity between this 'sophisticated' PR work and 'quality journalism'. In the language he uses to describe an example, both spheres blur:

> One online medium I worked for points somewhat into the direction of PR….that is a website of a pharma corporation. They produce products to counter (specific illness) and such. And they have a website that functions as very subtle image promotion… it poses as a health website and only has a small 'sponsored by' section.

Although I did not ask for elaboration, 'Gerhard' goes on to defend his PR assignment. He makes an effort to protect his credibility as a journalist, naming a magazine work as the original source of the material created for the pharma company, and pointing towards strict copyright rules imposed by media organizations as a reason for re-publishing one's work in non-media outlets:

> But this is very solid online journalism about health topics…. I published something similar in a magazine and this is how they found me. I can do this with fairly little effort. I re-use material. Today, secondary use of published material is becoming more and more difficult for journalists. ('Gerhard')

'Caren' points out repeatedly that the distinction between journalistic and non-journalistic work is not important in her daily working life. However, her discourse shows

that she performs at least some corporate work for financial reasons and takes less pride in completing it:

> I did stuff for a guy. Never had an address and did some writing for him....it was a verbal contract. (...) I was doing corporate letters for him....It was an interesting topic...I just needed him to pay me. I don't have rights to this work and don't want the rights. .... It was corporate work so it wasn't really about the content.

'Caren' is doing an increasing amount of corporate work for small and big clients, as it is more and more difficult to acquire journalistic features for magazines. She describes conventions that characterize each of the 'two worlds' as she calls it, meaning journalism and corporate work.

> Something I do know about magazines is that we speak the same language when we speak with each other. Sometimes when you work in the corporate world.....they can't express what they need...I have a really hard time actually with corporate work, just understanding what people are talking about...corporate people really like using their lingo and they don't like when people don't use their lingo... and I hate lingo. And I was like, what do you mean?...They had a very set idea of what they meant and I didn't get the gig because I am not a copy writer.

'Caren''s' background in journalism and lack of abilty to understand a narrow corporate goal seemed to have worked against her in this instance. She does not trust the rather opaque decision-making in corporations and prefers working for media outlets:

> But I do love working with magazines. I know that my piece is going to go through a certain kind of process. My piece will be edited by a smart editor or copy-editor, the commas will be in the right place and the art will be lovely. There is something kind of beautiful about that. And I think when you go to the other world, it is kind of client by client. What are they gonna do? Are they gonna update it when things change? Can I talk to them?

One non-journalisic project 'Caren' is struggling with at the time of the interview is proofreading a book written by a real estate agent.

> It was such a fucking disaster.... he had sentences that made no sense...it was so much work to get it somehow consistent ... you should not be putting together a book...many people in the corporate world think it is easy to do these things....it is very, very, very hard ... if you as a non-writer are creating the original content....and he's giving me a hard time ... .

'Caren' emphasizes that other corporate assignments are 'fun' and 'super interesting' – to a point where she forgets if the assignment is for a journalistic or non-journalistic client:

> If I was sitting at my desk and you quizzed me: Is this journalism or is it not? Ehhm...well...I would not have a good answer for you. Certainly not off the top of my head. When I'm doing it, I'm just doing it...every deadline is a deadline. ... I don't differentiate that much... .

'Caren' says that, surprisingly, she has even more decision-making power in this assignment than in magazine work where she often gets clear instructions along the lines of 'This is the story. Do it.' In contrast, '(...) when you're involved in content marketing you almost play the editor a bit more', she says:

> I am doing some content marketing for a college and I am writing a bunch of articles ...this is really exciting because I get to help decide ... what the articles will be about... trying to understand the issue and trying to figure out how to structure the piece and I am trying to make it sound good. That is not different. Like, how is this different (from a journalistic assignment)? I'm trying to take information and synthesize it into an article....and I'm trying to think about what the reader is interested in... .
>
> I have a story, I have a deadline and I focus and anything else I tune out... I don't really have time for this.... For the custom content that I'm writing for trade publications...If you want to kiss up to people, that is your issue, I'm just writing a story. If you want to vet the story before you publish it, then do it. If you have to take something out, take it out. ... I'm really interested in the topic...and that is why I'm able to do corporate work...sometimes it is interesting...I am writing about accounting standards....and it is actually interesting to me so I am writing about that... .

Although it was not questioned in the research interview, 'Caren' defends her journalistic independence when asked about conflicts arising from dong corporate work as wel as journalism.

> I have done work for companies that I have later used as sources in stories.....but when I'm using them as a source in my story, all I really care about is my story...My story has the right angle and outcome and makes sense and looks good....and so I just...I called the owner back and asked them, can you be a source for this business story and they say, sure...I'm not sure if I would do this if I was doing a big corporate project for them at the same time... .
>
> And I'm using them as a business source in a business article...it is not controversial topics either...I don't know...it's like...when you are doing a story, any story, people say, 'you know what you need to talk about...the story is really this...' and I'm like, fuck you, that pisses me off ... it can happen with any story...like I'm doing this obituary right now (for a big national newspaper in Canada) and one of the guys was like ... these should be the sources....but I'm gonna talk to whoever I want to talk to for the story...it is an obituary and the family is not in charge of the story... . I don't want to promote anybody. Nobody.

Those business sources have not tried to influence her as much as editors at media organizations, Caren states. While she oscillates between praising and resenting corporate work, ultimately, she says, her working life is not about this difference; rather, it is the quality of the professional relationships involved and the respect received:

> ...Somebody has to take your story home...right...someone has to clean it up... and if people edit shittily or they don't share, that is worse than anything. But if people are supporting you and believe in you and you get what you need, that is kind of awesome ... .

One of my participants, a female journalist working in Bavaria, obviously anticipated potential criticism regarding her work in public relations. 'Gerda' choses her words carefully, re-framing her statement partially while speaking when describing the public relations work she does for one week every month. For this one week, she physically moves to a different geographic area in Germany, away from her hometown.

> I am doing a half-half weighing… or, half-half would be exaggerated… but I also do PR. But I have shifted this to (a different region in Bavaria), to have a spatial separation. (…).I work for an advertising agency there for which I do mostly public relations pieces.

The interviewee implies that clear boundaries are necessary between journalism and PR work. The interviewee tones down the importance of her PR work, 'repairing' the potentially negative impression an audience might develop of someone who combines PR work with journalism. After listing additional non-journalistic jobs such as doing work for a museum as a copy editor, or preparing a company history, 'Gerda' goes on to emphasize her preference for journalistic work over those jobs. She says, 'My background is in classical newspaper journalism and mentally, one cannot move away from this when one has worked in it. One simply wants to do this.' However, as 'Gerda' suggests, working as a pure newspaper journalist would be 'financially challenging'. Advertising agencies and corporations that contract her for custom publications pay much better than publishing houses hiring her for journalistic work. She does both types of work but:

> I always say, it has to be right at the bottom line.(…) with public relations and advertising …, you can ask for the (higher) fee. Journalism is fun – and this (non-journalistic work) brings in the money. And one has to find a middle ground. I will also participate in a company history soon, and will be working with a flat-rate payment.

Another freelancer, ‘Gustav’ describes himself as a very successful freelance journalist who can feed his wife and three kids as a sole income earner on freelance journalism. His annual salary, as he shared during the research interview, is between 80,000 and 100,00 Euros. However, he regularly performs non-journalistic work as a journalism instructor at a university. He also regularly works as a moderator of panel discussions for different organizations that are players in the field of science, education, and university policy – which is his area of expertise. He enjoys being comfortable enough financially to pick and choose his journalistic as well as non-journalistic engagements. Pay is a deciding factor. At the same time, ‘Gustav’ has the ability to support causes and organizations that are resource-strapped but pursue goals he admires:

> I was invited to moderate a conference (in Northern Germany) for 300 Euros and I said no. This would have meant leaving home Saturday morning and probably not returning the same day. So, I would be gone for one and a half days. And I have a family. I don’t do this, sorry. If someone offers 1500 Euros, then I would do it, of course. This is a question of pay.
>
> But then there are organizers that I would moderate for and be content with a beer and a warm dinner. Simply because I find them great. For example, next week I am moderating a discussion about school policy in (city). They simply don’t have money. They give me a 20 Euro travel allowance. And I am in a position to be able to still go. I don’t have to make a certain amount every single day.

‘Gustav’ also approached universities in Germany and alerted them to the need to hold workshops for students that prepare them for a changing labour market. He says that it took a few semesters but then one university asked him to lead a seminar on freelancing for students:

> (The course) is not specifically targeted at journalists but generally for graduates in the humanities. But, of course, many are thinking about a career as journalists. But it could also be people interested in event management. One has to also make this clear to universities. I told them (the university) that, whoever is wanting to become a journalist today, 70 or 80 per cent of these people will work as freelancers. There are no more permanent positions.

‘Gitte’, who works in the same independent journalists’ office as ‘Gustav’, considers herself a successful freelancer who is in a very comfortable position. “I rarely pitch. I am called and invited to do things”. ‘Gitte’ says that she works mostly as a radio freelance journalist. A major component of this is producing a regular radio program with

a colleague for a public broadcaster in Germany. Once every year, 'Gitte' acts as a vacation replacement for a permanent editor at a German online news magazine. She says she could survive financially "if I did only freelance journalism". But acting as a moderator for public panels relating to her area of journalistic expertise pays significantly better. She is hired regularly to take on such a role at events by organizations across Germany. She also teaches workshops at universities. "I like the variety. Every month is different".

Other research participants talk about their broad involvement in non-journalistic projects openly as a necessity to supplement their income from journalism. Frequently, they work on such projects more than in their capacity as journalists. 'Gabi' says that many journalists prefer being poor over doing public relations. This is not the case for her. She explains:

> (…) I don't trust the classical media in terms of making money (as a freelancer)…if we are making money (as freelance journalists), it will be from corporate publishing and PR. And I don't find this scandalous … .

'Gabi' is an established freelancer with many years of experience. She writes articles for national daily newspapers and smaller regional newspapers in Germany and produces the occasional longer-form radio features for the Bavarian public broadcaster. She also writes for a PR agency, does translations from German into other languages, produces a regular newsletter for a hospital, and annual reports for trade associations. Moreover, 'Gabi' has written books about food and cooking, both as an author and as a ghostwriter. A mix of jobs is typical of her life as a freelancer:

> It changes constantly and never stays the same. For two months this year, I wrote an annual report (for a tourism association), then I did an online project (for a health and wellness company) and then there are times when I do countless little writing jobs at the same time. (…) But … between serious journalism and corporate publishing or PR … if that was fifty-fifty …. Then the income is absolutely not the same. Because I make much more money in PR and corporate publishing.

'Gabi' names a concrete example:

> For one page in the (a big national newspaper in Germany), I get 400 Euros … for a whole page. And for the online project I mentioned (for a health and wellness website)…there is a company behind this but we wrote the journalistic texts …. I received 350 Euros for one single text…. If we talk about percentage

> points, a lot more money can be earned with non-serious journalism. And that is why I'm doing it.

In this statement, rather than distinguishing between corporate work and journalism, 'Gabi' talks about 'serious' and 'non-serious' journalism. She challenges strict categorizations, also in the following statement, and invites the listener to do the same. She says:

> I work for magazines (magazines published by two big corporations for their customers) … that is in some ways corporate publishing but I still consider this journalism.

'Gabi' also speaks highly of a regular assignment she has with another client, namely the hospital she writes the newsletter for:

> I love the clinic newsletter. That is a lot of fun for me. …That is a great client. It is a fantastic cooperation that working really well. There, the work is appreciated in terms of the quality but it is also well-remunerated. … I write most of the texts myself. First, they wrote it themselves and then I edited but that was more work for me than as if I had done it myself. (…)I interview them, they tell me about their topic, and write it up.

'Gabi' says that this work is "clearly PR…they can cultivate an image of themselves… ." She describes a sense of mutual satisfaction:

> I fully respect them as doctors. And, as a journalist, I only intervene where (…) I see something that I cannot recommend journalistically. (…) They are grateful to me.

According to 'Gabi', corporations often value journalistic work more than media organizations. She mentions online content she produced for one company:

> We were free as journalists to do our research and our work…because they know that no one would want to read this if it was just a PR-spiel … And if I do research for them for two hours, I am paid well. … But I don't go overboard, I have a generous budget each time … but I don't use it up…. That is really nice.

However, what is portrayed by corporate clients as giving journalists far-reaching editorial freedom in researching and writing about a topic, sometimes does not hold true in the end.

> With (a health and wellness) project online, it is different. …My friend is editor-in-chief for this. It is brutal what she has to put up with regarding the paying client…because they constantly are trying to tell us what to do. They initially said

> that we would be creating a super journalistic project but now that it is done …they want to intervene everywhere.

'Gabi' is conscious that there could be conflicts of interests and problems of compromised independence for her, as she is doing both journalism and corporate work.

> (…) I still find it touchy. But what is good in my case … the hospital newsletter, for example, that is PR and does not collide with anything else I am doing. … I will not be in a situation where I will need to write about the hospital journalistically. I would not do that.

Still, 'Gabi' has to navigate carefully her two professional identities, as both a journalist and PR worker. Collisions, she says, are rare but she describes one example:

> In one case, I didn't watch out… I do a lot of (journalistic) travel reports on trips to the US, mostly the southern States. And at the same time, I have translated travel brochures for some tourism agencies in the same area. So I am paid by the travel agency for the (journalistic) report and I did the brochures (tourists would encounter when travelling). Pragmatically, I am tempted to simply leave my name out of the brochures… . ('Gabi')

Overall, for 'Gabi', the difference between journalistic and non-journalistic work is not so much defined by the type of client but by the nature of the work, the respect received from clients, and if it is enjoyable or not. For example, 'Gabi' writes press releases for a company and is 'making quite a bit of money' with it. However, "this is not that much fun for me … and that has an impact on the quality (of her texts)… ." She is "not proud" of this kind of PR work and does not PR assignments in her portfolio. On her website, she only mentions journalistic and book projects she has completed.

6.3.3. Freelance journalism as a lifestyle benefit and other non-monetary rewards

Another reaction to the devaluation of journalistic labour is to foreground the lifestyle benefits and other non-monetary benefits that this kind of work affords. At the same time, these benefits seem less related to pursuing journalism as a profession and more to the employment status of my research participants– which is being a freelancer versus a permanent employee. When talking about the advantages of being a freelance journalist, the statements emerging from the research interviews were consistent and clear among all participants. They share the enthusiasm about having a flexible schedule. Gitte points to this kind of flexibility when talking about a typical work week:

> I can go for lunch with people for two hours or meet at 5 pm. Yesterday, for example, I was invited for dinner. Then I did sports on another evening. I am going out tomorrow, away on the weekend, and then on vacation from Monday onwards.

'Colin' emphasizes that he often works weekends or long hours but always takes the time to walk his dog during the day or go to the gym. Another research participant, 'Gustav', mentions the flexibility to schedule family-related commitments as a freelance journalist:

> Years ago, my son drew me red heart and wrote under it: 'Say no sometimes' (to assignments offered to him). I attached this to my monitor. And that is a pretty good reminder. And I also cancel things. Last week, I went to the dentist with my son and it is clear that this will not be a work day. And of course, I have to work a little bit in the evening, at home, that day and I have a little more pressure during the following days. But it works.

'Cindy' appreciates immensely that she can go for a walk any time during the day unless there is a hard deadline':

> I don't have a hard boundary between work and life. .. I like to see my life and work more holistically and as extensions of one another. If I spend the weekend a little bit of researching and working and also watching a movie and also hanging out, then it doesn't bother me...I don't get a sense, like, I didn't get my weekend....and also my work day is not intense go, go, go... .' (Cindy)

One of the big advantages of freelancing is that she can create her own schedule, with work and housework spaced out as she pleases.

> One of the big lifestyle benefits to freelancing is that I can do activities during the day, I can do laundry during the day, I can cook during the day....I can run an errand in the middle of the afternoon...I don't have an everyday, you know, commute that takes up time...so I have more time than people who have to travel somewhere. And my boyfriend is also a freelancer and we can see each other during the day. It's not like I have to wait for him to get off work... I enjoy it...it suits the way that I like to live. ('Cindy')

Many freelancers also mention the 'freedom' to travel for assignments or work from another city, as they do not have to work on site in an office. What stands out is the joy to have social or free time when other professionals are at work:

> My friend had several days off. And we both hadn't seen the (exhibition) at the Ontario Art Gallery. So she said, why don't we go Tuesday morning, right when it opens...and then we went for a late lunch and hung around for a while and had coffee. And basically, I blew my whole day off, a Tuesday...And I don't mind if

> that means I have to work Friday night or Saturday...the flexibility is incredible. For others, they have children or have other demands or they are not suited to it. They like the structure of 9 to 5. This is when work takes place. ('Christopher')

'Cindy' appreciates that she does not have to commute or wear professional clothing. She notes that working downtown during her journalistic internship meant spending more money as she had a higher dry-cleaning bill and bought lunch in the cafeteria.

> Also, if you work in an office downtown...it takes 15 minutes to get through the security and everything and go outside... and then when you're outside, you're in concrete. There is no real place to go. Whereas here (in her own neighbourhood), I can walk down to the local shops or a cafe...or I can walk to a park. (Cindy)

'Caren' compares her own situation to those of neighbours and friends who hold permanent jobs. While she envied them for their maternity leave entitlement, she finds her own life easer now that her children are slightly older:

> (Now) my life is better than their lives because they get home at 6 pm and they gotta feed their kids and their life is pretty stressful. ... and I drop off my kids (at school) in the morning and then I get some groceries and I walk home and then I work ... like, my life is much more relaxed than theirs now.

'Gerda' changed her employment status because she had the same perception. She had a permanent position as an editor of a daily newspaper in Bavaria. Her work required her to live away from her husband and her hometown during the week. For several years, she commuted back and forth between the two locations. When she and her husband were tired of being apart so often and started considering having a child, 'Gerda' decided to quit her permanent job and become a freelance journalist. It was a conscious decision to enable more control over the place and pace of her work:

> What I really enjoy in comparison to my job as editor at the newspaper – I had several municipalities to look after - … a lot of evening meetings … and I had 50 to 55 hour weeks. … I don't think I am working less now. I also work quite a bit on weekends. But I am more relaxed. And when the weather is nice, I sit outside in the garden. And when I am planning to meet friends, I am not cancelling (last minute because of work). … I work as much as before but I perceive it as having more free time. I can run the washing machine while I am sitting in my office. And in the evening there is not much housework left to do. You create more free spaces for yourself.

The lifestyle benefits as a freelance journalist are appreciated especially in contrast to a permanent or on-site job held at another time or simultaneously. The actual amount of work performed seems to matter less: 'Connor' says:

> The autonomy that I feel as a freelancer ... is so rewarding to the point that even with the job I have now (a non-journalistic writing contract) which is interesting and well paid and offers a certain amount of security ... the fact that I have to be in an office at a certain time of the day...I find it so... I am so spoiled by being a freelancer...I'd rather work a 12 hour day as a freelancer and picking my own hours than an 8 hour job in an office...even if...I worked for the CBC for a little while, a writing job for their website. It is the same work that I would have done from home but I had to be there...even just psychologically it felt... . (Connor)

It is obvious that for freelance journalists, satisfaction and the potential to self-exploit are two sides of the same coin. My research participants portray themselves as deviating from the norm and being liberated from Fordist constraints of work, such as a fixed schedule and place of work. 'Candace''s statement examplefies such a perspective.

> What do they (regular employees) use their little bit of free, flexible time for? Two weeks of vacation. And then, at the end of the second week, what do you have? Another year of non-stop full-time work. I remember in a full-time job, it's desperate when those two weeks are over... .

The following statement shows the flipside of flexible schedules among freelance journalists. Where life and work blend more or less organically, there is never really a time without work.

> When you travel, you think of pitches in advance... You don't want to waste a two week visit to Paris without any pitches. I am thinking of going to Belgium. There is no such thing as a trip for pleasure only. ('Candace')

Apart from lifestyle benefits, journalism provides other non-monetary rewards to my research participants.'Gerda' acknowledges that the pay is low for articles, especially at daily newspapers. But she takes satisfaction from non-financial benefits that she negotiates with newspapers she writes for:

> Sometimes I say (to editors), I know you are not paying that much but then if I get to cover attractive events for you. … For example, I cover an event such as the Mozart festival, I would have to buy the ticket (if I just went as a private citizen). So this heightens the value of the assignment a little bit. What I don't do are court hearings because one sits there for a long time … and then is paid per line. Or city council meetings. … The price-performance ratio has to be right.

‘Gerda’ uses business language to describe her relationship with freelance journalism. This indicates why important journalistic work which more directly monitors power and legal decision-making processes is not financially attractive and might be avoided by many freelance journalists. Another journalist who was still a student at the time of the research interview talks about journalism rather as a passion. He works for an investigative department at a big regional newspaper in Germany 10 days per month. He acknowledges that often works more than that and that is pay is low. When starting this job, he was considering finding another job to cover his monthly expenses. But his priority is not financial:

> I would never, for example, work for (a big prestigious media organization in Germany), even if I received 250 Euros a day, if it was a position that was complete rubbish. Because (the investigative contract position at the daily newspaper) is exactly what I want to do. I cannot imagine anything better.

For ‘Guido’, learning investigative journalism techniques directly from his boss is very rewarding. ‘Gero’ says that his motives for pursuing journalism as a career are quite selfish. He is a curious person.

> For me, this is the best job that could have happened to me. If I was about security, money, or regular work times ...then I would do something else. And my motivation is quite hedonistic....Talking to so many different people, seeing different countries, researching topics during my work time that I am interested in anyway...there are not other jobs that offer that much freedom... . (‘Gero’)

In contrast, ‘Gina’ says she is doing journalism ‘out of idealism’, despite the difficult working conditions. According to her, journalism is ‘extremely relevant for society’.

> There are people who live on the streets and then there are models of successful. I see journalism as … holding together the different parts of society. Holding together in a sense that, if it wasn’t for (journalism), one part of the population would not find out what the other parts are doing.’

‘Candace’ often considers discussing the fee for an assignment with the editor but ultimately decides against it when she is really passionate about a topic.

> Sometimes, you want to write so much about it that you just want the piece out and not raise hell. Or you want to keep that relationship with that particular editor for another occasion, another negotiation. (‘Candace’)

‘Candace’ will even accept assignments that do not pay at all but promise to have an impact: “People repost the article somewhere and the argument gets considered seriously ... that is fun.” ‘Candace’ explains.

> You do it (writing for free) because you are passionate about a topic, because you want to set the parameters of a conversation, because you wanna change people’s opinions, because you want people to know about an artist... . (‘Candace’)

6.3.4. Self-management and self-disciplining

Apart from engaging in more and more non-journalistic work and praising the lifestyle and other non-monetary benefits of being a journalist, my research participants also narrate another set of strategies that are used to cope with chronic insecurity and lack of institutional support. They embrace enterprising behaviours; they self-manage and self-blame and take it upon themselves to do their own personal risk management, trying to cope with unpredictable working conditions. ‘Caren’s’ detailed statement shows the inner struggles and the intensity of self-management involved in a career in freelance journalism.

> Freelancing has always been super emotional, from day one. ... You need to manage your expectations and your mental health...has always been a mental job. ... It is all about confidence, it is all about believing in yourself, not getting too down on things. Managing my mood during the day. And other people with (regular) jobs ....have their own problems...and that kind of emotional existentialism that you get here by yourself...they don’t have that...they don’t get it.
>
> That was my big realization early on. I gotta manage my confidence. I will never get anywhere if I don’t believe in myself. That was certainly not easy for me; it was easy for other people. In recent years, it has really come back to that....you lost this gig, this is not happening, they’re not assigning you much....this emotional management, confidence feels really...you kind of hope it would end...but...it has become a lot bigger for freelancers.

To remain sane and productive, self-improvement and emotional labour are required. ‘Caren’’s discourse shows almost meditative, ritualistic uses of self-help slogans, to be shared with others in a similar situation:

> Recently I basically talked a friend off the ledge. And she’s been doing this (freelance journalism) for a long time and very successfully.....I said you’re going to be okay. You’ll be fine. I’m very into this...We’re still here. That is my thing.

> We're still here. Some people have chosen to leave the profession. But I have not. I haven't had to yet. So...fuck it, I figure you know ....we're still here. You must be figuring it out. But my time will come and you might be talking me off the ledge...you know... .

Where self-motivation does not work, self-blaming arises. Although 'Gabi' worked six days a week for a few years and says she was 'done and finished' affter that, she is not able to fully embrace a more relaxed schedule:

> Some people have a talent to be workaholics. Not me. I have a lazy tendency. … I have difficulty motivating myself and being disciplined. I say to myself, once you have achieved this and this and this, you can reward yourself with this. And I don't get things done and I still reward myself.

While 'Gabi' does recognize that challenging working conditions exist because there is 'something wrong systemically', she then excuses the system and assigns responsibility to the individual worker: "(…) If you make an effort you can make it. But oftentimes, I don't make this effort."

> If I work in a disciplined and concentrated way for 7 hours every day, then I can live a really good life. … But I don't do it…I spend my time reading gossip magazines online … Sometimes I don't get anything done for three days in a row.

'Connor' discusses the same issue:

> It can always be better ....In my head, I figured if I worked really, really hard and that is the point where would not have any vacation at all and work 10 hours per day...I would probably make $100,000 ... That sounds good. But I don't wanna work like that. If I can, close to 60k which is still good. I am not rich but it is enough to live ... Every month you have to make 5k... .

'Cindy' displays a tendency to self-discipline which she dislikes but cannot escape:

> I do blame myself for not getting all the tasks done that I set for myself in a day...but I know quality of life is also important and I could work 10 or 12 hour days but I don't... If I have a huge deadline coming up, then I'll pull an all-nighter to get it done...I can work really hard if I have to. I've no trouble working at night or getting up at 5 am.

'Cindy' does not enjoy "being my enjoy being my own lawyer, accountant and secretary and all that. In this sense...it would be nice to just work for a publication (in a permanent job) and not have to worry... ." 'Charles' mentions that creating 'a brand, a persona' has become important for freelance journalists: "…all of a sudden, this is

another layer of work, you have to become your own marketing arm... .” ‘Gerhard’ sticks with this idea of dividing oneself up into different ‘departments’ and internalizing each, pursuing one goal at a time. ‘Gerhard’ describes a phase of intensive acquisition in his life, embracing the fact that he is a ‘mini-firm’ of sorts.

> I am my own acquisition, controlling, my own marketing, my own production department…there are phases during which the production department is taking up almost 100 per cent of the time. And during that phase, it was the acquisition, marketing, PR and advertising departments that took up 80 per cent of my time. …I meet people for lunch and get a new business cards and such.

The result was tangible: An old acquaintance who has a publishing house invited ‘Gerhard’ to write a book for them. As the project required upfront investments, Gerhard says he has “decided to be entrepreneurial and take the risk and went into debt for this book”. Many of my research participants, willingly or not, embrace an enterprising attitude toward their work as freelance journalists. For example, ‘Connor’ says that he is simply a curious person who likes to research and write about a broad array of topics: “I am under no illusion that I am serving democracy. What I write is often just erntertainment.” He points out:

> ‘Another appealing thing about being a freelancer is that you’re an entrepreneur so the harder you work, the more you make. At a regular job...you can work very hard and still get the same pay... .

He explains that this includes taking some assignments “that you aren’t that interested in. Or you’re doing some corporate work. Yeah.” ‘Colin‘ says that you have to be adaptable and diverse as a freelance journalist, in order to stay afloat:

> Look at the range of subjects I cover. Other freelancers do media or fashion...I used to do a lot of technology reporting...then the crash hit and technology died and you had to find other things to do. ... So now I write about concrete and infrastructure and ... about mining, oil and gas.

‘Colin’ describes his understanding of freelance journalism in business terms:

> ‘Really, what we are is independen businesses, we are contractors... this is no different than renovating a kitchen or preparing a will ... if somebody contracts you, deliver within the agreed time frame within the agreed price... .

He says that his motivation as a journalist is not to support democracy or reports informed by a public service ethos: “I pay my bills ... when I was 21, I wanted to save the whales. ... Now I am happy paying my mortgage.” While ‘Caren’ distances herself

throughout the research interview from “copy writing”, she embraces the more business-oriented strategies of this professinal group for her own work, especially non-journalistic assignments:

> As a journalist, you are not used to quoting...I have some more copy-editor oriented friends and I ask them (what is a reasonable fee for an assignment)....when you are doing this corporate work you have to tell them how much you want to get paid...We’re used to (as journalists)... like ... this is the date and this is the publication...okay! So you have to put on this copy-writer hat... .

‘Christopher’ says it has become difficult for him to get up in front of a group of students because of the crisis of journalism and lack of well-paying work for freelancers. He has changed how he markets the benefits of a course in long-form journalism that he has been teaching in Canada for a long time:

> I tell them now is that writing is a transferable skill ...so there is all kinds of other areas. People have moved into corporate communications or political communications offices...in addition now I have found more and more people have moved into the non-profit sector...grant writing...this whole sector of philantrophy where this kind of feature writing really flies. You are not doing journalism but you are applying these kinds of feature writing skills to it. Same is true in marketing departments... One student of mine is working in one and came to me half way through the course saying that her boss noticed her writing is so much better...I have now six or seven people who have moved into the non-profit sector...so there are more ways to apply the skills than just in the wreckage of the journalism industry... .

Similarly, ‘Caren’ teaches in a journalism program at a university in Toronto. She emphasizes that skills such as researching and writing that journalists possess are important and transferable. However, the pride she takes in mastering these skills herself is tainted by the frustration regarding the type and quality of assignments available for journalists today. It is here that the journalistic ethos collides with the enterprising ethos, and that corporate work is performed that insults journalistic professional identity:

> It’s amazing when you know how to research properly and you are given a shit budget and no time, you can pull info out of your ass...that’s good enough.
>
> I’m doing some corporate blogging right now and...cause I guess I’m really good at this (researching and writing) because I have done much harder things....and now I am writing these sort of stupid little blogs for this company...and the client is loving it ... so I guess I can just bullshit my way....I can crank out chirpy little odd blogs...they’re silly but I can do them.

‘Caren‘ makes an effort to reconcile journalistic and non-journalistic work in her life. At the same time, after privileging journalistic work slightly in the mix of jobs she performs, she clarifies that, for her, the most important aspect of work is not journalism versus other work. What matters most to her is a good, respectful relationship with the client.

> Although things are dour, in some ways I would say I am also super happy right now. I have features for magazines, I have business content marketing stories that I actually find very interesting...I do some corporate blogging. ... To be honest, I really really like doing features and if I have a feature I am happy. And everything else....I don’t like to...the stuff that makes the most unhappy is stuff with people who are shitty to work with or they don’t care about the quality or they’re annoying or proofreading things....that is what really bothers me.

Another freelancer considers her success as a freelancer partially a result of her willingness to be ‘proactive’ about marketing herself and her services in order to obtain assignments. Although this sometimes requires a one or two-hour trip by car, ‘Gerda’ makes a point of paying short personal visits to editorial offices of newspapers in her region. During these visits, she introduces herself and passes on promotional materials such as pens with her name printed on. This, she says, is not “everyone’s cup of tea”:

> Many journalists are bad at self-marketing. In my city, for example, I am actually the only freelancer who has their own website. … I don’t really understand this. For example, because of my website, I was approached by a car dealer who organized a conference here (in her city) and I did a company newsletter for them. (…).The journalist has perhaps a problem advertising himself. Because he says, this is exactly what I don’t like doing. But this is nonsense. If I am a freelancer, I must advertise myself.

There is an implicit assumption here that journalism and advertising are for some journalists irreconcilable, even when it comes to marketing their own skills in order to find work. Thus, what might be second nature for freelancers in other industries, is conflict with the ethos of the profession itself, from the perspective of many if not all journalists.

> One has to be completely self-reliant. That is clear. That is part of working as a freelancer. … There are contact points at (journalism unions). But… ultimately, this would be saying, just like a nanny, that they would have to check in with me if I have done (everything it takes to be a successful freelancer)…No, I mean, I chose this career path and so this is my responsibility. (‘Martha’)

My research participants respond to an all-encompassing insecurity that characterizes their working lives with a mix of embracing it and trying to alleviate the

impact of unpredictable working conditions. When ‘Christopher’ is asked to give advice on career planning for freelance journalists or writers, he says, “I have never made a plan in my entire life. I believe in the zero-year plan.” ‘Christopher’ embraces uncertainty:

> My name is out there and I have my agent and cultivate the relationship with her ...but if there are no book projects that come into my agent’s office or they are not suitable for me...I am not getting any work even though my plan was to get three ghostwriting projects within a year. Magazine writing ...I might put together a project and then it is rejected. Teaching is out of my control as well because the course (a journalism school) is based on minimum enrollment... Plans fall apart all the time. You made an arbitrary plan and then you get stressed out if you don’t meet your target. I don’t like that. You made the plan.

In order to manage at least some of the risks involved in freelancing, ‘Christopher’ moved into an affordable housing unit within a housing co-op. This enables him to ‘change places internally, “if I was much older and not able to work as much.” Other than that, he simply hopes he will be able to work for a long time to come:

> I do not have a lot of savings...frankly, the only I have to rely on is that I don’t get dementia or something where I am no longer able to work as a writer. If your health is with you, you could be working as a writer in your 80s. That is basically my retirement plan which is no plan.

6.3.5. Beyond competition, towards togetherness

As a union member, ‘Gertrude’ in the past attended dedicated events for freelancers organized by the German Association of Journalists. However, instead of finding some sense of community, ‘Gertrude’ observed a ‘push- and shove mentality’ among freelancers during these events. She says freelance journalists in Munich where she lives and works, ‘observe’ and ‘stalk’ each other:

> Your colleague is always your potential competitor. That is simply how it is. The other day, I worked on a topic and suddenly it appeared elsewhere…a colleague (that she had talked to) had copied my idea … .

As a result, ‘Gertrude’ now keeps her distance from other freelance journalists and says, she prefers having no contact at all with others to having experiences such as the following:

> The stealing of topics … or (competition for) relationships with editorial offices. The latter has happened to me. Really mean things. Someone found out I was

> not going to an event and then called many editorial offices to offer reporting the event … .

'Gerda has similar concerns. She would like to reach out to other freelancers but is hesitant because there is a potential to take away assignments from one another.

> There is one freelancer who writes a lot for different media in my region here and I have considered contacting her. But on the other hand, I am writing for the same media as her.

At the same time, during the research interviews, participants frequently indicated that they often feel lonely and miss working with others in a structured office environment. 'Gabi' recalls working in an editorial office two days a week, at a magazine and fondly remembers the colleagiality. 'Cindy' says that she struggles with staying motivated when working alone and she misses the feedback from colleagues as a 'quality control' of her work:

> It is nice working in an office with other people where you have story meetings...as an intern (with a Canadian magazine). …I had to go every two weeks, there would be a story meeting. I was expected to pitch ideas. I find that that that really motivated me. It is harder for me to motivate myself sometimes to put a lot of work into a big pitch because if it gets rejected then I wasted my time. So that is a challenge.

'Gerhard' calls 'loneliness' the greatest challenge in his career as a freelance journalist.

> It is a pretty lonely affair, sitting at one's desk. That is also why I am going with my son to drop him off at school in the morning. To get out and see the world is still turning, the buses and street cars are still going and people are going to work.

As 'Gerhard' held a temporary job as an editor, he uses this situation as reference point:

> I enjoyed the exchange of ideas among colleagues when I worked on site … And you can see all the press releases come in; you see how others pitch topics, you have access to all the newspapers that are coming into the editorial office. That is all a great infrastructure that you do not have access to as a freelancer.

To compensate for the loss of collegiality and structure, 'Gerhard' initiates phone conversations with friends, among other efforts:

> I am meeting other freelancers in the morning once a week. A friend who has his office in (his neighbourhood) …I am meeting him for lunch every few weeks. I enjoy when I have an appointment in the inner city… . (‘Gerhard’)

‘Gina’ says occasional shifts as editor at a daily newspaper ensure that she gets a break from the cabin fever that she feels working alone at home most of the time. ‘Gerda’ describes how she misses interacting with others regularly as part of her current work as a freelance journalist. In ‘Gerda’s’ previous job, she worked as an editor for a daily newspaper in a small, one-woman correspondent’s office in a rural area in Southern Germany. With a smile, she conjures up the following memory:

> It was like that: I sat in my office (in that region) and one person after another came to see me and explain the world to me. One was in direct contact with (readers of the newspaper she worked for). … And now I try to make sure that I am covering events outside (her home office) once or twice a week and to not just do all my research via the phone.

‘Gertrude’ has a desire to connect with other freelance journalists but because of the highly competitive nature of the job, she believes that this is only possible when there is no direct overlap in the types of media the journalists contribute to (for example, print versus radio journalists). ‘Gertrude’ says that she has made efforts to make this happen: “A shared office … I looked into it. But they charged hourly fees for studio use, etc. And that is not what I envision. I envision mutual support and help.” ‘Gertrude’ is not as much interested in co-producing journalistic work or collectively acquiring assignments but in organizational issues. For example, she proposes sharing a home daycare spot for one’s children, sharing the use of a car or exchanging information about perks for journalists, such as reduced transit tickets, with another freelancer.

For the freelance journalists I interviewed, getting together informally with colleagues or other types of freelancers and symbolic workers or artists is crucial. This helps freelance journalists with acquiring assignments, learning about particularities of different media organizations, and alleviates a sense of isolation that is part of their daily work routines.

> ‘I don’t necessarily hang out with other freelancers... I much prefer the company of artists, singers, musicians, any other profession, etc. Most of us sort of cocoon and hang out with other writers ... it may help their career but their intellect and their moral imagination will suffer. It’s important to work and hang out and drink or not drink with all sorts of people …’ (‘Candace’)

While ‘Candace’ emphasizes the inspriation she receives from professionals unlike herself, ‘Caren’ is more interested in practical advice:

> Through my children and my neigbourhood, I know a lot of people who are not journalists....people who are freelancers but not journalists...and those are such a great resource...they’re freelancers in different fields like web design ... we share stories and we support each other. If I have a problem, I pick up the phone and I talk to people...I know what publications pay ‘cause I know people... .

‘Caren’ says she is ‘a massive believer in networking’. Reaching out to her community of friends and colleagues is her number one strategy to navigate the vagaries of freelance life.

> I really really believe in using the people and the networks I have. I like going to events...I know a lot of people in my industry, that is why I’m still alive... You gotta go out and hang with people...you gotta go to the national magazine awards... I just went...I have people, I use them, I go out with them and go for coffee with them a lot ... .

These social activities are part of ‘Caren’s’ work day. Exhanging what ‘Caren’ calls ‘fine, detailed information’ with others reduces risks:

> I never ever pitch (to an editor) before I have talked to someone...you know...who is the best person .....you know this person (editor) is really good by e-mail, this person (editor) likes detailed pitches...or this person is on mat leave...’‘I have gotten a lot of people jobs...and gigs... If I know someone, I will hook them up...I get people gigs and they get me gigs.... .

Although moving in a very competitive and often stressful environment, the freelance journalists I interviewed emphasize the importance of helping each other. ‘Charles’, who is a seasoned journalist, says he regularly refers freelance colleagues to editors he knows because he has good relationshps with editors. Together with a reporter from the Globe and Mail, he organizes get-togethers every few weeks in Vancouver. The informal meetings are attended by a mix of freelancers and permanently employed journalists, for example ‘people from CBC radio, editors from magazines, younger journalists. Many of my participants, especially the successful ones, take time to nurture relationships with other freelance journalists. They do this without necessarily putting their own needs first or thinking of exhanges in a merely instrumental way:

> I got a call (from this young colleague) a while ago who asked me about a subject that I am an expert in. He said, this is your area, I have no idea how to write about that. So invited him over to my place and we had coffee and a sandwich. I

> gave him a copy of my book (on the subject) and gave him all this information...this is how it should be. To me, it is giving back to the business and also...if he is doing a story...he is s more likely to mention my name if he has to too much work and cannot do an assignment ... because I was nice to him. You are nice to people so they do a favour to you. That is collegial. (Christopher)

'Cindy', a younger journalist, is in contact with other freelance journalists as well as permanent reporters and editors, mostly through events not initated by her.

> Some colleagues (...) I see at media parties or launch parties or a party at some editor's house .... Or I'm closer friends with other freelancers and when I go out with them informally... Christmas parties, I did that when I did internships at a couple of media organizations but as soon as I stopped working for them....I am still invited to one magazine's...to some of their staff parties, not the ones with the free drinks but informal ones at the bars...Ironically, if there is a layoff and they are having a going-away party for someone then they invite me... .

Some social activities she was included in ended with her internships, when she was no longer a part of the organization. As 'Cindy' states, editors tend to explain to her that a reduced number of permanent jobs available to journalists means more work for freelancers. So inviting her to going-away parties might be a logical consequence. As contacts and get-togethers that freelancers have are mostly organized loosely and irregularly, changing family situations or busy schedules easiy disrupt meetings that take place on a fairly regular basis:

> I do have a pool of fellow editors and we always talk about assignments and pay and how did you like working with this editor and that editor....it is a very informal group. I had a regular lunch with freelancers but now we've all gotten babies and it has fallen apart... . ('Connor')

My research participants see the need change the isolated, individualized way in which most freelancers work – and to move beyond accidental, irregular, or merely informal modalities of coming together.

> 'I am of the opinion that we have to band together … if there is a real chance (to change things)…I don't know. The chances get diminished because there is always someone who does it …working for a lower price. That is how it is.'

'Gabi' names one of the biggest issues that divide freelancers, namely accepting or rejecting extremely low fees for assignments. However, the traditional path to organize groups of professionals and then collectively fight for better working conditions, namely through unions and associations, does not seem promising to them.

> There hasn't been a lot of advantage from (unions, associations and their benefits)....that has been our downfall as well because we all have this lone wolf kind of mentality...and I don't think that has served us well. ('Charles')

'Charles' compares attempts to organize freelancers to "herding cats" and says that freelancers are "very autonomous". Joining a group, therefore seems 'almost anathema' to freelancers. Still, 'Charles' shares the feeling voiced by most of my research participants that it is time that "something happens". Joining a union and a collective effort to structurally address working conditons of journalists will continue to be an option that freelancers may or may not take up. At the same time, new forms of organizing labour itself could be an alternative to the isolation and stress of sole entrepreneurship in journalism. 'Guido' is one of several participants who are consciously taking steps to engage in more co-operation with other freelance journalists:

> In the past, I suspiciously eyed other freelancers and thought, he or she wrote this and that. But … I have changed quite a bit. One can never tune this out completely but I am mostly over it. (…) Lately, I have tried to do things together with colleagues who have a similar mission or work on similar topics … For example, I am going to Cologne for five days with two colleagues that I like. And we are doing a live blog together (for a big event), all three of us. One of us writes something but we are putting it all on our blogs. We cooperate to create more public awareness (than any one of the could do alone).

'Guido''s long-term goal is to overcome the dominant paradigm of individuals competing against one another, at least in his own professional life. His vision is to work cooperatively with others in a more structured and permanent manner:

> I am thinking 10 years ahead…maybe (then) we will have found solutions for making money on the internet and ways to finance author blogs. And then I would have a network of four or five or maybe ten people who would be willing to join an authors' blog that makes money… .

'Gabi' has a PR-cooperation with a family member who has a business background and takes any and all opportunities to get away from lone freelancing:

> …I miss working with people … when I worked at the travel magazine, we were three people in one room. I loved it. Working cooperatively is something I really miss. I am glad to have the one-hour editorial conference at the hospital (for which she writes a corporate newsletter and interviews doctors)… .

More than other freelancers, Gabi is trying to embrace a community-oriented attitude in her work and embrace feminist advocacy efforts in journalism:

> I am a member of the BJV and the female journalists association. We are organizing the annual conference for next year. Two women from my office are members there as well. … In the female journalists association, I am not somebody who expects much but I am a more senior member who gives back…we try to make sure, among us women, that we help each other getting assignments. … This is clear. Whenever we learn of job postings, we mail them around…we have permanently employed members … our goal is to promote women as much as we can. … We try to use women as interview partners and we write letters to talk shows that speak out against the dominance of men in talk shows.

Two research participants were practicing journalism as formalized cooperation in a shared office space, with several other journalists. Such independent journalists' offices – not attached to a big media organization and working without hierarchies, sharing rent and other office expenses – exist in many German cities.

Independent journalists' offices

Gabi shared her memories of working in one of these offices several years ago:

> I went to (a city in Germany) for two years. I knew people there. Someone had their own studio in their house. That was a terrific independent journalists' office. … That was ingenious. I became the one for print and radio. …I covered travel topics, cultural topics and sometimes science topics …whatever came to us as a group.

While 'Gerhard' is currently not able to afford a workspace outside his home, he used to do most of his freelance journalism in a shared office.

> It was not a, journalists' office, though…. An independent journalists' office was always my dream. I have looked but could not find one here in this area…. I even put an ad in the paper for this. In the end, I then shared my office with a lawyer and he was very nice, though (the office was) not in my neighbourhood.

'Gerhard' mentions the 'exceptionally high' rents in Munich as an impediment to setting up shared offices outside freelancers' homes. Barring that, he says:

> I have no doubt that most of us would prefer this (working in a journalists' shared office). It seems (…) it is becoming more frequent. Complete cohorts from journalism schools are now sometimes working together and cooperating. That is smart. That is a new generation. Before it wasn't necessary (because the working conditions in journalism were better).

Two of the journalists I interviewed work in an independent journalists' office and have been doing so for several years. 'Gustav' describes the history of this shared office located in Cologne:

> In the beginning, it was an office for translations. … And at some point, I was there. And two other freelancers. … And the experience was, even back then, that the three of us – working definitely for the same editorial offices and on the same topics – that we did not take away from each others' assignments but rather the effect emerges among editors: Ok, I'll call them (to assign an article or radio piece), one of the three guys will have time.

'Gustav' is he only one now present in the office of the original group. But the office and its current members still operate in the same way:

> Editors call and say, hey, do you or one of the others have time (to do an assignment) ?… It is almost like calling another editorial office. That is cool. … From the beginning I felt that this interconnectedness and solidarity is very productive.

Before this, 'Gustav' had worked in another independent journalists' office. He says that work in that office was even more collectivized. The four journalists who were members "purposefully worked to acquire assignments together". Even the income was "communal", as 'Gustav' says. The current office:

> …it is more like a shared apartment. No one has to justify why they are not there if they are away. Everyone provides their own phone and computer. All that matters is that the share of rent is paid. But still, funnily, many projects are done together. For example, a colleague and mine designed a radio show together . …. I think we have a pretty good reputation for our subject area among editorial offices.

One major advantage for office members is that there is not the constant temptation to do housework, as one is not working from home:

> We have a cleaning lady who comes in. We go out to get coffee or milk. But that is about it for activities outside work. … One doesn't have to clear the dishwasher and I don't have to squeeze in trimming the hedges or so.

'Gitte' is a freelance journalist who is always busy and rarely has to pitch to editors. She attributes her success to her membership in the same independent journalists' office that 'Gustav' works in. She has completed many journalistic projects in cooperation with him or other members. She explains that the office distributes risks and benefits of freelance work across a several sets of shoulders, instead of one individual freelancer being burdened with it all:

> It happened to me that someone (an editor) called and I wasn't able to take on the assignment but I recommended my colleague …and I got a turn for the next assignment again. If one is sick, one is able to recommend someone else who

> can help out. A colleague of mine already said, since working a lot with us (in the office), he has acquired more assignments. If one works in a team, one gets more assignments… . We all have different strengths (as journalists)… .

However, since there is no hierarchy and no fixed rules to guide work in the office, it can sometimes be challenging to push organizational change, if necessary:

> 'What is not as easy is to find time to actually talk. We had to reform something internally here in the media office and it was a strenuous effort to have a situation in which my colleague and I were both present and had both time to talk for two or three hours. The organizational component is paid short shrift. That is probably typical of freelancers.

Independent journalists' offices are not a new phenomenon in Germany and there exist several such offices, mainly in bigger cities. Nevertheless, freelance journalists overwhelmingly work alone and in their own homes. 'Gitte' is aware that her work situation deviates from the norm.

> There is a lot of competition (in freelance journalism) and many people are very competitive … . But (…) through cooperation, you get a lot more assignments. … We just had another journalist join our office. And we invest a lot in her, pass a lot of assignments on to her these days. But at some point, she will give this back.

'Gitte' says one is not losing anything but gaining significantly by not only working in the same dedicated space but by sharing journalistic assignments:

> …The other day, I was asked to join a project as an author. And I directly recommended two of my colleagues (in the office) because this will be a lot of texts and one cannot do this alone. … . Cooperation is good. There are always freelancers who handle this differently but that is of no concern to me …. There also doesn't have to be a direct match between giving and taking. … But there has to be a potential, a general atmosphere of wanting to give something back.

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7. Discussion: Journalists in the neoliberal nexus

7.1. Introduction

The 25 journalists I interviewed for this dissertation share in detail their perceptions of contemporary journalistic labour. Their narratives broadly articulate a "situatedness" of their daily work experiences in a nexus of neoliberal logics. As the metaphor that structures the title of the dissertation, this imagery is *not* designed to signal a spiderweb, tightly woven of neoliberal strings that rigidly hold freelance journalists and interns in one place (waiting as defenceless victims, to be attacked and "internalized' by a powerful, spider-like entity called neoliberalism). On the contrary, the metaphor is designed to signal a flexible web of social relations, without one but many actual and potential centers and many subject positions, though some are more encouraged than others.

However, to understand the "nexus of neoliberalism" that freelance journalists and interns find themselves in – and which they might be stabilizing as well as destabilizing at certain times – we need to undo the threads, trace them back to their origins, and see what is connected to what. This goes especially for the thickenings in the web of social relations where neoliberalism seems strong because it is reinforced or doubled-up by other logics. This also goes for places where the neoliberal nexus is thin and especially elastic because the enlisting of other logics by neoliberalizing logics did not work or "backfired".

I argue that the narratives of journalistic labour articulate a "situatedness" in the nexus of neoliberalism on four levels. The first level maps journalists' perception of neoliberalism as different historical phases. The second level maps the relationship of journalists with employers, clients, and unions. It is based on their role as workers in post-Fordism as the regime of accumulation that has arisen with neoliberalism as a regulatory regime. The third level of neoliberal "situatedness" maps the relationship of

journalists with the state, based on their role as citizens of a nation, with neoliberalism appearing here as a version of government policy-making. Fourth, the narratives of freelance labour indicate the presence of neoliberalism as governmentality. This is understood as subject constitution and self-governance in neoliberalism, mapping their professional subjectivity as it oscillates between an “entrepreneurial self” and an “ethical self”, between reaffirming and challenging neoliberal logics.

7.2. Neoliberalism as historical phases

The crisis of journalism as a crisis of work and employment opportunities is tangible in the statements made by my research participants. Their narratives of perceived decline mirror the transition from the overt, oppositional phase of neoliberalism – which is still characterized by a broadly social democratic policy regime - which marked the rise as a policy and governance regime in the 1990s to neoliberalism as largely accepted common sense at the beginning of the 21st century, with austerity measures intensifying neoliberalism further after the financial crisis in 2008 and onwards. This transition is marked by ownership concentration internationally and integration of media business into large conglomerates mainly active in other business areas such as financial services, all responding to increased pressures to generate profits and decrease spending at all costs in order to please shareholders. My research participants describe the effects of such a changing and changed climate on the ground, as workers.

During the past years, younger freelance journalists have personally witnessed layoffs of newsroom staff, often at multiple media organization they interned for. Editors have signalled to them that this means more work can be assigned to freelancers, but this is not the case for the freelancers I interviewed.

Older freelance journalists who have been active for several decades perceive the changes in journalism most starkly. One Canadian participant remembers that he started working for magazines in the 1980s, even before finishing journalism school, and that this part-time work covered all his living costs, including rent. This has become all but impossible, he remarks. The same participant is regularly teaching journalism students today, acknowledging how much harder it is now to ‘patch together a career’ for freelance journalists. The participant says that it is therefore becoming harder for him to

get up in front of a group of students, as a teacher, and inspire hopes that they might be able to turn journalism into a sustainable career.

A German participant who has worked as a freelancer for more than 20 years echoes the Canadian's disappointment over a career path in journalism that was promising during long periods of time in the 1980s or 1990s but started to become more and more difficult in the 21st century, despite many high-prestige assignments and projects completed. This is mostly for reasons described consistently by all my freelance participants: editors assign fewer journalistic assignments overall, the word count is lower, and fees for assignments have either not risen for 20 plus years or fallen. Therefore, freelance journalists have to intensify their pitching efforts or receive more rejections or non-committal responses from editors. Participants also describe that some media organizations have stopped accepting outside pitches completely, as they draw only from a small pool of select freelance journalists that they commission to, in order to streamline the process.

Journalists find it harder to make a living from freelance journalism, resulting in emotional frustration and material struggles. One participant puts specific numbers to the decline freelance journalists perceive in general. In the early 2000s, this Canadian journalist was completing two stories per month for 'big national magazines' and she is now doing around 3 per year, emphasizing that the length of longer-form journalism has decreased by several hundred words since then. Another Canadian freelancer describes how he used to be able to "feed the family" on 5 or 6 big magazine features a year and he remembers 'nice big cheques coming in'.

My research participants point out that the tendency to shorter pieces decreases their stagnating or falling incomes further while requiring about the same amount of time to research (which is unpaid work time for freelance journalists), as an article that is longer. One participant describes how these developments collectively 'nudge' journalists to produce 'poor work' as they literally cannot afford to research topics in depth anymore. The exploitative payment model in freelance journalism, as identified by Cohen (2016) – media organizations paying only for the finished product but not for research and writing time – means that journalists are compelled to cut corners in work components that are unpaid and to complete assignments in the fastest and least resource-intense manner.

Pieces have not just become shorter but topics more superficial and service-oriented which my research participants find regrettable, such as a 300-word piece on how to teach children to tie their shoes or ride a bike that still require the journalist to interview an 'expert' or a parent personally affected by the situation. One journalist observes a clear division of topics along which one can determine what kind of journalism still 'makes money'. Lifestyle, interior design, fashion, real estate and home renovation, are in high demand by media organizations and audiences. These growth areas in journalism stand in contrast to her own areas of expertise in high culture and classical music which are some of the lowest-paid.

Apart from declining incomes from journalism, to make sense of changing working conditions in journalism, the journalists I interviewed refer to other types of support received from media organizations in the past that is declining today. First, this concerns access to technological equipment where it is necessary for production, for example, in broadcast journalism. In her work for a public broadcaster, it has become more difficult to book production times and studio space with a professional technician to complete assignments. This has led the journalist to afford a home studio and learn how to do the digital editing of her recorded material herself, shifting responsibility from employer to worker.

This demonstrates the complex interlinking of decreasing commitments to journalists on the part of media organizations and the perception of choice and freedom associated with freelancing. The participant first notes an increasing reluctance of the public broadcaster to provide freelancers with professional production space and technical help on-site. However, the shifting of responsibility for media production to freelancers is re-interpreted as an opportunity to become more autonomous.

Second, this concerns the coverage of costs related to travel. My research participants remember receiving per diem allowances on top of the fee paid for the assignment if travel was necessary, and during some years travelling one week per month under this arrangement to complete assignments. What editors were able to grant even into the early 2000s is now rare, as controllers in media corporations often does not allow travel funding for journalistic assignments. Today, journalists cover many costs related to travel and equipment in advance, unsure if they will ever be reimbursed. This means an additional strain on their budget and a requirement to aggressively market and

re-sell a piece in order to recover costs (this, however becomes increasingly difficult due to restrictive copyright arrangements).

Only one participant in my sample tried to comprehend worsening working conditions in journalism by referring to the larger social and economic context, rather than individual perceptions and examples of decline. When pondering the 'capitalist system' as a potential culprit, he observes that capitalism existed for a long time and did not prevent editorial offices from having generous travel budgets for freelance journalists, up into the 1990s. Here, the participant touches on the different phases of neoliberalism. The initial, antagonistic phase consisted of undermining a social-democratic consensus, including an acceptance of the normative role and thus necessary protection of some public goods, including media to varying degrees, from market forces. After the colonization of this consensus was complete, including media concentration, conglomeration and increased profit expectations, the policing of human resources spending and other costs took hold.

7.3. Neoliberal labour regimes – Journalists as workers

First, I explore the relationship of journalists with employers and their position as workers. The perceptions of working conditions in journalism voiced by my research participants articulate an embeddedness in post-Fordist labour regimes which are the dominant regime of accumulation in neoliberalism (Jessop, 2018). The lives of many of my research participants are often characterized by acute social and financial precarity. The flexibilization of production and thus labour is responsible for these experiences. The latter undergirds heightened profit and shareholder orientation in financialized economies which thrive on profiting from and governing through risk and uncertainty. This is especially the case in media companies that have been merged into big international conglomerates which only have a small stake and interest in news (Almiron, 2010). In post-Fordist regimes, employers aspire more than ever to minimize commitments to workers, so their numbers can easily be adjusted to the ebb and flow of capital accumulation, leading to the demise of standard employment and the rise of freelancing.

At the same time, employers want to maximize the value of workers hired, as demonstrated by contracts that impose low pay on freelance journalists and exploit workers by not paying them for portions of their work time, such as time to interview, research, and write in the case of journalists. This also finds expression in the prevalence of low-paid or unpaid internships in which interns not seldomly replace fully fledged employees - and forego pay or endure low pay in the hopes of some undefined future professional reward.

Apart from being shaped by a financialized economy, post-Fordist labour regimes also imply the rise of the so-called knowledge economy. This is an accumulation regime that departs from Fordism, its predecessor which relied on mass production of material goods by workers in standard employment. In contrast, post-Fordism is marked by the exploitation of and value creation through customized or customizable immaterial, symbolic goods (Jessop, 2018), such as the copyright on original journalistic content. Thus, the lives of freelancers are characterized by aggressive copyright regimes imposed by media organizations that freelancers have little power to negotiate. This means an important potential source of revenue is often not available for them, as such copyright regimes, for example, prohibit secondary use or sale of freelance works by their authors.

There a broad range of levels of precarity evident among my interviewees. This precarity is not always accompanied by exceptionally low incomes but mostly consists of lack of control over amount and consistency in remuneration, work flow, work loads, and an absence of employer- or state-supplied protections. Also, the freelance journalists and interns I talked to experience the externalization of corporate risk to individual workers, in that they are asked to indemnify news organizations against possible law suits. Unpaid or low-paid interns struggle with the implicit expectation by employers that they provide their own resources during journalistic internships, such as cars and photo equipment. This is perceived as negative and stressful.

Conversely, while the corporate responsibility for providing a work place and managing a work schedule is also shifted from news organizations to individual freelance workers, this development is perceived in more ambiguous terms. Providing a work space in one’s home sometimes leads to conflicts over space with family members, interruptions through kids, or makes it difficult to mentally focus exclusively on work.

However, more importantly, freelance journalists consistently report control over work places and, even more, work schedules as a source of satisfaction, being one quintessential element of the "freedom" contained in and foregrounding the lifestyle benefits of the concept of "freelancing".

Cohen (2016) in her work on Canadian freelance writers, points to this interlinking or dove-tailing of corporate strategy with individual perceptions of freedom. I interpret these resonances as an instance where long-standing ideologies around freelance work or working for one's own account get pulled into an assembly with neoliberal logics to strengthen neoliberalism. Neoliberal notions of freedom as liberation from direct constraints and rigid hierarchies, including employer-imposed ones, get reinforced through the appreciation of flexible schedules and lifestyles traditionally associated with self-employment, even before the rise of neoliberalism. Here the "freelancing" portion of "freelance journalism" interacts with logics in a neoliberal labour market. This neoliberal assemblage coalesces around the notion of freedom as the flexibility of the worker.

Another such interlinking between contemporary journalistic labour and neoliberalism stems from the "journalism" portion of "freelance journalism". For journalists, autonomy over media content production is a key component of how they define their occupation (Weaver & Wilhoit, 2014; Deuze 2005, Hanitzsch, 2011). The freelance journalists in my study emphasize that, even if not always possible in practice, it is in principle their very own choice which organizations to work for and which stories to create. This definition of professionalism among freelance journalists has a history that goes back to the 19th century when freelancing was used by journalists to escape employment in emerging mass media organizations at the time, and retain control over the labour process in media production, as they had exercised it during and before the rise of modern capitalism (Örnebring, 2010; Cohen, 2016).

Such a notion of journalistic professional autonomy directs attention to the idea creation and realization stage of freelance media content production where freelance journalists enjoy freedom. At the same time, it directs attention away from the exploitation of journalists by media organizations that follows in the later stages of the labour process and that freelancers are usually not at liberty to negotiate (Cohen, 2016). In other words, the first stages in the production process are uncontrolled by employers

as these stages enable the creation of precious original content by freelance journalists- while the commodification and exploitation of such content, including copyright regimes, and compensation for the labour involved, is largely imposed by news organizations which freelance journalists depend on for wide distribution of their work (Cohen, 2016). This neoliberal assemblage coalesces around the notion of freedom as the autonomy of the professional over content creation.

Freelance journalists' work can be considered exploited because they are only paid for the finished piece they submit (Cohen, 2016). They are not remunerated for significant portions of their work time, such as time to do research, interviews, and writing, by news organizations. In contrast, work created for non-media corporations, such as public relations material, corporate magazines, or advertising texts and videos, are often paid hourly. Working for clients who hire journalists for this kind of communications work seem to offer better working conditions and pay than journalistic assignments. Thus, not all work available to freelance journalists or interns today is precarious.

This bifurcation of working conditions and experiences, as indicated by my research participants, is interpreted here as an expression of the dual nature of neoliberal capitalism. It can be explained as flowing from the umbrella logic of neoliberalism: The promotion of economic measurement across all realms of social, political, and economic life, and the simultaneous undermining of political-normative values and practices - of which journalism is one.

More precisely, media content such as journalism, from an economic point of view, is an ambivalent good that holds cultural and social significance – be it making sense of a complex world or monitoring the powerful - as well as opportunities for commodification. Media industries must deal with an additional layer of instability due to the changing and often unpredictable "habits of people's lives and patterns of media use" which force industries to rethink their offerings and which "erect strong barriers to the complete commodification of media and culture" (Winseck & Jin, 2011, p.4). Media organizations, while acting within market dynamics, "also enable and depend upon forms of expression that are not market driven". Chronic uncertainty is part of being in the media business and has led news outlets, as outlined in chapter 2 on the crisis of journalism, to decrease permanent employment, and adjust its work force as well as

freelance budgets to the ebb and flow of capital accumulation while continuing to feed audience demand for journalistic content.

Conversely, outside of media and journalism, there is a massive expansion of private and public organizational communication and the rise of communicative professions such customer service workers, public relations workers, specialists for internal, employee-oriented communication, and social media managers. This is designed to build and manage relationships between organizations and their brands on the one hand and employees, clients, customers and potential funders on the other (Dean, 2009). This kind of communication officially serves a narrow purpose that can be tailored more directly to profit-making or other organizational goals, as the wider public interest is not or at least not a primary reference point. This does not necessarily mean that working conditions are always better in these sectors than in journalism. But as my research participants indicate, assignments in corporate publishing are more readily available and often better paid than journalism.

Lastly, another aspect that shapes the position of journalists as workers, are unions and professional associations. These do not have profit accumulation as their main goal but worker protection and they strongly rely on the idea of solidarity. As outlined in chapter 3, the role of unions was weakened significantly under neoliberalism. In general, both my Canadian and German research participants do not have much faith in the ability of unions to significantly improve working conditions for freelance journalists or interns. Their expectations of unions and their willingness to more actively engage with labour politics in this context were low, reflecting the undermining of collectivist impulses in neoliberalism that interlinks with an individualist outlook of self-employed versus other workers.

Many research participants point to the fact that intense competition among freelance journalists for assignments makes collective action, such as strikes or other forms of labour resistance nearly impossible. Also, a notion of individual independence which is part of journalistic professionalism – embodied in the metaphor of the freelance reporter as a lone wolf (Cohen, 2016) – makes journalists as a professional group traditionally suspicious of collective causes and solidarity. This older tendency ties in and reinforces the newer neoliberal disempowering of unions and suppression of collectivist impulses more generally. This neoliberal assemblage coalesces around the notion of

freedom as individualization, as the absence of group constraints. Evidence of labour dissent and labour resistance is mostly limited to individual action among my research participants, such as negotiating pay or copyright terms with editors one-on-one or crossing out contract language.

As far as national differences in union protections are concerned, the comparison between Canada and Germany points to the continued relevance of national varieties of capitalism in shaping post-Fordist regimes, rather than a unified neoliberalism undermining labour politics around the world. For example, German unions offer legal representation to freelance whereas Canadian unions limit support to contract advice and grievance support. Also, an exception to German competition law allows unions to represent freelance journalists in negotiations with newspaper publishers in order to agree on mandatory fee structures. Thus, unions can mediate the impact of precarious journalistic labour on journalists, depending on the services they offer, and the powers accorded to them by national legal frame works. The latter are the subject of the next section.

7.4. Neoliberalism as policy program – Journalists as citizens

In this section, I explore the relationship of journalists with the state and their position as citizens. While the general retreat of traditional welfare state supports is clear for both Germany and Canada, policy roll back and roll out develops unevenly and depends on national context and tradition rather than unified neoliberal restructuring, as shown in chapter 4.

For example, in 2015, Germany guaranteed a minimum wage for workers across economic sectors in Germany, with few exceptions. The minimum wage explicitly includes interns whose internship lasts at least three months and who are not performing an internship as mandatory part of a formal educational program. Most German interns I interviewed (before the introduction of the minimum wage, in 2011) received a small honorarium of a few hundred Euros per month even then, whether interning as part of educational programs or not. However, the amount was usually not enough to cover their living costs which had to be covered by parents or additional jobs. In contrast, right now,

interns qualifying for the minimum wage would receive a wage of about 1400 Euros per month.

In Canada, minimum wage for interns outside of educational programs is only mandatory - and unpaid internships outside of educational programs only illegal - in the minority of provinces, for example, in Ontario and British Columbia. The Canadian interns interviewed were not paid for internships during educational programs but received small honorariums for internships outside of such programs or after finishing their postsecondary education.

While Canada, in 2011, has opened its parental leave benefits program to self-employed citizens across sectors, participation in the program is restrictive in terms of income thresholds and expensive, as my Canadian research participants point out. Thus, plans of my Canadian research participants around having children did not include signing up for this program. In this instance, formally increasing social security for freelance journalists has not resulted in actual improvement. Having children is thus perceived both in Canada and Germany – where no policy exists for parental leave among the self-employed - as a private choice and risk. One participant noted that the lack of supports makes it close to impossible for freelancers, especially single women, to have children.

In Germany, legislation designed to recognize and protect the unique contributions of artists and journalists to society results in freelance journalists – who are assumed to be especially vulnerable to precarity – having access to statutory health, long-term care and pension insurance. In Canada, the precarity in freelance journalistic labour is not ameliorated through a similar program. Apart from basic medical services covered by public health insurance, no structural support is offered and most of my research participants in Canada go without extended health and dental insurance, hoping that extensive medical needs will not arise for themselves or their families.

The Artists' Social Fund in Germany, while continuing to exist, is under fire from industry and suffers from intermittent instability of government funding as enrollment has increased exponentially over the past years, with more and more journalists working as freelancers. It is becoming more difficult to gain access to and remain in this unique,

government-funded social insurance scheme, as the Fund performs frequent audits of freelance journalist to see if they still qualify for membership.

In Canada, freelance journalists whose income is more than $30,000 a year, need to register their own business with Canada revenue agency and start to collect taxes from clients that they later forward to the government. Some Canadian research participants' income was too low to reach the income threshold. Or they choose not to register despite making more than the threshold because they did not want to pay taxes on an already low income or wanted to avoid the bureaucratic work involved in running a business.

German freelance journalists do not usually register a business - unless they officially mix commercial work with journalism. None of my German research participants had chosen this path, although many of them are performing significant amounts of non-journalistic work. They prefer defining themselves as part of the "free professions" so that they can take advantage of membership in the Artists Social Fund, as outlined above. German law distinguishes between so-called "free professions" on the one hand and trades or businesses on the other. Among the latter are self-employed trades people such as plumbers or restaurant owners, whose primary goal is assumed to be making a profit. Among the former are medical doctors, translators, accountants, architects and journalists who are self-employed, and – while earning an income is assumed to be a goal as well – use highly intellectual skills for their work and have a university education or equivalent (Sebstaendig.de, n. d.). "Free professions" are guided by civil, not commercial law, and have lower bureaucratic and tax burdens.

7.5. Neoliberalism as governmentality – Journalists as subjects

In this section, I explore the subjectivity of the freelance journalists and interns I interviewed. My research participants are not only workers or citizens; they not only have relationships with employers and the state but also with their "self". I use Foucault's concept of governmentality as an approach to conceptualize professional subjectivities and forms of agency in neoliberalism.

More precisely, these subjectivities are constructed during short moments or longer, more intricate narrations of professional self-reflection during the research interviews I conducted – which can function as windows onto the different types and degrees of agency available to journalists. My research participants' accounts of journalistic labour range between the two poles of "entrepreneurial self" and "ethical self" (Dilts, 2011), with the former subjectivity tending to align with and the latter tending to undermine or at least question neoliberalism. For most research participants, both are present in their everyday work experiences. This demonstrates that journalistic agency in neoliberalism partially resonates with and partially contradicts neoliberal logics rather than consisting of their wholesale embrace or rejection.

My research participants' stories articulate different modes of agency in the face of deteriorating working conditions and intense competition for journalistic assignments with other freelancers. Certain coping strategies fall within the notion of the entrepreneurial self as it appears in Foucault's account human capital theory. As outlined in chapter 3, this implies thinking of oneself as an entrepreneur or investor. This is exemplified in several research participants who describe how they divide up their professional persona into acquisition, marketing, controlling and production departments, running these at changing capacities as required by work flow, or speak of acting as their own lawyers, tax advisors, and accountants. Performing the work of these multiple job descriptions, which entail paid as well as unpaid work, is not necessarily enjoyable but perceived as necessary to succeed as freelance journalists. The effort to allocate micro-investments of time, energy or material resources wherever one expects the highest return at any given point in time is clear among my research participants.

Additionally, some develop their professional services as a brand to increase visibility among clients. For example, they print their name on pens they give out to clients or pay personal visits to editors to introduce themselves. Networking and relationship building with decision-makers in the media rank high on the list of activities among interns and freelancers. These are activities which are unpaid but planned and executed carefully by my research participants – during events such as casual after-work get-togethers, workshops, or media award ceremonies – to secure future reward in terms of work and income, to tilt uncertainty in their favour. Some but not all of my research participants have to overcome inner resistance to engage in networking and

self-marketing, with some participants noting that advertising is traditionally perceived as negative or even antipode to journalistic professional identity.

As part of policing their own efficiency as entrepreneurs, the freelance journalists I talked to try to consciously control their emotional states, such as fear of not finding enough work or not being able to afford health care. They write post-it notes to themselves in order to cheer themselves up, monitor internet browsing that is not work-related, and work with weekly or monthly income targets in mind that they need to reach in order to become or remain financially sustainable. Efforts to acquire assignments are intensified accordingly.

One participant explicitly frames journalism as nothing more and nothing less than a regular business service, similar to those provided by notary publics or home renovation companies. This journalist also switches topics as required by the market, writing about technology in the past, before the 2008 financial crisis, and now about oil, gas, and concrete. These topics are now in high demand by news outlets and other clients. The participant invests his skills and energies in issues that are more likely to offer regular work and decent compensation, thus promising a return on investment.

Thus far we have discussed subjectivities that largely adopt the logic of an entrepreneurial self as the concept of subjectivity preferred by neoliberalism. However, as hinted before, this process is never complete and not one of my research participants' stories of journalistic labour maps neatly and fully onto such a subjectivity. My participants' subjectivities are, to a greater or lesser extent, at the same time composed of components that indicate an "ethical self". The latter is understood, with Foucault, as self-care - which finds expression in self-reflection on one's position and practices within a given environment, as well as recognition of the preferred mode of self-governance implied by a given regime. Self-care in this sense is ultimately the capacity for critique. The interns and freelance journalists I interviewed indeed "think self-consciously about the production" of the particular "regime of truth" they find themselves in (Dilts, 2011, p. 145), which is neoliberalism.

Rather than blindly acting out subjectivities encouraged under this regime, they adopt and incorporate ideas and actions that do not squarely fit into or even resist neoliberal logics. This is obvious, for example, in those research participants who

describe entrepreneurial efforts in their journalistic labour as necessary but emotionally and mentally draining. A critical resource and reference point that helps with the above-mentioned self-reflection as basis for ethical reasoning and potential resistance to neoliberal logics, is their professional identity as journalists.

For some, the institution of journalism under neoliberalism is becoming untenable as a source of income and as the realization of a particular professional ethos. Insisting on a subjectivity that sees itself as more than a mini-investor, as more than "a machine producing an income" (Dilts, 2011, p. 145), some of the journalists use the subject position of an ethical self to frame why they are leaving or consider leaving journalism. For them, this means leaving an industry and occupation that requires too much entrepreneurial and self-promotional effort which is perceived not only as exhausting but antithetical to journalism. Or the participants suffer under the constant tension between journalistic work and work that feels like a violation of journalistic professional identity, such as public relations.

The necessity to be entrepreneurial in combination with a lack of stable and well-paid work is driving young journalists to look for careers outside of journalism. After many internships, unsuccessful applications for permanent jobs, or trying to make a living through freelancing, some my research participants had decided on or were considering alternative career paths. Such paths include those that do not neatly align with an entrepreneurial ethos based on narrow return-on-investment thinking and retains a connection to the journalistic ethos of independence – such as pursuing a doctoral degree in the humanities or founding a social enterprise dedicated to media education. Other participants, especially those at the beginning of their job search in journalism, acknowledge that work in advertising, public relations, or copy writing is easier to find better paid, and will be likely be chosen for these reasons in case job in journalism cannot be found, demonstrating how the entrepreneurial and the ethical self struggle with one another.

Of the freelance journalists interviewed with many years of experience in journalism, none had decided to leave journalism, despite its precarity, but many vocalized this as possibility, should working conditions further deteriorate. What keeps many of them from leaving journalism is their enjoyment derived from journalistic work, based on types and degrees of autonomy and independence rarely found in "corporate

work". Some frame their decision to keep working as a journalist as surrendering luxuries such as buying new clothing, going out with friends, or owning a house – perceived as mainstream definitions of success – for professional enjoyment and a sense of purpose in life.

One way to keep doing journalistic work in the current environment is to subsidize it with other jobs or assignments which all of my research participants did to varying degrees. Against the background of these other jobs, the values and practices connected to journalistic professional identity are foregrounded especially forcefully, as something that is not in tune with the subjectivity of the neoliberal self. This journalistic professionalism is either in tension with or peacefully coexists with work that is not performed for media organizations but other clients. More precisely, the journalists and interns I interviewed engage in non-journalistic work that can be divided into four categories of which only one leads to clashes with a journalistic professional identity.

First of all, some journalists hold what they call "money jobs" – such as positions as secretaries, translators, or sales assistants in retail - that make up for the fact that internships or freelance journalistic work often does not pay enough to make a living. Second, some of my research participants work regularly or irregularly as teachers in postsecondary education, teaching writing or journalism courses. Some have held full-time teaching positions in the past. Third, several of my freelance journalists are writing their own books, sometimes debt-financed or cross-financed by other activities. Others are regularly commissioned book projects, many of which pay very well. and align well with a journalistic ethos.

These three categories of jobs - either clearly *dissimilar to journalism by nature* and unrelated to doing journalistic work, such as administrative jobs or teaching, or *similar* in skills and techniques required, such as book writing - do not cause my research participants to question or defend their journalistic integrity. The same goes for content prepared for organizations that serves non-profit or largely public causes such as communications work for churches, government agencies, or museums.

This relaxed attitude towards additional jobs changes when journalists perform work that most perceive to have an *ethos dissimilar to journalism* – as it serves narrow corporate rather than public goals – and is, at the same time, *similar in the application of*

journalistic skills and techniques. Work falling into this category is the creation of public relations and advertising materials, custom corporate magazines or reports written for a corporation's clients, customers, or employees, corporate newsletters, tourist guides or travel catalogues, articles for trade magazines or reports for industry associations.

Especially when it comes to these types of work – what many of my research participants simply term "corporate work" - the interns and freelancers tend to defend their journalistic integrity or otherwise acknowledge a clashing of two ethoses. They feel the push and pull in journalistic labour in the nexus of neoliberalism. Working conditions push journalists away from working for news organizations and pull them towards jobs or assignments serving narrow corporate goals. This reflects the up-valuing/down-valuing dynamic at the core of neoliberalism: the promotion of economic measurement and evaluation in all realms of human life and the simultaneous undermining of political-normative values and practices, such as journalism.

There are three sub-sets of subjectivities embraced in this situation where journalists remain in journalism as an occupation, even when faced with the many struggles involved in such a decision, but also perform non-journalistic work.

The first is a subjectivity that accepts low pay and precarity in journalism as the price there is to pay for doing meaningful work that allows for a large degree of autonomy over content created as a public service. Some journalists in my sample do very little "corporate work" as it takes time away from doing journalism and is perceived to be in opposition to a journalistic ethos. They struggle the most financially.

Second, some journalists remain in journalism for now, despite associated risks and penalties, and despite only being able to perform journalism part-time since it needs to be subsidized through other work – which results in juggling different jobs and mental commitments as the price there is to pay for continuing to do journalism. The non-journalistic work includes public relations and similar lines of work that are perceived to contradict a journalistic ethos but are more lucrative and often pay by the hour which makes income more predictable than in journalism. In order to protect journalistic integrity, strategies such as geographic or weekly separation between the two realms of work are used to erect boundaries and mark two different professional commitments – of which journalism is framed as the clearly preferred one.

Both subjectivities entail freelance journalists and interns extracting themselves from behaviours entirely in tune with the neoliberalism's encouraged subjectivity, namely the entrepreneurial self. They thereby help resist the neoliberal undermining of journalism as politico-normative practice and its subjugation to economic evaluation as ultima ratio for gauging journalism's success, legitimacy, and credibility. A dedication to public service and independence as part of journalistic professionalism grudgingly coexists with but trumps entrepreneurial considerations.

On the other hand, intrinsic motivation as part of journalistic professionalism, is also a major benefit to media organizations who can keep payment and security low for contingently employed journalists while never running out of a reserve army of workers. One can draw a connection here with care work, another type of work supporting society at large and therefore not naturally aligned with neoliberal logics. Care work is often defined as a "labour of love" that makes it hard for workers in this sector to measure reward by return on investment of their energies and skills (England, 2005).

A third subjectivity exists among journalists reacting to difficult working conditions. At first glance, it shifts the emphasis towards the entrepreneurial self, even if this shift is somewhat painful and involuntary, and away from commitments that point beyond return-on-investment thinking. Some of my research participants, in their narratives, rather than acknowledge, are eager to erase the boundaries between "corporate work" and journalism. They work in both realms extensively if less and less in journalism due to lack of assignments and low pay. They construct journalistic professional identity by emphasizing that they use the very same journalistic skills and values to write articles for magazines that they use to prepare texts for "corporate" clients. Some freelance journalists foreground that working with corporate clients often entails generous budgets and fairer modes of payment, namely by the hour which includes time to interview, research and write a piece rather than pay only for the finished product as in journalism. However, importantly, it also entails, from the experience of many research participants, often a more respectful professional relationship in which the work of freelance journalists is explicitly appreciated. This line of argument by my research participants implies that the journalistic ethos - rather than being compromised by corporate work - is being extended into the corporate realm. Thinking through this logic, one could interpret these journalists as even more radically

embracing an ethical self than other journalists, as they infuse the corporate realm with journalistic values such as accuracy, independence and public service.

Alternatively, this group of journalists can be interpreted as representing an expansion of the entrepreneurial self in journalism, as more and more non-journalistic work is necessary to subsidize their journalism as they try to uphold their journalistic integrity. The stories of my research participants indicate that corporate clients often tailor and revise the texts ordered, according to their interests, and conflicts arise when working for a corporation that one later has to cover as a journalist. However, the transfer of journalistic skills and values into the corporate realm, such as public relations or advertising, can also be considered a possible benefit. Public relations materials created by journalists might be more infused with a public interest orientation and portray the issues at hand more accurately. These types of "mixed bag" journalists are more likely than the other journalistic subjectivities mentioned to explicitly call themselves "writer" rather than "journalist", indicating that their adherence to a traditional journalistic identity is rather weak or more receptive to modification. At the same time, one participant underlined that she does not consider herself a "copy writer" which she clearly saw an activity inferior to writing or journalism.

Finally, while largely working alone and competing with countless other freelance journalists known or unknown to them or assignments, the desire for a different way of doing freelance journalistic labour is tangible among my research participants. They long for togetherness and cooperation but barriers to realizing this are perceived as strong. Competition is the principle mechanism by which social activity and progress is imagined and organized in neoliberalism. However, alternative ways of organizing journalistic labour are not only possible but already exist and lead to satisfaction and financial stability for journalists. Two of my participants work in a so-called independent journalists' office where work is based on a model of cooperation and mutual aid in acquiring and completing journalistic assignments. They most clearly reject an entrepreneurial self and embrace an ethical one, not so much by using journalistic professional identity as a reference point, but by more fundamentally embracing an alternative mode of organizing journalistic labour that is out of tune with neoliberalism, namely cooperation rather than competition.

We can conclude that adopting subjectivities associated with an “entrepreneurial self” does not mean that journalists, in a simple and straightforward sense, capitulate to and directly bolster neoliberal logics. However, we can also conclude that choosing subject positions that challenge neoliberal logics does not necessarily or automatically amount to a large-scale or lasting change of that logic itself. And lastly, ethical and enterprising components of an emerging or established journalistic professional identity are not mutually exclusive but appear as elements of the same subjectivity.

Overall, the stories that engage with the non-journalistic assignments and jobs in the lives of journalists foreground the tenacity of traditional journalistic identity, understood as combining autonomy over content, effort at truth-telling, and the idea of public service (even if it is not strictly a watchdog role) (Deuze, 2005). At the same time, journalistic professional identity becomes fragile and hybridized as freelance journalists put on different non-journalistic hats in their daily working lives, in order to subsidize their journalistic work – and increasingly engage in self-branding to promote their journalism.

7.6. Disassembling journalism, assembling neoliberalism – and reassembling journalism differently

Following Will Davies definition of neoliberalism, we can understand it, broadly, as an effort to disenchant politics by economics, as a tendency to deemphasize political-normative values and practices and instead promote competition and economic valuation (and, as a necessary consequence, undermine collectivity and validate individualization) as a way to organize all social activity. In this vision, the media and journalism produce ‘goods’ or ‘services’ comparable to institutions such as the church, the family, unions, and non-profit organizations. All of these, unsurprisingly, suffer particularly under neoliberalism as their defining feature, first of all and foundationally, is some notion of society at large or contribution to the common good, beyond or apart from individual benefit and economic profit. All of these have historically provided coherent visions that were and are alternatives to neoliberalism. These are, for instance, mutual care and cooperation, spiritual and ethical orientation, environmental well-being, collective representation or social and economic justice, with profit accumulation as either absent, secondary, or complementary to these primary goals.

Honing in on journalism's place in particular in this neoliberal nexus, journalism is not in crisis or devalued per se, but journalism as a paid profession with a public interest motivation and funded by news organizations is in crisis. This is one major result of this dissertation. The reason for this crisis is the privatization and simultaneous corporatization of the journalistic ethos, as I will outline throughout this section.

This dissertation argues, in line with current theorists of neoliberalism, that neoliberalization is powerful because it is a complex, often ambiguous and always multidirectional process that cannot easily be disentangled or generalized. It proceeds by integrating – or even more loosely, assembling - neoliberal logics and those not originally or traditionally neoliberal or even opposed to neoliberalism. I argue that the work experiences of casually employed journalists reflect such a complex account of neoliberalism, in particular, their narratives articulate what I term a 'downgrading/up-valuing dynamic'. The latter leads to experiences of devaluation in journalistic work on the one hand and simultaneous experiences of validation and interpellation on the other. While employment by or freelancing for media organizations becomes rarer, is low-paid and unstable, new opportunities are created for journalists to use their skills and make money.

One important manifestation of this up-valuing/down-valuing dynamic surfaced during the research interviews, namely the perception among my participants that some content and some publications do not seem to be sustainable anymore to produce – such as long-form journalism in general and arts and culture journalism in particular - while others are thriving, such as house and home magazines, special interest magazines, fashion and real estate magazines. Additionally, not only higher pay but fairer payment models make public relations and similar work more attractive than journalism, such as pay by the hour versus by assignment. Recognizing this, young journalists are tempted to leave journalism and move into these professional domains.

Moreover, there is the tendency for corporations, associations, wealthy individuals and families, as well as churches and non-profits to hire magazine or newspaper companies to produce custom content of high calibre, informed by journalistic skill and ethos. They do this in pursuit of narrow, often corporate goals. Thus, once more, journalistic skills and products are in high demand - but not by media organizations and not in formats and genres typical of journalism. Rather they are in

demand when packaged as corporate, not-for profit, or otherwise non-journalistic communication.

This dissertation foregrounds that the upholding of a public service ethos as part of journalistic professionalism increasingly rests on the narrow shoulders of an army of individualized freelancers - many of whom earn more income from and spend most of their time on non-journalistic/corporate work, or, if they are pure journalists, live precariously and forego health care or consider not having children in order to pursue their career.

The public service ethos among journalists contains an affective component. As the research interviews demonstrate, journalists are deeply wedded to this ethos, although they only implicitly articulate it, mostly when demarcating their journalistic work from what they call 'corporate work'. Therefore, self-exploitation does not just relate to freelance journalists incited to use their own time and money to produce journalism (material resources). The concept extends to the mobilization of their mental and ethical resources. The have to mentally negotiate the conflicts that emerge from doing corporate and non-corporate work at the same time.

Thus, under neoliberalism, we are facing the privatization of journalists' public service ethos which means that individual journalists' are faced with upholding this ethos on their own. The protection of democracy is at the bottom of the public service ethos as the ultimate if often implicit motivator for journalistic work. But from the perspective of my research participants, this is no longer an effort supported by the state or media corporations who underpay freelance journalists and exploit their copyrights as authors. It has become a side-effect of journalistic work; an optional add-on. It is up to individual workers to infuse their work with this ethos – or not – when it comes to producing journalism.

Conversely and paradoxically, it is exactly this journalistic or public service ethos that is activated, coveted, enlisted, coopted and rewarded (financially and otherwise) by non-media corporations when they hire freelance journalists. Journalists produce advertising, corporate newsletters, ghostwriting, and other communications that serve narrow corporate or other strategic goals. The public service ethos attributed to journalists is what clients assigning such work seek in order to imbue with legitimacy and

credibility the purpose they pursue (selling a product, creating a positive public image, etc.). A journalistic voice in the writing or audiovisual material commissioned serves to increase the perceived validity and authenticity of the content among target audiences.

Corporations enlist and reward the advanced research, fact-checking and story-telling skills of journalists and their ability to include perspectives on society at large, independent thinking, balanced accounts of events, and even modest critiques of whatever the paying client is trying to communicate. This is the reason why corporations tend to favour freelance journalists over advertising agencies or copy writers when it comes to commissioning work requiring symbolic labour, as observed by my research participants. The journalistic ethos is believed to help distract from the fact that the purpose of the article or video produced is private or commercial, not public.

Therefore, we are facing not only a privatization of the public service ethos but a simultaneous corporatization of that ethos, as demonstrated by my study of freelance journalists and interns. As it is abandoned by media organizations and made the responsibility of individual freelancers, this ethos is captured and enlisted by a new set of organizations that, in a way, offer it a new institutional 'home' and try to benefit from it. Neoliberal and journalistic logics intersect and interlink, with profit-oriented corporations co-opting – rather than attacking or eliminating – journalistic professional norms and ethics to further their own goals.

The enlisting of the journalistic ethos by corporate players, however, cannot work in the long run, as these corporations – when assigning work to journalists - treasure and cultivate something that they undermine at the same time. There is no friction-free transition of the journalistic ethos into realms that are foreign to it in nature. A public service ethos cannot ultimately survive in the corporate realm because it originally feeds off a distance to or even critique of the corporate realm. My research demonstrates that what is appreciated about journalists in their commercial work is their journalistic approach - whose credibility with 'message receivers' resides in its rejection to openly endorse particular perspectives. A public service ethos cannot genuinely endorse narrow, private goals without getting damaged in the process, without, in fact, becoming something else.

The working conditions and professional identities of freelance journalists and interns, as examined in this dissertation, are one microcosm of many in which neoliberalization plays out. If the boundaries continue to blur between fact-based independent journalism and strategic communication that has little ambition to be truthful, as the latter instrumentalizes and appropriates the former – then a distinction between the two spheres might become impossible at some point. The current discussion about fake news in the wake of the Trump presidency as well as increasing priority accorded, by humans as well as algorithms, to compelling rather than the accurate and socially relevant information are a case in point. The implications of such convergence for journalism's role in sustaining democracy are alarming.

Put succinctly, the principle opposition between journalism and neoliberalism - neoliberalism undermines political-normative practices and values of which journalism is one – is eroded through increasing parallelism at the level of logics. The interlinking of neoliberal and journalistic logics – through the merging of journalistic and non-journalistic work and professional identities, for example – weakens journalism's normative role as a force that sustains democracies and hold power accountable.

Nevertheless, as outlined in the empirical analysis, there are possibilities for renewal in the return to journalism's unstable and non-standardized historic roots. It was a profession often performed part-time alongside other jobs and for multiple clients or publishers, before and still during the rise of industrialized journalism, standardized employment relationships, and the emergence of mass audiences. Both dangers of exploitation as well as opportunities for emancipation have characterized the working lives of journalists since journalism's inception as an occupation about three hundred years ago. For example, as scholars (Cohen, 2016; Örnebring, 2010) outline, avoiding the standard employment relationship with dependency on one single employer – by working as a freelancer - was historically a strategy to retain control over the news production process and the terms of exploitation of one's work.

We can interpret the current return to a pluralization of ways to organize and fund journalistic labour as an opening for towards less hierarchical and more collective forms of labour. This might lead to financially sustainable and satisfying work in journalism that is also less structurally hostile to a journalistic ethos. Alongside the two dominant modes of journalistic labour – namely full-time employment in big media organizations or,

conversely, work as lone freelancer – we see a rise in news start-ups, journalism co-operatives, independent journalist offices, government- or industry-initiated collective funds for investigative journalism, as well as crowdsourcing and crowdfunding initiatives online (Hunter, 2016; Usher, 2017, Wagemans, Witschge & Deuze, 2017). While none of these exist outside neoliberal capitalism and some may not automatically lead to better work environments or better journalism in the long term, at the very least, with Will Davies (2014), such pluralization is one way to bar an easy or blanket 'commensurabilization' of journalism with neoliberal logics.

Out of these examples, modes of labour based on common activities or common ownership are particularly promising when it comes to thinking about pathways out of neoliberalism. Cooperative labour regimes – for example, as practiced in cooperative journalists' offices by two German journalists in my sample - are living laboratories for a different society; studying these allow us to see what alternative types of working, owning, and living together are possible, even within neoliberalism.

8. Contributions

8.1. Comparing contexts for journalistic labour in Germany and Canada

Exploring working conditions in journalism in comparative perspective has foregrounded the presence of neoliberalism as a structuring element in both countries. However, the analysis also indicates the variability and geographic adaptability of neoliberalism as a policy program and labour regime. As far as differences between the two countries are concerned, the experiences of journalistic labour align with differences between the Anglo-Saxon (Canada) and ordoliberal versions (Germany) of neoliberalism. The German model of organizing or advocating for casual journalistic workers offers more robust support.

As far as professional associations and unions are concerned, this model is based on specializing in the needs of journalists as a particular group of workers. This is in contrast to including journalists in sector-wide (as in cultural industries) or cross-sectoral representation of worker interests, as we find it in Canadian organizations representing the interests of freelance journalists.

All of the organizations representing freelance journalists in Germany, big and old or small and more recently founded, emphasize that they limit membership to those working primarily in journalism or those whose work is primarily journalistic. They have approval mechanisms that require evidence from aspiring members proving such a role. At the same time, PR work, for example, is rarely prohibited. Also, all of my interviewees performed non-journalistic work, some regularly and at times more than journalistic work, but all had an active membership in a union or professional association. This suggests membership criteria are not always strictly applied or enforced. The criteria seem designed to not necessarily exclude journalists who only work in journalism part-time – it is in the interest of unions to increase membership – but to limit membership to those working in journalism.

More recently, smaller professional organizations who, unlike above unions, offer membership exclusively to journalists who work as freelancers –not those in permanent employment - have been founded. One example is the association Freischreiber. Associations such as this are perceived as more agile and successful in publicly demonstrating the particular importance of freelance journalism for society and flagging the deteriorating working conditions of freelance journalists. However, these do not offer legal representation, just contract advice through lawyers.

The bundle of services offered by Canadian organizations to freelance journalists is composed of general advocacy efforts, training and events for members as well as different types of insurances designed to help individual freelance workers reduce risk. The types of insurances for sale are an indication of the kinds of responsibilities that (self-employed) workers are supposed to take on today in Canada; these are risks externalized and offloaded onto freelance workers and organizations that represent them, by employers and the state. Also, in Canada, freelance journalists cannot access extended health and dental insurance through employers, due to their status as self-employed workers. But freelancers can now sign up for the plans that unions and professional associations, trying to fill this gap in support, have started to offer.

Canadian associations and unions for freelance journalists offer liability insurance and error and omission insurance to freelance journalists, responding to the increasing tendency of media organizations to seek indemnification from freelancers in case of legal challenges arising from their reporting, as noted in the research interviews. Thus, the Canadian system is a system largely free of state intervention. It is an opt-in system relying on recent and relatively small organizations or freelance chapters in unions to support freelance journalists as workers. These organizations provide contract advice and a bundle of optional insurances for sale at membership rates – which freelance journalists can customize to their budgets and perceptions of risk.

The German model of regulating freelance journalistic labour thus is more substantial and offers automatic legal representation and social security protection, especially health insurance, upon enrollment in the Artists' Social Fund and upon becoming a union member, respectively. In Canada, such risk protection has to be bought and claimed from insurances. Special legislation in Germany– as in the case of the Artists' Social Fund – mandates social protection. Copyright law emphasizes the

need for “decent remuneration” of freelance journalists and artists. In both cases, the German state uses the argument that these groups of workers contribute to society at large but are more vulnerable and less well-paid than other professional groups.

The 2002 law in Germany regarding copyright regulation stating that “decent compensation” must be sought for journalists and artists paved the way in Germany for what amounts to a small and limited albeit notable exception from competition law (which generally forbids collective bargaining for self-employed workers). Namely, based on the law, German journalism unions are able to negotiate, on behalf of their freelance journalist members, with the association of newspaper publishers. Unions and publishers can sign agreements over fee schedules and copyright regimes that then apply to assignments given to freelance journalists. In Canada, it was more class action law suits initiated by an individual freelance journalist, Heather Robertson, that have shaped the environment for copyright arrangements between authors and those that buy their works, namely media organizations. Thus, copyright issues have been addressed by the state in Germany to, at least formally, seek more balance between freelancers and media organization. But in Canada, it was freelance journalists themselves who have challenged copyright regimes unfavorable to them, pointing to a greater reluctance in Canada to take state action to protect workers.

8.1.1. National contexts as reflected in the journalists’ experience

As a reflection of a more intensified version of neoliberalization in Canada, the interns and journalists interviewed in that jurisdiction generally perceive higher levels of precarity than the German research participants. For example, Canadian interns in my sample routinely had to forego compensation for internships whereas German participants usually received at least a few hundred Euros, even before the introduction of the minimum wage in Germany in 2015. This is understandable, given the corporate tradition of industrial relations in Germany and the more adversarial relationship traditionally between capital and labour in Canada.

These two different traditions of industrial relations might also be reflected in German newspaper publishers’ agreement, after many years of negotiating with journalism unions, to an official, mandatory fee schedule specifying payment for freelance journalists. Although my research participants pointed out that the fee

schedule was often not adhered to by media organizations, some of them enlisted the help of their journalism union to enforce it. In Canada, unions who represent the interests of freelance journalists do not have the powers to negotiate fees with media organizations and their supports – including health and dental plans, liability or omission insurance – and are thus perceived by my participants as weak or too expensive which is why most of them were not union members. This is in marked contrast to my German participants who were all union members, except for one intern. For example, German journalism unions offer free legal representation of freelance journalists in lawsuits or outside of court. This is one of services that was most appreciated and used by the German freelance journalists and interns I talked to. In contrast, Canadian participants were actively confronted with the question of legal risk, weighing the option of buying private insurance to buffer the risk or shouldering on their own the financial and legal consequences potentially arising from their reporting.

While legal frameworks for press freedom and source protection are similar in Canada and Germany, it is Germany's proactive policy-making to decrease precarity among self-employed artists and journalists that results in working lives characterized by a level of social security among freelance journalists that is at par with employed workers. Whereas my Canadian research participants had to scramble not only cover living costs from their often-low incomes but to put money aside for unexpected health expenses, German participants' felt less acute insecurity and pressure in this regard. The social security scheme of the Artists' Social Fund is a much appreciated and affordable source of support for the German freelance journalists I interviewed, despite increasing attempts by the Fund to make it less accessible.

Furthermore, most of my German research participants were working for public broadcasters in Germany which traditionally pay freelancers much higher fees than print publishers or other companies operating without government funding. The continued generous funding of public broadcasters by the German government explains that financial worries were less pressing among German participants. In contrast, most of my Canadian participants worked for print publishers as their main journalistic clients, thus receiving lower fees, and felt a more pressing need to accept non-journalistic jobs to subsidize their journalism. In addition, media concentration levels in Canada are higher than in Germany. As the Canadian freelancers pointed out, this makes it harder for

freelancers and interns to offer their labour to multiple and competing media outlets, weakening their position to negotiate pay and working conditions. Finally, the principal issues emerging from policy and legal frameworks that were similar for both Canadian and German research participants involve copyright. Although moral rights can by law not be waived by journalists in Germany but can be in Canada, both my German and Canadian research participants experienced difficulty earning income from secondary uses of their work as news organizations increasingly demand all rights in perpetuity. Similarly, parental leave policies are a blind spot in both national frameworks that have especially female freelance journalists facing tough choices, between doing freelance work or having a child. Both Canadian and German participants acknowledge that having children is therefore a private risk whose management requires individual creativity and planning, such as finding a job with maternity benefits or finding a partner with a fixed income. Lastly, one major hurdle to substantially improving work experiences for Canadian and German research participants is barriers to collective bargaining. As antitrust laws and labour laws in Germany and Canada define most self-employed workers as entrepreneurs (like companies), they are generally prevented from seeking arrangements on prices in the form of collective agreements.

8.2. Confirmation of findings in existing studies of contingent journalistic labour

In terms of the contributions to the field of journalism studies, I see the insights offered by the dissertation as two-fold. First, I ask what does journalistic work look and feel like in time where much of it is not practiced anymore in the context of a permanent employment relationship but outside of the newsroom, with the amounts of journalists working in this way likely to increase substantially in the future? By examining this, my dissertation contributes to the growing number of smaller qualitative studies from the UK, Australia, Belgium, Norway, Sweden, the US, and other countries. These studies have begun to map the different aspects of the increasing flexibilization of journalistic labour (Ryan, 2009; Edstrom & Ladendorf, 2012, Das, 2007; Massey & Elmore, 2011; De Cock & De Smaele, 2016; Mathisen, 2017). Thus, although labour can still be considered a thoroughly understudied area within journalism studies (Cohen, 2018), this dissertation is making evidence in this area more robust.

My examination of German and Canadian freelance journalists and interns confirms multiple findings from above studies. For example, journalists face increasing struggles to make ends meet from journalistic work only. Also, as above studies have shown, this results in more of them taking on non-journalistic jobs in public relations or teaching, resulting in role conflicts, professional identity issues, and a struggle to negotiate their own and public normative expectations towards the profession of journalism (Fröhlich, Koch, & Obermaier, 2013; Lahhav, 2008). Furthermore, my dissertation confirms that the lives of journalists in non-standard employment oscillate between freedom and constraints, between autonomy and precarity. This perception of two poles can be found both between accounts of different journalists but also within one and the same account of journalistic work. Flexibility is perceived as a defining feature of contingent journalistic labour and is framed as both an advantage and a disadvantage.

Secondly, apart from this hybrid quality of journalistic work experiences and a general trend to low incomes, there also seems to be a "polarization" among contemporary journalists regarding income, as noted by Örnebring (2010). Among freelance journalists interviewed, there are those who say they are doing very well financially and do not need to take on non-journalistic 'money jobs' - and there are those for whom the latter are a necessity to survive. Lastly, in my study, there are indications that emerging typologies of journalists and freelance journalists more specifically indeed capture dominant categories in the increasing employment and career diversity in journalism. Mathison's (2017) distinction between "idealists" and "entrepreneurs" in freelance journalism applies, to some extent, to my sample of 25 journalists. In my study, too, there are some participants who fall into the first category as defined by Mathison, being mostly journalists who accept low pay for idealistic reasons, and there are those who conceive of their work mainly in terms of business and customers or consumers and are financially better off.

8.3. Changes and continuities in professional identity articulations

Staff journalists with job security and regular, decent incomes have been the source overwhelmingly of existing research on journalistic professionalism (and many other areas in journalism research) - but both the journalists and the journalism

researchers involved have taken for granted rather than interrogated the type of employment relationship or working conditions as a factor potentially shaping professional identity (Örnebring & Conill, 2016).

According to my study, freelance journalists articulate elements of their professional identity as journalists differently from journalists in stable, permanent employment. The basic values of timeliness, independence, truth-telling, and public service (Deuze, 2005) still animate the accounts of journalistic work provided by my research participants. However, they modify and adjust elements of this identity, reflecting their employment situation in various ways. In their articulations of professional identity and values, the freelance journalists I interviewed draw boundaries between themselves and permanently employed colleagues but also journalists who have left journalism and work in corporate communications.

For example, my research participants imply that they have more journalistic integrity than staff journalists, indicating that they might be the "better journalists" in that sense (although their income and working conditions seem to generally be inferior to those of staff journalists): Whereas freelance journalists, as some of my participants say, are careful to not put, professionally, "all eggs in one basket", staff journalists depend economically on one employer, potentially limiting their professional independence or credibility with audiences. This amounts to an inversion of a traditional definition of journalistic professionalism where journalists in standard-employment have relied on their employer to guarantee quality journalism and their independence as professionals (through a regular salary, legal protection, travel budgets, time allocated for longer investigations (Meyerson & David, 2016). In other words, freelance journalists interpret not having a permanent employer as the ultimate demonstration of journalistic integrity and independence (as also found in Ryan, 2009).

Another line of argument implies that freelance journalists who stick with journalism as an occupation, despite deteriorating working conditions and incomes, are ethically superior to ex-journalists who have embraced a more lucrative career path. This is suggested by my research participants when portraying themselves as consciously prioritizing professional fulfillment over financial security, in contrast to friends or colleagues who have left journalism for a "corporate job" to be more materially secure but are now "unhappy".

Two narratives appear among interviewees who work regularly both in journalism and in related realms, such as public relations or other forms of corporate communications. Both narratives articulate an awareness of the normative expectations towards journalists not to engage in public relations, due to journalists' role in serving the public (Ladendorf, 2012). First, some of my interviewees describe how they consciously separate their journalistic from public relations work, including geographic or weekly alternation of jobs. Second, some other freelance journalists I interviewed imply that, for them, working in both realms is unproblematic and they do not really distinguish much between the two types of work.

For them, being a journalist today is not necessarily defined by working primarily in or for news organizations versus other organizations. Rather, being a journalist consists of the application of journalistic techniques and values to the creation of content. Aiming to protect their professional integrity, they point out how they use the same standards of independence and public service orientation in public relations as in journalism. This is confirmed by current research on journalists in Australia who were laid off and forced to look for alternative careers in public relations, as political media advisors, etc. (Sherwood & O'Donnell, 2017). For these journalists as well as those in my study, there is a shift in emphasis from working for news organizations as a primary definer of journalistic professional identity – to journalistic professional practices and values applied to other forms of content, assigned by clients outside of the media industries.

In sum, notions of traditional professional identity are used as a resource to cope with challenges and change in the profession, as confirmed by this study (Witschge & Nygren, 2009; Grubenmann & Meckel, 2017). However, these changes, including the precaritization of journalistic employment, also modify and make more fluid definitions of professional identity. For journalists working in non-standard employment situations and especially those working partially inside and partially outside journalism, professional identity requires ongoing and active negotiation rather than being a rarely articulated but stable reference point that guides daily work routines. The work of "ethical boundary setting" (Ladendorf, 2012) between overlapping professional realms is, in other words, an additional type of labour that casually employed journalists today perform.

8.4. Taking seriously structural conditions of labour in journalism studies

It is increasingly accepted, as outlined earlier, that journalism is not a stable object of study but a field in flux, conditioned by social, cultural, and political-economic forces. For example, studies tend to acknowledge the "uncertain times" (Deuze & Witschge, 2018) or the "restructuring" (Sherwood & O'Donnell, 2017) of the news industry as well as trends such as "individualization" or "flexibilization" (Edstrom & Ladendorf, 2012) as shaping journalism and the work of journalists. Many scholars, following Deuze (2007), refer to Zygmunt Bauman's concept of liquid modernity as capturing the dissolution of traditional social bonds and realms in postmodern societies, to frame changes in journalism (see for example, Paulussen, 2012). Other studies explain developments in journalism, such as deteriorating working conditions, by referring to the global transformation of the media industries, including conglomeration and financialization (such as Winseck & Jin, 2011 or work by McChesney & Nichols, 2010; see also Almiron, 2010).

Fewer authors have explicitly connected the deterioration of working conditions in journalism to neoliberal capitalism and Post-Fordist labour regimes (see Compton & Benedetti, 2010 or Cohen, 2016, for exceptions). This dissertation sees itself as advancing the work commenced by such scholarship, affirming that journalism studies needs to continue to move from simply acknowledging to precisely capturing the nature of change, uncertainty, or even crisis in media production and media work.

This dissertation uses neoliberalization as a conceptual lens that unpacks the broader political-economic formation shaping journalism today, through examining homologies as well as contradictions between neoliberal logics and journalism. In doing so, I have been able to crystallize under one conceptual umbrella aspects of journalistic labour thus far studied separately, such as journalists' relationship with employers, with the state, and their professional identities. By outlining how the global devaluation of news labour is entangled on multiple levels with neoliberalization, I confront the "orthodoxy of journalistic detachment" (Carlson, Robinson, Lewis & Berkowitz, 2018, p. 11) assumed by older, more traditional journalism scholarship - and affirm the need to understand how exactly social, political, and economic contexts reconfigure the communicative power of the media (Deuze & Witschge, 2018).

8.5. Adding agency to critical political economy framings of freelance journalism[6]

While adding a thorough consideration of political-economic conditions of possibility for journalistic work to the journalism studies literature, the contribution to critical political economy framings of freelance journalistic labour lies in re-directing attention to the agency and power of journalists as individuals, for example, by demonstrating the resilience and mediating role of professional journalistic values in difficult times.

The Marxist political economy perspective interprets the working conditions of journalists under neoliberalism mostly as a result of an ongoing project of class domination. Labour conditions in the media are seen as shaped by the conscious efforts of "ruthless media capitalists" (Cohen, 2016, p. x) who extract surplus value from workers, in this case, freelance journalists, and download the risks of media production onto individual workers. Cohen (2016) frames freelance journalists as workers in their relationship with employers or clients, but less as citizens in their relationship with the state, or people attached to norms and practices of specific journalistic professionalism.

As far as their role as workers in a post-Fordist economy is concerned, my findings broadly confirm those by Cohen in her study of Canadian freelance journalists, in terms of their precarious working conditions. This includes struggles to make a living off journalism alone, and a far-reaching lack of ability to challenge copyright regimes that privilege employers and make it difficult for journalists to fully exploit their own works.

Cohen indicates that the reason freelance journalists enjoy their work despite low to modest incomes and general precariousness might lie in their inability to see through labour-capital relations of exploitation: "The organization of freelance work prevents writers from recognizing that they face common challenges linked to structural conditions" (Cohen, 2016, p. 111). While Cohen does not explicitly claim that this is an instance of false consciousness, blocking journalists' ability to recognize that they have

[6] Parts of this section were first published in: Gollmitzer, M. (2018). Writer's Rights: Freelance Journalism in the Digital Age by N. Cohen. *Canadian Journal of Labour Studies: Labour/Le travail*, *8*(1), 308-310.

internalized the interests of the ruling class erroneously as their own, such a statement comes very close to this. If freelance journalism is contextualized in a notion of neoliberalism as a continuation of an ongoing project of class domination, there is very little room to accord agency to individual journalists.

Consequently, Cohen is not able to explain why the freelance journalists in her study, as well as those in most other research exploring the working conditions of freelance journalists, consistently emphasize how satisfying their work is for them – and why they continue to pursue this line of work, despite it being so poorly paid and unpredictable. In the same vein, Cohen's observation that "corporate work" such as public relations usually pays significantly better than journalism is critical but not explored or theorized further. Obviously, "journalism's precarity penalty" (2016, p. 232) which Cohen portrays as a major feature of journalistic work does not apply to all freelance writing or freelance work. There does not seem to be a "public relations penalty". This raises the question why the freelance journalists in Cohen's study continue to pursue journalism when there is other work is more readily available to them, that is somewhat similar to journalism and requires a similar skill set - but offers better pay and is often more predictable? When freelance journalists are conceptualized exclusively as workers -- scarcely different from other types of workers in their experiences and their needs -- then their particular professional identity or ethos cannot be recognized as a factor that mediates perceptions of labour and as a potential resource for resisting neoliberal logics.

Lastly, Cohen's analysis leaves open the question why, even if there exists far-reaching fragility and instability in many types of cultural labour today, a bifurcation exists between work that is valued and other work that is devalued. Strangely, it is work less attractive to journalists – namely non-journalistic, corporate work – that offers better working conditions. As this dissertation has shown, one reason lies in the paradoxical nature of neoliberal capitalism whose foundational logic is two-fold: it promotes economic measurement and efficiency in all realms of social, political, and cultural life while at the same time broadly deemphasizing political-normative values and practices. This aspect of neoliberal regimes makes understandable the phenomenon observed by Cohen but not conceptualized as such: the undermining of journalism as a political-

normative practice as well as its flipside, namely the 'up-valuing' of writing that serves a narrow corporate purpose, be it increasing financial or symbolic capital.

8.6. Contribution to the broader literature on precarious labour

Beyond the realm of journalism studies, the current study adds to the prolific scholarship from various disciplines that traces contemporary labour conditions and the growing precarity large groups of workers experience across economic sectors. For example, in line with this study's findings about journalists, for creative workers, insecure employment has become just as normalized as the subsidizing "day jobs" they hold alongside activities designed to improve their chances of eventually entering the creative industries. Trade union initiatives addressing precarious labour and "flexploitation" are not bound to gain much traction among such workers (see, for example, Morgan, Wood, Nelligan, Wilson & Ebert, 2013). Concepts such as "hope labour" (Kuehn & Corrigan, 2013) resonate not just with interns' experiences in the news industry but many types of voluntary, uncompensated social production online that is commercially exploited by private companies across industries.

Moreover, increasing amounts of unpaid labour such as self-branding, self-marketing, and excessive networking as part of ongoing job search efforts are required of many workers today, not just journalists (Wittel, 2001). Such activities are emblematic of what Guy Standing has called the new class of the precariat (Standing, 2011). This is a social class of well-educated, often young or middle-aged people caught in an ongoing cycle of unpredictable and intermittent work, regularly including under-or unpaid work time. Furthermore, entrepreneurialism, risk-taking, and individualized understandings of professional success or failure are as common among high-tech workers as they are among journalists (Neff, 2012). Lastly, when discussing contemporary labour conditions in the context of professions with a strong public service ethos, studies exploring "precarious academic labour forces" (Busso & Rivetti, 2014, p. 15) indicate results strikingly similar to the findings of the current study. Public cuts to education due to marketization and financialization have led to a rise in precarious employment in universities across the world (Hall, 2018). Tenured teaching staff are increasingly replaced with disposable instructors on short-term contracts. The implicit assumption

among universities – as well as among precarious instructors themselves – is often that pursuing a purposeful job one is passionate about compensates morally and emotionally for the lack of decent remuneration und security (Busso & Rivetti, 2014).

8.7. Informing neoliberalism studies

There is a steadily growing interdisciplinary literature that seems to consolidate slowly into a loosely defined academic field one could call “neoliberalism studies”. Two recent handbooks of neoliberalism are documenting the lively and timely work done in this field (Springer, Kean & MacLeavy, 2018; Cahill, Cooper, Konings & Primrose, 2016). Among the broad themes examined are history, theory, the state, economic and social questions, nature, and geographies. Only one of the handbooks (Cahill et. Al, 2018) has a section on “cultural dimensions” of neoliberalism which contains a single article (Phelan, 2018) on the realm of the media and journalism. As Phelan (2018) points out, neoliberalism scholars need to take into account that neoliberalism is a “mediated formation” (p. 548). Media infrastructures are important actors in either challenging or confirming the authority of neoliberalism (ibid.). Accordingly, studies that analyze how media discourse amplifies neoliberal logics (or not) (as explored by Phelan, 2014) or those that show how neoliberal logics are implicated in media production, including the journalistic labour involved (as examined in this dissertation), are undertakings relevant to the analysis of neoliberalism at large.

More specifically, my study adds to the neoliberalism literature that explores the complex and unpredictable ways in which neoliberalism is negotiated in people’s everyday lives. For example, such studies illuminate how masculinity among firemen dovetails with neoliberalization in the realm of health care (Braedley, 2010). Or they explore how volunteerism - encouraged by neoliberal governments outsourcing social work to citizens who perform free labour – nevertheless produces community bonds and caring subjects which do not align with neoliberalism (Hoffmann, Reidum St. John, 2018). The current study examines how aspects of journalistic work and journalistic professionalism – such as flexibility, individual autonomy, public service ideals, and cooperative modes of labour – serve to amplify or challenge neoliberal logics in the realm of journalism. The dissertation thereby confirms that neoliberalization is a process

in which contradictory elements are assembled of which some are neoliberal and others non-neoliberal or anti-neoliberal.

9. Conclusion

9.1. Limitations of the research

This dissertation has offered insights into the working conditions and increasingly hybrid professional identities of freelancers and interns in journalism. It has done so by situating the narratives of these workers in the academic literature on journalistic labour, in their respective national contexts, and in a nexus of neoliberalism shaping work experiences and worker subjectivities.

Quantitatively speaking, this study can only provide a small slice of the reality of contemporary journalism, as it is based on the perceptions of 25 journalists from Canada and Germany. At the same time, the reality of contemporary journalism – at least when it comes to working conditions, employment relationships, and career trajectories underpinning the production of news content – is of yet largely unknown. Neither lists of permanent employees working in particular news rooms (still a dominant starting point for much research in journalism studies) nor labour statistics (measuring mostly paid, ongoing, and primary work) are reliable sources anymore when it comes to accounting for the dynamic, precarious, and diverse work situations of contemporary journalists. Therefore, qualitative, exploratory research such as this dissertation have an important role to play in knowledge production about contemporary journalistic labour.

In journalism, professional boundaries have never been as well defined as for professionals such as doctors or lawyers, for example. However, with the casualization and de-institutionalization of employment in journalism, there is currently no stable or broadly accepted definition of what constitutes membership in journalism as an occupation. Some continue to define as journalists only those who practice journalism full-time and as employees and exclude freelancers (Wilhoit, Weaver & Choi, 2013). Others define the occupation as composed exclusively of those who spend most of their time on or earn most of their income from paid news work (Weischenberg et al., 2006, Worlds of Journalism Study, n. d.), likely excluding large groups of part-time journalists.

In contrast, more recent studies, including this dissertation, are based on participants self-identifying as journalists and many scholars explicitly accept the increasing prevalence of non-journalistic work and income, in the lives of freelance journalists (Cohen, 2016; Mathisen, 2017, Edstrom & Ladendorf, 2012; Meyen & Springer, 2009).

That scholars differ significantly in their assessments of who should or should not participate in studies exploring journalists (be the focus working conditions, professional self-images, training and skills, democratic performance, etc.) is an indication that the field of journalism itself – not just the conditions under which journalists work – is unstable and undergoing transformation. Some of the most comprehensive, authoritative and frequently cited research on journalists has been quantitative, representative survey research, going on over decades, using the same selection criteria and survey questions (in part to ensure the comparability of results over time). However, representative studies can no longer be conducted when the size of the target population is unknown (Meyen & Springer, 2009). It is widely accepted that the number of freelance and other non-permanent journalists is constantly growing and that less and less of these are able to live off journalism alone. But we do not currently know how many such freelance journalists, interns, and other non-standard workers there are in any given jurisdiction (Deutscher Journalisten-Verband, 2014). A team of journalism researchers (Thurman et al, 2016) confirm this for the United Kingdom: 'While newspaper employment has fallen sharply, it is unsettled, due to disagreement about definitions, if we have more or fewer journalists in the digital age' (p.4).

In such a climate of uncertainty and change, exploratory, qualitative studies such as this dissertation are crucial in helping to create an initial map of contemporary journalistic labour, and by extension, of the new and emerging field of journalistic labour studies within journalism studies. It has been a major goal of this dissertation to help chart this emerging territory, and thereby respond to recent calls from a small but increasingly vocal group of scholars to renew the field of journalism studies (Deuze & Witschge, 2018; Cohen, 2018). This call is rooted in a foundational critique of established assumptions and paradigms in the field that 'have exceeded their self lives' (Deuze & Witschge, 2018). According to these scholars, it is time to stop searching for stability and continuity in professional self-images, work routines, or democratic

performance of journalists, and embrace the 'messy' reality of contemporary journalism as an 'unruly' subject in constant transformation.

9.2. Mapping instability for a renewed journalism studies

The dissertation contributes to the renewal of the field of journalism studies that has been ongoing over the past fifteen to twenty years. It does so by endorsing a view of journalism as grounded in social, cultural and political-economic contexts, by grappling with ideals of normative expectations versus everyday realities, by using comparative analysis, and, lastly, by insisting on news as something produced by human beings who are relationally connected with others, as part of or outside of their journalistic work (Carlson, Robinson, Lewis & Berkowitz, 2018; Deuze & Witschge, 2018).

As much recent research has done – moving away from conceptualizing journalism as a universal and stable force, detached from society – this study not only accepts but investigates instability and uncertainty in journalism today. It proposes neoliberal logics as a conceptual tool to explore and explain such instability, advancing it as important element to be incorporated into the "change narratives" (Carlson, Robinson, Lewis & Berkowitz, 2018, p. 11) journalism scholars have been telling of the "decline of legacy media" (ibid.) and other fundamental shifts in journalistic production and consumption in the 21st century.

Unless we discuss the precise quality of the changes in contemporary journalism and keep front and center the implications these have for journalism's role in society and democracy, research risks being rather descriptive (Carlson, Robinson, Lewis & Berkowitz, 2018). This quality can sometimes be detected in the recently emerging line of research within journalism studies that explores so-called "entrepreneurial journalism" as one response to uncertainty. Such research on venture capital-funded digital news start-ups, journalistic self-branding in crowdfunding, and agile production in journalism inspired by software companies can offer valuable insights into changing funding and organizational models in journalism. However, it does not often interrogate the working conditions or sustainability of incomes implied such initiatives (Usher, 2017; Wagemans, Witschge & Deuze, 2016; Hunter, 2016).

Placing journalists analytically in a nexus of neoliberalism to tease out how their roles as workers, citizens, and their professional subjectivities are assembled, both through and against neoliberal logics, can provide answers to these larger questions. As the dissertation has shown, such an approach can also offer new insights on the tenacity as well as increasing hybridization of journalistic professional identity in a changing labour market. This professional identity, paradoxically, turns out to be a resource that mediates the impact of deteriorating working conditions on journalists while – being a "labour of love" for many journalists – it simultaneously provides a disincentive for journalists to protest those conditions and for employers and policy-makers to change them.

9.3. Improving journalistic working conditions to sustain democracy[7]

These findings generate both hope that journalism can continue to play a role in sustaining democracies as well as worries that this might not be the case. Hope, because some freelance journalists – as professionals - are so dedicated to public service and independent reporting that they endure insecurity, low incomes, subsidizing journalism through other jobs, and juggling opposing professional commitments. Worry, because the conditions that an increasing number of journalists - as workers - find themselves in threaten to undermine, at the least in the long term, their dedication as professionals. The institution of journalism, viewed as ensemble of the journalistic workers who uphold it, may collapse at some point under the burden of a privatized and corporatized public service ethos, if journalists, the public, and governments do not act to alleviate precarity and improve their working conditions. As a society, we need to figure out collectively if we still need a dedicated group of decently paid professionals to monitor corporate, political and other powers and enable public conversations about issues that matter. There are many ways to improve journalists' working conditions and recent proposals to especially support the growing group of those in non-standard employment.

[7] Parts of this section were first published in: Gollmitzer, M. (forthcoming 2018). Employment Conditions in Journalism. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Communication*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

For example, current labour law frameworks can be powerful if applied and enacted to address working conditions among journalists. Some prominent Canadian magazines discontinued their unpaid internship programs as the provincial government of Ontario found a number of publications in violation of legal employment standards, by not paying their interns minimum wage (Salamon, 2015). A class action law suit settlement in the United States resulted in about 200 former unpaid interns receiving a total of $250 000 in wages from a television production company (Eddie, 2015). In 2011, the National Union of Journalists in the UK won, on behalf of an unpaid intern, entitlement to minimum wage and holiday pay (Brédart & Holderness, 2016). In a Canadian class action law suit, a freelancer successfully sued a national newspaper publisher for unauthorized reproduction and re-use of her work in digital databases and achieved backpay for herself and other freelance journalists, totalling several million dollars (Cohen, 2016).

As far as working conditions of journalists in non-standard employment are concerned, these generally enjoy less rights and receive lower pay than permanently employed journalists. One reason are barriers these workers encounter in joining labour unions or trying to engage in collective bargaining, including strikes to pressure employers (Brédart & Holderness, 2016). In most jurisdictions, self-employed workers are not allowed to have collective representation and bargain collectively with employers (ibid., p.27), as this would violate competition law.

Recently, for example, the Competition Authority of Denmark took legal action against the Danish Union of Journalists. This resulted in the fee recommendation lists prepared by the union to guide employers in paying freelance journalists being declared as illegal (hindering competition). At the same time, the court stated that freelancers who work just like employees and dependent on one employer, must be recognized, paid, and protected as such (Brédart & Holderness, 2016). The International Labour Organization considers it crucially important to fight bogus self-employment in the media sector, which employers commonly use to avoid financial and security commitments to workers while monopolizing their time and skills. Apart from advocating to extend collective bargaining to self-employed journalists, new freelance unions or recently created freelance chapters within traditional unions explore new ways of organizing the

growing number of contingent journalists, including publicly protesting unfair contracts imposed by media organizations (Cohen, 2016).

Other proposals to improve the working conditions of journalists include efforts to tighten intellectual property and copyright regulations in favour of content creators. Also, journalists could benefit from a free legal advice service, including potential legal representation, to buffer the individualization of legal risks journalists experience. This is especially relevant for freelancers who would likely not be supported by media organizations they work for if a legal challenge arose due to their reporting (Public Policy Forum, 2017). Another support tool already exists. Developed in a union context in Scandinavia, the 'freelance fee calculator' has been adopted in several countries across Europe. This online tool includes research time (not customarily paid for by media organizations) in the calculation of fees for assignments by freelance journalists and is starting to gain acceptance among media organizations (Brédart & Holderness, 2016).

Proposals to financially support journalistic labour outside the standard employment relationship include independent funds for journalism and democracy, financed by governments, advertisers, and industry players. Such funds could support investigative reporting on a project basis or provide a source of independent start-up money to enterprises and member-run cooperatives engaging in digital news innovation (Public Policy Forum, 2017). Rather than financial support, online initiatives such as Hostwriter facilitate the exchange of advice, accommodation during work trips, and collaboration among otherwise isolated freelance journalists around the world (Bittner, 2015). Finally, rooted in broader anti-poverty and anti-precarity initiatives, some scholars are calling for a universal basic income for journalists (Cohen, 2018).

9.4. Future research

In addition to focussing on improving policy and other supports for journalists in their everyday working lives, researchers should consider the immediate implications of the current state of journalistic labour. One crucial question for scholars to consider is what it means for journalism's role in democracy when journalism is becoming a part-time job, with many journalists forced to hold multiple jobs, and often "money jobs" in public relations or related fields? As pointed out in chapter 2 of this dissertation, there is

traditional concern among journalism scholars and journalists themselves that a convergence between journalism and public relations would hurt or hinder journalism's democratic mandate. Such concerns are justified and legitimate, and this dissertation has specifically pointed to the potential dangers of various organizations – by enlisting the labour of journalists in precarious employment - instrumentalizing the journalistic ethos in corporate communications for narrow corporate goals. Research is needed not only on the views of former journalists who have changed careers and moved into public relations or related realms but also content analyses of texts and other material they produce in these roles. Importantly, the motivations of corporations across industries to hire journalists rather than public relations professionals or copy writers to do their communications work should be examined.

As the flipside of this, in these times of flux, uncertainty and renewal in journalism, traditional assumptions about journalism and its perceived adversaries need to be interrogated. Critical journalism scholars have started to explore one potentially positive consequence of the crisis of journalism or, more precisely, chronically underfunded news rooms: Messages from NGOs and progressive organizations – for example, those who do environmental advocacy – might have a better chance to make it into news more frequently and mostly unfiltered (Gurleyen & Hackett, 2016). Such a development might be propelled by the professionalization of such messages through journalists who hold part-time jobs at such NGOs or who have left journalism to work for such organizations full-time, using in such roles their journalistic ethos and journalistic techniques to increase media visibility of progressive issues – thus serving democracy as journalists working outside news organizations.

As this dissertation has indicated, some types of work and organization outside journalism seem to align better with a journalistic ethos than others. For example, many journalists who look for either additional jobs and alternative careers seem to be drawn to graduate degrees in the humanities, postsecondary teaching, managing social enterprises, or non-profit organizations – domains, activities, or types of organizations which, by mission or design, measure success and value in other than purely economic terms and thus present alternatives to neoliberal logics. However, if extended from non-profit and into the corporate realm, the phenomenon of multiple job-holding or career change in journalism opens up unconventional but necessary questions such as this: If

journalists bring an ethos of independence and accuracy into corporate realms, could this result in an improvement of corporate communications for those receiving it -- such as infusing content narrowly embracing corporate interests with an edge of public service orientation? This is another crucial question that future research should explore.

Moreover, apart from these specific questions, much more research is needed to allow us to develop a fuller and more accurate understanding of work environments and workers in the media industries than we currently have. Although research based on representative samples may not be possible at this point – the size of the 'population' is not only unknown but likely constantly fluctuating, as mentioned above – large-scale and longitudinal qualitative research could substantially move forward our understanding of contemporary labour in journalism. A particularly appropriate response to the casualization and flexibilization of journalistic labour should include research that goes beyond exploring working conditions at one point in time (which is what this dissertation has done). In a situation of constant change, following career *trajectories* instead would allow us to capture and understand the frequent transitions between employment statuses, journalistic and non-journalistic work, as well as periods of over-, under- and unemployment that journalists experience today.

Important work in this vein has been commenced by Meyers & Davidson (2016) for a small number of Israeli journalists, using work life history interviews as method to explore the connection between different types of journalism careers and journalistic professionalism. However, to deepen and expand insights, more international research with larger number of participants is needed and with a greater focus on working conditions under neoliberalism as drivers of career change, in addition to different registers of professionalism as result of such change. Ideally, such research would be based on interviews with journalists over several years, to cover different career stages as they move in and out of a diversity of employment statuses and professions. It is also time to confront findings from the still dominant interview - or survey-based research on journalists with insights from ethnographies. Such ethnographies would take place mostly outside news rooms and trace the working lives of journalists by following their work at home, in public spaces, or on the road, doing freelance journalism and non-journalistic work and interacting with clients, sources, and family members across different spaces.

Another suggestion for future research is based on the insights gained in this dissertation about the challenges related to spatial constraints when working from home as well as combining freelance journalism with family life. Such research would entail directing attention from the paid work of news production to unpaid activities in the lives of journalists. In post-Fordist work contexts, private relationships and commitments are less and less the flipside of work but intersecting with it in complex ways, as non-standard and at-home work becomes more common. Continuing an exploration of the well-being of journalists, such research would examine how journalists - outside of or in conjunction with work - care for dependents, develop strategies for self-care or receive care, for example, treatment for burnout conditions. Following feminist scholars in political science and sociology, we could thereby consider gender, care and household situation to conceptualize 'work' more holistically (Fuller, 2008, 2011). In this context, examining male versus female perceptions would be particularly interesting, as existing studies, including this dissertation, paint an ambivalent picture of female self-employment in journalism as either a threat to family life or panacea for balancing work and care obligations (Massey & Elmore 2011).

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